### spooky

**Summary**

He's just a kid—a glowing, floating, other ghost fighting kid.

Sometimes though, he isn't even that.

**Notes**

See the end of the work for [notes](#).
With a growl, Sam pressed end call, and shuffled her phone back into her pocket before taking a sip from her glass of water. She glanced out the window, narrowing her eyes at the store across the parking lot. "Those two had better hurry up," she grumbled, going over the menu again.

Basically everything on here is meat, she thought as she flipped the sheet over, desserts it is.

The jingle of bells startled her, and she jumped, sloshing water onto her skirt and the menu as she knocked into the table with a curse. Grabbing a handful of napkins, she wiped up the water on the table before dabbing at her skirt, and looking up to glare at the two men who'd walked in.

The shorter of the two seems to brighten as soon as he caught sight of her, and Sam felt a tic develop under her eye as he all but swaggered—and who did that? No one she knew had ever done that—up to the booth just across from of hers. The taller one trailed after him, and by the roll of his eyes, she figured she was in for a common event.

Sam frowned as he winked at her, and plopped down into his booth, the last free corner one. Jazz had talked about it before; about Danny setting up in corners with his back to the wall, not that it helped with ghosts much if they came up behind him through said wall.

Huffing, she turned back to the menu for what she thought was longer than a minute before watching as the waitress wandered over to their table, and completely missing the sound of bells.

"So! Danny managed to find a map, and get pointed in the direction of good camping gear," came a familiar voice," and not only did he manage to knock down a rack of clothes but a couple of mannequins too while he was at it, so he'll be back soon-ish."

Sam sucked in a breath, and Tucker grinned from his place on the other side of the table.

"I don't think I'll ask how that happened," she deadpanned.

"Good, 'cause I wasn't there to witness it as it happened," he informed her, fiddling with his PDA. "So... how's the meat looking on the menu?"

The goth glared.

Two shins kicked later, a steaming plate of bacon, sausage, eggs, grits, and toast was laid out in front of the geek while Sam picked at her apple pie.

Chewing on the bit in her mouth, she glanced at the two men out of the corner of her eyes. The taller one was done, and the shorter one was just about done with his own slice of pie. Looking out the window, she sat up as she noticed the fogged up figure of her boyfriend walk from the back of their car, and to the door.
"Danny's back," she said, kicking the meat-lover in the shin again.

"Ow! Sam!" he yelped, dropping his fork as a jingle rang out through the dinner.

The taller of the two men jerked in their direction, but Sam barely noticed as Danny stepped closer and plopped down next to her. "What? You guys already eat without me?" he pouted, twinging his fingers in hers between them.

Tucker choked, and beat at his chest with a fist. "Dude! I'm getting abused over here," he wheezed.

Danny said something in return, blue eyes glinting in amusement, however, Sam wasn't paying attention anymore; the two men had gotten up, and were stepping close towards them around the waitress as she served the occupied table in front of their newly vacated one.

The tall one walked by first without so much as a glance, but it was different for the shorter one. He grinned at her as he got closer, and winked, and then the screeching started up.

Everything seemed to stop, and a block of ice dropped into the pit of Sam's stomach.

There was a long silence.
happenstance camping trip

4.

Dean cleared his throat, and the kid's shoulders slumped even further. Warmth collected underneath the collar of his jacket, and he glanced around, words failing him. His attention strayed for a moment, and he almost wished Sammy were there, being pre-law he would know a way to... work this out, probably. Maybe.

He couldn't even remember his first time, how it felt; how he felt afterwards. It was a no brainer that he'd been younger, by a couple of years at most, and Dean knew he'd been prepared for it, but he still couldn't pull up the memories from the murky corners of his mind; still couldn't find the emotions to try and emphasize.

He needed to say something. He'd probably screw things up, but he needed to say something to the kid.

"It... was easier than I thought to kill a man."

Startled, Dean bobbed his head even as he realized the kid couldn't see him. "It wasn't really a... man, human, whatever, y'know."

A pale hand ran through black hair. "I... But still, I... actually killed him—It, I dunno, and frankly I don't care, but I killed 'em," he breathed, turning to look at Dean, blue eyes shiny. "And it was so freaking easy."

Self-preservation was a human thing to think about; me or them, you or me, but Dean couldn't say that. He'd fuck it up, make the situation worse, so, he bit his tongue.

And, that was when it really hit Dean; that it really hit home that the kid was younger than he ever had been.
"He's not what you think he is!" echoes in Dean's mind as the world slows down. He sees the girl as her face steels, and her body tenses; he sees her burst into motion, and she's much faster than the world around him, and he sees his brother raise his gun.

The elder Winchester can already see what will happen as he whips towards Sam, the words stalling for a fraction of a moment too long as they bubble their way up his throat:

"Sam, don —!"

Too late, he'll always be too late.

The spurt of blood is short and quick, colouring the ground as the silver bullet met the girl's side. She'd protected the creature, defenseless as it was, curled on the concrete as its body ripples and flickers, with herself as the shield. She is pitching forward with a gasp when Dean finds himself moving, his rifle falling from his hands.

The shapeshifter is moving when he kneels next to the girl, ignoring a yelp from behind him. "Shitshitshitshit—fuck," he growls as he stalls.

Dean is scared to touch her, and fuck have we screwed up again, but he is given no more time to think as the creature uncurls itself, and blinks blearily toward the sky, trembling. As soon as it's muddled eyes lower and land on the girl sprawled across its chest something breaks—Dean can tell by how dead it's eyes become; how it's entire body stills, and the hair on the back of his neck rises—and then Dean's soaring through the air.

A scream rips through the air, pain and despair strung through it, and soon everything is shaking as it tapers into a wail. Dean's breath rattles in his chest as he gasps like a beached fish on the pavement, chest burning, as his ears start to ring.

"Dean!"

"S-Sam! Danny! D-Danny stop! You're g-going to—"

Windows shatter, and the sentence is lost to the growing rumble.
The door snapped open with a sharp crack, the wood splintering around the knob and lock, and twin yelps pierced the air in surprise. Dean and Sam barged into the room, guns loaded with salt and EMF detectors going mad, and ready for almost anything that could be thrown their way.

There were two separate thumps, but nothing more happened.

Violet eyes framed by disheveled black hair were the first things that appeared, and immediately disappear as the brothers leveled their weapons toward the furthest bedside. The blankets were twisted into a mess, pillows askew, and the two brothers shared a look as panicking whispering started up.

Eyes like the clearest of water appeared from the edge of the unmade bed, black hair spiked in every direction falling around them. The EMFs screeched, and the boy winced. "Uh... Can we help you?"

His face slowly appeared, and the hunters’ faces flushed at the sight of his slightly bruised lips twitching into a frown. They shared a look, and slowly hid their guns behind their backs.

"Erm, no, uh, we didn't mean to interrupt; wrong room," Dean lied, shuffling himself and Sam back, "Sorry."

They pulled the door shut as best as they could.
"Cas..."

The angel twitches minutely, his wings pulling close to his back. He has already buried the creature, the earth soft and upturned marking the grave. He knows what he has done is for the best; he knows it was not cruel; he knows it was necessary, but it doesn't stop the slight constriction of his chest at the way his name is said.

"It had to be done, Dean," he says as he closes his eyes. Castiel cannot fault him for his way of thinking for he'd only come along later, after the creature had breathed its last breath, drifting away into death. He knows how it had looked; how it had looked nothing more than a child.

He stays long after the hunter has left, his grace slowly knitting together the wound in his shoulder. That single connection between he and creature had been enough, and a future had splashed across his entire being in a wave of red—the world in ruin, cities destroyed and razed to the ground; humans pitiful in numbers and those that can fight, defend what little is left. The world is torn, and the creature's red eyes—and then he had fought harder, much harder then he'd thought he'd need to, and then the monster had changed.

An adolescent, his mind tells him as he spears the monstrosity, and it slowly dies; the creature spits and rages, but it does not change back.

Castiel feels Jimmy stir within him as the sun dips beyond the horizon; as the air grows cold, and the world silent.

"... Thank you."
The temperature drops, the slight breeze turning bitter and cold; the wind bites angrily at Dean's cheeks before he hunches into himself and faces away, the air beating at his back. The hunter flinches as the EMF in his pocket shrieks one long note before falling silent, the smell of burnt wire curling into the air.

"Sam—"

"I know! I know! I'm hurrying!" his brother responds, another clot of dirt joining a growing mound. Dean's pretty sure he's all *bitch-face*.

Clouding the air space in front of his face with his breath, the elder Winchester flexes his grip on his rifle after a moment, eyes slipping over the head stone before back to the grave as there's a sharp *crack* and wood starts to fly out in pieces.

A shadow flickers in the of the corner of his eyes, and he whirls. The blast of rock-salt chips a corner off of a headstone, but otherwise finds no target.

There's a beat.

"*Way to keep it classy,*" teases the air, the last bit of outside warmth draining away as the fog presses inward.

Dean whips back around, shotgun tight in his hands. Narrowing his eyes, he peers out into the thick fog before looking to his brother as he climbs out of the grave and picks up the canister of gasoline. "Sam, pour—!"

"Y'know," purrs the same voice, echoing lightly in the elder hunter's ear, "that won't work on me."

The shorter man jumps, startled, and his finger tightens on the gun's trigger. A chuckle echoes through the air as Sam throws himself sideways, dodging the rock-salt as it buries itself into a gnarled cherry blossom.

Dean barley has a second to react as the sleeves of his brother's shirt bunch up.

"H-Hey!" the younger Winchester yelps as his feet leave the ground, the fog swirling around his huge frame.

The air laughs, full of childish glee. "Who you gonna call?" it warbles in sing-song.

"*F*uck—put my brother down!" Dean barks, uncertainty colouring his undertones as he warily aims his gun because *what the hell kind of ghost is this.* He has bested some of the nastiest ghosts, and come out worse for wear but alive but *what. the. hell.*

There's a snicker, and Sam falls back to earth a moment later, the ground unforgiving and unyielding as he lands wrong, and the spirit fades into view.

The feral grin spread across the ghost's face pinches its eyes in mischief; rage nor cruel amusement present in its entirety, the ghost pulls at its lower eyelid, and a healthy pink tongue slips out.

Toxic green eyes crinkle as rock-salt tears through its face with no resistance, the edges of its body
blurring blue and its colours washing away into dull tones.
The light is sudden and ungodly bright, burning his retinas even though his back is turned; Dean lets the fungi drop from his hand and whirls around—it could be *anything*, and though he hopes it's Cas to spirit him out of the pitch hell-hole he had been tossed into, he's taking no chances—and he scrambles backwards just as soon as he gets his first good look.

Blinking rapidly, Dean sucks in a breath, the musk and stale air seizing his throat.

The ghost—he's sure it's one, it's a bit see through and faded, and *glowing*—is all skin and bones; it is probably the scrawniest thing he has ever seen, each rib showing in HD-quality detail. The thought that perhaps he might have been able to do something slams a fist into his chest, and he swallows hard as it shifts on the pile of dirt it's atop of.

"Those are poisonous," it intones, voice airy and faint, tone flat.

Dean darts his eyes about the hole he'd been dumped into before settling them back onto the ghost. "And how would you know?" he shoots back on reflex, jade on toxic green, and immediately regrets it.

Something flickers across the specter's face; it's eyes pinch shut for the briefest of moments before reopening, and the Winchester can tell that the room has grown a shade darker.

Whatever he had been expecting, it had not been for the phantom to grin.

Dean recoils as if struck, his heart stuttering in shock, and eyes wide.

It's teeth are bloodied even in death; it's gums a hateful dark purple and oozing a bubbly dark green, and if Dean had been looking, he would swear flecked with red.

"How do you think I died," it whispers, eyes radioactive bright and unwavering.
2.

It doesn't fight anymore than it has too; the ghost just falls limp as his form ripples and flickers, slick with a cocktail of gasoline, holy water, and rock salt. Pain is all too clear in it's shiny radioactive eyes as it looks up at the single brother, face pinched in determination, but resigned in its entirety.

"I'm the same y'know," it says weakly, eyes hooded and partially obscured by its winter frost, white hair.

Sam doubts that, but says nothing in return. It wouldn't take his brother long to dig up the specter's grave and light it aflame.

The ghost grunts after a moment of silence, and curls in on itself as its body seizes. It takes a moment, sucking in breaths that Sam knows it doesn't need before looking back up to the Winchester. "I-I know you probably won't believe me, b-but we're both fighting to protect p-people who will never know what we've d-done for them—or, w-was in my case, huh?" it jokes without any true humour.

The hunter frowns, and looks away. Ghosts of this kind were malevolent, and manipulative, willing to do whatever it takes to cling to their obsession. Sam scowls; he won't be fooled by the lies it spun, he's too smart for that.

Much too smart.

"Oh."

With its voice so faint and startled, Sam cannot help but look back to it, and take a step back in shock:

Its legs were beginning to chip away into nothing; legs pulling to pieces and fading into the air as they slowly ate themselves up from the ankles.

"Ah, ah," it gasps, eyes bright and glossy as it watches it's own legs disappear. "I—Oh."

The younger Winchester is only able to spare a moment to the thought that maybe it hurts to die again before his eyes meet toxic green; the ghost's chest is almost gone.

Lips move, and no words escape the phantom's mouth, but it's enough.

"I forgive you."

(Sam pretends he knows there will never be exceptions.)
"You will eliminate this... boy, Daniel Fenton."

His blade is unfamiliar in his hand, hot to the touch, and inches from the adolescent's drowsy blue eyes. Fear, and pain flicker in their depths, and Castiel's mind is torn asunder as they sharpen in awareness. The boy isn't completely human, he knows that, but he is... different.

And... this... this isn't the same. Samandriel had been compromised—*but he knows better, and it will haunt him*—but this human, this human child had done no wrong. If anything, he had done the mortal world good, time and time again, much like the Winchesters... so much like them, it's all Castiel can do not to see their faces in the boy.

There's a flicker of black light, and it glints off of the angel's knife.

His arm trembles as he pushes and pushes for his limb to stall; the angel clenches his eyes shut in pain, and flares his wings in anger, his knuckles no doubt turning white in the strain. He has learned to hate *so much*, and this would be just another thing to hate *himself*—

The boy suddenly stiffens under the angel's hand, neck muscles tightening and pulse throbbing, and Castiel's eyes snap open; the boy's eyes are fixed behind him, past his clean-shaven face, and wide in disbelief.

"Y-You're... an a-angel?" whispers the boy, Daniel, and his clear water eyes take on such a stricken and horrified look it causes a physical pain to erupt in the Thursday guardian's chest.

Of course... he'd be able to tell.

The angel leans harder against the boy's chest as his control slips, and rears his other arm back, the limb visibly straining.

A sob chokes itself in the adolescent's throat.

"*This is for the greater good Castiel./*/"
wisconsin ghosts

1.

You steady your arm, clutching the barrel of the gun closer toward your chest. The house is dark and dusty from unhabitance, and the stone floor is cold under your worn shoes. Pain thrums steadily from the surely mottled purple that is your ankle, but you only allow yourself to limp slightly, biting into your cheek to stifle your gasps.

It's when you step out into the hallway that you glance to your left and catch a glimpse of it out of the corner of your eye. Whirling around, you let loose a round of rock-salt. It buries itself into the wallpaper curled walls without incident, and you're left wondering.

But only for a moment.

You turn and come face to face with it, your heart stuttering in mute panic.

Vertical from the ceiling is a boy, and he almost looks to be your brother's age. Radioactive eyes bore into your own, and your breath clouds the space between your faces as the seconds tick by. The gun is useless in your hands when it is already so close to your person.

*He's assessing me,* you realize as the ghost's eyes narrow to slits after what seems to be an eternity.

Your mouth opens but the entire structure shakes at the same moment, the walls of the mansion throwing dust everywhere. You gag as you inhale in shock, coughing as the dust invaded your airways.

The boy's eyes go impossibly wide.

"You need to leave," the phantom says, eyes trained to something behind you, voice distant and far-reaching." You need to leave now."

You turn.

There's another ghost further down the hall, eyes of blood rubies, and the gun drops from your hands. A orb of vibrant pink is festering in its hand, throwing the hall's shadows wickedly, and you take a small step back.

Wood cracks from somewhere behind you, unmistakable as the sound of a wooden door being kicked open.

"Sam!"

The world ends in pink hell-fire.
The nail polish on her left index finger is chipped.

"Sam?"

She doesn't reply.

"Sam?"

An inky black has replaced deep amethyst; a grin so out of place stretches across her blood speckled face, and it promises hell.

"Kid... that ain't your friend anymore."
You're aware; your conscious tingling in a reboot, a restart. Your vision comes back, spotty and pulsating with a white noise, but layered a smoldering crimson.

Your hands are moving but you're not doing it; your body is moving but you're not directing it. You can't feel your fingers ghosting over the slick gun but you know it's not you in control.

That's when you notice it.

It's there and then it isn't; it's a non-entity that is sharing space in your head, and it's not friendly. You shove at it, pushing mental hands into its sides with bruising force.

It laughs at you, a trickle of blood is slipping from your nose, and.

then the limbs are sliced off at the wrist.

You shut down from the blinding pain—ohgodohgodohgodithurts—

"You're not as strong as you'd like to think you are, boy."

A roar fills the normally clever space between your ears, and then you're aware. Consciousness rushes back in a wave of fire, a burning pain, but it fades to a dull growl, and then you can see.

You don't know where you are, but the man in orange has the biggest grin on his face you've ever seen and.

his eyes look tired, and sad.

A hiss rings loud, and you shrink back.

The man chatters on, lips moving without a single sound reaching you, and throws an arm over your shoulder—any other time you might have been surprised; he's tall. You're thinking you might be in his home when a girl and an older woman come down some stairs. The girl zeroes in on you, her eyes narrowing, but you only have eyes for the older woman in that moment.

Your entire being burns with desire.

She smiles at you and whatever is crowding your mental space swells, pushing against you.

You're vision flickers.

The scene has changed, the walls are a shiny metal and the room is cluttered with technology, and the man has his back to you.

The gun from before is in your hands.

You start yelling, beating at the thing controlling your mind with re-imagined but thin hands. You shove and you shove, and your yelling devolving into screams as you throw all that you can at whatever it is.

It knocks you aside, perhaps with a bit of effort behind it, and your vision shuts out.
"And now she's all mine."

Beeping beats hard at your ears, and you groan, brown eyes slipping open to slits.

Your heart jumps, skipping a beat.

The man is a bloody smear against the wall, blood darkening the orange jumpsuit in dark patches and pooling under his hulking frame.

Someone screams.
Castiel is a mile out, emptying his last round of ammunition into a group of croats, when it happens. The savage and mindless woman leaps at him, clothes in tatters and eyes wild, and is frozen before his very eyes. The sudden block of ice flies into him, knocking him to the ground and into the dirty slush with a grunt.

There are shrieks and mad grunts as the powerless angel struggles to lift the frozen body off of him, his fingers burning against the frigid temperature while his arms ache with fatigue; while his body tingles in the onset of withdrawal. He just manages to scramble out from under the dead weight as the last of the Croatoans is suddenly an angry and twisted block of ice.

His skin itches and crawls as he shifts his eyes around the disturbed area of snow. The gun is useless in his hands, but he holds it tight, drawing it up to his chest.

"You're... not infected are you?"

Castiel's arms are moving before he even realizes it; he swings the gun around in an about-face, and it passes harmlessly through a pale face and toxic green eyes.

The continuing momentum throws him into the slush once more.

There's a snicker, and Castiel rolls over onto his back with a groan.

A ghost floats in the air above him, hair as white as the snow that stretches out for miles.

The former angel laughs, arching up off the wet ground as his abdomen clenches.

"I... I made... it," he barks, gasping.

Alone.

Based off of a thing where End!Castiel survived after SPN 5x09 "The End" and Lucifer!Sam marked him with something that basically made him immortal I think? Probably just can't be killed, but i'll look for it and link it when/if i find it again
The contempt and disgust flash so quickly Jazz almost misses it.

She hesitates in the hug her brother engulfs her in the next moment, startled and tense. Nothing feels different; the hug is just as tight and quick as to be expected. Leaves poke out from his hair, and his clothes are scuffed, but his eyes are clear and so very blue. Jazz smiles at Danny when he let's go.

His returning grin doesn't quite reach his eyes.

Jazz's lips thin, and she steps back, narrowing her eyes as she meets... his.

"What have you done with Danny?"

His upper lip twitches once more before his face floods with confusion. "What? Jazz, c'mon, I just went through the ringer with both Skulker and Technus."

Jazz bites her lip, the smallest bit of doubt festering. "Where is my brother?" she presses, fingerig the ectogun in her right hand. "What have you done with him?"

He blinks, and Jazz jerks the gun up with a gasp.

"Sorry, but Daniel isn't here right now."

Bottomless black stares back at her.
0.

You've never been possessed before, but you have been controlled but this is nothing like being submerged under Freakshow's control.

There is no hazy vision and warm tingles encouraging you to do things—oh you want to do this, you want that, lets take that; no blissful sleepiness, or bell like voice whispering nothings to you in comfort.

Whatever it is, it stretches your skin, holding it taut and itching it all over. It's much too big for your body, and all you want to do is dig roves into your epidermis, scratch up the layers of dead cells and let it seep out in trickling lines of red.

Sight buzzes into being like the start up of an old television, and you struggle to make sense of what you're being shown.

A man is crumpled against the wall just in front of you, and an ecto blast is festering in your hand.

His eyes are livid, wild, angry, and hurt; their intensity rivals that of your radioactive green, and you inwardly flinch as your body steps forward.

"My, my, how the mighty have fallen," purrs your voice, but it isn't you. It's oiled and silky, much more smooth and deep. "Dean Winchester at my feet, how... satisfying."

The man—Dean?—spits at your feet, and you can feel the frown tugging at your lips. The green energy flickers in your hand, spiking with the ripple of annoyance that washes over you.

"Now that was just uncalled for," drawls the entity, and the pure, unadulterated hate curls uncomfortably close to your piece of mind. It's as thick as oil and grease, and it's rising slowly over you in thin, rippling waves of a shiny blackness.

"Fuck you," snarls Dean.

You've fought enough to know it's all a sham; he's given up, the bite is gone out of him but the man is not the type to just roll over and die quietly.

And that's just it, isn't it?

You surge forward in an explosion of green, and the invader screams in an array of sickly yellow.
the guns who won the west

1.

"I want... to sleep for an... eternity."

She cradles his head, bent over him with a soft rock to her movements. Fat tears gather at the edges of her black lined eyes, and the salt burns at her eyes. The ectoplasm is soaking into her stockings and skirt, but she could care fucking less.

Sam presses a kiss to his forehead. "Shh, it's o-okay, you can go to s-sleep now," she murmurs to him,"i-it'll be fine."

Glossy green eyes bleed blue as they blink up at her. "C-Can't, gotta... g-gotta beat... Tucker.. gotta p-protect the t-town ," Danny breathes before coughs erupt from his throat.

It can't be helped when she tightens her grip around him; the door is starting to splinter, the ice cracking and chipping off as the wood begins to break beneath it.

— the hunters are just beyond the doo —

"No, no, i-it's alright," she starts, running her fingers through his green stained hair, and choking back a sob," I'll c-cover for y-you; T-Tucker's already g-gone ahead, r-remember?"

Roots are crawling their way over her legs and his arms, twisting painfully into her skin, and no doubt into his as they inch up and up. Grass tickles her sides as it grows taller and taller still, sprouting around her and Danny in long tendrils of whispering stalks and pink pampas.

Danny smiles up at her, dopey and crooked, eyelids fluttering. "You'll be... h-here when I wake u-up?" he whispers, glow dimming against the surrounding grass and leaving it to her shades of purple.

Tears escape from the edges of her eyes, dropping onto the moss reaching across his chest. "Y-Yes, I'll be right h-here, T-Tucker too."

— we're dying all over again and i'll be here, and i love you so much it hur —

"You... Y-You promise?"

A crack splits the air, and the door falls forward.

"I... p-promise."
0.

"No! Leave him alone!"

The ghost is only a kid.

"Leave Danny alone!"

His radioactive eyes are flooded with fear and terror, and he tries to shy away from the looming hunter. Green plasm leaks from the corner of his mouth, and black lines branch out around his neck.

"No, no, no! Leave him alone, p-please!"

The girl can scream all she wants; the ghost has to go.
"You took my brother away from me."

The words are sharp and bitterly cold; they cut deep and leave invisible, oozing wounds. Shame and self-loathing twist painfully underneath your skin, and you flinch, drawing back and turning your face away.

You think of your brother, hunching over too expensive books, and doing his damnest to forget you; to forget that the world and its people are not alone.

Electric eyes burn holes into your skin.

"Look at me."

Your eyes find hers, and the flare of deep sadness that engulfs you steals your breath away.

Her pretty face twists into a snarl, red hair fluttering in an invisible wind. "I should take your brother from you."

You tense, tightening your hold on the rifle in your hands, and gritting your teeth. Maybe if you move quick enough you can get to Sam before she did, put up protections and barriers and then find her grave and bur—

"But... I won't, he wouldn't want me to," the ghost says, the fire dying from her neon eyes. Her bright glow dies down, and she floats back a foot, face pinching to hold back tears. "D-Danny was a good boy, and I wish you could have known that."

You're flooded with love, and sadness and hate and anger and defeat and—

"You, Dean Winchester, will believe in second chances and the benefit of a doubt," she intones, and her voice is everywhere at once; sharp bells and blaring trumpets, thrumming bass and a steady beat, her words take hold of you.

Fat tears leak from her aquamarine eyes as your world flickers out.

"You will truly never forget."

(benny. kate. castiel. gabriel. sam. lucky. adam. meg.)
"Are you sure there were no survivors?"

He almost misses the kid in the darkness. The glint of light that reflects off his glasses gives him away, and then the angel is upon him, knife flashing. The kid yelps and dodges, scrambling to the left and out of Castiel reach, and falls into a nearby pile of empty cardboard boxes in his panic; the angel only manages to spear an electronic device that sparks and sputters around his bloodied blade.

Flaring his wings, Castiel moves after the boy.

"Yes, there were none."

I made sure is left unsaid.
There's a solid *thump*, and the entire boat rocks. Kevin's soda spills over his lap, the last of his burger and his fries; it dyes the food and his jeans brown with coca cola. The Prophet swears, standing out of reflex and throwing the now soggy food from his lap and onto the cramped floor of his room.

"Goddamm—"

It's muffled through the metal door, but he hears a *groan*.

Kevin stiffens.

"*Damn...*"

He nervously eyes the shotgun on the shelf next to him. If whatever is out there got into the boat, then his room is less safe than anywhere else, but how to get out without making any noise...? Kevin snatchs the rifle up, inwardly flinching as a few trinkets fall from the shelf and hit the floor.

Scrambling backwards and back onto his bed, he pushes himself up against the back wall, barrel to the door.

Everything goes deathly quiet save for the roar of blood in the Prophet's ears.

A couple of long and slow minutes pass, and his grip loosens on the gun; his hearts slows, and the gun tips down just a bit. Okay, so maybe he is imagining it. Maybe. Possibly. Stress? Stress can do that. Probably.

He should probably get back to the tab—

A head appears through the door without preamble, glowing green eyes a sore even in the well-lit room, and Kevin nearly chokes on his tongue.

The bullets rips from the gun with a loud *bang*. The head yelps, and the silver rounds *fucking disappear through the door*.

"Jesus christ I only wanted *directions!*"
"It's no use diggin' yer heels in."

Castiel stands off to the side, eyes narrowed and wings loose. The ghost bares its teeth at Bobby, and electricity cracks weakly across its skin. It is defiant, stubborn and unyielding; weak as it is, the angel cannot help but admire its loyalty.

He barely twitches as the blood blossoms are shoved closer to the ghost. The entity rears back in the chair, straining against it's binds, eyes a livid and molten brown.

"Where did your friends go?" the hunter demands, face darkening in frustration. The angel idly notes the red beret being crushed underfoot. "We can do this the easy way, or the hard way, ghost."

Bobby gets an electric blue loogy to the face, weak energy leaving a trail through the air. Castiel ruffles his wings when the human's body spasms, ready if the flower falls from his hands.

The entire endeavor is pointless, a complete waste of time; the ghost will not talk, Castiel knows this for a fact.

It's written in its entire being:

*It'd rather cease to exist on this plane than give up its friends.*
friend(s)

No one ever looks up because no one ever has to. It's a known fact in Purgatory; everyone's a grounded target. So, no one ever looks up, thinks to look up, or bothers to even wonder about looking up. It just doesn't happen. Ever. Nothing's up there, so nothing down there need worry.

Right?

Benny almost loses his head to the kid. Where he drops down from the vampire never knows, and it's a ridiculously close shave; the kid's shive cuts a line from behind his ear to the curve of his neck meeting his shoulder. Blood coats the collar of his jacket, and he snarls.

The kid's scrawny, and beaten an ugly dark colour all over. Matted black hair falls in his face, but slivers of a sky-blue flicker behind the dirty curtain. He's so pale Benny's almost surprised when he snarls in return his teeth are nothing but humanly blunt.

Benny's just about to rush the kid when he's hit from behind. Raw heat twists his skin, and he howls in pain as he whips around, blade raised to his chest.

It's... the kid.

"The hell?" he growls, shuffling back and putting the two in his line of sight. His back burns, but he can already feel the skin stitching itself together from whatever the damn thing that was tossed onto his back.

Just as matted and dirty as the other, they advance on him, curling into the arches of a circle to catch Benny on both sides. The vampire darts his eyes between them, eyes narrowed at the flickers of green, and blue under the two's twisted mess of hair. Were the both real? Twin monsters? He's grasping at straws, trying to figure what they are and the best way to kill them, when they freeze.

Both of their heads snap to the east, and Benny can see their bodies grow tense.

"Leviathans," they hiss, drawing back.

And then they're gone just as quick as they came.

The leaves of the trees above his head rustle, and Benny snaps his head up. Shiny radioactive eyes peer down at him before flickering out. The vampire gives the area one wary glance over before hightailing it. Fuck if he was gonna stick around.

The next time Benny sees either of the two again, it's the one with green eyes and it's pilfering through the dead bodies of a dozen or so monsters.

He watches off to the side, hidden behind a tangle of trees. The kid moves between the bodies, poking around in their pockets, and appraising their weapons, and that's when it hits him. All they had wanted was his blade; the green eyed one had been weaponless. Not that he'd have given it up to them, gotta being able to defend himself and all, but he can concede the point that he has a very nice and durable makeshift weapon.
Cold steel bites into his neck, and Benny freezes. A mistake, he'd made a mistake. If they could sense Leviathans before he even could hear their monstrous roars then the two could definitely sense him barely even twenty feet away. He swallows, and the sharp edge nicks the skin of his neck, drawing a small bead of blood.

"Uh, I'll give you my weapon free of charge?" he tries, eyes darting to the still figure of the other of the two. He was staring in their direction. "Cross my heart and hope to die."

The weapon falters, as if confused at the ease of which he'd give up his weapon, and Benny swings it back. The blade definitely sinks into something, that he's sure, but when the smaller blade tumbles from his shoulder and he tips back from the sudden release of his weapon, Benny knows he's had.

He dodges a thrown axe-like weapon, rolling from the minimal cover of the trees, and scrambles upright and ready.

Only, they're—or is it just one? not two?—gone, and he's left standing at the edge of a clearing full of bodies.

For all of the few times Benny has encountered the two, or whatever, he figures they survive on being sneaky and using guerrilla style tactics. Ambushing being their main thing. So, he gives the thought that maybe they wouldn't do so well caught barefooted and in close quarters when unprepared.

It's just his luck that he stumbles upon them fighting tooth and nail under such conditions. He skulks in the background for what he knows is less than a minute but feels like minutes when the blue-eyed one is struck down while shielding the green-eyed one, and explodes close range into green plasm. The monster caught in the small explosion screams, and falls to the ground spasming in pain.

Well. That's new.

Benny jumps into the fight before he really knows what he's doing. Three are already down, which leaves three more, and having surprise on his side, he manages to help the kid kill them. It's messy, and they bump into each other too many times to ever say they had compatible fighting habits, but they kill them.

He downs the last one and is about to turn around to the kid, a smirk on his lips, when a furious green orb knocks his weapon from his hand, and he's bowled over. They both roll in a flurry of punches and ragged nails before Benny is pinned, the kid sitting on his chest with another radioactive sphere festering in its hand.

Toxic eyes glare down at him. "Why'd you help?" the kid demands, voice raspy with disuse. Benny wonders at that, since there are two of them... right?

"You looked like you could'a used a hand."

His answer seems to throw the kid off, who narrows his eyes down at Benny. The vampire doesn't know how long they sit there, but before long the orb dies down and disappears. The kid slowly gets off his chest, and moves a few feet away as Benny sits up, rubbing at his chest.

"Thanks."

Benny gives the kid a crooked grin as he gets to his feet. "No problem, kid," he says, eyes darting
toward the green goo and missing the flicker of amusement," sorry 'bout your friend though."

"Mm," comes the short response.

Brushing at his clothes, Benny spies his blade a bit away. He glances at the kid, who makes no outward movement toward him retrieving his weapon. He moves back toward the kid after he picks up the blade, hefting it onto his shoulder, and holds his hand out.

"Name's Benny, and I think me and you should stick together out here, whaddya think?"

The kid seems to blink at him, and then his hand, and for a moment Benny wonders when exactly the kid landed in Purgatory if he's not sure what a handshake is.

He tenses slightly when an ice cold hand slips into his.

"Danny."
It's just one of those days. Where nothing can seem to go just right. At all. Tucker likes to think it started out alright, but, by the time he should have been home eating dinner of a nice juicy steak and baked potatoes, he's stranded in the ghost zone of all places. Of all freaking places. It's not fair he wants to whine, but he'd rather not attract attention.

A formless blob of green decides to give it to him anyway. Tucker scrambles away from the ghost, clutching his PDA. One swipe sends him stumbling, and he loses his beret. The second swipe sends him tumbling; the third right into a portal.

Tucker falls.

The array of colours make him nauseous and dizzy. He flips head over heels once, then twice, and then once more before he hits something hard. The breath is knocked out of him, and terror seizes his chest. Portals can lead anywhere and to any time.

Gasping, he scrambles up, fingers digging into what he thinks is leather, and rams his head into the roof of a car.

"Ow!"

Clutching at his head, he curls up on the seat. So, he's in a car. A nice car by the feel of the seating.

There's a ding, and he panics for a moment when he can't find his PDA. He scrambles in the seat, darting his eyes about, beyond thankful his glasses hadn't fallen off, before a sharp glint hits his eyes. His PDA's on the floor. Snatching it up, he finds he has an IM from Danny.

>Dude! Where are you, and Dora? (38 minutes ago)

Thank god for small miracles, seriously.

>>She dropped me man! I don't know why exactly but she dropped me and flew off and then I fell through a portal; I don't know where I am! (right now)

At least he's still in the right time. So it'd only be a matter of getting back to Amity Park for school tomorrow. Twisting in the seat, Tucker peers out the rear windshield. He's in a... scrapyard, probably. Empty shells of cars litter the area from what he can see. But this car is in good shape. Which begs the question—

"Hey!" yells a voice, "What the hell are you doing in my car?"

Tucker jumps.

Shit.
(not) alone

It starts with flickers out of the corner of his eyes. A dark shape disappearing from sight. It can't be an angel, he knows this, and it only makes his skin crawl even worse. Metatron knows better than to try and actively seek whatever it is out, so he doesn't, and pretends he doesn't see as it inches closer and closer still. This is Heaven, so whatever it is can't be all that bad even if he is supposed to be alone alone alone alone.

Then things start to disappear. His coffee mug. His book. His pens. His paper. He doesn't get them back, wherever they're spirited away to, and irritation starts to swell in his chest. More of his books start to disappear, and anger starts to seep in.

"What ever you are, stop taking my things," he yells at the air," and give back the things you've already taken too!"

There is no reply. Metatron almost expected there to be one, but his hopes are dashed. Only, the next time he plucks up a book and heads to the room he's deemed to be his study he finds that his plush lazy-boy chair is gone. He seethes for a good hour, cursing the entity.

The next three books on his to-read list he finds waterlogged in a sink full of water.

Metatron wants to rage, trash a room, but he doesn't. The angel dries out his books in miffed silence, and says nothing more. He catches a pair of green eyes out of the corner of his eyes set into a young face.

It's amused, he is not.
winner winner chicken dinner

Chapter Notes

implied d/s.

1. "I think... I think we're lost."

Sam radiates smugness, and Tucker scowls at her. Sure. Okay. Fine. Maybe they should have gotten directions or a map, it's not his fault his PDA lost its signal halfway out. If anything she should blame the area for being out in the middle of freaking nowhere. The outdoors? Crummy. Danny? A traitor.

Said best friend shoots him an innocent look. Right. He hadn't been all for the map, or not getting a map. He'd just let them two battle it out. It's totally not unfortunate that Tucker won because it's totally not his fault that they're now lost in the woods with the sun disappearing in the distance.

"Well, Danny can just fly us back to civilization, right?"

Danny rubs his neck, glancing at Sam, and Tucker can already tell he'd made a promise.

Tucker palms his face, groaning. "Please tell me you didn't agree to no powers on this trip."

"I didn't agree to no powers on this trip," he returns cheekily.

Sam snorts, rolling her shoulders. "We'll be fine, c'mon, are you afraid of being eaten or something, Tucker?"

He sputters in indignation. Of course he's not. He's faced worse during his high schools years than what could be found in the forest. But. Y'know. Better safe than sorry, and all that jazz.

"Alright, Tucker... you go get firewood."

"Make Danny do it."

"Danny go get firewood."

"Make Tucker do it."

"I am so not getting into this with you two."

The techno-geek ends up stumbling out into the darkness anyway, swinging the light of his flashlight. Tucker knows Danny would have been better for the job, having better eyesight and all, but he's pretty sure all they wanted was a bit of time to make out without him around. Which, hey, he can totally understand when he's not being sent out into the dark to collect twigs.
Tucker crashes through the brush, falling heavily onto his front and flashlight as he tumbles into the makeshift campsite with a panicked yelp.

Danny and Sam jump apart like frightened cats, already muttering excuses, just as an unearthly howl splits the air.

They both freeze, the following silence interrupted only by quiet gasps from Tucker. And, then Danny's moving before Sam can even think, disappearing into the trees with a sharp burst of white light.

"Sam, car—!"

There's a screech of tires as the car swerves, and Tucker blacks out from the sudden and blistering pain that lights up his entire right side.


"Hey! You... all right?"

"What... ppend?"

"Tu... er.."

"It's... It's gonna eat... eat Danny, oh god," he croaks, sight fuzzy. His glasses are gone, where are his glasses, where are they, where are theywherearetheywherearethey—

"Sam... tipped-arrows... have some?"

"Anasazi... fire..."

Hiccuping gasps break through the panicked haze, and the techno-geek can feel light drops drip onto his face. A cough drags its way up his throat, and a roar fills his ears before a flash of green light his eyes.

"Holy shit!"
Once, there lived a boy. Smile akin to that of the sun on a beautiful day, eyes as blue as the sky, and hair as dark as the night but as messy as a rat's nest. He had a sister, and a mother and a father. He also had two best friends, a girl and a boy, who stuck with him through thick and thin with tireless loyalty.

Once, there lived a boy who died but still lived. Smile akin to that of glittering pearls, eyes as green as emeralds and lush rolling hills, and hair as light as freshly fallen snow. He protected a town, even when it refused him.

Only, one day two brothers came to that town and.

the two disappeared, and the town found it missing the boy who lived—who had a sister and a mother and a father and two best friends, and the boy who died but had lived to protect them.

*They were never seen again.*
through and through

0.

If anything, the ghost looked more surprised than you did.

Green plasm spurts from the wound, but the entity only stares at you with wide—horror-filled—eyes, and falls from the air with a nasty crack against the concrete. It lays almost completely still, its chest heaving with each of its breaths, and you're stunned.

What?

You stare at the gathering pool of green beneath the ghost—is it even a ghost? Its... breathing?—and then at the gun in your hands, unsure but with a tingling terror creeping up your back. It had been ready to hurt you. It would have killed you. You are to shoot first, ask questions later. First sign of danger: shoot it. You were in the right to shoot it.

Right?

But it had barely turned in your direction, niggles a little voice, when you shot it.

You weren't even supposed to be there; you just wanted to prove you were good at Hunting, get a less stern look for once, maybe even a bit of praise; prove you could be a Hunter but who the hell had you been kidding.

Shuffling closer, and holding the gun closer to your chest, you peer down at the thing.

Bile burns at the back of your throat.

Its chest is a mess; the smell of burning flesh curls up in smoky trails, and the wound continues to burn. Toxic eyes stare up at you, unfocused and lost in a haze of pain, while green plasm trickles steadily from the edges of the flesh and stains its white hair as the pool grows larger.

It... doesn't look much older than y—

"S-Sorry—"

Twin rings of black light snap into existence, and you jump back.

"—’M so... sorry..."

(The plasm fades from a shiny green to a dull brown before a vibrant red that is so so red.)
Kevin eyes the thermos, wary and distrustful. It's just a beat up canister, but it can't only just be a soup thermos; nothing in the The Bunker can only be just whatever, but he's curious nonetheless. It has to be useful or something, not dangerous, right? It wouldn't have been hidden under a fallen box of files if it was dangerous.

Maybe it's just full of rotten soup. It would fit, being forgotten under a bunch of files and out of sight for who knows how long.

Shuffling closer, he gingerly picks it up, eyes roving over the nicks and scratches lining its metal surface. When nothing happens, he gives it an experimental shake. The inside movement is sluggish, like that of being filled with liquid, and Kevin sighs.

He curls his fingers around the lid, and twists.

A pale green light explodes from within, blinding him and filling the room, washing everything out. Kevin yelps, and flings the thermos the fuck away holy shit.

"Fuck yeah!"

Blinking the spots from his eyes, Kevin nearly upends the chair behind him in his haste to scramble away; he catches himself on the side of a table instead, and hisses at the pain that blooms in his side.

"Sam? Tucker?" comes the voice again, but much smaller, unsure.

Kevin's eyes focus, and he sucks in a breath sharply.

It floats who knows how fucking far off the ground, legs nonexistent in a long silver tail, and looks around. Green eyes slip to Kevin's, and the Prophet freezes.

"Um," begins the... monster, brows furrowing together underneath snowy hair, "hi?"
The ghost hisses, drawing up in the chair. Shriveled brown strips of grass are sprouting up through the concrete beneath its feet, twining around its bare toes. The ghost's eyes are a livid, furious shade of purple, but its face is drawn and its glow is all but nonexistent.

"Where'd yer white haired friend go?" Bobby growls, holding the blood blossoms closer to it.

It snarls, baring sharp fangs and a toxic green tongue, and spits at the hunter.

Bobby barely dodges the loogy, and grimaces as it festers on the ground, burning the concrete as it bubbles. Glaring slightly at the ghost, he moves the tongs over to the acidic spit, holding the blossoms as close to it as he can, and watches as the fizzling stops and the saliva dries out into flakes.

Stupid ghost. Stupid idgits. Stupid ghost infested town. Stupid everything really right now. Bobby exhales, frustrated and just ready to gank the stupid thing, but he needs to know where the white-haired one went. Scowling at the entity, he turns back to the metal tray just behind him, and picks up a syringe as he puts the tongs and blood blossoms down.

He pulls the stopper full from a watered down glass of blood blossom paste.

The specter stills out of the corner of his eye.

"Still wanna go a few rounds?" he growls, brandishing the needle as he walks back toward the ghost and behind it. "I'll give you three guesses as to what's in this here syringe, and the first two won't even count if you get it wrong."

"Fuck y—"

The words are barely out before Bobby plunges the needle into its neck, depressing the paste, and jerking back when a fourth of it is gone.

It screams.

Bobby watches dispassionately as it withers in the chair, spasming in pain. The ghost bites back on more howls of pain as the paste filters through its body; its hair falls free from its green tie and ponytail atop its head as it jerks violently and silently in pain. He busies himself with pulling the stopper full with more of the paste, giving an idle ear too the fading growls and grunts of pain.

"Ready to talk?" he inquires over his shoulder, his annoyance at getting nowhere fast clear in his voice.

When he turns back, the ghost is invoking murder with its eyes, trembling just the slightest under the saltwater soaked ropes, and its lips are coated in free flowing plasm.

It grins a sharp mouth full of green when he swears.
0.

16/06/19

My granddad says there used to live a family on the corner two blocks down which is a giant overgrown crater now. Probably kinda crazy or had a few screws loose since they believed in the craziest of things. Ghosts. They believed in ghosts and thought of ways to fight them! Crazy stuff. But, that was such a long time ago according to him.

Apparently most people moved away after the explosion. Who could blame them, yeah? People only trickled back in about a decade ago, says my granddad. The explosion killed a family of four, and two other teenagers. He says it had a domino effect; the two kids families moved, and then a lot of people followed suit. The mayor at the time whose name I did not learn kept the town alive with his money, but there weren't many people left for that long while.

18/06/19

I don't know if I should believe him when he says ghosts are real. My mom and dad don't, but he seems so genuine and earnest about it all. He tells me stories of this one ghost who could feed off emotions and attacked the local school once posing as a counselor; another apparently was really tiny and controlled a suit of armour! He talks about so many different ones, and my fave so far is the one who was a queen of some ghost land in the the Ghost Zone (it's where ghosts live or lived) who could turn into a dragon!

23/06/19

My granddad was grumbling about a car earlier. I ask him about it right before lunch but he only says don't trust anyone who drives a '67 Impala.

Weird.

I look up the car since I don't know what it looks like, and commit it to memory. I catch a brief glance at a link about some of america's most wanted but my mom called me away and I forget about it; I don't really care about it now.

17/07/19

I,, er,, um, i can,t talk about it right now may..be later

23/07/19

I... think... I saw a ghost.

30/07/19

-green eyes

-white hair

-weird jumpsuit
I ask my granddad to see if he knows of a ghost like that, and he turns pale. He asks me what made me want to ask, and I hesitantly tell him about falling off the roof of the condemned Nasty Burger building, and how I think I saw a ghost float above me for a moment before flying off before Joey and Phoebe Baxter (who I had just met) come running from around back to see if I was okay. Which, I was. I... should have probably died from the fall but here I am.

He scolds me about doing dumb stuff, and dangerous dares, but something in his tone makes me feel like he's more sad than angry. I plead with him to not tell my mom and dad; he grumbles but agrees not too.

Later

He didn't answer my question!

31/07/19

I found some old and really obscure websites. They all scream "GHOSTS IN AMITY PARK", "AMITY PARK SUCKED INTO ANOTHER DIMENSION", "INVISIO-BILL STRIKES AGAIN" over and over in most cases. 'Inviso-Bill' shows up a lot so I check out one of the articles about how it had tried to attack the mayor, and it's the ghost I saw! I'm so excited I up and leave to go ask my granddad about it that I don't bother to see what the mayor looked like.

My granddad is dozing in his chair, and when I wake him up he flings the book in his lap across the room, clawing his hands in my direction for a brief moment before he seems to become aware that it's just me. He then mutters one of his weird little phrases "fiddle sticks" and asks what I want.

I ask him who Inviso-Bill is.
The kid is pathetic; bruised face, bruised neck and arms, basically bruised everything. The black around his left eye is turning an ugly yellow, and Dean can see he's trembling ever so slightly under his restraints. He almost feels bad about tying him up. It's... It's just he can't handle another episode like the kiddie Jefferson Starships.

Picking up a blade off the stone counter, the elder Winchester twirls it, expression cool. "Kid, I'm gonna only ask you this once more: who the hell are you and who sent you?" The words slide like sludge off his tongue, and he swallows as normally as he can.

The silence deepens as the boy's tremors increase, and Dean switches on the gas to a bunsen burner.

"Anytime now."

"(i can't... i can't... no no... no!)

The teen startles as Dean flicks a spark in the next moment, and the gas ignites. He strains in the chair, blue eyes wide and pupils dilated, but fixed on the red flame. Colour leaves his face as the hunter runs the metal over the flame, heating the blade.

"Wanna talk now before we get further along?"

He looks positively sick to his stomach, and Dean can see the barest tremble to his lips; the kid swallows hard under the hunter's narrowed eyes. Pulling the blade away from the flame, the elder Winchester walks over to the boy. Dean lets the blade hover slightly over one thin, purple-splotched arm. The entire arm is almost completely dark with bruising, and he scrutinizes several dark points.

"One more chance," he says.

"(shit shit... shit no no i'm trying... wait wait!)

Silence. Terrified blue eyes stare back at him.

The first cut is long, and blood wells quickly from the wound; the kid rears back in the chair with an equally long hiss that changes abruptly into a hacking cough as the knife catches deeper into the skin. Dean steps away, eyes hard but calculating.

He nearly jumps back a foot when a huge cloud of yellow drags itself up from the kid's throat, followed by a thick yellow glob, and the sm—

Dean tenses.

"Christo!" he snarls, gripping the blade tightly.

"(no... no!)

sulfuric acid
The kid throws his head up... and an inky black stares back at Dean.

A feral sneer curls the boy's lips for the briefest of moments, revealing sharp canines. Then, as quick as it came, it's gone; surprise ripples across the meatsuit's face before it darkens, and turns ugly in anger.

Blue surfaces from within the abyss, speckled in the black.
The kid just plops down in the seat; he doesn't ask nor does he seem to care whether Bobby found the intrusion rude or otherwise. He just starts pulling out a laptop, and possibly the power cords to it. The hunter is too stunned to voice his grievances before the kid is up and moving around to the plug just behind Bobby's chair.

"Hey, could you move over like an inch so I can plug this in?"

Irritation swells. "Now, look here you ingrat: this table is taken, so you need to move on to another table," Bobby growls, glaring.

The kid blinks confused brown eyes at him. "Uh, yeah dude I know this; I feel like this is gonna take awhile so I need to plug my laptop in."

Bobby furrows his brows. "What?"

"Dude, we're supposed to meet here? We set this up like a week ago?"

"You're Tucker?" Bobby rumbles, eyeing the kid up and down," You're like, what, in high school? How are you an expert on ghosts?"

'Tucker' scowls, adjusting the beret on his head with a free hand. "Well, excuse me for knowing more than you did at this age," he snips, glasses glinting in the fluorescent lights, before huffing, "So, you gonna scoot over some so I can hook this up or what?"

Bobby grumbles, but moves. "You better know yer stuff kid," he warns, fingers reaching for the holy water tucked in an inner pocket of his jacket.

"Oh, believe me when I say I could literally *run* circles around what you think you know about gho — ack, what'd you do that for!"
"You're totally not going to shoot me," the monster sing-songs, eyes bright with humour," with all of those priceless books on the bookshelf behind me. Wouldn't want to ruin 'em all would you?"

Bobby growls, hands tight around the rifle; the barrel is flush to the creature's head but it gives nary a care to its predicament. But. It has a point; he'd lose so much lore and ritual guidelines if he missed for some ungodly reason because the stupid fucking things says he will. The doubt is there now.

With a snarl, the seasoned hunter swings the firearm back before taking a swipe at the monsters head. What he hits can only be described as a cloud of pure electricity as details wash away; it's like he's stuck a fork straight into fifty different sockets at once. His muscles seize, and then he's on the floor.

"Gosh, manners, manners, manners, Mister Singer," says illuminated brown eyes, and sharp teeth from above. "Is that anyway to treat someone baring gifts?"

The hunter grunts, hoping his disbelief and anger are conveyed clearly.

"Duuude, suck it up, you'll be fine... eventually."
drinking anti-freeze

1.

The bag hits his jaw, twisting his head violently to the left, and he rears back, stumbling; the screeching EMF detector falls from Sam's hand, and the 'kid' bolts as his book-bag flies into a bush. The roar of the impala's engine bursts from behind him as he blinks the stars from his eyes.

"Shit! Get in!"

Still dazed from the hit, Sam stumbles once more as he makes to scoop up the EMF detector, and after a moment's hesitation, the book-bag from the bushes. Jumping into the impala, he tosses the bag in the back and slams the door shut just as his brother peels from the curb, punching the gas to catch up with the kid darting across the street to disappear around a corner.

The younger Winchester takes those few moments to register the pain radiating from his face and neck. Can't be human for sure, he thinks while rubbing his jaw with a slight wince.

The impala's tires squeal as they turn the tight street corner, and the two catch sight of the 'boy' sprinting up the sidewalk.

Blue eyes glance back at them, panicked and wide, and Sam watches as his brother leans harder on the pedal with a growl.

The car eats up the distance between them and the 'kid', and it makes the mistake of keeping straight, long legs getting it halfway across the street before the impala swings in front of it, intercepting it. Sam winces just as the 'kid' hits the driver-side door, and passes clean through it.

An intense chill grips his chest, and Sam gasps just as the impala jerks to the side; it's almost as if a blizzard erupts inside his body, and when suddenly a telephone poles looms in the front windshield, the younger Winchester snaps his head to the left.

The last thing he sees before an inky black bursts in an array of angry red sparks is Dean pale and stiff in the driver seat, blue fingers clenched around the wheel.

The crunch of metal against metal nearly makes Danny trip on the curb, startling at the abrupt noise. He glances over his shoulder, and feels the blood drain from his face. Oh no. Oh no, no, no. He'd only passed through the car; he hadn't touched them or anything so why would...?

The car is bent against a light pole, the front a crumpled mess, and smoke slips out in wisps from beneath the destroyed hood. Danny-whips back around, heart pounding, and he goes ghost without a thought. He clears the road, and floats above the car, green eyes darting about, before plunging his upper body through the scarred roof.

Both men are stock still in their seats, eyes pinched shut, and blue.

Sucking in a breath, he grabs ahold of the bigger guy in the passengers seat and pulls him through his seatbelt and the roof, and lays him out on the sidewalk. His face and fingers are blue, and when he presses cold fingers to his neck, Danny finds the man's heart rate dangerously slow.

Flying back to the car, Danny plucks the second man from the car just as there's a groan of metal,
and yelps as the light pole slips through him and the guy before striking the hood of the car with a loud *crack*.

"Oh man, what do I do," he mumbles, placing the smaller man next to the other, and wringing his hands. "Why were you guys even chasing me...?"

No one had ever had such a... violent reaction to him passing through them before. Sure, a chill or a shiver at most, but *never* to the point of turning blue with hypothermia. Fluttering over both men, he bites the lining of his cheek. It's bad if they weren't shivering right? Like, extremely b—

There's flash of orange out of the corner of his eye, and Danny snaps his head up.

"*Ghost!*"
"Hello Daniel."

The boy jumps, and whirls around. He raises his arms and fisted hands, wary, and darts his eyes about; finding nothing, they rest again on the seated figure, taking in the man's pristine suit and slicked back hair. Danny scrutinizes the man's easy posture.

"H-How do you know my name?" he demands, daring the man to lie or say anything from the truth. He isn't home, maybe not even Amity Park; he's somewhere else and alone.

The older man shifts in the weathered, leather chair, expression softening. "I know everyone... eventually," he says, voice smooth, inflection nonexistent.

His words make Danny's skin crawl, and his stomach churn. What's that supposed to mean? Know everyone eventually? That's not possible. No one can know everyone, even if given time. Narrowing his eyes, he draws his arms closer to his sides and shuffles his feet.

A chair pops in existence, and he yelps as the colour spontaneously bleeds in, stark against the encompassing white. Scrambling backwards, Danny trips over and everything twists sideways, and before he can even begin to be nauseous, he finds himself thrown haphazardly into the chair.

Snapping his head to the man, he glimpses amusement flicker across his aged face. Danny scowls, and makes to get up when the man holds a hand up.

"I have much to discuss with you Daniel, please stay seated."

Despite the niggling tingle up his spine, he stays in the chair, tense and anxious. He'll hear him out. The man brought him there, which would mean he can't leave without the man's say so. Digging his fingers into the plush chair beneath him, Danny heaves a deep breath, and nods.

However, they lapse into silence, the man seemingly fine with staring lazily at him. Danny shifts in the seat, and wrings his hands together.

"Who are y-you?" he blurs after a moment, and amusement flickers once more over the man's face.

"I am Death."

Fear slams in Danny at that, the colour draining from his face. No. Nonononono. If the guy is Death, then that means that he was... he was... Bile burns at the back of Danny's throat as the idea washes over him, and he bites his lip hard between his teeth.
The man shifts in his seat, leaning forward a bit. "You are dead," Death says as if reading his mind, and I am here to collect your soul."

Something warm leaks over his lip, and into his mouth. He isn't dead. He'd know if he was dead, right? He's not dead, he'd been with Tucker and Sam just minutes ago, home from school; his parents, they'd been excited about something, first of it's kind, history making. Trembling, Danny jerks a hand to his chest, and presses his fingers hard over his heart.

Nothing.

*Oh god, oh god, I'm dead, I'm dead oh god mom dad jazz sam tucker, oh god i'm deaddeaddead—*

"But, you do have a... choice here, like some and unlike most who find themselves before me," he continues, eyes boring in Danny's panicked blue.

"W-What?" Danny croaks, thoughts grounding to halt, fingers curling into his shirt. "I-I'm not dead dead dead—"

Death gives him a leveled look, and an arched eyebrow at his words. "Oh no, you are most certainly dead, but you have found yourself in a very... unique situation," he starts before pausing for a moment, "If you so wish it hard enough, you can return to the land of the living."

Danny shoots up from the chair. "Yes! Y-Yes, I want to go back, I-I don't want to die," he pleads, "Please let me go back."

"It wouldn't come without a price, a hefty one at that," he says.

The boy almost feels like he's missing something crucial, but he can't be dead. He just can't. It'd devastate his parents, and Jazz, and Sam and Tucker. He can't do that to them.

"I'll pay it, whatever it is, just let me go back please," he begs, hopeful and frightened. He can die someday, after he's lived a full life, and been in space; not now when he's barely just made it halfway through his first year of highschool.

"Are you sure?" Death asks.

Danny's almost unsure he can't nod his head hard enough before Death sighs and stands. The man adjusts his suit, and the boy leans back into the chair, pinching his eyes shut. It can't be all that bad. Nothing could be worse than death. Nothing. Absolutely nothing.

Right?

("*Oh God, Danny? D-Danny! Danny are you okay, d-dude?*

"Danny, oh my god we were so scared y-you were... aren't b-breathing?"")
Eyeing the newest arrivals, Ellen frowns.

She's never seen the three before. Yet, they act familiar with the Roadhouse; none of them are skittish or uncertain about getting a place in the bar, they just take one like they've been coming to the place for years.

Which, she knows, they have not.

They commandeer a table in the back, the former occupant returning to a cast aside drink, and three daring stares. Ellen almost feels bad for Garth as the man shuffles in front of them for a moment before gathering up his drink and moving to an empty table up front and near the doors, barely giving the tables with seats a glance; the place is packed, and most find the man hard to tolerate, so the other tables close ranks as he walks by.

Honestly, that's where the three should have sat; the least advantageous seats for those just eking out a spot in the Roadhouse Hunter hierarchy, "newbies" as the veteran hunters like to call them. She really doesn't care about the pseudo-politics as long as Jo is left alone and no fights are fought on her property.

She catches her daughter's eye just as she begins to make her way to the three, shaking her head. Jo rolls her eyes, but changes directions to another table to the far left. Rubbing the glass in her hands dry, she sets it down before making her own way to the table of three.

They were customers, after all.

Their conversation stops as she arrives, cutting off mid-sentence. "So, what can I get you three?" she starts, scrutinizing their faces. All three look something awful, and painfully young now that she's up and close to them."You all are of age, right?"

Ellen receives three Wisconsin IDs of smiling faces without a single word, stark contrast to the faces she sees now. Twenty-two, twenty-two, twenty-two; from a placed called Amity Park, Wisconsin. Something about that name itches at the back of her mind, familiar but not in a good way.

Daniel, pale and black hair, gets her moving along with a request for her cheapest beer, and Tucker, glasses and shaved head, asks after her daughter with a grin that doesn't reach his eyes.

She can tell he doesn't really mean it, but Ellen glares at him anyway as he flinches from a swift kick hidden under the table from Samantha, if her reprimanding glare is anything to go by.

"Stay away from my daughter," she tosses over shoulder.

("We are unsure at this time what exactly has happened to this sleepy town of Wisconsin," starts the reporter, the camera panning beyond her and taking the view of a large crater spanning miles from the helicopter, "But as of now it is being ruled an act of extreme domestic terrorism and no survivors have yet to be found.")
the deep freeze

You huddle down into your clothes, the frigid air heavy and silent as you push the tape into the player. It's old and battered, but still very much functional despite how long ago it was made. The TV screen crackles to life, lines of grey and other colours running across the screen before rippling to a coal black.

You've no idea what you're doing. This is stupid. You've got eight miles to cover and you're dallying in an abandoned house.

It starts to gasps and the sound of broken foliage. It bounces up and down, and you cross your arms as you peer closer. The foliage is green. Picture books at bedtime come to mind, your mother rocking you to sleep and burning scarce oil to give you that comfort.

Minutes pass of constant running, and stumbling, the recording showing only the ground before everything slows and moves onto a house porch and through a door left ajar. "It's right behind me, we've gotta go," starts a voice, and the perspective is lifted.

A behemoth of a man graces the screen for all of a moment before nodding and disappearing into another room. The view flips after a couple of steps, and you're greeted with a dark face and fogged up glasses that clear. Light doe eyes flicker to the sides before staring right back at you.

"I... I just want to say it's not his fault okay? Not entirely. Really not at all, alright? It was an accident, please don't blame him. Danny never wanted to hurt anyone, never meant to hurt anyone," he says, almost too soft for you to hear as you lean closer. Tears gather along the rims of his eyes. "We'll fix this, help him, set everything right."

The ice just appeared one day and never left, your mother had said, whispering to you in the dead of night as everyone else whimpered and curled tightly in their sleep. Oh my sweet baby, everything used to be so so green.

A resounding thud rattles the house, and you and the boy jumps, the camera jerking in his hands. Heart racing, invested in it now, you can’t tear your eyes away.

"S-Sam! We've got to go!"

The man, Sam, reappears, a bag slung over his shoulder, and his face is grim. You want to say tight, stretched at the corners and lacking in vibrancy. Looking away, you look down to your feet; you can almost imagine the two standing where you are.

Scuffing a foot, a thin sheet of frost slides up from the frozen floorboards. You're cradling two devices in your hands, numbly tracing the tiny inscription of PDA, Property of Tucker Foley, and the broken recorder.

You wonder who they were.

"Just remember it wasn't his fault. Amity Park, Wisconsin, Ground Zero. I don't know if he'll always be there, but it's the best anyone will have if we—"

The entire house shakes, and the sound of shattering glass fills the speakers along with a hungry, cold howl. There's a yelp and a yell, the recorder is dropped. Frost inches across the screen, washing everything blue and white.
It ends there, with the rustling of feathers and a long, high pitched shriek.
0.

The spectre rears its arm back, green light throwing shadows wickedly across its face and snow white hair as the orb fizzes and fester in its hand, highlighting the dark circles around its toxic eyes, and it just stops. Freezes up. A heartbeat passes, and the temperature drops, and a snarl blooms on the ghost's face. The energy peters out with a sharp crack.

Garth braces himself against the decrepit warehouse wall, eyes wide. The anger is genuine, the rage palpable and ruthless in the frigid air falling hard around them. This is why people shouldn't split up, shouldn't take cues from a an old cartoon show; he probably shouldn't take newbies out on a hunt either with no other veteran hunters into a town rumoured to have been infested with ghosts.

There's a whimper, and the hunter darts a look to the floor. The monster is tiny now, nothing but a tiny ball of green and leaking plasm; it is nothing like the beast that had chased him from the abandoned home. It's pitiful, and Garth just wishes he could go back in time and say no to a christmas eve hunt to himself.

"You're very lucky, human," hisses the ghost, eyes lit with rage and a spark of fear Garth didn't think possible," that it is midnight."

Garth swallows, and the ghost swoops down to the tiny dog, pulling it into its arms and cradling it to its chest.

It's christmas, he thinks dazedly as the ghost disappears through the far wall.
Sometimes, you wonder if you'd made the right decision. You'd be lying if you said you had never thought about taking your own life. It would have spared you so much, spared your mother so much grief. You'd be dead, sure, but she and Channing would still be alive. Living life, without the fucking knowledge of what is out there.

The nosebleeds, the headaches, the stupid fucking hotdogs, the torture; the lack of sleep, the nightmares, and lack of concern for you. You worked yourself to the bone, put yourself not even last; they said they cared. You're family, they said. A hysterical bubble works its way up from you don't know where, and you laugh, something pushing against the black, and yeah maybe they were telling the truth. Family gets family killed, and you'd know all about that wouldn't you.

Were you a heirloom? A familial tool to be passed around in the family as long as you were useful? Valuable? Cherished for your use?

Solid green sclera and iris blink back at you, wicked white grinning at you, blue and green the sky.

Your anger, your rage, burns ice cold.
The kid literally comes from nowhere, all but belly-flopping onto the worn road, and directly in front of the impala.

Dean slams the breaks, swearing, and jerks back in his seat as Sam crashes forward against the dashboard with a yelp. The tires swerve just around the kid as the car comes to halt, black lines of burnt rubber trailing behind. Heart pounding, the elder hunter sits frozen in his seat, pressing hard against the leather, with his hands locked around the steering wheel.

"The fuck."

And, then he's out of the car, leaving Sam tangled up in the passenger's seat, and darting around the impala and looking over the tires. He's on the last one when his brother manages to tumble out of the car and onto the road with a groan, and he remembers. Right. The kid. Whipping around, Dean spots the slumped body a few feet back and unmoving.

Palming the knife from the inner lining of his jacket, he slowly moves toward the body.

Road rash runs up the entire side of the one listless arm, the kid's head is tucked toward a shoulder and hidden under black hair.

"Hey," he starts, nudging the kid with his shoe," hey, kid, er, hello?"

There's a groan.

Dean looks around. They are literally in the middle of nowhere. Eyes darting to the tree lines on both sides of the road, he glances over the unbroken brush and undergrowth. He didn't come from there. And, his Baby has been the only car for the past three hours.

Where the fuck did he come from.

"Dean?"

Peeking momentarily over his shoulder, said Winchester spots his brother standing next to the impala; he looks nauseas and shaken, but otherwise unhurt, save for the red splotch covering the entire left side of his face. Dean stifles a snort, and turns his attention back to the kid.

Well. It's not like they can just leave him in the middle of the road. Toeing the kid over, he glances over lanky limbs and a thin body, and catches a glimpse of mottled yellow when the dirty shirt draws up at his waist. Dean's face darkens, and he glances around once more before putting the knife back into his jacket.

"Sammy push the seats down and help me get him in the back," he calls over his shoulder, and crouches to try and scoop the teenager up.

Dean nurses a beer from his place at the main table, eyes glancing to the kid on the small couch Kevin had dragged between two bookshelves. He's fretful, and restless, but the Winchester doesn't know if the sleep is good or bad for him. What if he needs the rest? There's no telling what has
happened to him, and—

He nearly drops the bottle to the floor when the kid cries out, and arches up off the couch, arm flying forward in a swipe that sends him tumbling to the floor. Dean jumps from his chair and rounds the table. He just reaches the kid, kneeling beside him, when a sudden spark blinds him, burning spots in his eyes. He hesitates, vision clearing, and misses the fist that catches him in the chest.

Something connects with his head, and an inky black leeches out sight.

"... ean... Dea...

en... Dean... Dean!"

Something covers his face, and cuts out the air, and Dean bolts upright with a gasp. Kevin's stressed face is the first thing he notices, and then the empty glass in his hand and the clothes sticking to his chest.

"What the hell, Kevin?" he growls, immediately pulling at his shirt to loosen it from his skin.

The prophet's eyes dart to somewhere behind Dean, and he holds the glass to his chest. "The uh, kid is having a sandwich but he's sitting under the table and all the books are thrown on the floor. I dragged you back here. It calmed him a bit."

Right. The kid. Dean winces as the pain rears its head as the thought, and rubs at the sore area. He's so thin but damn if he can't throw a punch.

Clearing his throat, Kevin looks at him and then back to where the kid must be. Shaking his head, Dean slowly gets to his feet, fingers going to the back of his head. It's tender, but probably not a concussion. He hopes it's not at least. Taking a moment to let a wave of nausea wash over him, he shakes out his arms before slowly walking back to the main area and out from the back hallway.

He's still under the table, but the sandwich is gone and he has his knees drawn to his chest. Stopping at the furthest point down the table from him, Dean crouches before sitting completely.

"Uh, hey," he tries, "you okay, kid?"

The boy startles, blue eyes snapping to him before moving to scramble backwards. "I'm n-not scared of you," he says, voice wavering.

Dean blinks. "Um, that's great? I didn't mean to scare you or anything, you were just having the mother of all nightmares I guess and I was gonna wake you up but man, do you got one hell of a left hook," he returns, touching lightly to the space just at the end and center of his ribs.

Not to mention it was a great spot to hit, when trying to escape someone.

The teen doesn't respond for a moment, and Dean scrambles for a follow up. "You knocked the breath outta me kid, gotta give you props for someone as thin and stick looking as you to do that."

It's not the best thing, but the fear lessens a bit, and the kid shifts into a more comfortable position looking decidedly more docile.

Footsteps shuffle by, and Dean watches as Kevin just sticks his hand under the edge of the table and the kid moves to hand over the empty plate. Another plate is placed into the boy's pale hand with
another sandwich atop it. Well. At least he's somewhat comfortable with Kevin. And fed.

"Thank you," the boy whispers, eyes darting to Dean.

"Um, yeah, no problem, I'll just be in the other room," Kevin replies, and shuffles out.

Silence reigns as he starts to eat the food, all but scarfing it down as if it might disappear on him.

Dean frowns. "So... you got a name? I'm just calling you 'the kid' and 'the boy' and such in my head but a name would work better y'know? I'm Dean, and that was Kevin if he didn't say so."

The kid mumbles something, and Dean leans forward. "What was that? Sorry, I'm old, hearing's doubtlessly going out on me."

It takes a moment, but he gets it.

"D-Danny... My name's D-Danny."
"He is so!"

"Yeah right."

"He is real!"

"Sammy, I hate to break it to ya but he ain't real."

"No! He is real! He's just scared of what you, Dad, and Bobby would do to him if he showed himself!"

Bobby sighs into his beer, and flips the book in his lap closed. It's like they can't go an hour without getting into some kind of fight these last few days, and it is fraying his last nerves to the very end. With a grunt, he stands and stretches. Something pops in his back, and he exhales loudly before setting the beer and book aside, and moving out from the kitchen. Time to see what's the issue this time.

"Well, why don't he just prove it to me then, huh? I won't tell anyone if he... throws that book against the wall by the door, and I'll believe you."

"You promise? You gotta swear on it."

"Yeah yeah, whatever, I swear on it."

Bobby frowns. He's never had kids of his own, so he's still a little out there with what kids need and do, but he's got the gist of most things. Sure, hiding Sam's ruined football and not telling him isn't A+ guardian material, but he likes to think he's doing alright. Most of the time anyway. He's just in the doorway, slightly bewildered, and with a "What the hell're you two goin' on about?" half pass his lips when something dark flies past him out of the corner of his eyes.

There's a crack, and Bobby leaps back into the other side of the doorframe, startled. A book thumps pitifully onto the wood floor, spine and pages bent, stitching split open. Curses, Hexes, and Spells stares back up at him in bold font.

Dean and Sam are wide-eyed, and standing side by side on the other side of the room.

"Which one of you brats threw that?" He growls, eyes narrowed as he turns.

Dean jumps as if burned, and whirls on his brother. "Sammy's imaginary friend did it!" he yelps, and Bobby turns his eyes to Sam. So far, Sam's been more stubborn than Dean, has less stock in the things that go bump in the night. An imaginary friend? He'd have to see about that.

Betrayed, he gaps at his brother. "You said you wouldn't say anything!" he shrieks, and then leaps on his brother. "You swore on it!"

With a rumbled groan, Bobby crosses the room in three strides, and pulls the two apart. He holds them apart by the collars of their shirts, and far enough their tiny arms can't reach each other or kick him in the legs. "Whoa! Hey, stop it you idjits or I will—!"

"Danny, no!"
Green washes over everything, and pulls into two. Suddenly, Bobby's looking out and powerless. The boys have tunneled down to pinpricks, yet are still as clear as the day is long. He twists, tries to reach forward, move forward, and finds the space occupied. He's sharing space with something iridescent and blinding, and holy shit what. the. fuck.

And, then there's his voice. Or not, someone else's; it's young, and shaky, moving his vocal cords and swallowing hard.

"S-Sorry."

"Imaginary friends should not be able to do that," gasps Dean, eyes wide, something toxic and bright shining back against his own pale green as the gleam of light.

Everything shrinks into black.
"What the hell?"

Its thin, gangly limbed, and young. A teenager. High noon blue narrows upon contact. Its not dressed to impress, so informal it hurts compared to Crowley's suits. Shaggy, unkempt hair falls over its head like a rat's nest. Dean thinks its perhaps the most bedraggled demon he has ever seen, and he's seen a lot of roughed up demons in his line of work. Sure, he had been the cause but still. What high ranking demon doesn't dress its meat suit to the nines?

This one apparently.

It wrinkles its nose, inhaling deeply, and takes one step forward. It ripples with a full-body shiver, and pauses. It glances lazily to the floor, and looks back up at him, and Castiel lining the sides each in turn. It lingers on Castiel with a thoughtful gleam in its eyes before settling back on Dean. The devil's trap is stark against the concrete, and it merely frowns at them.

"What the hell, yourself," it drawls, breaking the silence.

Dean really wants to break its face in. "You've got information, so we've been told. We want it. Among other things."

It shrugs its shoulders, pushing its hands into its pockets like its got naught a worry in the world.

Well. They'll just have to change that won't they.

With a jerked nod to Castiel, Dean smirks. Its eyes narrow to slits of glittering blue, following the motion toward the angel just as he pulls a long chain. There's a crank, and a soft hiss of metal against metal.

The demon jerks its head back.

"Heard human blood works wonders on the skin."

The blood rushes down with a wet slop. It coats the demon from head to toe, running down its head and onto the floor, and it howls in rage as its skin slides off like dirt. Distorted reality washes away with slabs of illusioned clothes, and magicked skin. Black hair bleeds white, skin revealed as a dark grey-brown shade; two dark horns wash into view above suddenly sharp-pointed ears. Black and white clothes appear from under the blood, a satanic cross appearing from beneath the flow as it ebbs.

The sigils on the floor glow, and the fallen blood recedes into it; the lines of dried paint twist and contort before resting in new forms, the demon and area clean from blood and ruined magick.

"Feel like talking now, Cambion?" Dean eggs on. "Or should I call you Daniel?"

It laughs.

Falling back onto the floor, it bares rows of sharp teeth and a split tongue. A spear ended tail arches
into view, sweeping sideways and near its shoulder. It laughs, the sound throaty and echoing. White gloves curl sharp fingers into dark clothed knees, and noxious green eyes widen as they land back on Dean.

"Ohh. Ohh," Daniel sneers, lips curled, and eyes curving to bright slits. "Do I ever want to know who told you that beauty secret. I must thank them personally."

Castiel shifts minutely out the corner of the elder Winchester's eye, strangely quiet. The angel's face is hard, like it's cut from stone and just as blank. Dean grimaces inwardly at what he might see his human eyes can't.

Taking a pause, Dean makes a show of thinking it about it, rubbing lightly at his chin as if in thought. "Mmm, nah. I think I'll keep that one to myself. Maybe if you're a good boy, I'll throw you a bone, how does that sound?" he mocks, eyes hard.

A flicker of simmering rage surfaces in the radioactive. It disappears as quick as it came, but Dean notes it. "Oh, okay," it relents, face titling into one hand, the other waving forward dismissively as it leans back. "You've caught me. Now what, hm? A deal? Is that what you want? I can most certainly make a deal."

"Something like that," Dean snaps back. "I want Kevin's soul. You're gonna go get it from whatever bastard's dragged him down and maybe, just maybe, we won't gank your ass." A spirit blessed stake to the chest sounds like a nice reward.

It looks positively fucking delighted at the demand. "Oh, you want little prophet boy, do you? But he's been having so much fun with us downstairs," the Cambion cooes, grinning from ear to ear. "It'd be a shame if he had to ditch early, wouldn't you say?"

Dean takes a step back as if hit. "You motherfucker," he snarls.

"Didn't you know," it chirps, eyes wide with murderous glee, "I collect all the prophet souls. Or did... Crowley not mention that?"

He tries, he really does, but Dean's so thrown he can't stop the surprise that crosses his face.

"Oh Crowley, Crowley, Crowley," Daniel sighs, disappointment fading into a slow grin. "Demons, can't trust them, am I right?"

There's a beat, time slowing to a crawl, and the Cambion's tail whips sideways; it carves a line into the concrete, digging up the paint and solid ground, and Dean feels his heart stutter.

And, then a hand grips his arm hard, and they're gone, the frantic flap of feathers roaring in his ears.

Chapter End Notes

This was based off a picture I saw on tumblr of an idea of Danny being a cambion but I took it further and made him like THE Cambion of sorts and changed the upside down cross to a satanic cross
It starts like this.

Thursday afternoon. Bright and sunny, cloudless and an all-around good day to do whatever the hell anyone wants to do. And, Danny doesn't want for much. Maybe a day without a ghost fight or some otherworldly event pulling him away from the livelier part of his life. He's got homework to do, and dammit if he won't get it done this time. One paper, he can do that. If it takes him the whole fuckig afternoon, he's gonna get it done. Junior year. Danny's got to make up for freshman and sophomore with a great junior year.

The clock on his desk reads 4:48pm, to 8:23pm, and then 1:13am in the next moment.

He jerks up with a groan. Suddenly blinded by white and fuzzy blue, he pulls at the paper sticking to his face and growls as some of the lines stay behind and rip from the sheet. Last time he ever writes a rough draft on paper. Danny grumbles, eyes finding a crumpled blanket on the floor, and rolling his eyes exasperatedly. Because, yes, he needs sleep but he kinda needs this year to be nothing short of perfect. He is so going to be an astronaut.

His stomach decides to make itself known in the next moment, and Danny gets up from the chair, stretching his arms high above his head. Scratching the pieces of paper that stuck to his face off, he stifles a yawn and steps out of his room, and makes his way downstairs.

The house is almost completely pitch black. He manages not to walk into the couch or a kitchen chair, and only walks slightly into the refrigerator before fumbling blindly for the fridge's handle.

Danny's just opening the fridge when he's grabbed from behind, and a cloth finds its way over his face. It's reflex, instinct, that drives him to stop breathing and jab his elbow into the person's sternum when he's jerked off his feet. Their hold loosens, he slips through their arms in a spark of intangibility, sliding down to the floor. He darts up and forward, and whips around in the badly lit kitchen. Home invasion. Who the hell does this? Human crime is almost nonexistent in amity Park, and these bozos think it's bright to break into some ghost hunters' home? Like, wow, and his ideas are generally considered boneheaded.

Swallowing, adrenaline pulsing through his veins, Danny takes in the recovering hulking form, and dives under the table before the lunging shape in the corner of his eye can grab him. He hits the floor hard, scrambling between the chairs and purposely kicking them over in his wake with a pained grimace. If anything the noise should wake Mom up. Danny's halfway from under the table when a hand wraps around his reaching arm and yanks him up. Light blue eye shine in the refrigerator light, and Danny freezes in the hold, a yell stuck halfway up his throat.

"I have caught him."

Oh, shit. Oh, shit. He can't move. Why can't he move. This is a nightmare. He's dreaming; he's still slumped over his english paper, a blanket draped over his shoulders. Danny mentally screams as his body in its entirety decides to just. Not. Move. What if they steal everything. What if they're murders. What if they work for the Guys in White. This so cannot be happening, have they found him out? Come to cart him away for some study deep in the bowels of some secret facility?

"Er, yeah good job, Cas. You just hold him while we do our thing." And, two sets of footsteps fade
out of the room.

Cas. *Cas.* Not Agent. Not Agent O or Agent K, or Agent MKYVF.

What are the other two doing?

The man holding him up just narrows his eyes at Danny, holding his stunned stare, and tilting his head. Frosty blue holds sky blue, and then something shifts slightly out of the corner of Danny's eye, behind the man's back and—the spell is broken.

Huge dark shadows—freaking *wings*—flare, and Danny kicks his legs forward. He nearly cries out when the rebound ripples back up his legs in a wash of sour pain. A brick wall. He just kicked a fucking *brick wall*. The man merely grunts, eyes closing briefly from the kick, and Danny thinks *what the hell he's got wings."

"*Goin' ghost!"*
It starts as a whisper down the grapevine. Hearsay. Gossip. Drama. Nothing but some demon's idea at a joke to rattle the entirety of Hell for shits and giggles, send the hive buzzing. No one points any fingers, owns up or otherwise. So. It lingers. Surviving among the threads of what the next big deal breaker for humans is, what do they want most nowadays. Wealth. Love. Someone else dead. The list goes on. Self gain is most popular. Saving a loved one is a tie for third with getting back at some past wrong. The list goes on, and on.

However, a debate about human evolution springs up.

Humans evolve. They adapt to their surroundings; they work to correct their own failings, be it age or illness or anything thing else that threatens their lives in some form or fashion. Humans are surprisingly durable, some relent. A meatsuit can take a long time to die when housing a demon, the human subconscious fading slowly but surely beneath the roiling black that is the demon's presence. The body weakens terribly slow left unnourished. It's fine as long as the demon is still there after the human's soul departs, but otherwise. Meatsuit. Apt name.

*Can humans evolve,* whispers one beast of eyes and frothing blood, *to the point that we won't be able to posses them?*

There are hisses and snarls, but also murmurs of doubt and apprehension. It wouldn't make sense, some howl in indignation. Genetics are hereditary. Demon possessed humans copulating with humans result in cambions. There is only one cambion, much too young by human societal standards for breeding. It is impossible. Absurd.

And, Crowley agrees when the rounds make their way up to him.

Life moves on, and the gossipers find new topics in the Winchesters and the demon helping them. But.

Still it lingers.

A demon steps forward.

It's a raving mess of oil and slime, vaguely still humanoid in shape, and young by demon standards. Crowley towers over it in comparison, a tall spear of black and red eyes. He's all for appearances, and simple does nicely when you're powerful enough to mind your own form, but intimidation does wonders for keeping the young in line with the company rules.

*I made a deal with a woman,* it gurgles nervously, single eye lowered to the floor, *and I followed the rules of the agreement. She'd give up her body and I'd take away her child's cancer and give it to the doctor who misdiagnosed them. So. I did that.*

It shuffles, leaving splotches of black on the ground. *I barely got ten seconds in her body before I just had to get out. It burned. It hurt a lot and I don't know, I couldn't possess her body again. I tried, sir. T-There are others who've had the same thing happen to them,* it pauses, and then whimpers, single eye wide, *Boss? What's happening?*
Amity Park, Wisconsin. Curious and curiouser. There are others, who claim the same, and now Crowley's not sure what to do about it. It seems isolated to the single town, and maybe another town not far from it. Something special about the two. Well, it's not like he's never lacked the ability to dig up dirt.

*Humans,* Crowley grumbles internally, *infernal creatures.*
The creature strikes quickly, and suddenly, prey turning apex predator.

It decimates the entire ring of monsters, running through them all in a shower of gore and pointed hands, bared fangs and flashes of a vibrant pink. Wild black hair flies as it moves, sliding between hatchets and axes, digging roves into dead flesh and severing necks with pink fingers. The smell of burnt flesh fills the air as the numbers dwindle, severed limbs and displaced heads strewn around the clearing.

When the last falls, a look of fury etched onto the vampire's face as its head separates from its neck, it barely seems winded. Blue skin glistens with a thin sheen of sweat, and red eyes drift around, lidded and lax as its fingers loosen and fold.

Garnet red spots Benny, finding him past unruly undergrowth and twisted tree limbs.

The vampire freezes, hands tight around his own weapon because, well shit he's dead. The eyes linger on him, thoughtful, then slide down. Thin lips curl up in clear distaste, eyeing its bloodied arms and hands, sharpening angular cheekbones.

"You can come out, I won't kill you," It drawls, tilting its head as it glances about the torn bodies. Pink fire bursts into being up from its fingers to it shoulders on each arm, the blood disappearing into thin wisps of smoke. Raising its arms and twisting them around, it inspects bright blue skin as it slowly darkens before darting its eyes back to Benny. Like hell he's gonna 'come out.'

Its lips twitch in some aborted manner, the thoughtful gleam coming back to its eyes before it begins to turn away. Benny raises his weapon as it moves, a hand going to a pocket and pulling out a thick string as it lazily picks its way through the carnage littering the forest floor. The vampire feels almost led on at the action, so strung on adrenaline.

It disappears into the shadows of the trees and from sight; hands running through its loose hair and drawing it up into a ponytail is the last Benny catches of it before he's alone.

_Bastard_, he thinks.

They meet again along a river.

The monster is sitting on the edge of the bank, knees drawn to its chest and arms pillowed a top to rest its head. It looks smaller like that. Its crimson eyes are dim and far away, and only sharpen in awareness when Benny settles down himself on the opposite bank. The red catches his brown, narrowed to slits of light. Its eyes have no pupils or sclera, and Benny bares his pinprick teeth in a challenge.

It snorts at the display, curling its lip to flash its sharp canines. "We meet again," it says, face lit with vague amusement.

"So it seems," Benny returns, the almost stagnant air bringing the raft of dead across the water. It's a nasty mess of sterile metal, and old stone, but also something wet and warm underneath it. He'd almost say alive, human, if he didn't know the creature across from he couldn't be either.
The soft hum travels easily in the quiet. "Suppose you wouldn't care for the Green Bay Packers would you?"

A strange question, sure. But, Benny can only shake his head. "At most I could get behind the New Orleans Zephyrs," he admits. Worshipping a Maker doesn't leave much time for leisure.

"Pity," it murmurs, uncurling and standing, before quietly echoing Benny. "New Orleans Zephyrs? Maybe I'll look into it once I'm topside."

Benny doesn't think he is meant to hear the last bit, but he does and doesn't comment. The vampire doesn't so much as move as the other leaves, climbing slowly back up the river's sloping back and vanishing into the thick tree line without a single glance back.

He doesn't see the monster again.
Honestly, Dani knows that even if the guy sees her, no one will believe him.

The guy looks so pitiful, his clothes all dirty and junk, like who would not think he’s a junkie or something; some corporate monkey who had a bit of a break in standards or something, who knows, right? She floats near her washer, invisible, and flips to the next page of her comic before closing it around her fingers. He glances around, eyes sliding right over her, and chooses a washer down from hers. She only makes no noise because the guy looks like one good scare will send him into cardiac arrest.

She twists her face up at the trail of black the guy leaves behind and the mottled grey skin peeking out from beneath feathers of obsidian on painfully bent wings. He’s nothing new really to all the other creatures she’s meet over the United States, but definitely one of the more human ones living something of a good human life. But. Perhaps not so good anymore, she muses somberly as he starts to strip off his clothes, placing them almost gingerly into the washing machine. The guy looks close to complete exhaustion, filthy with sweat and who knows what else.

It’s when he’s counting the change in his hand that his stomach decides to gurgle in noisy hunger. He looks nearly to tears at the choice suddenly before him, eyes suddenly shiny in the light. Maybe her earlier thoughts were wrong. Just so very wrong. A disservice, somehow. But she does nothing as he chooses food, biting her lip at the stricken look taking over his face as he merely closes the washing machine, and shuffles slowly over to the vending machine in his boxers.

The first coin slides into the machine and.

Dani’s plunging her free hand into the coin slot of the dryer next to her’s before she even really thinks about it, hands closing around a fistful of assorted coins and pulling them out without a single, full thought before she’s floating over toward his washer. It’s just... that it feels like the guy could use being dealt a good hand today. Maybe more but she can’t do much more than this, even if it is cheating the store. She counts out the coins, slipping them into the slot and leaving the rest on top, and twists the knobs before pushing them in with a loud *crank*.

The washing machine starts up, and the man jumps, whirling around, crooked wings flaring slightly. He sees nothing, Dani knows this. But. When his startled blue eyes are just drifting over her, Dani isn’t sure she imagines the brief pause when their eyes meet.

Good luck, she thinks.
It starts with a migraine, and a long suffering sigh halfway up his throat.

_The kid's got blue eyes and a faint speckling of freckles, a rat's nest of black hair and a sheepish smile. It's fake though. He shuffles downstairs, hands clutching tightly to the straps of his bookbag, and bypasses the breakfast entirely, leaving his mother, father, and sister with a slight wave and muted words over his shoulder. He's nervous, but not so much to reveal what's happening. The boy's left hand shifts closer to his pocket, fingers disappearing briefly into the denim._

_He shifts nervously in his seat, a test laid out before him. The pencil is held harshly in his right hand, and his blue blue eyes dart around, tracking an older man who makes rounds around the room. His left hand aborts a motion toward his pocket as the teacher moves closer and then away again. The kid pulls a folded paper from his pocket, the others too busy with their own tests. He quickly smooths it out and slips it under his test, the writing peeking out just beneath._

_The boy is cheating._

_The explosion collapses the building into a towering spear of flames and smoke, the ground shaking beneath the horror struck teen._

_His mother, his father, his sister, his two best friends, his teacher._

_the_  

_wORLd_  

_is_  

_buRNIng._

Chuck sits up with a gasp, bile itching at the back of his throat, and scrambles from his couch. He trips over a stack of books, sending them flying and himself sprawling over the floor. Oh. Oh god. Oh god, oh god. His lunch from earlier paints the carpet floor, the chunky bits of chicken and cheese and bacon beyond recognition.

The prophet sags against the floor, breaths shallow and panicky. He's. He's got to do something, tell someone, he can't just keep this one to himself. Not this time, definitely not this time _fucking shit oh god_. Chuck pushes his face into the carpet, and whimpered, arms pulled under him. Stomach acid irritates his mouth and throat, but Chuck merely grits his teeth and, and _shit._

_flaming white hair, ruby red eyes, hypothermia kissed skin, glittering fangs, and murderous thoughts. damning. heinous. worse than the virus. worse than an angel brawl across the earth._
worse than anything any of them could imagine.
there'll be peace when you are done

Chapter Notes

possible d/s.

1.

Sam draws the pillow up to her face and screams, and screams, until her muffled cries are nothing but a dull throb in her ears.

She is Samantha Mason.

She is Sam.

She is Samael.

She is the first of the fallen.

She is the Morning Star.

The memories flood from their gates. Lives. So many lives flash before her eyes. So much pain, and hurt, and anger, and hatred. So much love, and happiness, and joy. Lifetimes of love, and friends, and humans, and Father I am so sorry. The rise and fall of empires, and civilizations, so many lives. Such love.

She remembers the first galaxies forming, the universe expanding after her Father decides it should be. The creation of the Earth over millions of years, the formation of water where there had been naught but molten earth and rock. She remembers when her Father had set forth the creation of humans, naked and pure and new, and no no i love you so much more do not make melovethemmorethanyou.

Remembers. Remembers being born to Pam and Jeremy Mason.

Throwing herself from the room, Sam takes flight. Her Grace and trueness burns into view as she leaves Earth and it's galaxy, slowing to a drift far from view. It's so quiet. It presses down on her, and she cries out. Calls out into space. The Host is quiet. It is gone. Or, nowhere it is meant to be. Samael throws herself forward and.

crashes down hard onto manicured sod with a cry of pain, digging a long groove into the yard. Earth's dark sky twinkles down at her, and she cries.

Danny's eyes flash a brilliant green as he shoves Tucker behind him, fists coming forward as he changes. "Who are you, and what have you done to Sam?" he demands.

"I am Sam," she tries, almost bewildered that he can tell, smile turning watery.

Sam can see the confictions, feel the warring emotions. Samael wonders why she ever thought them
to be worthless monkeys undeserving of their love, of her love. The concern and fear in their eyes breaks her heart. Nothing can ever be the same, but she'd only wanted it last just a little longer. The last human life she will live.

Samael allows the moment.

It is not necessarily a mistake.

The boy Sam loves lunges forward, his clear blue hands shoving through her chest and.

pulls what makes sam and samael apart.

Someone screams a wretched sound, and everything erupts into the night sky.

He whips in all directions, chest heaving, and scared of the encompassing white. Samael allows herself to bleed into from the collectiveness, standing some feet away. Danny stills when she appears, eyes going from hers to the many wings curving mighty and strong from her back into the distance. There is no going back, and he meant well. She wants to hate him, just a little, and maybe she does or will.

But.

"Sam?"

She shakes her head. There is work to be done. The Host rings quietly, softly. Samael can hear it now, and so many are gone. "I'll be back," she says, promises. "I'll be back and we can maybe do something. Go to a movie. The Nasty Burger. Okay?"

Tears gather in his so very blue eyes.

She arrives silently, space and time smoothing out behind her. The room is dark, curtains pulled shut. They sleep undisturbed, and she merely stands and watches. Samael does not know what her Father has in mind for the two, but she will see it play out well for them. As she should have in the beginning for them all.

Samael moves outside in the next moment, and there's a flutter of feathers. A blade glints in the parking lot lights, and she twists it from her brother's hands as he drives it forward. She takes the blade in one swift motion and pushes him away from her, stepping back and holding the blade in her palm, hilt forward.

"Hello Brother," she whispers as he whirls around, "Hello Castiel."

So very blue.

I'll be back.
"Hey... you heard about the old Fenton's place?"

"No, what about it?"

"I heard from a friend of a friend that the place is haunted, like, creaking stairs and stuff," there's a pause," some things got tossed around."

There's a collective gasp from the group, and Dean makes a face as he spears the greasy meatballs on his tray. He glances briefly out of the corner of his eyes at the group, drifting over their dramatically wide eyes and fidgeting. The boy snorts, and Sam peers ups from his book, eyeing his brother.

"What's so funny," he says quietly, eyes following Dean's to the group down the table.

"Them," he replies, rolling his eyes, making no attempt to keep himself unheard. "They think some place is haunted, some stuff flew around. Whoop-t do. Babies." If it'd actually been a ghost, that friend of a friend wouldn't have made it out alive. Probably.

Sam makes a noise in the back of his throat, and pulls his book up, hiding his face. Dean doesn't flinch as the group is jerking up from the table, and then swarming around behind him.

The cafeteria chatter tapers off.

"You got something you wanna say, newbie?" snaps a black haired boy, hands curling at his sides. His friends twitter around them, as if this is comedy gold. Dean sighs, and turns in his seat to look up at the other boy. He's seen much, much scary things the size of a small dog.

"Bunch of wimps if ya think a few things tossed around is spooky, even if the story is true," he drawls, eyes lidded. "Bet you made it up to be honest."

The boy's face goes red, and tight with anger. Dean's almost surprised when he doesn't take a swing at him. "Oh, yeah? think you're so great and all, bet you wouldn't last a night in the place, be scared off by the ghost. Cry for your mommy, wuss," he crows, like he's won, looking around at his friends with a grin.

Too bad for him. Dean's not about to lose this. "Is that a triple-dog dare?" he asks, and stands up.

The other kid falters when he finds Dean is a couple of inches taller, shuffling back a step when Dean pushes into his space.

"Yeah, unless you're too chicken," he replies, bravado thinning. "Triple-dog dare you to spend a night in the old Fenton's place, record it, and communicate with it or you're just a big baby who'll do my homework for the rest of the year."

Oh. Oh, yes Dean's got this in the bag. "Sure, but when I win, you gotta carry my stuff around for me for the rest of the year," he quips back, grinning.

A spit handshake seals the deal.
"Dean," hisses a voice in the dark," where are you going?"

Dean groans, and turns around, camera and flashlight in hand. He flashes his light in Sam's face, who just scrunches up his nose, illuminating the dark hotel room around them for a brief moment. "I'm going to the Fenton place, duh. You were there, gotta do this so I can show that wimp who's boss," he says, and turns right back around.

A hand grabs hold of his denim jacket as he's pulling the door open. "You can't go, what if it's a real ghost or something? And, you can't leave me by myself, remember? Besides, we're only gonna be here maybe one more week, what does the dare matter?"

S'why I was gonna leave while you were sleeping. "Just shut up, it's about pride here," Dean grumbles.

There's a stony silence, and Dean growls, stomping a foot. "Okay, fine, get dressed, I'm leaving in five minutes whether you're ready or not."

Dean leaves with his brother trailing behind, hoping to some cosmic entity that their dad doesn't call the room for a check-in later in the night.

It's not really hard to find a way into the strange home. The only hard part is getting through the trashed living room, squeezing through spaces beneath toppled and overturned furniture. Dean grumbles when Sam easily fits through the small spaces, carrying a pillow while he starts rolling the video on the camera.

"Think we should go down to the basement," Dean whispers, eyeing an ajar metal door and the sliver of complete darkness beyond it.

Sam makes a small noise but otherwise no comment as they press on, and down the dusty stairs. The room is pitch, and when Dean flicks on the flashlight, both he and Sam grimace as the light reflects off the shiny, metallic walls.

"What's that," murmurs Sam, pointing over to the left.

It's a gate of some kind, maybe. Closed up, and off, the cables lying cut to pieces around it. Dean shrugs, and swivels around to look over the room. Papers litter the floor, and jars filled with something dark and green sit on tables with bits of machinery and wires.

Weird.

Clearing an area of paper, Dean sets the flashlight and camera down, and reaches into the pack he'd had slung over his shoulder. He pulls out mini white candles, and matches, leaving the batteries for only if they run out of candles and need the flashlight into the night.

The candles light easily, and light the room well. Sam shuffles over and drops his pillow before pulling the sleeping bags from the pack. Deans lets him roll them out, and plucks the ouija board from the buckles along the back. He sets it up, handing Sam the camera, and shimmies into his sleeping bag like his brother.

"So, just keep the camera on the board, and write down stuff if it moves," Dean says, and Sam nods his head, one hand holding the camera and the other a pencil over paper.

Dean checks the time on his watch. "It's 12:32 am, and we're gonna talk to some ghosts," he says
aloud, and clears his throat. "Spirit, this is a safe place. We only wish to communicate with you, ask you questions and learn from you. Please come through and talk with us for a while."

Possibly minutes tick by, and Dean almost starts to feel silly, curling his finger tips into the planchette. He remains silent, the only noise their breathing.

A slight pain has inched it's way between Dean's eyes when the skin over his arms crawls, and the room chills. There's a tug from the planchette, and Dean almost wants to jerk away when it pulls his arms over the board. The wooden piece slides between two letters.

'Hi'

Holy shit.

Dean shares a quick, wide-eyed look with his brother.

"Um, hello. What's your name?"

His hands move along again, and Dean wants to swear he can feel fingers ghost over his own.

'Danny' says Sam's chicken scratch.

"My name is Dean, and this is my brother Sam," he replies in kind.

Unexpectedly, the planchette moves swiftly, and repeatedly between three letters.

'Sam, Sam, Sam, Sam'

The two share another look, but when the piece slows to a stop, Dean doesn't question the repetition.

"How old are you, er, how old were you when you died?"

It takes a moment before the planchette moves again.

'Fourteen'

The questions continue.

They learn the boy had lived in the town. His best friends had been a Sam, and a Tucker. He'd had an older sister, and had gone to the high school. Danny loves space, and had wanted to be an astronaut. Dean ask many trivial questions, favourite colour, birthday, and food, etcetera. But a number of hours have gone by, and while Danny too has been asking questions of his own, Dean still finds himself reluctant to ask the one question he'd so far skirted around.

"How'd you die?"

At first he thought that maybe Danny just won't answer. It's okay, and he's about to move on to another question when a sudden circle of crushing cold wraps itself around each of his wrists, and Dean bites back a startled shriek as the planchette is jerked back and forth from the 'No' repeatedly.

Sam gasps from beside him, and Dean struggles to stop the movement. "Okay! Okay, I'm sorry, you don't gotta answer!" he yelps, and nearly rolls into his brother when the planchette slides over the 'No' and off the board, taking him with it.

The room is heavy, and Dean scrambles to put the planchette back on the board. "Goodbye," he
barks, his stomach roiling, and drags the planchette down to end the session," Goodbye Danny."

It's almost as if a heavy weight had been lying over his back, and pressing down on his hands, pushing him down into the floor, because as soon as he says goodbye the second time, Dean finds he can breathe easier. Gasping, he turns to his brother who is almost as white as sheet and trembling, the pencil having skittered away into the edges of darkness and the camera bobbing in his hand.

The candles go out, the unease lingering.

"You two can handle yourselves until I get back," Dad says, shooting a look over to the lump that is Dean's brother, before turning the knob to the door, "I'm going to check out a lead in a town a couple of hours from here. Look after your brother Dean."

And, then he's gone. Again. Dean sighs and closes the door as the impala rumbles to life, leaves the parking lot. He pulls the shades closed, and crawls over onto the bed Sam is curled up in. The room is silent, and Dean sighs again.

He pats what he guesses is his brother's hunched shoulder. "I'm gonna go back tonight, gotta get all the stuff we left behind," he says, and Sam moves a little. "I'm going by myself this time, so just be ready to let me in."

"Okay," comes Sam's voice, muffled under the blankets.

They spend Saturday curled up on the bed.

If anything, Dean is glad he didn't leave behind the flashlight, aside from the camera. When he flashes it over the living room, he hums in his chest and stares around at the furniture shoved around the room. Dean has almost a clear path through the living room, most of the furniture now against the walls or halfway into the kitchen.

He's at the basement door when he steps on something underfoot.

It's their stuff, the pack and pillows slouching up against the walls on either side of the doorframe. Dean sets the flashlight down, and begins to pack up the stuff, deciding it's not worth it to try and get the missing ouija board or look a gift horse in the mouth.

His fingers brush over the paper Sam had written on and squints as the taken up space seems to have grown. Dean picks up the flashlight and shines it over the paper.

'Sorry. Didn't mean to scare you and your brother.

Sensitive topic. No hard feelings if you two never come back.

Sorry.'

Dean bites the inside of his cheek, and glances around, fingers slipping into his pocket, curling around the loosely capped salt shaker. "You didn't even need the ouija board did you?" he asks aloud.

There's a shuffle, and suddenly the room is lit dimly. "No, not really," admits a voice. "More for your benefit."
The spirit has unruly white hair, and bright green eyes, ringed in black. His clothes are few, some type of sash going from a shoulder around his waist, and legs nonexistent for some gray wispy tail. His blue-ish skin is adorned with dark blue freckles, and Dean touches his own face, thinking of his own freckles.

"What's up with those clothes?" he asks, hoping to keep the spirit friendly.

Danny looks down over himself. "Most in the Far Frozen wear something like this."

"Far Frozen?"

The ghost floats closer, and Dean can't help his step back. A look of hurt flashes across Danny's face, but the ghost lets it slide. "It's in the Ghost Zone," he replies, then pauses. "Do you even know about the Ghost Zone?"

Dean finds he knows very little about ghosts; that his Dad knows just as little. It's somewhat overwhelming, to be honest, but amazing. An entire dimension of ghosts. That don't hurt people, may not even be from people. He can't help all the questions he asks, curiosity taking over.

He's gathering info, duh.

"Psst, Sam, it's me."

The door cracks open, and Dean can see Sam rubbing his eyes in the light that falls across his face. "Yeah, okay, going back to sleep now," he says, and Dean watches as he walks right into Danny. Sam yelps, and flails backwards.

Dean most definitely does not laugh.

Sunday morning light is just creeping through the blinds when Danny leaves. He turns transparent and blue around the edges before flying through the ceiling and disappearing entirely, a grin on his pale blue face.

Dean flops back on the bed, and licks a bit of frost off his hand. Sam stretches the length of his body before rolling over to turn the lamp off.

Birds chirp outside.

"... We're gonna be leaving soon," the smaller boy whispers, and Dean's good mood fades.

Damn.

Dean smirks at the shorter boy as he hands over his bookbag. It's their last day at this school, last weekend in this town, but the other boy doesn't need to know that. Let him stew over the weekend, dreading the rest of the year that Dean won't be here for.

Sam shakes his head at him, and Dean slings an arm over his thin shoulders. He'd won on a technicality. The sun had already been rising when they'd ran. A night at the old Fenton's place.
"C'mon, let's hurry and see if Danny's not managed to eat all the chips yet."

There's only two bags left, but it's alright.

"It's a shame, but maybe one day you guys can come back and visit me one day," Danny says, grinning.

Dean throws himself from his bed with a shriek, the cold on his side sudden and jarring. "What the hell!" he yells, and scrambles up from the floor. Giggles erupt in earnest, and Danny appears on the other side of the bed, the blanket up to his neck and his arms moving beneath the blanket.

Dean gapes.

The ghost raises an eyebrow, a grin on his face. "Miss me?" he teases.

"I, you, what," he sputters.

"I've got connections," the ghost sing-songs, grinning from ear to ear.

Without a thought, Dean takes a flying leap onto the bed, making a grab for the ghost. "You ass. Me and Sam were sad for days!" he grouches softly, fingers curling around one chilly arm before the ghost slips away with a laugh.

He's not mad.

"Shh! We gotta go wake Sam up," the ghost whispers, eyes bright with mischief.

Dean grins. "Oh man, this is gonna be great."

He's happy.
under new management

0.

The demon's a mess.

Suit in tatters, barefoot, and emaciated.

And afraid. Oh, oh so very afraid.

"No," Crowley whispers, eyes flying wide. He scrambles back, pressing into the invisible barrier of the devil's trap, fingers clawed. "No! No! Y-You imbeciles. You fucking morons!"

The two hunters frown.

"Look, whatever issue you're having right now, we'll let you get back to it once you give us a few ans-"

Crowley hisses, decorum gone in a flurry of rage and a fear so thick his human visage thins to red around the edges. "I'm dead, I am dead. Fuck both of you!" he snarls.

And, then he's gone. The devil's trap crumbles, the spray paint on the floor curling up into strips and then fading to ash.

The silence is deafening.

"What the fuck."

A kid perches on the roof of the impala, arm outstretched and holding a phone, free hand curled into a peace sign. Ratty shirt, shoes, and jeans, space snapback twisted backwards, grinning from ear to ear for the camera as Dean flushes with anger and disbelief.

His blue eyes flicker to Dean, then back up to the phone in his hand. The camera lens shutters.

"Get the hell off my baby!" he barks, and strides the rest of the way to the car, leaving Sam behind inside with his bag of convenience store snacks. "Get off, get off! If there is one scratch on her, I'll wring your scrawny little neck!"

The kid stands, laughs, and shuffles out of the way of Dean's reaching hands, shoes scuffing the sleek black.

Dean circles around the car, and lunges. "C'mere you brat!" he growls, fingers catching the fabric of the kid's jeans.

An intense cold bites down on his hand, and the boy disappears. Dean hisses, lungs depressing at the pain, and jerks his hand to his chest, stumbling back from the car.

"Dean!"

His finger tips are numb with cold, the skin slightly blue and yellow. Frostbite. Dean swears, and whirls around in time for his brother to land in a heap next to him, twinkies and mini pies flying across the concrete.
The creature stands by a gas pump.

"The fearsome Winchester brothers," it mocks, grinning, eyes a solid, toxic green. "I'm unimpressed."

"Who the hell are you, and what do you want," Dean snarls, heart pounding, and shit, shit.

The monster snickers. "King of Hell," it chirps, eyes narrowing to slits," and all I want is you two's heads on a pike."

Cas!
The car drives into town on a tuesday. 

Danny barely notices it that first day, and thinks nothing of it, doesn’t see the driver or passenger flicker.

A couple of days pass, and he sees it again. Still, he thinks nothing of it.

But, then he sees it again. And again. And again. And again.

While on patrol. While on his way to school.

He thinks something of it, but too late.

Danny is defenseless, scared.

There is a funeral.

The car leaves.

you know, saving people, hunting things. the family business.

ghost!winchesters who never left the impala. poor danny
Valerie blinks awake in a ditch.

She finds herself lying in wet mud, the sky in dwindling sunset, and her armour gone. Valerie groans, and struggles to push herself up. She manages to roll onto her stomach, and sort of crawl her way up to the road's edge, fingers scratching into the pavement. Valerie takes a moment to rest before pushing through the aches and pains that engulf her body to check her pockets.

She's not surprised to find them empty. With a tired sigh, Valerie glances up and down the length of the road.

Each end disappears into the distance, and she bites back a frustrated scream.

*This is all the ghost boy's fault,* she thinks angrily, curling her fingers against the asphalt, *everything usually is.*

It's a struggle to get to her feet; her arms tremble from the effort, and she wobbles when he does get to her feet.

Valerie's chest heaves with each breath as she stands on the edge of the deserted road. She grits her teeth, and starts to walk. She'll be *damned* before she ever lets him win.

The sky is dark, and stars twinkle overhead before a brightness begins to grow from behind her. Valerie glances back, and jerks her arm out, thumb up as she slows to a stop. The light grows and grows, before taking a swerve toward her. An engine rumbles as a sleek black car rolls to a stop beside her.

The passenger side window rolls down, and two men peer out at her.

"You need a lift?" asks the driver, pale green eyes shining in the moonlight, and Valerie's swallows the thick knot in her throat down.

She wants to take the offer, she really does. But. Valerie's going to die one day, and it certainly isn't going to be this way.

Pushing past her various aches and pains, the soreness in her legs, and roiling grumble of her empty stomach, Valerie barely has, "No thanks, actually," past her lips when there's a flurry of movement, and a man in a tan coat is standing outside the four door car.

Not a single door moved.

The hairs on the back of her neck rise, and Valerie takes a step back, arms coming up.

"What the hell Cas?" exclaims one the men, and then there's a terrifying moment when Valerie can't breath and—and then she's pinned to the ground, the man perched over her, fingers digging into her shoulder and a blade held over her face.

She's not sure what happened next. There's a yell, bright light and a lack of oxygen, and somehow she's somewhere else entirely.
Valerie's sprawled over some bags of trash, concrete buildings on either side of her, and *what the hell*. Her stomach churns ominously, and she rolls over, falling to the concrete, bile slipping past her lips.

"Ah, ah," she gasps, scrambling up and away from the mess of trash and vomit. "Shit. Where am I?"

It takes a little while, but she leaves the dark alley.

She's got to get in touch with someone.

Valerie manages to bum a call from a woman with a cell phone. She tries her father first. But it rings, and it rings, and she doesn't leave a message. She tries Danny next, but the automated voice just tells her to leave a voicemail. Which, is fair enough with how often he loses his phone in some form or fashion, it's probably dead.

She thanks the woman, and is halfway down the block before she's being called after. Someone had called back.

Valerie thanks the woman, takes the phone with taut hands, and says, "Hello?" but it's not her father.

Murmuring *a sorry, wrong number*, she hangs up on the squeaky child, and hands the cell phone back to the woman. The lady, however, is looking her over, easier now that they're under a street lamp, and Valerie wonders briefly what a sight she must be.

"Are you okay?" the woman asks, and.

Well. She's not, is she?

The two women are nice, allowing her to use their bathroom and their daughter's room, who's off at college. Her clothes are cleaned, and in the morning she's given a good breakfast. They don't ask any questions, which is just as well since Valerie wouldn't really know how to answer any.

She escapes later in the day, noon or so, leaving a note behind.

St. Louis, Missouri. Valerie'd be an entire state away from home if Amity Park had showed up on google maps. Her eyes burns at the thought, and she scrubs at her face, wandering aimlessly.

It's when she's ended up on a park bench that she notices it. A growing buzz at the back of her mind, faint chatter in her ears. Valerie rubs each ear, face twisting up as the noise grows, settling almost like background noise over everything else.

People whispering nearby.

Through pinched eyes, she spies a few joggers, families with strollers, dogs, but no one close. No one near enough.

---is free. what do we do. the Prophet has seen nothing. where is Father. where, whe—

Something shatters, falls to pieces, and Valerie cannot think for the flow of her hand and arm that diverts the gleaming metal that appears from nothing and shoves the man away.
How did I get over here, stumbles her thoughts, Valerie standing dizzy several feet away from the man? No. That's not right. Something... Something else. Something—

"Lucifer," he says, voice like gravel, sharp blue eyes on her.

Valerie, she thinks, oblivious to the blade in her hand, and her white bright eyes.
Danny wakes to a clot of dirt to the face. Everything goes slowly, painfully so. Feeling comes back in his neck, then his chest and arms, then his legs and feet, restricted. He struggles to blink his eyes open around the dirt. Another scoop hits him the chest and presses hard against his ribs. He sits up with a gasp, sucking down a breath, and finds himself waist deep in loose earth.

"What the hell?" he croaks, and pulls free from the dirt. The world tilts dangerously as he floats up, and he cradles his head in his hands with a groan. A steady strum riddles his body. Loud. Very loud. His hands fall away, and Danny drops his head back, eyes hooded. Tired.

The sky is dark, stars bright overhead. Beautiful, absolutely stunning. He squints, eyes darting to each little speck of light, thoughts lethargic. Where—

"Holy shit."

Danny straightens his neck, startled, and blinks at the two men with shovels in their hands. They're dirt streaked, and sweaty; moonlight shines on their skin and highlights the dark trickles from their hair lines, and their panicked eyes.

"You said this would work!" shrieks the one on the right, raising the shovel defensively.

"What?" Danny mumbles, and looks down, unconcerned. Where is he, anyway. He can't... can't quite remember. Food? Maybe. Maybe, walking home—

It's a sliver of lightness in the dark, and he almost doesn't see it in the shaded gloom.

The hem of a white t-shirt.

His... heart jumps, the steady thrum now a crescendo, heavy in his ears, and the metal spade catches Danny across the left side of the face. Sends him down—down to earth, a bright red the blossoming pain.

Iridescent green leeches at the edges.
boredom

Sam’s seen and fared his own share of bullying. But. He’s never seen someone so… bored about it.

The jocks jostle the other kid between them, and Sam can’t help but see how utterly unimpressed he is. Like he’d ready for it to be over so he can move on, do monumentally better things with his time.

He waits around the corner after they shove the kid into a locker, waits out the crowd until everyone has hustled to some class. He’s new, can play off the I got lost, sorry, with a nervous smile. Sam’s going to let him out, and, maybe, he can make a friend while he’s at it.

He hasn’t a foot around the corner when the locker door shakes, clangs in its frame, and.

the boy steps through it.
Tucker's regaling Valerie, Kwan, and Jazz with a cheesy joke when he sees Sam stalk through the meandering mass of bodies, eyes suspiciously shiny, and hands balled into fists at her sides.

His eyes track her, and he trails off halfway through the punchline. She disappears into the women's bathroom, and when he turns back to the three, they're all straining to try and see what he did. There's really only one thing that could drive her to tears, and, well, Tucker'd better find him before Valerie catches wind.

"Ah, excuse me, guys," he says, and turns away. His sleeve rides up, and Tucker barely suppresses a groan.

9:17pm, blinks his wristwatch, and if he'd never known a dead man, he does now. A fully dead one once Sam, Jazz, and Valerie get ahold of him.

He makes his way toward the bathrooms, pulling his phone from his pocket.

Danny's phone goes straight to voicemail both times, and Tucker's almost to the bathroom when a hand catches his elbow.

Jazz. "Tucker, what's wrong?"

"I'm not sure," he admits, reluctant, thumbing the screen of his phone. Voicemail, voicemail, he has a voicemail from Danny. "Think Danny's late... really late. Sam's in the bathroom."

The voicemail starts to sobs, and Tucker freezes, hand catching Jazz's before she can go around him.

"Shit... shit... Tucker, hey man, look I was on my way but I found the Box Ghost and... He's... been like tortured or something dude. I don't even know... there's so much... ectoplasm... I can't just leave him here so I'm going to take him back to the Ghost Zo—"

There's a scuffle, and a mangled cry. "N-No..." wobbles a voice, the Box ghost. "Let... Let g-go..."

"Hold still... I.. gotta go, gotta find someone to help him. Tell Sam I'm sorry if I'm late, yeah?"

7:53pm.

"Tucker... you're kinda hurting my hand... was that from Danny?"

Why—Why would he not... not want to be taken to...

Tucker sucks in a breath, eyes flying wide. Oh.

(they've only just turned the corner, tires squealing, when the ground shakes, and.

the Fenton house collapses in a cloud of flying debris and billowing fire.)
morning mother

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

0.

You sit lightly on the bed, weight dipping the mattress.

In the gloom, you can see the blue of your child's eyes as they crack open, brillant slivers of color. You feather a hand across his left cheek, studying his face, his inky dark hair.

"Mom?" he whispers, heavy with sleep, and.

by all that is good in this world, you love them. It's warmth in your Grace, the sun against your human skin and fire bright. Ineffable, really. It tempers your anger, blows away the curling steam, and out the little spark of a flame that could have eaten the entire world.

You lean closer, brush back his hair, and press a kiss to his forehead. "Hi sweetie," you murmur, and pause, take that moment to simply breathe. You don't want to leave. But. You have to. "You know I love you right? Jazz and Jack too?"

Danny nods slightly, bone tired, sleep tugging him back down. "Are... you glowing?" he asks after a moment, eyes fluttering, face turning back into his pillow.

You don't answer, simply touch his shining soul with a bit of Grace. He sighs a breath of blue, falling back into sleep as his aches and pains disappear.

_I have to be strong_, you think, smiling sadly. _Just like you, Danny._

And in the morning, when the sky starts to turn from night to day, a family of four becomes three.

Chapter End Notes

same premise as chapters 48 and 52 with Lucifer, but with Maddie.
He meets it along a river.

It's a flicker of blue in the corner of his eye, shining, simmering. From one moment to the next, as Benny makes to turn his head, he's sent sprawling into the water. He bubbles in surprise as he flails, sinks, and then claws his way back to the surface, teeth bared. The vampire chokes as his eyes go up and up, following a trail of pale azure.

It towers over him, over the river itself, snarl bent maw full of teeth as long as his arm, ivory white. Fire bright eyes glare down at him, body extending from a barely visible hold in the slope's side almost at the water's edge, and Benny turns to splash his way to the other side of the river.

He's plucked from the water like an errant creature, claws as thick as his neck curling tight around his body and digging almost painfully into his belly. Benny is pulled up to the creature's face, and Benny can see his reflection in those teeth.

"What do you want?" it hisses, green fire licking the edges of its lips.

The vampire squirms, sweat beading on his forehead from the intense heat that radiates from the dragon's palm, and gasps,"Nothing! I'm just passin' through!"

There's a pause, the beast's lips relaxing as it takes a moment look him over, purple eyes narrowed. It breathes a sour breath of hot air over him, and Benny hunkers down in the hand, breathing hard, eyes casting down, and finds its neck.

It's a brief look, but enough. The scales are irregular, dark blue, criss-crossing strangely over dull, golden links that peek in a raised uniform circle around its neck with pink scars devoid of scales carved in jagged gouges around every link. But. Just about the start of its chest, a oval of shining gold and a gem pulsing green is grown in with the skin and scales.

Benny blinks, barely knows what to think, and then he's twisting through the air and landing back into the river with a splash. He spends one moment still beneath the water before resurfacing, only pulling half his face above the water, and finds that the dragon has slid back into its den. Only its glowing eyes are visible in the gloom.

It watches him clamber back onto land, completely silent. He darts a look, eyebrows furrowed, and jumps when it hisses. Benny makes to raise his blade, fingers closing around air, and falters.

Fuck, he thinks, and looks back over the river.

Benny spends a couple of hours searching the riverbed, and gets soaked in muck for all his trouble.
The daylight is nearly gone, and he is defenseless. His teeth prickle in his mouth as he turns his eyes back to the den's entrance, and finds the eyes are gone, yet there's a faint green tint, like a light from within. Benny darts his eyes around, and decides he'll take his chances.

The first slope downward is filled shallowly with water, muddy and soaks his shoes all over again, but he presses forward over the next slope upward and tumbles from the crest as the cavern widens ever more and he loses touch along the side. Benny lands in a heap at the bottom, stifling a groan, rolls onto his stomach. The light is stronger here, and as he pushes himself upright and up, eyes squinting, he sees that the end of the tunnel is a large purple door.

It's the source of the light, green and pulsing almost like a heartbeat.

*Maybe I should just go back outside and take my chances weaponless,* Benny thinks as he creeps up on the door anyway, wary. The door has no handle or door knob, not that he'd be able to reach it if it acted as a regular door itself. It's a very round oval, trees and grass and birds and other animals etched into the wood, and is sturdy under his probing fingers.

The vampire takes a moment to look around, grumbles, and raps his knuckles against the door. The knock sounds hollow, an opening on the other side, and everything falls still.

The hairs on the back of Benny's neck tingle and stand on end, and he barely scrambles back and out of range of the door before it flies open. The dragon explodes into the tunnel, mouth full of green fire as it lunges after him.

"Wait! Wait, wait!" he tries, and is snatched up yet again, brought face to face to leaking fire and bared teeth.

Something flickers over the monster's face before it loosens in surprise.

It hardens back into suspicion and anger just as quick as it left, lips drawing up from its green gums. "What are you doing down here?" it snarls, the tiny, ragged wings peeking from behind its shoulders drawing back and out of sight at Benny's wandering gaze, and squeezes him tighter for one moment.

"I lost my weapon," he gasps out, the heat from its palm familiar and just as draining.

The dragon looks completely but briefly flabbergasted at the admission, ear frills folding back. "So?" it growls, claws loosening around Benny.

"When you threw me the first time," he continues, wiggling in the loose grasp, brown eyes finding its purple.

"So?"

"You owe me," he says, and hopes it doesn't bite his head off.

It stares at him, and yes, Benny can see the amusement bubbling up at a puny vampire thinking it can tell a giant dragon something. He's perhaps beyond caring now. It didn't eat him earlier, so he's holding out on it not eating him now.

"I owe you," it echos with a small disbelieving laugh, lips drawing up into a scary smile if Benny is honest.

"Just give me the night in your den or whatever it is, and I'll be outta your hair in the morning."

It tilts its head, eyes narrowed. "What's in it for me?" it says, but they're already moving away from
the door and the swirling green it contains.

Well, shit. "Shiny things?" he says, and receives an unimpressed look. "Weapons? Other monsters for food?"

Climbing over the slope up, and nearing the entrance, Benny bites the inside of his cheek as the dragon steps through the puddle of muddy water. It's rearing up and out of the entrance, and his mind is made up when it pulls the arm he's in back.

"Wait, wait!" he hisses, drawing up in its hand, fingers scrabbling against its scales because he really doesn't want to go for another swim. Anything could be hiding in the watery depths this time of night. "What if I said I knew a way out of here?"

The dragon tenses, the muscles in its hand tightening around him. "Oh," it says, arm lowering and pulling Benny back up to its face. "Really now."

"Yes."

It eyes him, moonlight turning the purple silver. "Tell me about it."

"Give me the night."

"And if you're lying?"

"And if you throw me right back into the river after I tell you anyway?" he counters, baring his teeth.

"And if I already know about it?" it hisses, eyes purple slits.

Benny stills. "Then why are you still here?"

"Because only humans can leave," it snarls, and Benny ends up in the river anyway.

As Dean starts the spell, Benny's thoughts wander.

Thanks, he thinks, thinks of blue, and everything splashes red.
"I was never any good up there anyway," he says, and means it. *I don't have a place in that world anymore.*

And, as Benny's knocked onto his back, he thinks he'd like to go and try and find that dragon again because, hey, who knows, maybe another human will get their ass kicked down here again.

It's not too late for everyone.

Chapter End Notes

ghost dragon!sam
Tucker is three when the nightmares start.

They're bright white, and heavy, filled with screams, and screams, never ending screams. He's too young to fully grasp the turbulence of emotions that saturate them, but later, much much later, he'll remember the anger, hatred, and sorrow that press down, weight on his chest, throbbing pulse at his temple.

Befuddled, his parents take him to doctor after doctor after doctor, and the sleep studies yield nil.

He'll grow out of them, a couple say.

We're not sure what's wrong, a few others relent.

They never happen during the studies, there's not much we can do otherwise, the last one says, concern clear in her eyes. He's too young for sleep medicine, but if they persist as he grows older, it's worth a try.

He grows up—three, four, five, six—and makes friends, and the nightmares wane. Once every couple of weeks, once a month, once every few months, once a year. Maybe not even that.

Tucker is fourteen, and he has all but forgotten them.

Tucker is fourteen, and it feels like he's losing everything all over again.

again.

again.

again.

White, creeping fingers sink into his dreamlessness, and.

Shrieks, piercing and shrill, fill the dream. They bleed into familiarity, echoes of his best friend's screams as he dies, and drown him. Death rattles, and blinding light, but too small, much much too small. Held taut within an opaque glass case, struggling, fighting, raging, crying.

I love you, slips between one screech and the next. I love you, I do, please. Please forgive me—

Tucker wakes up, sits up, heart in his throat, and tears spent.

It will be the first time he uses sleep medicine in years, and he can lie and say it doesn't feel like betrayal, but it does, and Tucker doesn't know why.

He would have never known why, if his best friend had never died. Funny that.
Is Danny dead? is his last, horrible thought before sleep takes him, the sharp noise at the back of his mind fading entirely.

It starts when Danny throws up a thick, filmy cloud of blue.

Slipping out first as a thin wisp of mist from between his lips, but then his throat works, once, twice, and his cheeks bulge. He slaps a hand over his mouth, eyes throwing about, and immediately staggers for the hedges along the sidewalk, bookbag dropping from his shoulder.

Tucker and Sam share panicked looks, and quickly step after him. They're just in time for him to gag, and vomit out dripping indigo and misty sky blue.

Danny takes a few moments, choking out a few last droplets, and blinks numbly at the dissipating mass and the azure evaporating from the bush's leaves.

"That's weird," he says, and collapses.
Something starts talking a couple of weeks later.

Fragments of sentences, broken, and incomprehensible. Except, Tucker feels like it shouldn't be, like he knows what is being said, but the understanding is just out of reach.

Maybe he should be worried. Probably should. But it's such a nice change of pace to the screaming and crying and yelling, Tucker's not sure he can find it in himself to care. At least, not yet.

*Note to self: get mom to go to the Pharmacy,* he thinks, and rolls over.

Tucker's not sure why he wakes up so angry, but he is and it's red hot under his skin, blistering. The blankets are suffocating, and confining, and he tries to kick them off, teeth grinding as his feet get caught in a fold.

There's a loup rip and finally, they're on the floor in a heap. It's marginally better, but it's not enough enough *enough*. He growls, and pushes himself up from his bed, crawls out of it, puts on his glasses.

Morning light is faint, grey and light blue outside. 7:10am, says his PDA.

He groans deep in his chest, but decides on a shower.

It gets worse when he accidently twists the hot water knob completely off the wall, and breaks two hinges off the curtain pole when he pulls too hard on the curtain itself, struggling to put the knob top back on.

There's a knock on the door as he sits heavily onto the toilet's lid. "Tucker, honey, are you okay in there?"

"Peachy, mom," he snaps, and then stops.

Tucker scrubs his faces with his hands, and deflates with a sigh as a stony silence fills the air. "Sorry mama, I'm having a bad day today."

"You're forgiven," comes through the door after a pause. "If you need anything, just tell me,
"I broke a shower knob, and a couple of curtain rings," he says miserably.

He's forgiven for that too, but Tucker rides out the rest of the Saturday in his room.

Pathetic, hisses a voice, and Tucker startles, looks around.

Everyone's eyes are on Dash and his crew, barely an eye straying. They're harassing Danny, yet again, and not a teacher in sight. Tucker agrees, though. One'd think they'd have something better to do with their time besides commit crimes almost on the daily. But.

Who said that? he wonders as Danny is shoved into a locker, a prickle of shame warming his collar.

Witless, comes the voice again, but now everyone is continuing on their way, entertainment now over. Power squandered.

Tucker swallows, and walks over to the locker, the door banging in its frame.

"Of all the times to have no control," comes coughed through the slatted vents as he works to open the lock. "Thanks Tucker."

Weakness, echoes loudly in his head, rings in his ears.

The hallway is empty.
It gets better. Lessening in intensity. But.

It's a warning system, and it's always when they're together is it worse than when just a ghost appears.

Tucker knows how this needs to end.

_Stupid apes_, pierces his thoughts, and he squeezes his eyes shut at the lance of pain.

Danny turns around twice before he realizes the Fenton Ghost Finder is still only talking about him, and Sam is biting her lip, eyes narrowed in thought.

_It's now or never_, Tucker thinks, licks his lips, and.

"It's me," he blurts, and they both whirl in his direction, eyes wide.

Tucker swallows, hands finding each other in his lap. "It's me," he repeats, and breathes.

what are you? a ghost?

laughter.

...

_\textit{i am the Brightest.}\_

of what?

_\textit{of them All. i am the Morning Star.}\_
i a m  L u c i f e r .
0.

Valerie wakes with a gasp, tears springing to her eyes, and chokes back a sob. Her heart hurts, thumps painfully within her chest, and she rolls over. Screams into her pillow. Sickly green flashes behind her eyes, and she tastes blood as she fights to keep quiet.

*Why, why, whywhywhy,* she thinks to herself, hands fisting tight into her pillow.

"Sweetheart? Are you okay?"

She stills, dares not to breathe.

The door creaks, a shaft of hallway light floods her room. "Valerie?"

The inhale is harsh, and dries her throat, but she's up and out of her bed, going full tilt before she even really thinks about it. "Oh my god," she gasps, and clings, scrabbles for hold. "I, you—you were dead."

His arms encircle her as her legs buckle, turn to jelly, the only thing keeping her from being a mess on the floor. The hug is tight, and warm, all the things she has missed *so dearly.* She squeezes him harder, and maybe, just maybe, she will soak it all up, never go cold. Not again, never again.

"Oh honey, it was just a nightmare, it's okay, see? I'm right here," he says as they sink to the carpeted floor, hand rubbing lines up and down her back. "I'm okay, you're okay."

Valerie nods, her face pressed to the crook of his neck, and knows it for the lie that it is. Was.

*Never again,* she thinks, and burns.
In the end, Danny dies wide eyed and quietly, face awash with betrayal, pain, and fear.

In the end, Phantom screams with wordless rage, weak and dripping green, and disappears into the thermos.

_Never again_, she repeats, shoves it to the bottom of her bookbag.

Valerie passes the CAT with flying colors, hands dripping red with the lives saved of a future that never will be.
Clockwork waves the image away, face shadowed, and feels every bit of the years that his visage implies.

"Everything is the way it is supposed to be," he says, and grips his staff just the littlest bit tighter.

Chapter End Notes

happy phanniemay 2k15~
the most human color

0.

There’s a great, big flash, and.

What comes back out, tumbles, stumbles, isn’t what went in.

It’s blue, eyes a dull green, encircled by black, and its white hair flickers like a flame to a breeze. It glows, and doesn’t touch the ground, bobs in place a few inches in the air.

"Danny?" Tucker says, but. This can’t be right. This can’t be—

It tilts its head, eyes brightening with awareness, with intensity, and says, "Yes?" in a whispering hiss, faint like an echo already traveling away and away, to far off places.

Places where they can’t ever go.

—true.

blue lips, blue veins, blue, the color of our planet from far, far way..
Jazz is four when she creates an imaginary friend.

At first, Jack and Maddie rack it up to just being that thing kids do. Harmless imagination that she'd grow out of. It's only a little out of place, with how she refuses to believe in ghosts. The friend isn't a ghost, they checked, to make sure. So, they leave her, and when she drags little Danny over, to it.

They have ghosts to prove that exist, anyway.

"Put this on the fridge, please," she demands, paper held out.

Maddie chuckles, and takes the drawing. "What's this of?" she asks, giving it a once over.

Jazz rolls her eyes, like it's the most obvious thing in the world. "Me, Danny, and Thor, duh."

'Thor' turns out to be something of a barely humanoid blob of yellow-white crayon. Or, it could just be a child's lack of knowledge on anatomy. She's not sure, but Maddie doesn't question it, and places two magnets on diagonal corners to pin it onto the fridge.

"There we go," she says, stands back, and then scoops the little girl up. Jazz gives a small shriek, and a half-hearted attempt to wiggle from her arms. "Is that good?"

She sniffs, undeniably sour at being held, but her bright blue eyes give it a quick, assessing look, and nods with all the seriousness she can manage. "Yeah, it's good," she says, and makes another attempt to escape Maddie's arms. "You can put me down now."

"I could," she says in turn, and presses a kiss to her forehead. "Or I could just hold you hostage."

"Dad!" she shrieks as Maddie's fingers find their way to her sides. "I'm being kidnapped!"

There's a thump, and then footsteps on the floor above. "Don't worry Jazzipants! Me and Danny will save you!" comes muffled through the floor.

"Not if I have anything to do about it!" Maddie yells back, and presses a kiss to Jazz's cheek.

"Gross!"
"What do you mean the book is wrong?"

Jack pauses, chewing slowly as he backtracks to Jazz's room.

She's laid out on the floor, a book flat in front of her, and her face twisting up. Stubborn, but listening. Jazz is nine now, and for all this time, Jack knows very little of Thor.

"We have bones," she continues, and shoots the air to her left something of a nasty look. "Explain away bones. DNA."

There's a lengthy pause, but Jazz is tilting her head, face begrudging but considering. Listening, and.

she whips her head around, eyes flashing. "Dad! Stop eavesdropping!"

Jack chokes on his bite of fudge, surprised, and shuffles past the door. "S-Sorry, Jazzipants!" he calls back over his shoulder, and meanders downstairs.

It's only when Jazz goes from four all the way to eleven, do they begin to worry.

"It's natural," the doctor tells them. "Some kids lose them soon after they start school, or some well into their early teens, and recently we're thinking they never really go away for some people, especially authors who create stories later in life, as the fictional characters can be said to take on lives of their own."

"So, Jazz is fine?"

"Oh yes, definitely," she says, and they all look back out to the lobby. Jazz is sitting in a chair, kicking her feet, face almost mutinous, and Danny is curious beside her. "It's only if the friend seems to become violent or torment her will you want to worry, so take most things with a grain of salt and we can go from there if need be."
"We're just worried," Maddie says, and Jack's arm around her shoulders pulls just a little tighter. "She's starting middle school this year, and other kids can be unkind. Danny doesn't even do that sort of stuff anymore."

"Very true, and like I said, every child is different, but the best I can give you is to take it up with the school if bullying happens."

The appointment ends, and they all go home. Jazz holes up in her room, and even Danny babbling about space outside her door doesn't coax her out. Dinner brings her out, but she's quiet and sullen, and returns to her room after. The next day is better, and more so the next.

Their worry dissipates, and days, then weeks pass afterward. School starts up again, and Thor seems to spontaneously disappear.

"Oh, wow," Maddie says, fingers straightening a crumpled paper as she sat back from a box, "look at this, Jazz!"

Jazz briefly looks up from her book, frowning. "I'm trying to read, Mom," she grumbles, pulling it closer to the edge of the kitchen table.

Maddie huffs, smiling. Honestly, kids these days and their 'needed' space from their parents. "It's a picture you drew, don't you want to see it?"

"Not really," she mumbles, but Maddie sees the quick flicker of her eyes.

Standing, she leans across the table, and lays it within her daughter's reach. "Look, it's you and... Thor, was his name?"

Expression mullish, Jazz pulls it closer, just within an easy view. There's silence as she looks it over, and Maddie's smile falters, but. Then, she sees the twitch in her lips, and relaxes.

"Yeah, that was his name," she says after another moment, and then slides it back, eyes lingering. Jazz gives Maddie one quick look before turning back to her book.

Kids, Maddie thinks, amused, and turns to look for a few magnets.
"Oh shut up, Cas," Jazz grouches later, under her breath, as she straightens the picture on the fridge.
Kwan wakes up to a quiet home, a quiet life. His thoughts are brimming, swirling, tossing and turning, with equations and elements and *this will hurt the most*, and *this time for sure, this time for sure, this time. this time.*

*This time,* he thinks, *will be different.*

His thoughts are superficial. Beneath the roiling surface, shallow, skin deep, lies bloody futures with extinguished lights.

This is This Time No. 97.

Maybe. He's not quite sure. They've run together after a while, but.

*Gods,* Kwan thinks, and it'll never get old, never ever. *He's so scrawny.*

Danny Fenton is so small.

He looks from his hands to the kid that sits between two others, and finds it hard to reconcile friendships long gone. He's not the same Kwan anymore. Not the one from the first This Time, after the first Fall Back, or the one from the 23rd This Time when Dash killed him because.. because it must have been his fault, messing with Time. Right?

Starr is giving him a concerned look, and. Man. He loved her, he really did. But. He's just not that Kwan anymore.

Kwan gives her a smile, and she smiles back, uncertain, but it's enough to send her back to gossiping, back to *Do you see her hair? Ugh.*

*This time,* he thinks, and it's the first time he's ever Fallen so far back.

Before the beginning of the End.

Before Danny Phantom.
The Fenton home goes up in flames.

He doesn't leave as fire leaps from wall to wall, devours the living room, and crawls upstairs, follows his line of accelerant down to the basement.

Kwan dies from smoke inhalation, thinking, *This time, this time*—
Starr is thirteen, and sometimes hates her name.

It's a lapse of judgement. She knew it wasn't safe, somewhere at the back of her mind, but the flowers needed a vase, and the only empty one is up high, well out of reach. Starr doesn't even think about it, one track minded, and pulls over the closest chair.

It only takes one moment—the wheels slip, slide, and she loses her balance. Starr hits the ground too quickly to even scream.

Black.

It blinds her, bright to her eyes, and sticky as she sits up, eyes blinking.

"Ew?" she whispers, confused, as she pulls one hand free.

It goes on, far, very far, no distinction from a start to an end. A shiver works up Starr's spine, heavy in her bones, and steals one quick breath before she blinks.

She shakes it off, worrying her bottom lip, and works to stand. It's like goo, but a very big suction cup, peeling from her with wet slurps. It's tiring, and by the time she stands, wobbles, she's not sure she wants her legs to feel as her arms. Starr tugs halfheartedly at one leg, and gives up with a groan.
Flopping back down, she sits, sinks. She remembers falling, that terrible strike of fear.

Whoops, she thinks, and.

Everything ripples, vibrates, and then falls still, leaves her rattled. Chest heaving, she throws her eyes about, but it's all the same.

"Hello?" she tries, and it echoes, long and far. It tapers into silence, her own heartbeat loud in her ears, and she licks her lips just as her words come rattling back.

It's unmistakably her voice, her words, but. There's something about them, something—

"Starr? Starr sweetheart, please wake up, please."

She has a sore knot at the back of her head for a few weeks, and life goes on as usual.

Only, when months and months later school ends, and high school looms, does her words come back to her.

Again.

hello.

hello.

hello. is somebody there.

hello.

hello.

hello.
hello. is somebody there.

It's like a broken record, as annoying as a catchy song stuck in her head. Over and over, her voice, again and again.

Starr just wants to sleep.

She grits her teeth, hands fisting into her pillow, and thinks, shut up!

Blessedly, it does. Falls silent as the grave, and relief washes over her. She presses her cheek into her pillow, and lets her body go limp with an exhale. Her heart slows, and exhaustion weighs heavily. Her eyes are fluttering slits when—

shut up, echos sharp and blistering, and she nearly jerks right out of bed, startled, heart racing.

It takes her thoughts for its own, mish-mashed, pieced together. Whatever it is.

I think I'm going crazy, she thinks her first day of freshman year.

A steady background noise are repeated thoughts, unevenly stitched together, and it distracts her as she steadfastly tries her best to ignore it.

Freshman year she gets the reputation as the airhead blonde despite her grades, and it's frustrating. The cafeteria seems to soothe it, and it's not her fault by then all she wants to talk about are make up, and gossip with Paulina after struggling to just learn.

Sometimes Starr almost wants to cry, but she's usually too tired to even consider it before it's wash, rinse, and repeat as one day ends and another begins.

It's sometime a little over halfway through the year when the voice does something strange.

All morning it's been hello, hello, is there anyone there, yet again, and it's loud, head throbbing so in the silent hallway as she makes her way to class. She's late, which is not a regular occurrence, but her phone had fell off the bed and buzzed muffled into the floor for an extra hour. A blessed extra hour, but, well, there goes her perfect attendance.
Starr's just turning a corner when there's a muffled thud, and then a groan as Danny Phantom slides to a stop nearly on top of her shoes.

*Oh,* barely crosses her mind before there's a lance of pain striking though her head, and she's stumbling back with a hiss just as another ghost comes floating through the wall.

*abOMinAtiON,* rings loud in her ears, weary and wary, and it's not her voice.

She gasps, and then Phantom's shoving her out of the way.

Everything goes grey and quiet.

She wakes up in the hospital, her mom hunched at her bedside, and Kwan sprawled in a chair.

Later, Phantom even comes to apologize. Or, at least he tries. She has to shy away from him, apprehension jack-rabbiting her heart, and she doesn't know why.

It shames her to see the hurt skitter over his face before he's stuttering out *sorry* after *sorry,* and leaves the way he came.

The rest of the year, and the first third of sophomore year go bleakly. The voice is weak murmurs, fading almost, and it hurts her heart for some reason.

Starr almost feels like she's losing herself.

She tries to be upbeat, tries and tries, but her friends shoot each other concerned looks when they think she can't see, and it makes her want to just crumble and sob, beg for one of Kwan's hugs and Mom's hand carding through her hair as she lay her head in her lap.

She's struggling, and can't figure why.
Is this the End?, she thinks numbly to herself.

They project the asteroid to hit in a few days, maybe less.

Starr doesn't want to die. She doesn't want Mom, or her friends or anyone to die. Not like this.

School is cancelled, and she's miserable around the house. No one wants their family out of sight.

Y'know. Just in case.

A day passes.

Turns out Vlad Masters is a ghost, and can't save the world either.

Another day.
And everything has gone terribly quiet.

But, that night she wakes to white.

*huh,* she thinks, bleary eyed, and.

it comes to her veiled in smoke, smoldering with flickering fingers of blues and reds. it is Indescribable. Vast. Old, and terribly tired.

*i can save you,* it says, the words pitching oddly with the flow of her own voice interspersed among its. *i can save all of you.*

*can you?*

*yes,* is replied, but she can feel the hesitation. Reluctance.

*you don't have to,* Starr says back, and it's where she finds peace. She won't force this, whatever the price, either way.

*it is my decision.*

And here, she gets a feeling. It's bitter, painful, but determined all the same.

*say yes.*
will it hurt?

no, i promise you it will not, it murmurs, wings reaching forward. sleep. you will sleep.

okay, she breathes as the first feather cradles her face, okay. yes.

sleep, it repeats, and Starr closes her eyes.

thank you, she says, and she falls.

Michael makes a wish.
led by the hand, to that far off and later land

0.

despite it all, and everything you have done thus far, you are terribly ignorant.

what right do you have to decide this is suspicious, this looks dangerous and do something, about something, you have no business to consider? none.

but. here you are, here you go.

the green splashes against solid metal, eats at it like acid, and Skulker whirs around, murder in his eyes, and.

stops?

his face twists, lips thinning, and the hunk of shoulder armor thumps softly to the ground. softly fizzling, softly melting. he looks pissed, and rightly so, not that you've figured that yet.

"Whelp," he starts, and glances back over his other shoulder, trailing off.

you see the trail of lights, leading across the drop of the ravine, up the hill, further into the forest. you see Ember, Youngblood, and blurry figures in the distance between the trees. their faces are cloudy with anger, but soft in some way, eyes intense, flickering between you and the procession slowly bobbing its way somewhere.

"Leave," he says after a moment, face falling blank as the end of the line starts to appear.

you rear up in indignation, because, who was he to tell you that anyway? you'll stop whatever this is, one way or another.

your mouth is just opening, some snark ready to cut and bite, when there is a shriek, and one of the little orbs is suddenly squeezed between sharp fingers of viridian. Ember yells, dives forward, and Skulker whips around, weapons flaring to life.

you're too slow to react, and the light is dragged wailing into the bushes, Skulker hot on its heels.
the silence that follows is deafening, Ember curling and uncurling her fists, eyes jumping worriedly to the still progressing line as she returns to place, floating along. the hole in the brush left behind.

"What just happened?" you ask, weakly, shocked, demurely taking Skulker's place.

a sickly feeling has taken hold of you.

Ember shoots you something of a poisonous look as the end of the finally lines crosses the ravine. "You shouldn't be here, you don't deserve to be," she snarls, quiets at the startled chatter, and hisses, "You don't know, and you wouldn't understand."

something is wrong. something terrible just happened. is it your fault?

you flinch, head turning as if hit, and fall behind.

they continue up the hill, crest it, and disappear. the silence gains weight, and you press a hand to the pit of your stomach. you don't know how long you float there before you slip to the ground. before there is noise, and before there is Skulker.

he is alone.

"What happened?" you repeat, and hunch your shoulders at his unreadable face.

"you humans don't really know how we are born do you?" he asks instead, and floats past you, slowly. Skulker glances back, and unsure, you take a hopping step into the air after him.

human. yes, you are human, aren't you? halfa you may be, but also human first and foremost.

Ember is not holding the rear when you both catch up, Technus has taken her place.

there is another gap in the line.

you dart your eyes briefly to Technus's face, the muscles pulling tight and into a severe frown, and
look away as he and Skulker share a glance. he flies ahead, into the thickening fog.

Skulker takes his place, and you take one on the other side, suddenly hyper-aware of the forest around you, neck hair standing on end.

this is something important, something sacred. and, you've blundered right on top of it all. this is like christmas all over again, you think, your core thumping painfully at the thought.

the fog thickens, and then thins with the trees after what seems an eternity, a slow march of time. there are more shrieks, and very few triumphs. you manage to destroy a single creeping hand, but in your distraction, another snatches an orb away.

"Don't," Skulker says, and you are devastated, but you retreat form the foliage it had disappeared into. heavy in heart, heavy in soul.

soon, but perhaps not soon enough, the trees fall away entirely into a clearing, the grass luminous under the nearly full moon. it is only then you notice how late it is, how long you have been gone. notice that the clearing is a spiral of lights and glowing ghosts.

they fill the entire swath of land, curling inward, smooth arches centering to an end at a single outcropping of rock and moss. it swirls upward into a short end, and you see the first of the orbs dance merrily off its edge and into the sky.

you blink, and look at Skulker.

he's smiling.

and, when you take the next moments, you see that so is everyone else.

you still don't understand, or know what is happening. but, you stand sentry, eyes steady on the clearing, and don't notice the slither of movement. not until fingers wrap around your ankles, and pull.

you slam against the ground as you're dragged back through the bush, as you're snatched over roots and through branches, with a yelp. panic blinds you, has you scrabbling against the ground for purchase as the light grows further and further away.

Unadulterated terror swallows you whole, something primal and deeply intertwined—
"Oh no you don’t!"

—and then you’re wrenched up, pulled taut, and Ember is there, iridescent in the night.

"C’mon, dipstick!" she snaps, hand wrapped around your wrist, and lobes a pink blast over your shoulder.

The grip on your legs weakens, and you kick free, Ember stumbling back. you flop down just before her shoes, and you lay there, chest heaving. when you roll over, it’s to find Ember peering down at you. her face is a study of anger, but also guilt.

"Thanks?" you say, bewildered.

"I'm sorry," she says instead, after a moment, eyes bleeding back to green, "We should have figured it would go after you."

you frown, and sit up, get up. "Why—"

"Because," she starts, and pauses, shakes her head. "Listen, don't ever come back out here. You'll be left alone on this day every year, just... avoid these woods."

"I can help," you say, though your hands tremble.

Ember purses her lips. "You're not a... full ghost. It will always go after you if you stay out here."

you narrow your eyes, and cross your arms. "What is it? I need to know in case it's a threat to the town," you demand.

"You don't need to know jackshit," she hisses in return, hair flaring, eyes splashing red. and, if you had held her gaze the briefest moment longer, you would have seen the flickering ring of green, but.

you take a step back, effectively cowed. this is dangerous, whatever it is, but no one will tell you. it went after you. why you? why is it always you?

exhaling, you bob your head, and look up toward a break in the canopy.

the sun is rising?

you blink, and look back to Ember, except.

"Figures," you grumble to the trees, and after a breath, leap to the air.
Spike is a character who appears like once in the first episode of Danny Phantom (extreme punk goth looking kid), but all this character building was done by Kikaiz on tumblr, I just wrote this based off their stuff!

Spike is seven years old, and the tiny but healthy body sleeping in his hands falls still.

He brushes a thumb over the smooth fur, cups the small corpse in his hand as he digs a small hole. Things seem to always die around him. He doesn't like to reflect on it much, didn't really want to believe it, and just vows to never have anything he cares about linger within his grasp for too long.

Life is lonely this way, but.

He endures.

This is not the first hand to be thrust in his direction, only one of few he has not bitten. It is tanned, and supple without callous.

The person attached to it is irritating, and tenacious. Stubborn, terribly so. Spike doesn't want to like her, and tries his hardest to brush her off, scare her away.

Jazz keeps coming back, and he cannot figure why for the life of it.

It's a tingle in his fingers, restless motion, electric energy with no where to go.

He hates it. It takes, and it takes, and it takes. Whatever it is, it does not give, and honestly it's what he's always wanted to do. Spike had looked at his sisters, grandpa and grandma, really looked at them when he'd been old enough, and thought, I love you too much.

There's no way he could have ever been selfish enough.
He keeps them at arms length. Spike spends as little time with them as he can, but he's there for them. When he finds his younger sister crying one night, he sits outside her room and slowly plucks the reason from her.

If he knocks the asshole on his back the next day, and the boy is out for a week from a simple black eye, well. No one would ever really figure it out.

Worth it, he thinks later in detention, scribbling down answers to his homework.

Spike visits his mother, never his father.

She'd been drawn and sullen at first, angry, maybe at him, maybe not. But, he knows the system failed her, and that his father is mostly to blame.

"Mia's gotten tall," he tells her, phone between his shoulder and ear as he does homework. She's never minded, an education is what she wanted for all of them. "Brittany will graduate this year. She's hoping to go to either Ohio or North Carolina State."

He only falters when she tries to learn the personal things.

"What's Mia want to go to school for?" I don't know.

"What is Brittany's favorite color?" I don't know.

I don't know.

I don't know.

I don't know.

It frustrates her, but he can't really explain it. He'd hate to have to tell her he spends time with her only because a plexiglas window protects her from him.

"What's your favorite color?" she asks after awhile, and he wouldn't ever admit that the question startles him.

"Black," he says with a small smirk after a moment. She laughs, and it warms him somewhat.
"I worry about my brother," Jazz admits one day, out of the blue, straining on the tips of her shoes to try and reach a book on the top shelf.

He usually leaves her too it, one way he still tries to get rid of her, but today she looks especially hangdog. Tired, and extremely concerned. Spike settles his chair down on all its feet with a sigh, and stands.

Spike easily plucks the book from its spot, and hands it to her. "I, too, worry about my sisters," he replies in turn, eyes hooded as he looks down into aquamarine. "Pretty sure it's how being a sibling works."

Sometimes he wants to be jealous. She has the ability to be as close as she wants be to her brother, and squanders it. He has to fear every single hug Mia tries to trap him in, every time Brittany deigns to sit by him when all her usual cohorts are absent.

Every single time Jazz, herself, grabs his hand to drag him along somewhere.

"I guess," she relents, and hugs the book tightly. "He's just... I've seen some bruises, he tries to hide them."

Nodding, he can think of two reasons for those. Dash and his gang, or... well. It's not his to share.

"Have you tried talking to him, instead of lurking from afar?"

She flushes here, cheeks going splotchy. "I'm not lurking!" she snaps, but he can see the flash of guilt.

"Sure you're not," he says, and goes back to his book.

He'd only really figured it out when Jazz introduced them.

The kid is tiny for a freshman, hunched in on himself. Actually seems a little afraid of him.

It's the handshake that clenches it.

A bolt of electricity takes up his arm, and it hurts. Something yowls like a scalded cat in his ears, and he barely aborts a flinch. Spike takes a harder look at him after the brief lapse of silence, their hands still joined together mid-shake, the pins and needles growing stronger the longer they touch.
Ah.

Spike only feels a little bit ridiculous that he hadn't seen it before, but it's not like he really cares in the end. Kid's doing something good, so it's alright for the most part.

Danny can't be all dead because Spike can feel something restless under his skin, anxious almost. It wants to rob and steal, but he can also feel the... ectoplasm, he's sure he heard Jazz call it, pulsating angrily in response.

"Nice to meet you," he says in the end, dropping his hand away.

Jazz is beaming at him, however, and he thinks it can't lead to anything good.

"No," he says, firm, and without looking at her.

"But you don't even know—"

He looks up this time, face carefully blank. "No," he repeats, because it's after school and she's all packed up, and he knows what she wants to ask after these couple of years.

"They'll love you, I know—"

Spike gets up, gathers his things, and leaves her there.

He only wears the cross at first because his Grandpa gave it to him, but then because maybe it is a demon inhabiting his body. Perhaps a ghost, though he believes either less and less as time goes on.

Spike thinks it likes the irony. He's not sure how it's ironic tough, the bleed through of emotion fuzzy and usually without notice.

It's not talkative, whatever it is, just always mad and sullen. Sometimes he gets the image of straining wings, and thinks of an angry and puffed up robin.
It doesn't, however, appreciate his sense of humor.

Everything changes a month before graduation.

It's a ghost attack, a vicious one, and Danny is only just one kid. He can't be everywhere, and save everyone, all at once.

Spike thinks this would break the kid, and maybe, just maybe, himself too.

The blood spilling from her ruined side is warm to his numb hands, shiny and bright against his pale skin. It takes even as she is already slipping away, greedily sucking up something brilliant and divine.

"No, no, no," he hisses, and Mia is sobbing next to him.

Stupid! he wants to scream, but she'd saved his sister, and he can't—can't—

He snatches his hands away, and it snarls in protest.

Stop! he snarls back, savage and desperate, feeling terribly small. Help her!

NO, booms loud in his ears, and he pushes at it. Shoves, and tugs hard.

Help her.

HELP HER.

HELP. HER.

It fights, tooth and nail, but despite everything it leeches, Spike realizes it never would have been enough. It falters, wavers, and slowly relents.

His hands are cold, and Jazz's skin is blistering hot.

It's the last thing he remembers before darkness.
In the end, her parents like him, just like Jazz said they would.

It takes some time, for them to get past how he looks, dresses, and comes easier after he gets the third degree. We're just friends, yes she's good enough for me but we're just friends. He has to stress that last bit for a couple months, but they get it eventually.

He keeps to himself what really happened that day weeks before graduation. Jazz doesn't remember, and Mia had fainted from exhaustion, but.

Spike pats his sister's hand before he leaves for his first day of college, and if anything, the paper-cut on her index finger disappears without nary a thought.

Thanks, he thinks, and it hisses spitefully, but weakly.

It's fading. Steadily where something was, there begins to be nothing, and Spike finds he cannot mourn it, nameless and destructive as it is.

It's for the best, he muses as he gets into his car.

It eventually sleeps, quietly falls still. Spike is too busy trying to give back to the world to witness its passing.
but the satisfaction brought it back

Meg happens upon one of Alistar's would-be apprentices coming out of a cell, spitting curses and fire.

It's human visage immediately falls away, the woman with red hair and purple eyes peeling to roiling, thick smoke as the door is slammed shut. Without a word or as so much a by your leave, it whips by her, an empty syringe nearly obscured within it, and vibrating with fury. It disappears into the gloom of the corridor, the resounding clang echoing long after she is sure it is gone.

Curiosity killed the cat, she thinks, eyeing the cell door.

Meg looks up and down hall before approaching the door, and peering through the grate, blonde hair falling forward.

She wants to say it's a kid, but who could make a deal that young? Or, he could have been a promise, an exchange. Some steal your first born, sometimes your second. Messy business, taking children's souls. A lot of paperwork, and rare. Permits, and clauses, and all the shit Crowley likes to keep everything orderly and neat.

She honestly can't wait to knock the little shit down from his high horse.

The soul hangs limply from shackles, face obscured by white hair. Naked as day, and unblemished. Strange, how could a soul be so strong. Nothing's real if you don't think it is, but who could lie to themselves so easily and strongly?

Meg hums in wonder, and the soul shifts at the noise. Its head comes up, the hair parting easily, and a lone, milky but iridescent eye peeks at her from behind the white curtain.

Whomp, there it is, she thinks, but pauses. Blind, but not completely so, she figures as she leans to the left, and the eye trails slowly after her.

"You got a name?" she asks, and the soul seems to think, its hair falling back over its eye.

It says something, only it's more like an empty space where something is supposed to be. Something's said, but Meg can't quite hear it, even though she's pretty sure she should.

"Cool, name's Meg," she returns anyway, and is almost startled as a line of red suddenly cuts it from collar bone to hip, a waterfall of crimson spilling down almost as freely as a faucet. "Okaaayy, nice meeting you, talk to ya later."

She leaves, and does not go back because even in Hell some things are just too what the fuck even for her.
Okay, so maybe Meg lied.

Hell's a mess, and if anything, Father's old stomping grounds will remain untouched because even demons have some sort of decorum for the loss of someone so important. They're probably just afraid of Meg, but it's not like she honestly cares.

Most of the cells are empty, a few moaning souls every few doors, but today's just full of surprises in the end.

One door is completely frosted over in ice, and open. She remembers this door, and eyes the leaking tracks of glittering white that lead down the hall. Halfway to the next corner, she finds a demon splashed up again the wall in a wave of ice, human face twisted with alarm. And, okay, maybe she chuckles because she knows this guy and he's generally an asshole and stupid as fuck.

Case in point, honestly. She leaves him there, skipping a little quicker after the melting footprints.

Meg finds it huddled where another cell door meets a wall, the deep shadow cast by a torch nearly allowing her eyes to skim over it as she meanders by. Bemused, she backtracks, and looms over it, follows its gaze into the empty cell.

Dried blood coats an entire wall, flaking up from the stone, but it's undeniably been empty for a long while..

"Somebody you know used to be in there?" she asks, and it turns its head over, arms wrapped around its knees.

It looks up at her but doesn't answer, which is probably for the best.

"Hm, you're kinda a cute kid in this light," she remarks, eyeing it in the ill-fitting pajamas.

As if in spite, blood blossoms like a flower at its hip. Its face remains carefully blank as red runs down its leg and pools generously on the floor.

With a huff, she pouts at it. "I take that back, you're not cute at all," she says, and its hair falls back
over its eyes as it wanders toward the bed, movement almost mechanical looking.

Meg blinks, and then it's like the blood was never there. Which is nice because blood is a bitch to clean out of hardwood.

"Well, mi casa, su casa, and all that jazz," she continues, and when it just lays prone horizontally across the comforter, she wonders briefly if bringing it topside had been such a good idea.

Her first idea had been to keep it in a jar, like a really big firefly, but, surprise, surprise, it had kept its form as they transversed from Hell to Earth. She frowns, and turns to leave. That means it probably needs to eat or something. She eats sometimes, but, what do kids like these days? Candy? If it even is a kid.

Crossing the threshold, she pulls the door shut behind her, the sigils carved into the wood flaring to life briefly before settling. Meg nods, and really wonders what it is.

Well, that was a spectacularly Bad Idea.

The shag rug under her face is something of a blessing, hah, except where it meets her ruined front in its entirety. Holy Fire ain't no joke, shit.

Meg's not sure how long she lays there on the floor, the pain somewhat all encompassing as the body knits itself slowly back to rights. Most would've smoked out, it's true, but despite the hassle it'd be anyway, she kinda can't. The burns are more than just vessel deep, having reached her true form inhabiting the dead flesh. Who throws a demon onto holy fire anyway? This is certainly something she could have lived without ever knowing, at least personally.

There's movement, out of the corner of her eye, and suddenly bare feet fill her vision. Meg groans because of course it gets out of its room anyway. And now she can't do shit about it.

"I'm a-alive, obviously," she hisses as a foot comes closer, but it continues, and then she's roughly kicked over onto her back. Eyes black with pain, she snarls as healing skin is peeled away with the carpet. Okay, yeah that was a bad way to lay, but c'mon, it could have at least rolled her over more nicely.

It stares down at her, misty teal eyes dim, and raises its free hand, the other tucking a box of Cheerios to its side. Meg flinches, and closes her eyes. Nobody has to know that the fire didn't kill me in the end, she thinks, and waits.

The first drop is so cold it feels like she's been submerged completely in ice water. It's not terribly
pleasant, but it numbs the pain, and thinking is a little easier, gets more so as suddenly it's like water being poured over her. Opening her eyes to slits, Meg purses her lips at the sight.

Green bubbles freely from a cut starting at the wrist and spanning its palm, decidedly toxic looking even as her pain slowly recedes with each sticky drip inching across her torso.

Gross, but effective, she has to admit.

Meg lets it have free reign of the house after that. She's yet to figure how it escaped its room, but she kinda, maybe a little, feels somewhat bad it just toddled back inside it without even a token protest.

She's still tender, and laying face down on a clean area of the shag rug when she feels it. A sudden absence where something used to be. *Holy Fuck.* A giggle fit takes over her, and somewhat hysterical, she ends up in full blown laughter on her back.

"Assholes!" she barks, and really, she thinks she hates Crowley more than she does the Winchesters as the grapevine suddenly sparks to life with howling disbelief.

*Lucifer has been reCaged!*

*Sam Winchester is Dead?*

*Who is King now?*

She's back from a bout of Crowley hunting, still irritated that the slimy snake slipped so easily from her fingers, that it takes a moment for the smell to register. It chokes her, and alarmed, she surveys the trashed kitchen and the copious amount of rotting blood basically *everywhere.*
"Well," she grumbles as she edges through it and to the hallway, shirt over her nose, "everything is just going to Hell."

Meg finds it on its side just inside its room, the only clean area of the entire safe house. Though not for trying, she finds as she steps around it, and grimaces at the flow of red blood leaking from it's stomach and onto the floor. It vanishes at a certain, rough edged radius, and she coughs hard. The air is heavy with the smell of iron and ozone.

"This can't be good."

She circles it once before dropping down to its back, hands hovering, and wary of touching it.

"I really need to figure a name for you," Meg mumbles, and eyes the thick, rumpled comforter on the bed.

The eldest Winchester looks ready to throw a bitch fit at the sight of the bloody burrito laid out in the backseat of his car, but Meg gives like zero fucks at this point.

"You owe me," she says as he whips around, murder in his eyes. "I did just save you right now, your upholstery is fine, and the doors were unlocked, dipshit." The last bit is a dirty lie, but even he can't tell where she jimmed the lock open so it's a moot point if there's not a scratch to be had.

"What is it?" he hisses, but Meg is already opening the back door to take her own seat, laying one end of the rolled up comforter in her lap.

"A pet," she settles on, because, it kinda is? Sorta, anyway. "It's sick, and I thought maybe bird for brain might be able to help it too."

With a growl, Dean slams into the front seat, nearly vibrating with anger. "He helps my brother first," is all he says, and then they're off to see the Wizard.

The wonderful Wizard of Oz. Hah.
adaptation

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

0.

Danny dies sometime when he is eighteen, near nineteen, and doesn't realize it for the longest time that one transformation is his last and not a transformation at all.

It's hard too, really. He still 'transforms', still sleeps, still breaths, still uses the bathroom. He does forget to eat, and maybe that should have been his first clue that something was amiss. The boy won't ever be able to pin point the exact moment because for all that he died without anyone or himself noticing, he is still the definition of what it means to still be amongst the living.

He still bleeds red, heart thumping with the force of life, and what else could he be but alive?

"Dude, when's the last time you ate a real meal?" Tucker teases from the mini fridge, visiting from his own dorm three floors away. College is a lot of work, and topped with ghost fighting? It's like having a full-time job. "All the stuff in here is moldy or taking on a life of its own."

Defensive, Danny makes to snark about his friend's near complete lack of vegetable consumption, and recent resulting doctor visit, but pauses. When was his last meal anyway? Sunday when he went home for the weekend? But. That can't be right, he's had to have eaten something between then and today, Saturday.

Tucker closes the fridge, and turns around to give him a slightly concerned look. "Have you eaten today?"

It's near six in the evening, and no. He hasn't. Danny can't even remember if he's eaten at all this past week. Did he eat Wednesday when he went out with Sam? Yesterday when he was dragged to the cafeteria? Monday when Jazz dropped off leftovers? Tuesday?

"Danny?"

Shouldn't he be starving about now?

Danny presses a hand to his stomach, and feels nothing. Nothing at all. When was the last time he felt hungry, anyway?

It's a nasty shock then, an unconscious realization by his body. The transformation happens without prompting, and Tucker yelps. Only. It doesn't feel like a transformation, more like a veil being lifted, a skin or mask dropped. It's... freeing, even as Danny feels sick.
"I think I'm dead," he says, and he just knows, squeezes his eyes shut. "I think... I think I've died."

Tucker gives a weak and startled laugh. "That's not funny, man," he says, but.

Danny doesn't know when it stopped being a joke.

Chapter End Notes

inspired by a tumblr post http://surelysilly.tumblr.com/post/140055436146/
Danny takes in their wild, anger filled eyes, gritted teeth and clenched fists, and wonders, *what's up with them?*

"You guys okay?" he asks, genuinely concerned because—because—

He's never seen them like this before. It's more than meeting a deadline, more than all-nighters and 3am ideas; it's ongoing days of no sleep, crescent bruises along their palms and worn hazmat gloves, and bloodshot whites. There's cracked dishes set down too hard, splintered mugs in the trash, and.

Jazz is worried, *he's* worried, and for the past three weeks it's finally not about ghosts wrecking havoc. It's not really a consolation prize in the end.

"Yes, sweetie," Mom says, and smiles, but it's terribly brittle and weak. He darts a glance at Dad, but he's so eerily focused on a coffee stained blueprint, Danny's not sure he even heard them. "We're just a little put out that our weapons aren't a match for Inviso-Bill yet is all."

Ah. Yes. Danny clears his throat, and looks away from her dark, glistening eyes. Scorched metal sits in ungraceful heaps on various tables, wires exposed and frayed like desperate clawed hands. "A-Aw, well, you'll get him eventually, Mom," he mumbles, makes a hasty retreat, and lets fear swell in his chest, shame filling in the left behind spaces. He manages only *just* to not sink through the top most stair. *I know you will.*

But. That's not really it. They will tell him that, eyes raking him over from messy black hair to worn and scuffed red shoes, and not say what is *really* eating them all up bloody and horridly, yum, yum.
why, is what they despair, why them, why Danny.

This is what they've always wanted, to prove that ghosts existed, and here it is thrown back in their faces. He's going to die, die, die, and there's nothing you can do about it, it taunts, laughs, boyish facade a seething and roiling evil.

Inviso-Bill has white hair and green eyes, but.

Danny is alive, and that terrible, damnable creature takes on a so, so horrible likeness.

why us, they despair, fingers burning and bruising with a need to destroy, to protect, why Danny?

Chapter End Notes

http://abcleverun.tumblr.com/post/152011608492
Maddie gets the call at one o’ clock.

It’s during their newly scheduled break time, which now exists because they may or may not possibly forget to eat and continue working on upgrading something or another without eating all day otherwise, so they’re upstairs to pick it up. Or, well, she’s able to answer, Jack’s fingers coated liberally with sticky fudge and thusly unavailable.

Only Jazz really knows how many school calls they regularly miss.

“Hello, this is Mrs. Fenton,” she says, good mood already slipping away because what else could this be about, honestly.

“Hi,” comes the now vaguely familiar voice of the E to G last names counselor. Mrs.Tran. “I’m just calling to inform you that Danny has missed yet another row of classes today.”

Is he sick today?

Does he perhaps have an appointment?

Is today maybe a personal mental health day?

Maybe today is just a day you let him play hookie?

Is there any reason at all that could explain why he’s not in classes, yet again, today?

Is there?

No. There’s not. There never is, not since. Since. Since then.

The woman stresses, yet again, that he’s walking a thin line between passing and failing a lot of his classes. That they could be enough to make him repeat the grade. That nobody wants that, but.
It’s looking that way.

Maddie could identify how this makes her feel. She doesn’t want to, but if she did, she’d know she’s a mess of irritation, a little anger, but mostly fear and worry, all festering into a cesspool of almost debilitating doubt.

What have they done wrong?

“Also, while I don’t believe this is a cause for concern, Jazz, too, is absent so far, so you can see why I’m just trying to cover any bases here.”

Jazz never misses class. At least, not without telling them first. So what—

Oh. A sinking feeling hits Maddie then, a cold stone dropping into her stomach. Those men. They’d been too curious about Danny and Jazz, and Sam and Tucker too, if she remembers right. Why, she couldn’t figure for the life of her, and that’d been a few days ago now.

“Ah, yes, silly me how could I forget, it’s a mental health day today,” she laughs, the falseness of it drying her throat. She coughs, and Jack presses a glass of water closer, face pinched in confusion. “Though, I think Sam Manson and Tucker Foley may also be absent, perhaps?”

“A-Ah! That’s good to hear, a day off to rest mentally is always a good idea once in and while,” the woman agrees, and there’s the sound of shuffling papers. “Yes, there was a note from Mrs. Wing to me. Let me see… Miss Manson is present, but Mr. Foley is not, it seems, but if you say they’re together, I’ll give his parents a call later. Thank you so much, Mrs. Fenton, sorry to bother you over nothing.”

For once, is left unsaid.

Maddie makes a noise that must be interpreted as a farewell for the line clicks off not a moment later, and she’s left holding the phone in mute horror. No. No, she’s over thinking it, they’re fine, playing hookie, and Jazz went after them, to dissuade them or supervise, and they’re just out, doing reckless teenager things. They’re okay. They’re fine.

But, then the phone rings again.
She nearly drops it, fumbles with it, and gets the cord wrapped around her arm before she manages to answer it, Jack rising from his chair with a clatter.

“Hello?”

There’s no answer save some scuffling noises. Then, a yelp that sends a thrill of fear down her spine, and a yell:

“Stop! Just stop it! Let us go, we don’t know what you want!”

Oh God. Jazz.

“We’re just doing some preliminary tests, kid, calm down, it’s nothing but a little cut.”

“Y-You call t-this l-little?”

Tucker. Tucker and Jazz. Danny—

“We won’t tell anyone if you just let us go. J-Just please, let us go, don’t hurt Danny anymore.”

The plastic creaks in Maddie’s hands, and there’s blood over her lip and on her tongue. It takes too much effort for her to cover the receiver, and turn around into Jack.

“Jack, Jack get the Booo-merang,” she whispers. It’s always targeted Danny for some strange reason. Thank God for it now. “Jack, throw it and follow in the GAV, and then call the police, right now.”

And he goes, without question, he goes, Oh God.
They’ve stopped at a dinner, hungry for real food and restless, legs sore and aching. Dean gets his usual grease dripping grease, soda and whatever dessert they manage to have, and Sam his usual salad and juice.

His brother has just scarfed down the last chunk of his burger and fry, when Sam sees it.

The faintest outline of a hand, groping soundlessly on the table that a couple with two kids just vacated. And, he just has to *stare* because—because—

He can see under the table from here, and there’s no one underneath, but he blinks, and then one of the plates with leftover food is gone.

“*Dean,*” he hisses, bewildered.

Dean surfaces from his pie, frowning. “What?”

But. Then he sees something, if only for a few flickering moments. It’s a kid hunched under the table, stuffing the food into their mouth with only the fervor seen of the starving and abused. Dark hair, ratting looking clothes. Then. Gone. Again.

A foot connects unfairly with his shin, and Sam stifles a grunt.

“What is it?” Dean demands, cherry filling smeared at the edges of his mouth.

*I don’t know,* he thinks, as the hand reappears and reaches for another plate.
and everyday the sun rises

1.

It’s like watching a sunrise, but in reverse.

Remembering, that is.

And, that may sound ridiculous but it’s the only way Sam knows how to describe that Time. It’s a kaleidoscope, all the colors a blur, running, running together that it feels like a lifetime ago, yet, only yesterday.

It had grown so bright, blindingly so, like the sun rising above the horizon unobstructed, but then like a pulsing virus, everything draped itself in a poisonous green.

The screaming, she remembers best. The sound of Danny dying, of herself, of Tucker. It echoes in her ears with the morning sun, and sometimes she’ll find blood, red, but in the right light, a dark and thick lime color, trickling by her earrings.

Sometimes she thinks maybe they all died. Her, Tucker, and Danny. Maybe the whole fucking town. Gone in a flash too fast for the world to notice before it was too, too late.

But, then Danny will be on her porch for prom, again, and again, again. A few times with Tucker, sometimes neither, sometimes never. It’s always then that she becomes aware, too much so, because she hates prom, never wanted to go, but Danny probably did, does.

Sam wakes up, but.

It’s always then that she thinks being aware is too much, too selfish, when here, wherever it is, they’re all alive to live all over and over, and over, again.

It’s easier to think of it like a sunset, then. The sun comes back up every day, after all.

... the last mistake, the choice I made
Staring in the mirror with myself to blame...
(They say there’s a door, a strange and impossible door, somewhere out there where this town used to be. It never stays exactly in the same place twice, but they say if you scuff your feet at its threshold, it’ll be unlocked.

They say if you open it, step inside, you’ll find the town alive and well.

But, then again, they do say a lot of things, these days.)
It’s so quiet that Kwan jumps when Fenton’s pen hits the floor. He twists his head around to look at the boy, eyebrows high. It didn’t really bother Kwan, but last he looked Fenton had fallen asleep.

“Sorry,” the other boy whispers, grin sheepish, and settles back into his desk with the pen.

Mr. Lancer huffs at his desk, but continues to grade the tests in front of him. His detentions are done in silence. No earbuds, no phones out, nothing. Only whatever homework you have, or scribbling nonsense on a sheet of paper.

Kwan’s the latter today, though it’s by no means nonsense. He knows Fenton is probably the former, one of Mr. Lancer’s schemes to get him to do some homework for once, but all the boy’s been doing is sleeping.

With frown, he’s just turning back to translating a poem Starr might like when a green flash streaks by in the corner of his eyes, and there’s a muffled boom.

“Lord of the Flies!” Mr. Lancer yelps as the windows rattle, and Phantom zips past the window.

A ghost fight. Kwan’s up before he means too be, conflicted. He kinda… wants to see, but. The scorch marks along the pavement and sometimes on the outside walls of the school stall him. Fear and excitement in equal measure bubble under his skin—

“Mr. Sie, Mr. Fenton, come on now, we’re moving to an inner classroom. Just because there’s a fight outside doesn’t mean I’m letting either of you out an hour early.”

“Understandably reasonable,” Fenton quips, and startles Kwan once again, because he’s closer and out of his seat. “C’mon Kwan, get a move on, won’t ya?”

Right. Yeah. Kwan nods gamely, and collects his things as Fenton sidles around.

Most other kids froth at the mouth to even have a chance to see Phantom fight up close, and Kwan can admit, he wants to see too, and badly sometimes, but Fenton? He doesn’t ever seem to care, like, at all. Manson and Foley are caught around the scenes of fights all the time, but not Fenton, never Fenton.

It’s weird, but he probably understands the danger better than any of them, what with having Ghost Hunters for parents. It’s all probably old hat for him.

Kwan sighs. Oh, well. Despite that, he wouldn’t want to trade parents for weirdos like them.

There’s another rumble as they’re trooping down the hall, and Fenton trips. He catches himself before Kwan could even consider maybe reaching for him, and for a split second, he would swear Fenton’s hand looked a little paler around the edges.

Hm. A trick of the flickering lights overhead, probably.

Whatever.
It’s a wonder how someone could be so \textit{wrong}, and not even know it.

Tucker bites into his Nasty Burger, and wants to despair at the pair of fools sitting barely a table away, talking about \textit{exorcisms} of all things, and in a public place, at that! They want to burn bones, desecrate \textit{cemeteries}, and while that may be fair for spirits, they’d have to burn the entire \textit{fucking town down} to even begin to get at Danny.

They wouldn’t get that far, but \textit{still}.

Calling the cops on them would probably just cause them to escalate, become desperate, and everyone \textit{knows} what animals backed into corners do.

He groans deep in his chest.

Of course he wants to deal with Hunters during his lunch break, \textit{of course he does}. 
“Do you think if we throw treats at it — “

“Oh my God, Dean, it’s not some kind of dog — “

It hisses then, and they both swivel their heads around to look at it. With eyes a bloody red and hair like wispy smoke, they know it’s not a demon. At least, it hasn’t attacked anyone, or possessed anyone — that they know of — so they’re approaching it like a wild animal.

It’s intelligence might be a little higher than that, oops.

“… What if we gave it pie? Everyone likes a good ol’ slice of American pie.”

“Dean no.”

“Okay, well, I don’t see you coming up with any better ideas, Sam!”

It… it croons then, a confused and pitiful sound, and a stark difference to the bristling wet cat impressions it’s been giving for the past half hour. It looks at them with almost wounded eyes, which is a little hard to tell what with it having no pupils. Or irises.

“… What did you do.”

“I didn’t do anything, Sam!”

The same noise, but… sadder. It presses itself more into the corner, and bares it’s teeth after a moment, forked tongue coiled.

“What… What was the last tenants’ names again?”

It’s like a light bulb goes off. “Jazz… something with a T, and… Sam, the last one.”

The noise, again, but louder.

“Oh.”

“It doesn’t know… does it?”

Oh boy.

Chapter End Notes
	hat kinda Danny that looks like a mini Dan cos he actually died.
It’s a sleepy town, one where everyone knows everyone, and people have lived there for generations. It’s just, just such a shock, so very incomprehensible, that anyone would dig up graves and take the bones of deceased loved ones.

The man they meet with only manages a few words before bursting into tears, his oldest daughter ushering him back inside. The youngest explains it to them. She’s only fifteen.

“IT started a few months ago. But not here. In neighboring towns, and that’s a stretch, we’re in the middle fo nowhere here, y’know? The closest town is an hour away, but it started up North first. Further up North, I mean.

Then it spread.

Someone, or something, started digging up graves, leaving everything a right mess. And slowly, it’s migrated to here. We don’t even have a police department here, but they’re stumped anyway.

It dug up my Momma and my baby brother. It’s sick, whatever it is.

I hope whoever, or whatever it is, dies a horrible death and goes straight to Hell.”

What do you mean, or something? they ask, Why would it not be a person? This is all a little too sophisticated for a wild animal, don’t you think?

And, she looks at them, like she’s weighing their worth and finding them lacking.

“You’re not from around here, so I guess you don’t know.

Up North, way up North, just a few miles from the border, there used to be a town. Not much is left of it apparently, just up and vanished one day. Don’t know it’s name, don’t think anyone remembers it either, but they say it’s haunted. Ghosts, monsters, I dunno.

Don’t know if I believe ‘em, though.”
Who’s they? they ask.

She shrugs. “Just old man Vladimir, really. Says he used to live there, but everyone knows the lights aren’t all on upstairs, because that’d make him, like really, really old. Too old. So, yeah.“

They share a look. Where can we find him?

The girl throws a hand, a vague direction to the road that leads out of town, into the woods. “His house is that way, but he likes to hang out in the library sometimes. Apparently some family members of his or something also got dug up last night, so I dunno where he might be, really.

Are we done now?”

Yes, thank you for your time, we’ll get to the bottom of this, we promise, they assure her.

She doesn’t look assured.

They leave.

Chapter End Notes

Bad!Cujo and Bad!Danny? shrug
“What’s this?”

Clockwork hums, turns around, beard growing long, and body suddenly *aching*. “It appears to be a book,” he says dryly, despite it.

Dani pouts as he floats closer. “Well, yeah! But I can’t read it, what’s it say?”

Something no one is meant to know, not even himself, unfortunately, some record from before even *him*.

He plucks it from her hands, and when she squawks indignantly and makes to snatch it back, holds it out of reach. “Maybe you’ll learn what it says once you’re older than me.”

She gapes at him. “I’ll never be older than you, that’s rigged!”

“I don’t make the rules,” he tells her, beard disappearing, the book suddenly almost as big as he is. Oh, though how he wishes he did, sometimes.

It would make life so much easier.
can you hear me?

It's a new school, a fresh start. You're so excited you can barely breathe, eyes darting from window pane to unfamiliar and new people walking ahead, beside, behind you. Class is almost upon you, though, so despite the restless energy bodily contained, you make it to class without talking to anyone. It's English, but you've already forgotten the teacher's name. The man is behind his desk, and you dother a moment before he notices you.

“Transfer student?” he asks, and you nod. The bell dings and who is maybe the last of the class darts in, a boy with dark hair. The man frowns at him, and the boy shoots the teacher a sheepish look before taking his seat. “On time for once, Mr. Fenton.”

“I haven't been late once this semester, Mr. Lancer,” the boy cheeks, Fenton.

You blink, and mutter the name to yourself. Mr. Lancer. Right.

Something… sad, drifts across Mr. Lancer’s face, highlighting the lines on his face, but before you can think more on it, he's standing. “Yes, that is true… well. Class, today will be the first day of a new student…” he starts, and drifts off, looks at you.

Oh! Straightening, you say, “My name is Chaim Blau, it's nice to meet you!”

There are a smattering of Hellos in return, some friendly smiles in your direction.

“Yes, Mr. Blau will be joining us from here on out. Please make him welcome, and Mr. Blau take an open seat and we'll begin.”

Seat. Empty seat. There's a few scattered around, but Fenton has about one on every side of him. You hope no one is late, and head for the window seat in front of his. There are whispers, but you're too giddy to care.

“Is this seat open?” you say, hands tight on your backpack’s straps.

Fenton brightens. “Yep, Tucker and Sam sit beside and behind me but this one is good.”

You sit with a relieved smile. “Thanks, I'm, um, y’know, Chaim,” you say, something of a rush with nerves.

“I'm Danny,” the boy says, and pointedly looks past your shoulder.

Mr. Lancer’s looking at you when you turn around in your seat. He’s got that strange look to his face again, eyes intense. Confused, you furrow your eyebrows, but then his face smooths over.

He clears his throat. “Alright class, we're starting a new unit today…”

Class passes like a breeze, the second and third even more so. Danny isn't in those periods, but you do share lunch. So, you're looking for him when another student taps your shoulder.

“Hi, you're the new student, right?” she asks, unsure. You nod, and her shoulders ease, just a little. “Oh, good, okay. I'm here to invite you to eat lunch with me and my friends.”

She points, and a table full of a mess of other students wave back. You grin back.

“Sure, I'll sit with you guys, can my friend Danny come too?”
Her face immediately sours, not with distaste you think, but. Something like unease. “He always sits at that back table,” and she points this out too. You actually see Danny, and he spots you in turn. Waves. You don't wave back. “He… He can't sit with us.”

You frown. “Well, that's not fair,” you say, and shift your tray in your hands. “He's nice too.”

The girl grimaces. “It's… not that. Look, you're new, and don't know yet--” she starts, and then bites her lip. “Maybe you ought to learn the hard way,” she mutters, and walks off without so much as a by-your-leave.

Weird, and mean. You huff, glance briefly at the table full of now solemn fellow students, before making your way to Danny. His table is empty save you two, and it's depressing.

“Anyone else coming?” you ask despite it.

Swallowing a mouthful of food, Danny shakes his head. “Tucker and Sam aren't here, and my sister graduated last year, so it's just me today.” Your indignation must show on your face because he adds, “Look, it's alright. People think my parents are beyond strange and avoid me as a result. I don't care for them anyway, so.”

“So,” you echo, a little sadly. This is totally unfair. “So. What do they do then?”

Danny narrows his eyes ar you, tentatively says, “Hunt ghosts. Or, well, try to prove they exist.”

Your spoonful of what you hope is applesauce bumps into the corner of your mouth. “What?” you squeak, surprised. “Ghosts?”

“Well, no,” you admit, and scratch at your right ear. “That doesn't… freak you out, or something?”

Danny blinks at you. “That sounds.. oddly specific.”


The other boy raises his hands in surrender, but the conversation is dropped. Lunch goes nicely after that, and sadly, you have to part ways with Danny again, sharing only but the one class you find. He puts his cell phone number in yours, a little envious of the smartphone you carry compared to his razor.

Tomorrow comes quickly, dawns bright and breezy. Mom sees you off at the entrance, and you dither, waiting for Danny. It's ten minutes til, and still, he hasn't shown up. You shift anxiously for a few more minutes before giving up, and make it to class right after the bell rings.

“Get lost, Mr. Blau?” Mr. Lancer asks, arching an eyebrow.

You nod, glumly, because you did turn down the wrong hall at first. Turning, you see your seat, and behind it, Danny, looking out of the window.

He doesn't look at you until you sit down into your desk, bookbag thumping against its legs. Danny brightens. “Hey,” he starts, and at your disappointed look, pauses. “Um, did I do something to you…?”
“You left me hanging,” you grumble, and at his quizzical look, continues, “we were supposed to meet up at the front doors?”

He tilts his head. “Uh, sorry, I don't... have we met?”

Your insides run cold. “Um, yes?” you venture. “I just transferred yesterday…”

Danny shakes his head. “You must have me mixed up with someone else, I was absent yesterday, so…”

So.

“This isn't funny,” you say, and voice wavering. “I thought you wanted to be friends.”

“Oh, we can be friends? My name is Danny,” he says, and actually offers his hand.

“This isn't funny!” you shout, and then just as quickly quell at a hand on your shoulder.

It's Mr. Lancer. “Mr. Blau, step outside with me, okay?” he says, and you nod, stiffly, and refuse to even look at Danny.

The class is whispering, but your mind’s swimming as if through sludge. Your first friend. Stupid. Of course, prank the new kid. The hallway is silent, long and empty, unfamiliar. You miss your old school, suddenly and irrationally. You'd hoped to leave behind the cruelty, but. Clearly you haven't.

“Mr. Blau…”

“Why would he do that?” you demand, and the edges of your vision are going blurry. “I didn't... I didn't do anything wrong…”

“Mr. Blau,” Mr Lancer repeats, stern, you quiet, cowed. The teachers at your last school didn't care either. “Chaim. Mr. Fenton… requires patience, if you're to be his friend.”

You wipe at your eyes, sniff. “Like... special needs?”

But Mr. Lancer is shaking his head. “No, he's... Oh, there's never an easy way to say this,” he mumbles, and seems to deflate. “Mr. Fenton... Danny, he's dead, Mr. Blau.”

Your heart stutters. “W-What?”

“He's a ghost,” Mr. Lancer says, and the sadness is back on his face. “He died, but he doesn't quite realize that, well. He's no longer alive.”

Dread overtakes you. What that girl said to you yesterday echoes in your ears. “I, I can't,” you say, and. “I can't.”

“I understand,” Mr. Lancer says, careful to keep any disappoint from his voice, but you hear it anyway. “You can sit beside Miss Keller from now on, she's directly across from you.”

Your words haunt you all day after you change seats, make careful work of ignoring Danny’s curious looks. If the dead have something to say, they'll find a way. Lunch is a quiet affair and eaten alone surrounded by people who don't try to interact with you, sure the other kids are thinking, Told
Classes drags by, and the day ends.

“Mom,” you say, and she glances at you briefly, eyes mainly on the road. “Mom, there's a dead kid at school. A ghost.”

She blinks. “You met him? Is he nice?”

Betrayal stings. “Why, why didn't you tell me?” you demand, vision going hazy. “I, I looked so stupid trying to be his friend.”

The car takes a right. “Well, maybe he has something to say?” she offers, and you flinch. “Everyone deserves a friend, and everyone he knew is gone now. Tell me, how would you feel if no one wanted to be your friend because of what you are, hm?”

“But… But this isn't the same—”

Another right, then a left. “Was he mean to you?”

Your silence is answer enough.

“He's stuck, but adaptable. He'll eventually remember you, he's had a few friends over the years apparently, but if it's too much, no one will judge you,” she continues. “He won't even remember it by tomorrow.”

But I'll remember, you think.

“No one is forcing you, I'll put my foot up someone's butt if I have to,” she promises, and it startles a laugh out of you. Butt. “Ah, yes, teenage humor, never fails.”

“I love you, Mom,” you say, earnest.

She smiles. “And, I love you.”

The next day, you're already in your seat when Danny arrives. It's like the class is collectively holding their breath to see what you do, but all you do is smile at his wide eyed look.

“Oh, hello, new here?” he asks, and drops his backpack on his desk. Danny pauses after a moment, squints. “Do I know you from somewhere?”

You turn around in your seat. “Maybe, but I'm the new transfer student, Chaim,” you say, brightly.

Danny grins, the bewilderment fading from his face. “Oh, well, if no one’s said it yet, let me just say,” he starts, then chirps grandly, “Welcome to Casper High!”
A few days after. After. Y’know. There's a crackle over the intercom, and the Principal says, Students, please report to the auditorium in ten minutes. Thank you.

Danny shares bewildered looks with Sam and Tucker, but Mr. Lancer is clearing his throat, and the rest of the class are getting up from their seats, packing up. They follow suit, pressing out into the hallway in some semblance of order. Class after class slowly fill the space as they all make their way to the gym, stand after stand filling with confused and worried looks alike. Their class ends up in the back of a row of bleachers, and Danny blinks out over the sea of students.

“Wonder what's up,” Tucker muses, eyes glued to his PDA. He taps the screen, types something. “Don't see anything on the news, but.”

Sam shrugs, and Danny echoes the gesture. “Nothing good, I think,” she says, and makes a sharp gesture at Paulina two rows over, separated from the bulk of their class but surrounded by solemn faced friends. Kwan and Starr are missing from this picture. “Her mascara is running.”

Dread kindles in Danny’s chest.

“Hello everyone,” comes the Principal after the last class has seated, but no one verbally answers. “I, unfortunately, don’t have good news to have you all skipping class right now.” He clears his throat, and licks his lips. “It’s with a heavy heart I must announce the passing of a fellow student. He was the darling of our football team, Dash Baxter.”

Danny flinches amid the cries of people around him. Tucker sits straighter beside him, but Sam. Sam just stares ahead, unblinking, lips pressed firmly together.

“Starr DeLisle and Kwan Sie were witness to his passing, and as such are not present today. Please give them the respect they deserve when they return,” he continues, grimacing at the room now full of crying teenagers. “Anyone who needs to go home, please talk to your teacher, and we'll make sure your parents pick you up. I'm sorry, everyone, I really am.”

Everyone disassembles right after that. There are people crying, and some blank faced but trailing after teachers. Danny feels lost amongst these people who actually care about Dash, who know him outside of the bully that he is. Knew, was.

“C'mon,” Sam suddenly says, grabbing hold of both him and Tucker. She leads them toward the underneath of the bleachers, where she then sneaks them out of a door.

They don’t go home. Not until later, once the sun is beginning to go down, and Danny has eight different messages from his parents and Jazz. They skip the rest of the day at the park, spend it mainly just. Sitting. Together. Pressed close against the beat of the dwindling sun, the fall breeze.

“I don't remember going to bed last night,” Danny says. He must have been too tired, he'd even woken up in yesterday’s clothes.

“We know,” Tucker replies, eyes shut and head lolling back onto the bench.
Sam puts an arm over Danny’s shoulders, and he eases at the half hug. “Don’t worry about it,” she murmurs.

Danny doesn’t worry about it.

It seems to be the beginning of a trend, though. The years creep by, but so does the amount of people who seem to end up dead. Or missing. Or moved away, if they’re lucky enough. Kwan. Starr. Julie from math. Jared from earth science. Jackie from homeroom. Chaim from World History. Lamel from Spanish. Mr. Lancer, last year. A mayor his parents knew, two years ago. People continue to drop like flies, every funeral closed casket, and before Danny knows it, it’s the spring of his graduation year.

There’s barely two handfuls left to his entire graduating class.

These years haven’t been kind, not at all. Sam’s parents even threaten to move, but she threatened to run away if they did, come straight back to Amity Park. Tucker’s parents actually did, but only a city over. Danny and Sam see him on the weekend as often as they can once she learns to drive and Jazz takes pity on them, and it’s not the same, but then again… nothing seems to be. His own parents make noises a few times of uprooting, but never do. The portal is too important, so they just load Danny up with funny looking weapons, people and ghost orientated. Not that they’ve ever seen a ghost, just the remains of one or another. Something’s been eating them, his parents think. Might even be behind people going missing, turning up dead.

No one believes them though, but.

Danny might. He just… just might.

“Sam,” he croaks, riddled with nerves. He hasn’t been sleeping. He can’t be sleeping. Jazz has gone missing. “Sam, Sam, I think—”

She presses a finger to her lips, and he quiets. “I know,” she says, but his eyes are suddenly fixed on her fingernail.

The paint is chipped, the underneath dark with something, with something.

“I don’t remember going to bed last night,” he insists, but she’s turned back to looking at the sky above them, blanket wrapped around her shoulders. Danny can’t feel the cold seeping up from the hood of the car. “I don’t—” I don’t remember a lot of things, now.

“Tucker took care of it, don’t worry about it,” Sam says, smiles, and it startles a chuckle out of Danny when a particularly loud snore slips out from the car.

It’s spring break. They’re graduating soon.
Danny stops worrying about it.
deal

Chapter Notes

...a very old word prompt on tumblr...

It stares at her hand, bright green eyes narrowed and bottom lip drawn between its teeth. Its very sharp teeth.

Tucker’s bit off yelp from earlier rings in her ears, his gasped Bad idea, Sam—right before the rip in the swirling green light had reached out and ate him up. Before it spit this out in his place.

Sam’s confidence falters, wavers for a second, and its pupils sharpen, turn to slits, iris leeching a horrible red. The silver glow of its fire-flicker hair brightens, throws the burnt out shell of the metal lab into monstrous contrast, and quicker than she can blink, it slaps a thin clawed hand in hers, grip bruising.

A blistering tingle washes over her, her hair rising. A bad idea. The Fenton’s are going to be so pissed, but Sam doesn’t think it’ll compare to the Foley’s if she doesn’t get Tucker back, to the town itself once they hear that, that it’s happened again. She has to get Tucker back.

For his sake, for the Fenton’s sake.

Help me remember, it had said.

“Help me remember,” it repeats, the words curling oddly, and digs in its nails, draws blood. “Help me, and—”

“Help me get Tucker back,” Sam finishes, swallowing down her whimper, and.

It smiles, a hesitant imitation at life, and she hates how it softens the alien curve to its face, how it makes her think, It used to be someone and that’s all it wants to know.

To remember.

Lucky. Sam’s lucky. Ghosts far worst have slipped through the natural portals that randomly dot the town, have wanted worse. Done worse than melt a hole in the lab’s wall in apparent fright.

Should have just interned at Green Bay Conservation, she thinks, morosely, and smiles back with closed lips and sweat at her brow.
Danny fidgets in his seat, blue eyes darting around the office, and you sigh, shuffle the papers in your hand before flicking though them.

He’d seemed like the kind of students all professors wanted. He turned his work in on time, or asked for extensions with legitimate excuses, and participated in class to everyone’s benefit. You can say you quite like the kid, a funny gangly thing that seems to haunt the department at all hours, that you’re excited to see him go places once he graduates. You’ve yet to meet anyone who’s had anything to say contrary to the bright character seated in your office.

It’s a horrific sort of disappointment that you find yourself being that first person.

Plagiarism. And on the paper that consists the biggest chunk of his final grade in English. Not to mention the intellectual property theft the engineering and physics departments brought to your attention. But. But, you’re jaded enough to not let it get you too down. You have enough students come begging and demanding help in the last three week every semester, every year. You’ve had students get expelled before too, thinking that they’ll get away with stealing the ideas of dead people, of nearly obscure people. Sometimes they’re not even that clever.

Gotta give him props for trying harder than most, at least.

You pull his paper from the stack, and lay it to rest between you both. The red marking coats the crisp print liberally and mares the corner with a big, bright zero. Dr. Okeke had brought it by, thought you’d get a good read out of it, knowing you as he does. You would have, if anything had been sourced to their owners.

“Mr. Masters, I just want to say that I’m very disappointed, and that plagiarism of this scale has to be reported to the university. There’s nothing I can do about it,” you say, even as you think There’s nothing I would do about it. “Is there anything you’d like to say?”

His eyes go wide at the use of his last name, and then the color drains from his face. “W-What?” he laughs, nervously, and sits forward, gaze falling to his paper. “But, but I didn’t, Dr. Fong. Plagiarize anything, I mean.”

Disbelief curls your fingers, but also a rare fledgling of hope. “Oh? So you claim to say you wrote The Good, the Bad, and the Ghostly? Or built that pocket lazer you submitted to the university?”

He shakes his head. “Well, not really, the laser, but I just, um, improved upon an old idea,” he says, hands clutching tighter at his knees.

“That’s still theft to a degree, without permission,” you say, and frown, becoming a touch apprehensive at the wild look entering her eyes. “I’m sure Jetsam F. and the late Fentons would not approve—”
Danny flinches, recoils as if hit, and. You pause, stumbling to a halt. “You… You know about them?” he whispers, after a long moment, face turned away and hair hiding his eyes.

Well. You’ll admit the study of ghosts doesn’t have much to do with mathematics, but the works published by the late Fentons and Jetsam F. make for good idea fodder in creative fiction. You’re still a year or two away from publishing, but legitimate work and study on Ghosts is a very, very small field. Which, of course, meant Dr. Blau, as your co-author more interested in physics and engineering, would have known about the compact lasers they built, the weaponry meant to harm and corral ghosts, unlike you.

So, slowly, you say, “Yes,” unsure, and watch as Danny takes a shuddering breath, and nods.

Blurts, “I’m adopted,” in such a rush you almost miss it. You blink, astonished. “I, I took my guardian’s last name, but… but my real last name,” he continues, and seems to struggle with it,” my last name was Fenton.”

Oh.

That. That makes you want to believe, but. “I can’t take your word for it,” you say, gently, “If you can submit proof for the laser to the university, they’ll not penalize you for that, but that doesn’t explain your English paper.”

“I wrote the book,” he admits, miserably, “under pseudonym. I still study ghosts on break, but I didn’t… didn’t want anyone to know while I was in college.”

You so dearly want to believe, but. “You should have taken a moment to submit proof, instead of assuming it’d be okay. It’s not too late to do so, but it looks bad, Danny.”

“I didn’t think about it,” he whispers.

Forward thinking, not the easiest thing when it dregs up what no doubt had to be horrible memories. You’d read briefly about the explosion, the Fenton’s passing. Hadn’t really remembered until now, but they did have a son. A Danny Fenton.

“Don’t worry, just, just go home and get what you can to help prove it and I’ll be here tomorrow with the paperwork,” you say, and he jerks to attention, tears lining his eyes. “I’m sure your, erm, guardian will help you too, won’t he?”

They hadn’t looked alike, the few times you’ve seen Danny, and, well, not his father, together. You’d just assumed they were father and son regardless, but. Well. He cares for Danny, so that’s all that matters.

Danny nods, slowly. “Yeah, yeah he’s really looked out for me since. Since then. He’s family, old friends of my parents. I’ll have to convince he not to threaten a lawsuit, though…”

You just barely withhold a wince. Your degree is in calculus, but you’re not sure whether either side would really have a leg to stand on, but it wouldn’t be pretty, regardless.

“Tomorrow, bright and early,” you say, and give him an encouraging smile.

You like to be proven wrong, on occasion.

This time, you dearly hope you are.
End Notes

Thanks for reading! Comments and kudos are always welcome!

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