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Compromising Positions of the Not So Young and Elite

by rachelladeville

Summary

The events of the first two parts culminate in this last installment and we get to see what becomes of Sam, Dean and Cas.

Notes

I'm sure everyone who's been reading this story so far will notice the difference... this story is now being edited by MoniJune!

See the end of the work for more notes
Cas looks at his reflection in the mirror. The florescent light in the bathroom at the Airport Marriott doesn’t do him any favors. He stares for an extended moment considering what is different about his face now. It looks older, colder.

He was happy and healthy this morning… basking in the hot sun with Dean. Had his face really changed this much in twelve hours?

He knows it’s late. He’s tired and emotionally wrung out. He takes a deep breath, deciding it won’t do any good to continue staring at his reflection and expecting something to change. He brushes his teeth and considers a shower - but he’s far too drained to bother.

When he exits the bathroom, Dean is lying on the bed absorbed in his phone. “Your turn for the bathroom,” he says as he crosses to the bed and strips his clothes off.

Dean finishes typing out a text and by the time Cas is down to his boxers and crawling into bed, Dean’s heading to the bathroom. As Cas’ head hits the pillow, he hears bathroom door click shut.

It had been a very long day for both men. Once they’d decided to seek immediate medical attention, they were still at sea for over two hours while Cas guided the yacht back toward civilization.

Then, once they docked, they had several more hours ahead of them to get to the capital. All things considered… their stop at the Honduras Medical Center had been a waste of time. If they hadn’t stopped there, they could’ve made a commercial flight home instead of having to charter a plane.

By the time they’d arrived at the San Francisco airport, it was late and both men were exhausted. They’d barely spoken a word to each other since taking off from Tegucigalpa.

After making their flight arrangements, Cas had found Dean in the lounge and explained that he’d chartered a plane. Dean had asked why they didn’t just wait for the next commercial flight.
“It would have meant spending at least one night in the capital. I just wanted to get there… fast… and start getting some answers.”

“Seems like a waste of money to charter a plane when our money’s as tight as it is,” Dean commented.

“Maybe. But I used money you haven’t been counting, so I hope you can overlook it,” Cas sighed as he picked up Dean's glass and took a swig of his whiskey.

“What money haven’t I counted? I went over everything with a fine-toothed comb.”

“We rented out my condo, remember? I’ve been saving that… in case an emergency came up.”

“And this is an emergency?” he asked, finally looking at Cas.

“I hope not. I hope it’s a false alarm and you get the pleasure of rubbing it in my face that I’ve over-reacted,” Cas replied as he tried for a smile.

“Is there time to have another drink? Or are we leaving now?”

“An hour. We can head to the hangar whenever you’re ready.” Now it was Cas who couldn’t look up. He watched the floor as he waited to see if Dean was ordering another drink.

Cas saw Dean gesture to the bartender in his peripheral vision and slid onto the adjacent stool to wait. Neither man would speak again for quite some time.

Now, lying in a surprisingly comfortable bed and listening to Dean move about in the bathroom, Cas felt his eyes growing wet, the need to release tears was overwhelming. But he locked his body against it and tried to force his mind to other things.

It would be unacceptable for Dean to come out of the bathroom and find Cas crying. It wouldn’t be fair to Dean.

Lock it down he reprimanded himself.

Then, to avoid having to work so hard at controlling his face, he rolled over and faced away from Dean's empty side of the bed. When Dean joined him in the bed, he didn’t speak to Cas. What was there to say anyway?

Cas didn’t think he’d be able to sleep. He laid awake for quite some time. As did Dean, each in their own thoughts. But when morning came, it found them tangled together. Cas woke with himself wrapped up in Dean's arms. So starved for the man’s touch, he simply stayed there to bask in it, unmoving until Dean stirred and stretched.

It was still quiet between them as they dug into their duffel bags and got dressed. The clothes they had along were not seasonally appropriate and it was Dean who mentioned it out loud.

“Can we stop and buy some clothes before the hospital?” Dean asked as they were exiting the room.

“Sure,” Cas replied as he chanced a glance at his man and tried to smile for him.

When the elevator dinged, they stepped on and nodded to the current passengers. “Does anyone know we’re in town?” Dean asked Cas.

“I hadn’t told anyone yet. You?”
“Nope. But I’d like to call mom,” Dean said quietly, “It would be nice to sleep at her place tonight instead of here. I just don’t know how to tell her why we’re back…,” he trailed off.

They hopped in the rental car and by the time they stopped for clothes, it was the middle of the day by the time they got there. Cas had been in a fog as they traveled; but the city seemed to bring him to life.

First of all, it was cold. Bitterly cold. He’d forgotten how icy the wind could be here – packing a double punch now that his body had adjusted to the heat and humidity of Central America.

Second, it was clean. Even the places that he used to think of as unsavory looked pristine compared to the shanties and shacks that were common in Honduras – layers of dirt and rust having settled on everything.

Third, it was safe. Unlike Honduras - if anything happened - the police, fire department and ambulance were just a phone call away.

The hospital was even better than he’d remembered it. They’d been gone just over two years. It may as well have been ten years considering how foreign it all seemed.

Cas was spellbound as he waited for Dean, eyes wandering around the waiting room. The poorest in this country who had no insurance or money to see a doctor huddled in the ER waiting room… their best option for medical care.

But, aside from the occasional homeless person… the startlingly vast majority of America’s poor were still far better off than the average rural citizen of Honduras.

Cas watched a trashy woman and her three kids sitting in chairs. His eyes lingered for only a moment before he easily labeled her as someone who was scraping the bottom of the barrel. Yet, he could say with certainty that her kids wouldn’t be sleeping on a dirt floor that night – and that her baby had a crib. In fact, it was likely that this family had been to a McDonalds three times or more in the past month.

His mind flashed to Krizia, the young single mother who’d moved into a resort apartment with her baby… from a dirt floor shack leaning up against her parents’ shack.

The differences between life here and life there… it was startling.

As his time in the waiting room grew longer, he began to pace. That’s when Dean emerged and looked around the waiting room for him.

Cas stepped up and asked Dean how it went.

“Pretty much like you figured it would,” he said resolutely. “They want to rule out cancer. They set me up with an oncologist tomorrow at 11:00.”

Cas nodded, because he couldn’t speak. They were at UCSF… if there were nothing to really be worried about… Dean's appointment would be weeks out. The doctor who had seen him was worried.

“Cas?”

“Mhmm?”

“Why don’t you call mom and see if she wants to have dinner somewhere.”
Cas dug out his phone and called Mary. He spared half a second to wonder why Dean wasn’t calling her himself. Then he realized – Dean couldn’t make the call. It was all over his face.

Mary answered with, “Cas?”

“Hi Mary. Is this a bad time?”

“Not at all – is everything ok?”

“Well, we’re in town and we wondered if you might like to have dinner?”

She paused, clearly trying to piece together the information she was getting (or not getting).

Cas was calling her, not Dean. Her son and his lover were back in America with no advance warning. Her question of if things were ok had gone unanswered.

Cas was silent and waited for her response, mostly because he really didn’t know what Dean wanted him to tell her.

He knew Mary well enough to know that she wouldn’t push. She’d understand that now wasn’t the time for questions and save them for later. After an elongated pause she answered, “I’d love to. Why don’t you boys just come on over for dinner instead of going out?”

“That sounds perfect, thank you.”

“Yeah… I bet you boys could use something home cooked. Any requests?” she asked kindly.

Cas looked at Dean who was pacing nearby. “Pie. He’ll want pie.”

There was another awkward silence followed by Mary clearing her throat, “What would you like Cas?”

*A hug.* “Whatever you make will be delicious, as always. What time would you like us to come by?”

“Why don’t you just come as soon as you’re ready? You’re welcome to stay here while you’re in town… or have you already settled somewhere?”

“We’d love to stay, thank you.”

“Okay, Cas. I will look forward to seeing you both soon.”

“Okay. We’ll head that way now. Shouldn’t take us long.”

The ride to St. Francis Wood wasn’t too bad since rush hour wouldn’t hit for a while. They pulled the rental car into the circle drive and parked, grabbing their small bags from the back seat. Mary was on the porch waiting for them and stepped out into the cold to wrap her arms around them.

Cas loved the way Mary didn’t hug Dean first and then hug him. She simply engulfed both of them in her loving arms and pressed them to her firmly.

“Oh, my boys! I’m so glad to see you,” she said softly, then she led them into the house. It smelled wonderful, like apple cinnamon, and Cas noticed belatedly that there were holiday decorations up. He had to pause a moment to remember that it was early December.
Mary led them up to Dean’s room, asking if they had any laundry they’d like done. Clearly she’d noticed they were traveling light.

As they entered Dean’s room, Cas noticed that a much larger bed dominated the room now. There was a new TV in there too.

“What’s all this?” asked Dean.

“Oh, when you boys decided to move south, I bought a better bed. It’s one thing to sleep in that tiny bed one night a year on Christmas… but I had a hunch that if you were visiting from so far away you’d probably be staying longer on your visits. I actually bought this before you left, but it was backordered so it came just after you’d gone.”

“Thanks, Mom,” Dean said softly as he slid back into another hug. His grip on his mother was tight and her eyes opened over his shoulder and connected with Cas’. He couldn’t bring himself to look away.

“Well,” she said as she disentangled from Dean, “you guys get settled, ok? Dinner will be a little bit. Rest up a little if you’d like and just come down when you’re ready,” her demeanor was calm as she left the room, but Cas had seen her fear when he looked into her eyes. And she’d seen his too. He was sure of it.

Dean dropped his bag to the floor and flopped onto the new bed. Cas did the same on the other side. They were quiet for a bit, but then Dean rolled onto his side, facing Cas.

Cas turned too and slid an arm around Dean’s waist to pull him closer. That’s how they stayed until Mary called up that dinner was ready.

They settled around the table and dished up meatloaf with potatoes and gravy.

“Does Sam know you’re in town?” she asked them.

“No one knows anything yet, Mom,” said Dean, and then he returned to eating.

“We’ll know more tomorrow,” supplied Cas – trying to reassure Mary without overstepping.

“What happens tomorrow?” she asked him point blank.

Cas looked at Dean and saw the man give him a resigned nod. So Cas took a deep breath and answered her. “We see an oncologist at UCSF.”

It was very quiet then. Cas looked up and glanced between Mary and Dean. Both were looking at their plates, unmoving.

Cas took a bite. The food was delicious. He hadn’t realized he’d been hungry… he’d had no appetite since noon yesterday on the yacht. But now, in the quiet, he ate.

There was cherry pie for dessert. Dean had two slices.

When dinner was over, Dean poured them each a stiff drink and settled by the fireplace. Cas helped Mary clear the table as he sipped his, watching Dean out of the corner of his eye.

It seemed that Dean was giving Cas a few minutes alone with Mary. He must sense that one of them needed it. As they made trips from the dining room to the kitchen, Mary stayed quiet. But once the sink was running and the sound of clanking dishes was filling the kitchen she asked Cas
some questions.

“When did this come up?”

“Yesterday.”

“That’s sudden. What happened?”

“Um…” Cas decided to just lay it out there, “His testicle is swollen. It’s painful. The doctor in Tegucigalpa gave him an antibiotic and said to come back if that didn’t clear it up. I brought him here. He thinks I’m over-reacting. I hope I am.”

“Thank you, Cas. I hope it’s nothing. But if it’s not… UCSF is a wonderful facility… recognized nationally…,” her voice trailed off as she realized the triteness of what she was saying.

She looked at him and knew what he really needed from her. She dried her hands off on a towel and wrapped her arms around him tightly in a warm hug. He snuggled into it as if she were his own mother. Hell, she may as well be. His own mother had never hugged him so lovingly.

Jess looked down at Sam. He looked so small and pathetic on the floor… latched onto her and begging. She’d never seen him like this. She wanted to hug and comfort him, but as she looked down, the evidence of why she shouldn’t littered the floor around him.

“Who is that woman, Sam? Is that Meg?”

“Yes.”

“You said she was a friend. How long have you been fucking her?”

“Since prep school. We’ve been friends with benefits all that time, up til I graduated. I cut if off after that.”

“So you haven’t slept with her since last June?”

“Before that, actually,” he said as he sat back on his heels to look up at her, “I told her shortly after Valentines that I had met someone that I planned to be faithful to and that we would have to be just friends.”

“You cut her off after… what five or six years… to be with someone exclusively?”

“Yes.”

“And you had never done that before? Ever?”

“No. Once I met Meg… we never stayed away from each other for long.”

“Who was the girl you stopped seeing her for? The one who gave you that watch you wear?”

“Yes. Ruby.”
“And when you ended things with Ruby you didn’t go back to fucking Meg?”

“No. I saw no one between Ruby and you,” he said firmly. “I was honest with you, Jess, from the beginning. You are different. I want to make a life with you. I’m faithful.”

She didn’t answer, but she didn’t move to leave either.

“Jess, I love you. I know this isn’t easy for you… but this…,” he said as he gestured to the lewd photographs scattered out on the floor, “… this was way before you. This isn’t me anymore. This isn’t who I am when I’m with you.”

Jess bent over and picked up the one picture that had really pushed her over the edge. The one showing a soulless version of Sam with a depraved, leering smile on his face.

She kicked his hand off of her ankle and held it to his face. “Who is this man?” she asked him. “I never met him before.”

“You never will,” he told her. “I meant it,” he said as he considered the photo, “that lost man is me… without you.”

“Okay then,” she said as she let it fall to the floor, “get rid of these. I never want to see them again.”

With that she turned and headed for the bathroom. She was in there for quite a while. Long enough for Sam to wipe his face dry and shred of the envelope of pictures. He walked over to the huge window that faced the darkened city and watched the lights twinkle out before him. He heard her heels as she walked out of the bathroom and he moved towards her.

When their eyes met, he saw permission and reached out for her. It felt so good to hold her. He’d been so terrified that she’d walk out on him – and take the life he’d been dreaming of with her. But here she was. In his arms.

“Thank you,” he whispered into her hair, “for staying with me.”

She stepped back from him. “I’m not staying, Sam. I’m just not leaving.”

He looked at her, wondering what she meant.

“I don’t know how I’m going to feel about all this in the future. But for tonight… I’m not going anywhere.”

“That’s more than I deserve,” he told her honestly.

Cas was looking around another waiting room. Dean had been called back almost two hours ago. Cas was pacing again when he saw Dean appear in the doorway. Dean moved toward him and their eyes locked as he came closer.

“How did it go?” asked Cas.

“Still going,” Dean said firmly, “but I’m done leaving you in the waiting room.” With that he took
Cas by the hand and moved back through the door. The nurse holding the door open stepped back as they passed by and then gestured down the hall, indicating them to the left.

“Right here, gentlemen,” the nurse said as she ushered them into an office with a desk and two chairs facing it. Dean and Cas settled into the chairs. Dean was still holding Cas’ hand. His grip was firm, and Cas felt he owed it to Dean to look him in the eye now. He did, but it was hard.

After years together, they read each other so well that a long look between them was an incredibly intimate thing; so much passing between them without speaking. There could be no secrets when their eyes met like this.

The door opened and then closed again as the doctor entered. He carried a chart with him and dropped it onto the desk before reaching over it and extending a hand towards them. “You must be Cas,” he smiled.

“Yes,” said Cas as he stood and shook the hand being offered him.

“I’m Dr. Peter Carlton,” he said graciously. “It’s nice to meet you.”

Cas sat back down then and waited expectantly.

“Gentlemen, I’d like to get started by going over the basics. I don’t want to overwhelm you with a lot of technical jargon. I’m going to start by giving you the very basic information. Once we’ve gone over the ‘big picture’ of what’s happening then you can ask all the questions you’d like and we will get more specific.”

The boys glanced at each other and then nodded to the doctor.

“To start, we’ve looked at your ultrasound and lab work. All indications confirm a cancer diagnosis. Our next step is to remove the tumor and the testicle that it’s attached to as well as some surrounding tissue. This is known as an orchiectomy.”

Cas felt Dean stiffen.

The doctor kindly paused to let that sink in. Cas wanted to grab a pen and start taking notes. He resisted, not wanting to annoy Dean.

Dr. Carlton went on, “Once we’ve removed the tumor we can get the cells under a microscope and have a better idea of what we’re dealing with. We’ll then use a process called molecular profiling to determine what kind of treatments your unique cancer cells will be the most responsive to.”

Cas and Dean glanced at each other and then back to the Doctor.

“The next step is usually a lymph node dissection. That way we can see if there’s been any spread.” He looked back and forth between Dean and Cas before continuing, “If the surgery and dissection are successful, your overall prognosis is very, very good.” He smiled at them and nodded before continuing, “If the surgery fails to remove all the cancerous cells, we will have to operate again.”

Now, Dr. Carlton leaned forward making eye contact with only Dean.

“You have come to one of the best cancer treatment centers in the country. Our surgeons are some of the best. I myself have over twenty years of experience in this area. I will not make you any promises, but I will tell you that statistically, the survival rate for this type of cancer is over 95%. That should be encouraging.”
“And,” he went on to say, “Even if the lymph node dissection reveals that the cancer has spread out into the abdomen, the survival rate will still be over 90%. We don’t see a drop below the 75% survival rate until cancer is found to be metastasized into the upper extremities of the body.”

“Now,” he said firmly, “as proven by the statistics, our best weapon is the speed with which we begin treatment. We’d like to schedule the surgery immediately, before you leave today. Now, what questions do you have for me?”

You could have heard a pin drop. Dean wasn’t even breathing. Cas looked over at Dean who finally sucked in a breath and turned away from Cas to face the doctor.

“You’re going to take out my testicle?”

“Yes. As soon as possible.”

“What will happen to me after that?”

“As I’ve mentioned, the next step will likely be a lymph node dissection.”

“No, I mean,” pressed Dean, “what will happen to me after that?” he gestured to his lap.

“Oh, well, we can add a prosthetic if you like,” he said as he reached behind him into a cabinet. “Some men prefer not to have one put in as it carries a slightly higher risk,” he passed Dean a box of fake balls to look at, “but other men just feel better if things are balanced.”

“And how will I function, without my real one?”

“Very similarly to now. Your testosterone levels may drop. If they go too low we can always put you on hormone therapy.”

“Hormone therapy…” trailed Dean.

“Yes. At your age it’s possible that you won’t need it. But as you age the likelihood that it will be necessary increases. You’ll also have a much lower sperm count. It’s likely that your libido will drop and it may be significantly harder, if not impossible for you to father children.”

“Um… I hate to even ask… but how much of a libido drop are we talkin’ about here, doc?”

“Well, it’s different from person to person. With this combination of surgeries some erectile dysfunction, ejaculation problems, a reduced sex drive, or some combination of those are possible. If you experience any of these issues we can try to minimize them to a degree with medication. I would say there’s a very good chance that you’ll still have a very fulfilling sex life after the surgery.”

“Um, yeah… I’m gonna ask you to give me the worst case scenario.”

“Honestly, Mr. Winchester, the worst case scenario is that you are unable to achieve or maintain an erection. It’s also possible that even if you are able to participate in sex and achieve an orgasm you may find the experience to be significantly diminished compared to those you’ve had prior to surgery. It’s also possible that you may find your sex drive is lower or perhaps almost entirely gone.”

“Jesus!”

“Mr. Winchester,” he said patiently, “I understand this is distressing. But you’ve asked me for the
worst case. It’s also possible that you will only be minimally affected by the procedure… you might find that you’re having sex shortly after being released from the hospital and that it’s just as good as it ever was.”

“You have any statistics on that?”

Dr. Carlton huffed a laugh and smiled calmly. “I’m afraid not. But remember, as men age, many of these things happen naturally… a lack of drive, an inability to maintain an erection or achieve an orgasm… but we have medications we can try out for those types of medical problems.”

Dean looked so miserable in his chair.

Cas sat forward and addressed Dr. Carlton for the first time, “What other changes can we expect to see in his day to day life after the surgery?”

“Well, the recovery time from a lymph node dissection is roughly six to eight weeks. After that, his normal daily activities can be reintroduced as tolerated. Other than the obvious possibility of the surgery being unsuccessful in removing all the cancer cells, this really isn’t something that’s going to interfere with daily life in the long run.”

“What are the chances,” asked Cas, “of a reoccurrence down the road?”

“Ah, excellent question,” smiled Dr. Carlton. “If the surgery is successful then we’ll check his levels periodically to be sure there’s no return of cancer cells. When he’s been free of the cancer long enough he gets a clean bill of health.”

Cas looked to Dean, “Do you have any more questions?”

“It’s this or I die of cancer, right?”

Cas huffed a small laugh at Dean's attempt to be funny.

“Well, doc, when are we going to do this?” Dean asked.

When they left the medical center they had appointments set for everything. Today was Wednesday. Dean was to come back to this office on Friday for the orchiectomy and then the following Tuesday he’d be checking into the hospital for the lymph node dissection. He’d be in the hospital for about a week and then there’d be follow appointments.

As they climbed back into the rental car, Cas felt better. Dean’s prognosis was good. When they got back to the house and shared the news with Mary, she seemed to share Cas’ viewpoint.

Dean continued to mope. It was understandable… Dean was a very sexual creature… the reality of a significantly reduced, possibly non-existent sex life was going to take some getting used to.

Cas could give two fucks. If he never saw Dean get hard again it would be fine – as long as he didn’t actually lose him.

To cheer Dean and pass the time, Cas suggested returning the rental car and getting baby out of the garage. They walked to the garage and Cas watched as Dean pulled the tarp off.

“Hey baby…” crooned Dean sweetly as he ran his hands over the sleek black metal, “didja miss me?”

Cas grinned widely as he stepped away, “Right behind you,” he said as he slid into the driver’s
seat of their rental car.

He heard the heavy engine roar to life and then saw it roll proudly out of the garage. Cas fell in line behind Dean and pulled out the gate behind him.

Dean felt better immediately as his baby sputtered to life beneath him. Despite the cold cut of the wind, he rolled down his window and smiled as he pulled out of the garage. He glanced at his man in the car behind him when they hit the street.

As he merged onto the expressway, he turned on the radio. His mind wandered as he drove. It was quite a drive to the airport this time of day, but it was sweet relief to have some time alone. No one was looking at him now and monitoring his reactions. He relaxed little by little as he drove.

On some level, he’d known that this wasn’t a false alarm. As soon as he’d touched his balls on the boat he’d known there was a serious problem. Cas’ insistence on returning to the US for treatment had been smart, but Dean had been frustrated by it. He hadn’t been sure why.

In hindsight it was easy to see why. If they’d just taken the antibiotics and gone home… he would’ve had ten more days to hope that it was nothing. Ten more days of deluding himself that it was no big deal. After all, ignorance is bliss. And Dean is a master in the art of denial.

By forcing Dean to act quickly, Cas had taken away the small window of time that Dean would have spent not knowing that something was REALLY wrong. Ten days of sex… that’s like five, six, maybe seven fucks with Cas.

Now he was losing a ball – the day after tomorrow. The next fuck… could be the last.

“I think I’m going to go home,” Jess said quietly. “This has been a lot to process.”

Sam’s gut clenched hearing her say it. He had the overwhelming feeling that if she walked out the door – she wouldn’t be back. He felt it imperative that he keep her here.

“Please don’t go… I’ll do anything you want. I’ll rub your back while you think about it. I’ll take you out to help you forget about it. I’ll lock myself away and leave you alone if you want. Just please don’t go.”

“Why?”

“Just, please?”

“Damn. I really hate when you give me those puppy dog eyes,” she said tersely. “Fine. I’ll stay. But don’t hover, ok?”

“Ok,” he said quietly, “I’ll make some dinner.”

She nodded and moved to the bedroom, tugging off her work clothes and putting on a comfy pair of pants and one of Sam’s hoodies. His smell lingered on it and tugged on her heart a little.
She crawled up on the bed and pulled a pillow under her head – flipping channels on the TV looking for something, anything to distract her.

When Sam came in, bringing her pasta and wine on a tray, she patted the bed as an invitation to join her. He scuttled up next to her gladly but wisely kept his distance as she ate, pretending to be interested in what was on television. As wine and carbs hit her system she began to feel better quickly.

After all, she’d known who Sam was when she met him. She went out with him anyway. Fell in love anyway. And he was right… he’d been nothing but honest with her. He even warned her about this very scenario. There was no reason at all not to trust him.

She glanced over at him; he was adorable. She thumped his foot with hers and when he looked at her, she gave him a smile and watched as his entire body relaxed with it.

She turned back to the TV and finished her food, pretending she hadn’t noticed the way his chin quivered. She didn’t need to see him cry again tonight.

By the time Cas climbed into baby with Dean at the airport, he was feeling much better. He tilted his head in an invitation for Cas to slide closer. Cas smiled and slid over, Dean's arm draped over the back of the seat behind him and his hand resting comfortably on Dean's thigh as he drove.


“I would like that,” said Cas, “but I think Mary is expecting us to come back. I don’t want to leave her alone tonight.”

Dean pulled his arm in tightly around Cas’ shoulders in a quick squeeze. “You're right,” he nodded, relaxing his arm back on the seat behind Cas, “But why don’t you call Anna and see if she and Michael want to come over and play cards tonight?”

“That sounds perfect,” agreed Cas, pulling out his phone and texting Anna.

When they arrived back at the house, Mary had dinner going. The three settled down at the kitchen table and had pork chops and baked potatoes. Shortly after, when they were hovered around a teetering Jenga game, Cas got the reply from Anna that they’d be over shortly.

When the pair arrived, hugs were exchanged and Anna asked why she hadn’t been told they were coming.

“Impromptu visit,” smiled Cas. “Just needed a decent cheeseburger!” he joked.

Dean smiled and said, “Yeah… and a visit to the doctor once every decade or so isn’t a bad idea either.”

Anna immediately zeroed in on Dean. “What?”

“What?” he parroted back to her.

“Spill it Dean,” Anna said firmly as she settled at the table and began shuffling cards.
“I have cancer,” he said as she began to deal. He watched her almost miss a beat.

“Brain cancer?” she asked him. “It would explain so much.” They all laughed and then Anna stopped for a moment and watched Dean until he gave her the real answer.

“Testicular.”

She began to deal again. “What do you know so far?”

“Not much,” he said calmly. “We’ll know more on Friday when they take the tumor out. Unfortunately, it’s attached to one of my balls so that has to come out too.”

Mary rolled her eyes at Dean’s crass humor and moved to the kitchen to get drinks for the guests. Dean looked at Anna sharply.

“You drop the ‘F-word’ over dinner with Dorothy Holmes… but I tell you I’m losing half my manhood and you’ve got nothing?” he teased her, “Not even a ‘shit’ or a ‘dammit’?”

“It seems disproportionate,” Cas agreed teasingly with a smile tugging the corner of his mouth.

“I know!” Dean responded to Cas, grinning, “I expected something…” pressed Dean. “Anna, don’t my balls matter to you at all?” he was full on smirking now as he goaded her.

“Whatever you say, Mounds,” Anna smiled.

Cas and Dean looked at each other with question marks in their eyes. If that was a joke… they didn’t get it.

Anna continued to Deal and winked at Michael. Mary was back and passing out beers to everyone and depositing a bowl of chips on the table. “What are we playing?”

“Spoons!” shouted Dean and Cas together.

“Mom,” smiled Dean, “what have you got for shots?”

“Umm… hang on,” she said, heading back to the kitchen.

“Deal her in,” laughed Dean as he reached around the table slowly clinking his bottle neck with everyone in a cheers, “thanks for comin’ over guys. It’s great to see you.”

“What is that?” Dean gaped as he clinked with Anna.

“Deal her in,” laughed Dean as he reached around the table slowly clinking his bottle neck with everyone in a cheers, “thanks for comin’ over guys. It’s great to see you.”

“What is that?” Dean gaped as he clinked with Anna.

“Well,” said Dean loudly and slapping Michael on the back, “it’s about fucking time!”

The group laughed and Dean reddened a bit when he caught his mother’s eye… “Sorry, Mom. I had to get an ‘F-bomb’ out since Anna dropped the ball.”

They played a few rounds, and soon Mary had lost enough rounds to be equally as buzzed and noisy as the rest of them. When Dean finally lost a round, Anna shoved the bottle his way and said, “Shot for the loser, Mounds!”
Mary gaped at Anna and then burst out laughing. She dropped her head to the table and continued laughing – slapping her palm on the table top. “Mounds!” she repeated, looking up at Anna, “MOUNDS!”

The ladies were dying in a fit of laughter. “What?” said the men in response. “What am I missing?” Dean asked.

Anna and Mary leaned in together and began to sing and old commercial jingle, “… cause Almond Joy’s got nuts! Mounds don’t!”

The laughter continued late into the evening as they played. Anna filled them in on the engagement, which was now official and the wedding date was set for next June. She said they were hoping to take their honeymoon at Niagara Falls, and she inquired if Dean and Cas would be able to make it back for the wedding.

“We wouldn’t miss it,” assured Dean as he passed behind her on his way to the kitchen and as he said it, he leaned in and whispered in her ear, “I told you you’d get to have a real wedding one day.”

Cas watched from across the table as Dean whispered something to Anna that made her blush beautifully, and he smiled as Dean's eyes moved up to fix on his from across the table.

Anna and Michael had to head out shortly after midnight, having a busy day in the morning. Once they were gone, the boys sent Mary to bed and took care of the mess for her. They were pretty buzzed and soon their friendly banter turned into towel snapping and water flicking. The playful mood stayed with them as they turned out the lights and headed up to Dean's old room.

Once the door was closed, Cas immediately looked for a place to plug in his phone. “Dean, look!” he said with a grin, “Your mom put a dock in here…,” he was sliding his phone into it as he spoke, “you have a request?”

“Zep,” laughed Dean.

Cas leaned in and picked Led Zeppelin from his collection and set it to play on random. The rat-a-tat and light acoustic guitar of “Ramble On” filled the quiet as Dean moved to turn off the lights. Then, two silvery silhouettes moved toward each other in the dark. The streams of moonlight that filtered in through the blinds illuminated the bed beneath them and they reached for each other just as the music swelled. Dean smiled to himself. Getting laid in his childhood bedroom… was that ever gonna lose its novelty?

Dean felt strong arms wrap around his waist and roll him to the top. He kicked the covers to the bottom of the bed as he went and watched as Cas’ lithe body took on a bluish tint in the soft glow of the moon. He ducked his head to kiss… soft supple lips and a playful tongue rose to meet him. Dean found himself getting lost in the kiss, not even thinking, just melting together with his lover and losing track of anything but the feel of their mouths moving together in a passionate exchange of love that slowly gave way to lust as it built.

The song changed to “Heartbreaker,” which brought with it a faster tempo and one of Dean’s all-time favorite guitar riffs.

Cas broke their kiss and lurched to latch onto his nipple from beneath him. Dean released a breath as he felt indulgent passion roll out of his body and be replaced by quivering, thrumming need.

Cas was growing stiff against his thigh and he couldn’t help but tip his head forward into the mop
of Cas’ unruly hair and inhale his scent deeply as his lover worked over his nipples like it was going to take all night. Maybe it would.

Dean rolled his hips forward and lifted his body, seeking, until he found his shaft sliding along next to Cas’ where it belonged. His man’s body curled upward as they moved together.

Cas was working Dean’s nipples to the edge of their sensitivity, and he whispered to his lover, gruffly asking him to bite them. Then he focused on trying to hold back his answering grunt when his body zinged in response to the perfect sparks of pain that shot through him when Cas did what he was asked.

Cas rolled him, then, back to the bottom. Pressed his weight onto Dean and rolled his tongue down Dean’s abdomen, tugging the tingles with him as he went. Dean’s head dropped to the pillow as he relaxed and waited to feel the wet heat of Cas’ mouth descending on his shaft. But it was slow in coming.

The song had changed. A slow drum beat and blues guitar filled the space now – a slow and sexy progression that changed Cas’ tempo, too… he always followed the music.

He laid out smooth licks along Dean’s stiff member in time with the strumming of the guitar as “Since I’ve Been Loving You” played in the background. It was a sensual song, and Cas’ ministrations had Dean rolling his hips along with the easy slide of the guitar.

As the chord progressions changed, Cas moved with them, making love to his cock with his mouth. He artfully pulled his tongue along it, first sucking it in and then releasing it slowly. Pulling it up and then letting it slide back down. His fingers were working now too. As Cas slid a leg between Dean’s he felt himself move to accommodate, wondering what Cas had in mind to do to him tonight.

Then the music began to build and grow heavy, Dean felt Cas plunge his tongue into his crack and seek out his hole. He spread wider and pushed upward – wanting to open himself more – feel more. His cock was lying calmly on him now as his lover worked him over from between his legs, tongue growing rough, needy and demanding as Dean clenched his jaw and tried to hold back his moans.

He was glad for the music… it covered a lot of the noises that he would’ve normally been worried Mary would hear.

Cas’ thick shock of black hair moved artfully between the vee of Dean's spread legs and he found it impossible not to thread his fingers into it. When he could stand no more, he gave a tug and pulled his lover to him.

Cas moved to kiss his neck. But Dean wasn’t having it. He didn’t give a fuck where the man’s mouth had been. He put his own to it and sucked Cas’ tongue into his mouth. He was overcome with desire and when he finally released the man’s tongue to him, he whispered, “Are you going to fuck me Cas?”

“I’m going to do whatever I’m told,” Cas whispered back to him.

Dean didn’t hesitate, “Ride me Cas. I love it when you ride me.”

Cas moved to his knees, straddling Dean and easing himself back onto Dean's spit-slick dick.

“Ugh, fuck, Cas!” Dean cried out as he felt Cas slowly slide down on him with no lube and no prep. It felt incredible but even halfway drunk, Dean worried that he was hurting his lover.
“Cas…,” he whispered urgently, “I have lube in my bag,” but Cas just shook his head and leaned into it, sliding home the last little bit and then rising up again. Dean was overwhelmed with sensation. It was so tight and so gritty, dirty, good.

Every time Cas slid back down, Dean thought he might blow. “Cas… please,” he breathed, “don’t wanna hurt you….”

Cas covered Dean's mouth with his hand to silence him. Even though it was dark, Dean could see Cas clearly enough. He could see the grimace on his face and feel the stiffness of his body as it sank down on Dean. This was hurting Cas. A lot.

Dean shook his head no. Cas nodded his in a “yes,” keeping his hand firmly over Dean's mouth, “This is how I want it Dean. The more it hurts, the more I'll remember.”

He met Cas’ eyes and they were wet with tears, ready to overflow. “Just in case this is the last time… I want to remember… I never want to forget this, Dean,” he said as the tears started to roll down his cheeks. “I want to remember how you feel in me always… I’m never… never going to forget how you feel.”
I'm sure everyone who's been reading this story so far will notice the difference... this story is now being edited by MoniJune!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Jess was cold and had a stiff neck. She moved to turn over, but there was a heavy arm draped over her chest. She opened her eyes and looked around. The TV was playing an infomercial and Sam was sprawled across the bed with one arm and one leg draped over her.

As her brain came online, the first images it flashed to her were from the pictures. She saw Sam’s dick in someone else’s mouth… between someone else’s legs. Images passed through her mind quickly, flashing from one to the next… handcuffs… riding crop… vibrator… lipstick… ugh. A sickening nauseous feeling swept over Jess, and her stomach roiled. Her body’s reaction brought anger to the forefront of her mind and gave her the oomph she needed to shove Sam’s heavy limbs off of her.

No sooner was she free – she was sprinting for the bathroom. She fell to the floor in front of the toilet, a pile of elbows and knees as she retched into it. Her hair was everywhere and she scrambled to pull it back from the mess, off the rim. What a mess. As she came up for air, the smell hit her and she heaved again.

When her stomach was finally empty she flopped back against the wall, breathing deeply. Her limbs were shaky and held the strength of wet noodles. She managed to lean forward and flush – holding her breath as the rank air swirled around her. When it was still, she allowed herself to breathe again.

Unfortunately, her hair was full of sour slimy vomit and the smell didn’t dissipate, it added to the terrible taste in her mouth and tempted her stomach to heave again.

Jess forced herself to stagger to her feet and turn on the shower. She stripped and stepped in while it was still cold, for the sake of getting the slime off as quickly as possible.

Only when she was shampooing did the scent of soap finally overpower the stench of sick. She breathed easier then. As she cataloged herself, she had to wonder if the food she’d eaten last night was bad somehow or if her violent puking was simply the result of the visual images she’d awakened to. Maybe a delayed reaction that she’d managed to stave off when she’d initially seen the shocking photos? She was uncertain of why she’d reacted so violently to them now; as opposed to when she’d first seen them.

When her thoughts began to become repetitious, circling, she decided to simply do her best to push them from her mind. She promised herself not to dwell on the images and try to keep her mind on other things. As she finished washing up, she saw Sam’s silhouette on the other side of the opaque shower door. He appeared to be cleaning her mess. Damn straight he could clean the mess, her inner voice asserted.

He was gone from the bathroom when she stepped out of the shower, but he’d left a towel and t-
shirt for her on the sink.

She was toweling her damp hair as she walked back out into the bedroom. The sun was just starting to come up, the sky lightening. Sam was perched on the bed, which was turned down, and a glass of water was on the nightstand with a small plate of soda crackers.

She moved to the bed on weak legs and flopped into it.

“How are you feeling?” he asked cautiously.

She gave him the look. The one that said, “How do you think I’m feeling you dumbass?” without actually having to say the words out loud.

“Sorry. Was that because of my behavior or my cooking?” he asked – trying to lighten the mood.

“Jury’s still out,” she answered quietly, “I feel like I could sleep for hours more.”

“Sleep then,” he said quietly as he pressed a kiss to her forehead, “Is there anything I can do?” he asked her, “Backrub? Foot rub? Anything?”

“Yes, you kiss-ass, both,” she said playfully, meeting his eye for the first time.

Sam smiled, glad that she was starting to joke with him. He pulled her hair back gently and spread it out on the pillow and away from her shoulders. Then he began gently rubbing her soft skin. As she began to relax he moved to her scalp and back down and continued to touch her lovingly even after he knew she’d fallen back asleep.

Cas woke in Dean’s arms again. They’d had a great night and Cas felt bad when he recalled that he’d let Dean see him cry. During sex. Of all the times to cry…

He wanted to stay, nestled into the crook of Dean’s arm, but he had to pee. So he rolled out of bed and into the bathroom, pondering what they would do today. While showering, shaving and brushing his teeth Cas tried to think of some things to do with Dean to pass the day. Things that would be fun and keep his mind off of tomorrow. He considered everything from taking Mary out to get her Christmas tree to holiday shopping, a trip to the zoo, massages, going to visit friends or even something radical like skydiving. But nothing really felt right. As he towed off he consoled himself that Dean would likely have something he wanted to do today anyway.

When he was finished in the bathroom, Dean was still sleeping. So Cas sat down in the old recliner in the corner with his laptop. With Dean’s soft snoring as his background music, he checked in at work. It took over an hour to get his emails cleared and answer the questions from Roberto and Sunni.

While he was at it, he drafted a separate email to them to let them know that there was a medical emergency and that he and Dean would be gone for longer than anticipated. He didn’t give any specifics or even mention who was affected. He’d talk to Dean about that later and they’d decide together what to tell the staff. After tomorrow, they’d know a lot more about what to expect for
Dean’s treatment.

Dean was starting to stir, and Cas watched him over the lid of his laptop. He was so beautiful stretched out on the bed, morning sunlight kissing his freckles and turning his short, sandy-brown hair amber. The bedroom was warm, and Dean had kicked down the covers. His naked form was glorious. Cas raked his eyes over the man, thinking how much he wished he could paint. This scene was worthy of a museum wall.

Dean’s soft eyelashes fluttered and then green eyes opened to see Cas staring at him. Cas didn’t bother averting his eyes. He smiled unabashedly – an ear to ear grin – worthy of a voyeur who’d been busted staring at a naked man.

Dean returned the smile and slid out of bed, brushing Cas’ bare shoulder as he walked by to use the bathroom.

When they went downstairs, Mary was bustling around the kitchen. They relaxed at the table with coffee as she made their eggs and hash browns. No one said a word about tomorrow.

When breakfast was done, Dean moved to the living room and Cas followed behind him. Dean knelt at the fireplace and Cas sank down on the sofa. As Dean arranged logs and little bundles of twigs slowly getting a fire going, he spoke over his shoulder to Cas.

“You have any plans for today?”

“Loser’s choice,” smirked Cas.

“Kinda feel like chillin’ here. That ok?”

“Sure, sounds good,” said Cas as he leaned back into the couch and kicked off his shoes.

When the fire had caught, Dean closed the glass and reached over the back of the couch to pull the drapes shut. Darkness engulfed the room. Cas watched Dean meander over to the shelves and peruse the movie selection.

“Cas,” said Dean as he pulled several movies down, “I think it’s time you saw the Star Wars movies.”

“I’m finally going to see what an ewok looks like,” grinned Cas.

Mary wandered into the room and asked if they needed anything.

“Yes, Mom, we need you to sit down with us and watch Star Wars. Cas hasn’t ever seen it.”

Mary smiled softly at the invitation and nodded. Cas watched her as she pulled a throw blanket and pillow from a basket in the corner and tucked herself into the recliner. He gave her a smile as she settled in with them. Dean joined Cas on the couch, putting his head at the opposite end and laying his legs over Cas’. Then he reached up and pulled a throw from the back of the couch over them and settled his head on the arm of the couch as the music began to play.

The three of them got up and stretched after Star Wars. Dean and Cas took turns to the bathroom and when they returned to settle in for The Empire Strikes Back, Mary shuffled in with bowls of popcorn and sodas.

Between that movie and Return of the Jedi, they took a longer intermission. They all piled into Mary’s SUV and she took them to dinner at Bulls Head. Dean couldn’t be talked out of his half-
pound bacon cheeseburger, but Cas opted to try something new and had a Bison Burger with Mary.

As they were all leaning back and rubbing full bellies afterward, Mary asked Dean when he planned to tell Sam he was in town.

“Tomorrow,” he said firmly, looking over at Cas. Then he added tentatively, “We’ll tell everyone tomorrow?” and he watched Cas give him the nod. “When I tell people, I want to be able to tell them exactly what I have and what we’re going to do about it.”

“That makes sense,” Mary agreed. “What time do you have to be there?”

“We check in at 7,” said Dean, “I don’t know how long we’ll actually be there.”

“Are they going to put you under?”

“Yes,” answered Dean.

“Would you like me to be there?” Mary asked him.

“I would,” Cas interrupted, with a nod to Dean, “I would love it if you would be there.”

Sam had watched Jess call in sick to work, then he called out himself – intending to watch over her. He lingered in the bed watching her sleep for a while but got restless by ten. He wanted to be near Jess, but he couldn’t stand to just lay in bed with her doing nothing. He moved slowly from the bed so as not to disturb her and went to the dining room, settling at the table to get some work done.

He checked on her at noon and she was still sleeping. Strange. He continued to work.

She finally staggered out to the kitchen around 1:30. When he saw her, he jumped up and gestured for her to sit, asking her what she wanted so he could get it for her.

“Just coffee I guess. I feel like shit.”

“Flu?”

“Must be…” she conceded, “…or something I ate.” Jess had to acknowledge that waking to the graphic images of her lover with someone else may have given her a wave of nausea – but they didn’t account for feeling the way she had all morning and half the afternoon.

“Anything I can do?” asked Sam as he set coffee and creamer in front of her.

“I don’t think so. You’re gonna be sorry you didn’t let me leave last night,” she grinned at him, “Now you’re stuck with me. I’m feeling way too crappy to get dressed and go home.”

“I’ll take good care of you,” he said as he moved to the kitchen, “You want to try some soup? Maybe some soda?”

“Um… yeah. Soup sounds good, thank you, Sam.”

With coffee and soup warm in her stomach and no heaving to displace it, Jess settled into the couch
After Buffalo Burgers and beers, they headed home and tucked back in for Return of the Jedi. Cas adored the ewoks, “They’re like teddy bears!” Cas proclaimed, “… teddy bears with crude weapons, I guess.” He chuckled.

Mary headed to bed and Cas and Dean didn’t stay up long after she left them. They went to bed but didn’t sleep. Dean was restless but wasn’t able to eat or drink anything after 10 p.m., and he certainly couldn’t take sleeping pills or down a bottle of Jack. Sometimes, you just have to suffer through a sleepless night together.

They flipped channels on the TV for a few hours, dozing a little here and there. But when they shut it off, it was impossible to sleep. They laid awake talking for a while… reminiscing about the good and bad things… funny things that had happened as they were getting to know each other… pivotal things that had happened to them over the years… how they felt about things… eventually, of course, it led to how they felt about this thing.

“I know you love me,” said Dean quietly, “And I’m not so stupid as to think you’d leave me just because we couldn’t fuck anymore. You and me are about so much more than fucking. But for what it’s worth, I’m sorry,” he said as he looked at Cas, “I know that even the best case scenario means a lot of changes between us. And I’m sorry that you got stuck with the guy that drew the short straw.”

Cas chuckled at Dean’s metaphor and said, “It doesn’t even matter because I’d still choose you. Even if I had known this was coming from the first day. Even if it’s the worst case and we can never have sex again… I’d still pick you. Again and again. You’re it for me.”

“You too, Cas. For me.”

Cas tipped his forehead in and rested it against Dean’s on the pillow. They exchanged a few soft kisses and slid closer. They didn’t move apart the rest of the night. The clock ticked out minutes, slowly. The boys fell in and out of light sleep a few times, but they didn’t let go of each other until it was time to get up.

Jess felt well enough by bedtime that when she and Sam crawled in together, she pressed herself against him. “Are you ready to have some hot make-up sex?”
“Um, are you sure you’re up for it?” he asked her hesitantly.

“Yes,” she whispered as she ran her hand over the bulge in his boxers, “and I see you’re UP for it too.” Her wink was cute as her hand slid softly into his boxers and teased his flaccid cock to life.

Sam was gentle with her, careful. She seemed to appreciate it as she moaned his name against her pillow. He sank down between her smooth, milky white thighs and licked into her with a smooth, easy rhythm broken by occasional exploring to tease her and then resuming the soft slide of his tongue into her. He worked her over delicately but thoroughly until he could hear her begging.

When she turned over and positioned herself on all fours, he could hold back no longer. He was still careful with her though, holding her hips tightly and working to hold back as much as he could. He kept her still when his every fiber wanted to tear into her and fuck her hard and fast like she was begging him to.

When she started getting really close, he reached around and pinched at her nipple, rolling it between his fingers as his other hand moved between them to run a finger into her soft puckered hole.

His legs were on fire from supporting all his weight while still giving soft measured thrusts, but his attention was all on her. He wanted her to feel good – and he gave it his all.

The boys got ready quietly. Since Dean couldn’t eat or drink anything, neither did anyone else. They arrived at the center a few minutes early and before long, Dean was being prepped. He was soon sporting a ridiculous gown and an IV line. He joked a little, but was soon dozing under the florescent lights as the sedative started to kick in. He wasn’t even awake when the anesthesiologist came in. When Dean’s bed was rolled away towards the operating room, Cas and Mary were directed back to the waiting room.

They settled in chairs, turning vacant eyes to the TV and hoping for time to go quickly. It didn’t. They talked a little, but mostly they just waited together. When the doctor came out to them, he told them that Dean was in recovery, that the procedure had gone well and that the tissues were on their way to the lab. He warned them that Dean was awake but would be a little “out of it” for a while. They were told that he would slowly get more lucid over the next few hours, and the doctor said that he’d check back with them before Dean was discharged.

When they got to Dean's bedside, he was indeed awake. He was quiet and calm and didn’t say much. He asked them if it was over and they said yes. He asked them how it went and they told him it went well. He asked those same questions again and again for the next hour. But eventually, he started to clear up.

The nurse came around a few times to check his vitals and, eventually, she had him up and getting dressed. Mary excused herself to the restroom while Dean was getting out of his gown and into his clothes. Then they all waited together for the doctor.

When he finally arrived, he spent about ninety seconds with them before excusing himself.

“Wait, Doc, I thought that I was going to get information today… a treatment plan or whatever?” Dean asked him.
“Well, Dean, we don’t normally go over the results the same day that the patient comes out of anesthesia. I have reserved a time for you to come in tomorrow so that we can go over everything. The nurse will come by in a few minutes with your discharge instructions, and she’ll have an appointment card for you.”

Dean was very disappointed, Cas could tell. But he didn’t say anything – just slumped a little in the bed and nodded. It was hard to see his man look so small. Mary’s presence was reassuring, though. She’d been a quiet comfort today as they’d sat in the waiting room, and now, as she stood with Cas at Dean’s side it was easier to be strong.

When it was time to go, she left them to bring the SUV around the front, where Dean was brought to the sidewalk in a wheelchair. His head leaned against the window on the way home, and when they got there he spent most of the evening asleep on the couch.

Mary, again, was steadfast for Cas. They drank tea and talked for the first few hours. Then, as the sun was going down, they switched to bourbon.

When the alarm went off in the morning, Sam had to reach over Jess to shut it off. She sat up and looked at him. As she did, her stomach revolted again. She clasped her hand over her mouth and ran for the bathroom.

In a repeat of yesterday, she emptied all she had into the toilet. Having only had liquids yesterday, it wasn’t so bad. But her stomach continued to produce dry heaves until her eyes watered and her stomach ached for relief. She almost thought she should eat something – just so she’d have something to throw up.

Sam looked so forlorn. He ran a washcloth under the faucet and put the cool rag to her forehead as he stood behind her, allowing her to rest against him as she recovered.

“I think we need to get you to a doctor,” he said quietly.

“Yeah,” she agreed morosely, “I could’ve sworn I was over this last night. I guess not.”

“Do you have a doctor you want to see? Or should we just go to urgent care?” Sam asked her.

“Um… I have a doctor, but I think urgent care would be better. If this is the flu, I don’t want to wait for an appointment. Can you drive me?”

“Of course,” he said as he helped hoist her to her feet. “Let’s get you a tic tac first,” he teased her.

The appointment to see Dr. Carlton wasn’t until 1:00 so no one was up early. Yesterday had taken a lot out of all of them. Dean woke and went back to sleep twice before finally hauling out of bed around 10:00. He slid up behind Cas and curled an arm around his man’s waist.
“Mmm… you smell good Cas… is that bourbon?”

Cas chuckled and then stretched. “Your mom can keep up,” he joked.

“Speaking of… I haven’t eaten in days… feed me!”

They ambled downstairs in sleep pants and t-shirts. Mary wasn’t up yet so they put on coffee and made toast. As they leaned against the counter Cas dared to ask Dean how he felt.

“Better than I expected to,” he answered. “I had good dreams last night.”

“What did you dream of?”

“Lots of things… but mostly… I was with you in the bakery eating apple pie. Do you remember that day? When we went to lunch together the first time?”

“I do,” laughed Cas, “you made that poor woman buy us pie so you wouldn’t have to wait in line.”

“Yeah… good pie,” he said with a smirk.

“I was so taken with you,” Cas said softly, looking up at Dean from under dark lashes.

Dean watched the way Cas smiled. The late morning sun was streaming in the window and lighting up his sapphire eyes and warm skin.

“Oh Cas,” Dean’s voice cracked and his eyes welled up, “God dammit I just love you so much.”

Cas reached and they clamped onto each other in a fierce hug.

“I fuckin’ wanted to get through this without cryin’,” Dean complained through tears.

“I won’t tell,” whispered Cas.

When Mary came down, she was dressed and ready. Cas lingered in the kitchen, insisting on cooking her breakfast for a change. She and Dean settled at the table, talking quietly as Cas made Mary an omelette. Then, after breakfast, the boys headed upstairs to shower and get ready.

When they settled into the chairs in Doctor Carlton’s office, he asked how Dean was feeling.

“Well, doc, I’m unbalanced,” he said with a chuckle. “And I’m on the edge of my seat. So let’s cut to the chase. What can you tell me?”

“Dean, you have embryonic carcinoma with teratoma.”

“Wow. I thought I’d feel better when I had a diagnosis. But I don’t know what that even means.”

“Well Dean, let’s start with the simple version, just like last time. Then you can ask questions and we’ll get more specific, ok?”

“Yep.”

“Based on the molecular profiling, it is not our opinion that the response to chemical therapies or radiation will be favorable. Our best shot at getting your body free of cancer cells is removal. That
is where we’d like to focus our efforts.”

The doctor paused, allowing their brains to catch up, “We will not be recommending chemotherapy or radiation as part of your treatment plan. What we’ll be recommending is the lymph node dissection that we discussed in our first meeting. The point of that is to remove any cancer cells that have begun to spread into the rest of your body.”

“Okay,” said Dean slowly, not really knowing what to think.

“I’m going to be honest with you, in rare cases the spread can’t be controlled with the dissection and continues to metastasize. What we see in those cases is a repetition of surgeries as we try to eradicate the cells. With each new attempt at surgery – the overall favorability of the prognosis goes down.”

Dean was rigid.

“In other words, your best shot at being cancer free rests with the initial operation. With each successive operation, your life expectancy diminishes.”

Now the doctor leaned back in his chair, satisfied that he’d conveyed the gravity of the situation.

As the doctor leaned back, Cas was leaning forward.

“So there’s no chemo… no radiation… no nothing? Just one operation, and it all rests on that?” he said incredulously.

“Yes, Cas. It all rests on that. If it’s successful, normal life will resume shortly after. If it’s not, then another operation will need to be scheduled.”

“Jesus,” said Cas.

Next to him, Dean was silent.

Chapter End Notes

Please consider leaving feedback, I love to hear what everyone thinks!
The ride home from urgent care was a long one. Jess wasn’t speaking. She looked out the window at the grey sky and kept her hands folded in her lap.

When they reached Sam’s place he moved to open her door but she didn’t wait for him, exiting his car and walking around the corner of the building without even looking at him. He moved quickly to keep pace with her and watched her out of the corner of his eye. When she passed the main entrance to his building and kept walking… her intentions were clear. She was leaving. She was going home. And given her silence, it was safe to assume that he wouldn’t be hearing from her anytime soon.

“Jess,” he called out, feeling weak when he heard his voice crack.

She stopped, but didn’t turn to him. He closed the gap between them. Knowing that she was finding it difficult to look at him, he stayed behind her. Her hair moved in the breeze, tickling his face and neck as he spoke to her.

“I know this is unexpected. And given what just happened with Meg, this is probably the worst timing imaginable. I can see that you need some time – so I won’t beg you to stay again. I will let you leave and take all the time you need. But before you go, I have to tell you that I love you, that you are the one. That I want to spend my life with you… and our baby… and any others we make later. I want us to be a family and share our lives.”

He watched her shoulders as she took a deep breath. She didn’t turn to him, though. Or speak. She just waited, clearly ready to take a step when she was sure he’d finished speaking.

“Jess, I will be devoted to you, faithful, for the rest of my life if you stay. If you leave me, I will be a shell of a man, forever less because of your absence. But even if you go, I will still do right by you and our child. No matter what.”

With that he pressed a kiss to the back of her head and stepped back. He held his breath – praying she’d turn back towards him. She didn’t. She walked away and crossed the street towards her car without looking back. And she took his heart with her.

Cas and Dean followed Mary into the house. She went straight to the kitchen, and the boys followed her with Cas moving to the coffee maker to start a pot and Dean settling at the table to stare vacantly out the window.

When a warm mug of coffee was pressed into his hands, Dean looked up at Cas who held his gaze
while settling into a chair across from Dean with his own cup. Mary was moving about and setting out food, preparing a meal as Cas and Dean stared across the table at one another.

Cas put out his hand and Dean took it. They clamped tightly. Cas was back to thinking about losing Dean. He’d let that fall out of his mind as a possibility – enjoying the 95% survival rates that he’d been quoted by the surgeon. His mind had supplied what the surgeon didn’t say out loud. Only the old and sick died of this disease. Survival was the norm. Cas had felt much better.

Now, the rug had been yanked from under his feet and the possibility that Dean could die was again swimming before his eyes. Dean seemed to sense the nature of his thoughts, or be having similar ones because he said firmly, “Rare cases, Cas.”

No words had been spoken since they entered the house, so Dean’s words cut the silence and caught Mary’s attention. She looked over at the table, seeing Dean and Cas with their arms stretched across it and linked tightly. She tried not to watch them, but for some reason she couldn’t look away.

“Cas,” Dean prompted, “he said in ‘rare cases’ the surgery has to be repeated.”

Mary watched Cas nod solemnly. “Let’s try to see this as good news, ok?” pushed Dean. “I’m not gonna have to get injected with poison twice a week for months at a time. I’m not gonna lose my hair. I’m not gonna get weak and sick while they try to poison the cancer without actually killing me. It’s just a surgery. With a high success rate. And when it’s over we go back to our lives... our treehouse and our jungle and our beach.”

Cas was nodding now, buying into the beautiful pictures that Dean created in his mind when he said “our beach” and “our tree house.”

Mary watched them for a moment longer. She saw Cas force a smile for Dean and squeeze her son’s hand before retracting and putting both hands on his coffee cup. She returned her attention to the skillet in front of her and began adding sliced sausages and chopped veggies to the sizzling oil. When she looked up again, both boys were facing out the window.

God, John I wish you were here, Mary thought to herself as she bit back tears. Our baby is sick and I need you.

Sam didn’t go into his building. He pulled out his phone. He wanted to call mom. He needed comfort. His life, which had seemed to be finally coming together, was imploding all around him. He needed her to hug him and tell him it would all be ok. But once again, shame kept him from reaching out to her.

In order for Mary to understand the situation, he’d have to tell her about Meg and the pictures delivered to Jess. Personally. At work. Nice touch Meg, you bitch, thought Sam.

He pocketed his phone and got in the car. What he WANTED to do was seek comfort from Mary. What he SHOULD do was go to work to avoid being absent two days in a row. Instead he did the STUPIDEST thing imaginable. He drove to Meg’s office.
As Mary cooked, the boys eventually got up and started helping set the table. They all ate together in relative silence until Mary ventured to ask if Dean and Cas were planning to make some phone calls this afternoon.

They both nodded and she added, “Ok then. I have some to make as well. I’ll take care of the aunts and uncles and friends of the family, Dean. You can just call Sam and any friends of yours that you think need to know.”

Dean nodded as he worked on cleaning the last of his plate. When the meal had been finished and the table cleared, Dean and Cas pulled out their laptops and caught up on their work emails. They discussed it for a few minutes and then worked together to compose a mass email that would go out to the executive level staff and support.

The memo essentially said that the owners would be away for a few weeks dealing with a medical emergency and that until further notice all recurring meetings with the owners were cancelled. The boys made it clear that they’d be available via email for any issues that came up and said they’d try to respond to all emails within 24 hours. They then referred immediate issues to Roberto and Sunni in their stead.

Prior to sending anything, they also wrote a much more personal note to both Sunni and Roberto. They told the couple that Dean had cancer and that they were back in the US seeking treatment. If things went well, they’d be back soon. If not, it could be much longer.

They told the couple that their friendship meant a lot to them and that they trusted them with the resort. The boys told them that the resort was very special to them and that entrusting it to them was not done lightly. They thanked the couple for their service and loyalty and closed by saying that for Sunni and Roberto ONLY, Dean and Cas were available on their cell phones.

Once the emails had all been sent, there was only one really hard thing left to do. Dean had to tell Sam. He sent his brother a text saying he was in town and asked if Sam wanted to meet him at Hooligans and have a drink after work tonight. Then he looked over at Cas.

“I think we should save ourselves the trouble of telling all our friends about this,” Dean ventured. “All we really need to do is drop over to Pam’s and tell her… make sure she knows it’s not a secret. Before long everyone will know.”

“That’s a good idea. Do you want to go tonight? Or should we just drop in on the regular Saturday night party?”

“Can’t we do both?” joked Dean, regaining some humor.

Sam stepped from the elevator and walked up to the desk, asking to see Meg. He was told she was in a meeting.

“I will wait,” he said sternly, “when her meeting is finished, please advise her that Sam Winchester
“Alright, Mr. Winchester. Please have a seat.”

Sam took turns sitting and pacing and flipping through magazines for over thirty minutes before Meg’s secretary stepped up, “Mr. Winchester?”

Sam looked at her and stood.

“Right this way,” she said politely.

This wasn’t Sam’s first time in the office. He’d been here many times. He should probably know the name of the secretary by now…

As usual, the woman stepped ahead of him and opened the door to Meg’s office. As he stepped through it she closed it behind him.

Meg was at her desk. He couldn’t see her face; the young woman was looking down at something on her desk and she hadn’t looked up when he’d entered. He took a few steps toward the desk and moved towards the chair facing it, but he didn’t sit.

As he neared her, he saw what she was looking at. The manila envelope he’d addressed to her was in front of her and his letter was on top of it. Her attention was on the picture of them from the senior dance.

“This came this morning,” she said quietly. When she looked up her face was puffy and her eyes were red from crying. She sniffled a little and dropped the picture, leaning back in her chair to give him her full attention.

“The crying’s not fair,” Sam told her resolutely.

“I know.”

“Why, Meg? I thought we were friends. I never would’ve done anything to purposefully hurt you.”

“It doesn’t matter what you meant to do Sam. It hurts just the same.”

“I get it… I hurt you and you hurt me back. But Jess isn’t like us, Meg, and you’ve hurt her too. She didn’t deserve it.”

“I wasn’t thinking clearly. I’ve just…” she fumbled but kept going, “… I’ve been waiting for you for so long. And then, after your dad –”

Sam stiffened at even the mention of his late father.

Meg went on, “Sam, you started to look at me different. It was like you were finally seeing me. Us. The way I saw us. You even joked about taking me to Vegas, remember?”

“Yes.” Sam had completely forgotten it. But she was right. He’d done that several times over the years… alluded to her someday being his wife. The memory cut him. It was a despicable thing to do; he realized now that he’d never really meant it. It was nothing more than a passing mention; like when people say, “I should take a cooking class,” or “We should take a trip.”

He’d been stringing her along. He hadn’t really thought of it consciously, but he’d done it. He’d always wanted to keep Meg in his back pocket. He’d liked the way she made him feel. But he hadn’t given much thought to her feelings other than to manipulate her.
Manipulating Meg had always felt like fair game... she was manipulative too. And smart. He really thought of her as an equal – but she hadn’t been. Not when it came to his callousness.

“Meg, after all of it, I think we’re even. I broke your heart, and you broke mine.”

Meg gestured to his letter and the pictures, “If I’d gotten this sooner… I don’t think I would’ve done it. But I can’t take it back now.”

“Nope. You sure can’t.”

“Do you think you can forgive me? Ever?”

Sam knew what it was like to do something horrible and not be able to take it back. “Like I said Meg. We’re even.”

It was hours before Dean got a reply from Sam. Must’ve been a busy day at the office, thought Dean. Now that Sam had responded that he’d meet Dean at Hooligans, Dean set down his phone and moved to the couch where Cas was quietly clicking away on his laptop.

“Kitten porn?” Dean asked as he sat down next to Cas.

Cas chuckled but didn’t look up from his typing. “Updates to the Policy and Procedures Manual based on changes that were made this week.”

“Boring.”

“Important,” grinned Cas, “especially with the mix of languages. Everyone has to be on the same page about how things are to be done or it will be chaos.”

“Still boring. I’m glad it’s you doing it.”

Cas clicked the lid down to give Dean his full attention, “What’s on your mind, Dean?”

“I’m going to tell Sam tonight. Gonna meet him at the bar, get some shots in him before I drop the bomb.”

“Good idea.”

“You’re welcome to come. But I’m feeling okay, and I’ll be fine without you if you need some time to yourself, or want to spend some more time with Anna while we’re here.”

“Do you want me there or not?”


Cas looked over at Mary, who was sitting in the corner reading a book.

“I’ll stay here with Mary,” said Cas in a whisper. “She hasn’t looked well today.”

“Thanks, Cas.” Dean stepped away with a wink and headed upstairs to get ready to leave, and Cas
crossed the room to talk to Mary. He knelt in front of her chair and when she looked up from her book he said, “Let’s go out tonight.”

“What do you suggest?” she asked, interested.

“The Castro is showing the original Wizard of Oz. I would love to see it there.”

“Me too,” she said immediately while flashing her first smile of the day, “What time will we need to leave?”

“It starts at 7:00,” he replied, “but they do a pre-show organ concert. We can make that too if we leave in half an hour.”

Mary immediately popped up from her chair and said she’d hurry. Cas smiled as he watched her bound up the stairs.

He joined Dean in the bathroom to freshen up and then changed into some nicer clothes. As Dean was leaving, Cas pulled him back for a kiss and asked Dean to take his mom’s SUV. Dean seemed to think this was strange but gave his man a smile and agreed, leaving the keys to the Impala with Cas.

As Dean was leaving, Cas told him to call if they got hammered and Cas would come get them. Mary walked in, looking lovely, and Dean asked for her keys. She dug into her purse and put them into his palm. He leaned in kissed her cheek, “Bye, Mom.” And with that, he was gone.

Mary looked to Cas, “Where’s he going?”

“To talk to Sam. They’re meeting for drinks so I told them to call if they needed a ride home,” as he spoke he told her she looked beautiful and took her arm.

Cas treated her very much like a date for the duration of the evening. He opened the door to the Impala for her and closed it behind her when she was settled. They chatted in the car on the way over about their favorite movies, the older more classic ones that were shown at the Castro.

When they arrived, he opened her door for her and took her arm to escort her into the theater. They passed through the heavy wooden glass-paned doors and into the beautiful lobby, where he purchased their tickets and escorted her in. The theater was an architectural gem and the lighting enhanced the beautiful woodwork and decorations. It was hard not to feel awed with a sense of history here. This theater had been in operation since the twenties and still looked marvelous. It was a San Francisco tradition, and as soon as you stepped in, the feeling of grandeur from a bygone era swept over you.

As they moved to seats and settled in, Cas gave Mary a genuine smile and thanked her for coming out with him.

When the organ show started, the lights dimmed down to almost dark except a few white ones that were aimed at the detailed sculptures that climbed up the high walls on either side of the stage. The black and white background combined with the shiny black stage and pristine white organ against the red velvet curtains made a striking scene. Organ music wasn’t necessarily on Cas’ playlist, but there was a certain novelty to hearing it played in this historic theater.

Watching the Wizard of Oz in this theater was also incredibly entertaining. Seeing something old in black and white added to the nostalgia and then when Dorothy opened her door to all the color of Oz, it was even more breath-taking.
After the show, Cas took Mary’s arm again and walked her back to the Impala, opening the door for her before heading around to the driver’s side.

As they drove through the darkened city with the radio playing low in the background, they chatted about the history of this incredible city and what it had been like in Mary’s youth. She reminisced about dating John and the things they’d done together when they were young… even some of the things they’d taken the boys to do when they were just little “ankle biters.”

Rolling back through the gate and around the circle drive, Cas was sad for the evening to end. He walked around to Mary’s door and walked her to the house, where she unlocked the door and let them back in. The room was dark, and she turned on a lamp while thanking Cas for a lovely evening and asking what he planned to do with the rest of the night.

“Oh, I’m going to stay down here and hold down the couch,” he joked, “it’s likely I’ll be going out to collect a couple of rowdy brothers later… why bother putting the pajamas on, right?”

She gave him a warm hug and a peck on the cheek before she headed up the stairs.

Cas went to the kitchen and grabbed a beer and a snack, heading back to the living room to peruse the wide selection of movies on the shelf there. With his mind still on the theme of the evening, he settled comfortably on the couch to watch Clint Eastwood in “Escape from Alcatraz.”

Dean stepped into Hooligans expecting to feel nostalgic for the place. After all, these were his old “stompin’ grounds.” He’d done a lot of drinking here… both he and Sam had. But when he stepped in, it seemed smaller and somehow… cheesier? The décor was almost laughable and the clientele, though always an eclectic mix of classes, seemed to be shifting toward the lower end of the spectrum. The hoochie mamas far outweighed the smart business women relaxing with a drink after work.

Among the newly emerging young adults in America was a large group of young women who just didn’t know how to dress. They wore the same type of tittie-flaunting club clothes to school and work as well as to go out to bars. These type of girls could be spotted from a mile away. They were the type to have WAY too many pictures on social media. Who needs thirty pictures of themselves in the same damn outfit? Print the pictures and make a flip book if you feel the need. Seriously, thought Dean as two girls posed duck faces together for a selfie right in front of him. He watched them take several until they were satisfied with the way their faces and boobs looked and were certain that their colorful drinks wound up in the frame.

He stepped to the bar and ordered, surveying the room. Then, with a whiskey in one hand and a beer in the other, he moved toward one of the few open tables. He watched the antics of more and more low-class girls as they dribbled in over the next hour and wound up wondering… is it really them? Or is it me? Maybe I was this shallow when I was young, and I’m just starting to get old now? It was a distinct possibility. The more he considered how he’d thought and acted in his early twenties – he realized that was it. He was just getting older and (thankfully) wiser. This just wasn’t his scene anymore.

He waited patiently for his brother to arrive while playing defense from girls who ventured to his table to try and pick him up. If these girls had any idea how utterly unappealing he found them,
they’d save themselves the time and trouble. But he just wasn’t capable of being that dismissive. He’d always been one to let ‘em down easy when he could.

When Sam finally ducked in, Dean raised a hand to signal his brother. As Sam settled at the table with him, the waitress stopped by. He watched his brother order two double whiskeys and a beer. When the waitress turned his direction he waved her off, still working on the drink in front of him.

“So, honey, how was your day?” joked Dean.

“Worst fuckin day of my life… for days now,” Sam responded, taking Dean’s whiskey from him and tossing it back.

Dean chuckled at first but as he studied his brother’s face, he could see it was true. “What happened?”

“My past caught up with me and kicked my ass.”

Dean instinctively knew Sam was referencing a woman, “Which one?”

“Specifically? Meg.”

“Fuck. What happened?”

“You want the long version or the short?” Sam asked him.

“I’ve got all night,” said Dean, pulling his beer to his lips.

Jess settled herself into her couch, wrapped in her favorite fluffy blanket and holding a cup of hot tea in her hands. She spent the evening watching a marathon of the TV sitcom “Scrubs.” It was just light enough to keep her from feeling blue and just witty enough to keep her engaged. Still, her mind had a tendency to wander. She’d turned off her phone, uninterested in talking to her friends or inadvertently hearing from Sam.

Deep down, she knew she had two problems on her plate. Sam and a baby. She had two basic choices regarding Sam – dump him or not. With the baby she had three. Keep it, have it and give it away, or have an abortion.

She immediately discarded the idea of abortion. She knew she’d never make her peace with that and with that ruled out, she simply needed to decide whether keep the baby for herself. And whether to keep Sam.

Her heart told her to keep them both. She smiled before she could stop herself when she pictured a little boy with Sam’s large puppy eyes and her own pink cheeks and lips. Even now, she wanted to be with Sam instead of alone. She wanted to feel him wrap his arms around her and put his hands on her stomach… she wanted to tease him over ridiculous baby names and talk about who was going to move in with who.

If she didn’t think logically at all, the choice was so simple. Sam. Baby. Family.

The logic was a bitch. Just a few short days ago, she’d had a sharp and stinging reminder of Sam’s
history. A history she had no delusions about. Anyone in her place would have doubts. She’d be a fool not to.

Logically, she knew that she could keep the baby and not stay with Sam. They could share custody – people do it all the time. But, when she considered this option and pictured her life as it would be, all the joy of having the baby sucked away like water down a drain.

Damn. Life was full of tough choices. And when you’re making choices pregnant? You’re not just risking making the wrong choice for you. You’re risking making the wrong choice for your child too – and facing a lifetime of regrets.

She shrugged off her blanket, feeling overheated anyway. Kicking her feet up and spreading out, she forced herself to pay attention to the TV again and not call Sam… at least for a few days. More than anything else, Jess wanted to be cautious and not make any big decisions lightly.

Sam told Dean about his troubles over two rounds of whiskey. Dean listened intently.

“Damn,” he said when Sam finished and locked eyes with Dean.

“I’m so glad I took your advice about Jess,” Sam told him. “She would’ve left me over those pictures, FOR SURE, if I hadn’t been honest with her before that. You should’ve seen the look on her face…” Sam trailed off.

“How bad were the pictures?”

“Pretty fuckin’ bad, Dean,” sighed Sam as he looked to the waitress for another round, “You told me to come clean to her about everything. I didn’t wanna do it, but I knew you were right. So I did.”

Dean nodded to the waitress signaling he’d like another as well. Sam continued, “Man, I told her everything. I even warned her that someday we may have to deal with pictures or video that fell into the wrong hands; and thank god I did, too. At least she had some warning.”

Dean nodded and asked, “So, you feelin’ like she’ll come around?”

“Fuckin’ hope so, Dean. She’s the one. I mean… now that I know what it’s like to be part of that… how can I go back to being what I was before her?”

“Kinda makes me feel for Mom…” Dean trailed off.

“Yeah, she’s gotta be lonely. I guess we should be encouraging her to date, huh?”

Dean shrugged.

“I can’t really picture her dating, but I guess that’s what’s healthy, right?” Sam waited until Dean looked at him again and said, “You know she’s probably waiting for us to tell her it’s ok. She wouldn’t want to upset us by dating. We should tell her.”

“I’m not ready for that, Sam. I can’t. It’s too soon.”
“It’s not for you – it’s for her. And I’m not saying we should set her up on a dating site. I’m just saying we should give her permission to do what she wants when she’s ready. I don’t want her lonely and waiting – just so that you and I feel better.”

“You’re right,” conceded Dean. “She’s all alone knockin’ around in that big empty house. It isn’t fair.”

“Dean?”

“Yeah,” he answered as he returned his attention to his brother and took another swig of beer.

“Jess is pregnant.”

Dean spouted beer across the table and began coughing as he choked on the few drops that had trickled down his throat the wrong way.

“Jesus, Dean!” laughed Sam as he used his shirt sleeves to wipe foamy beer spray from his face.

Dean was still coughing when Sam’s face was dry, and he stepped around the table to thump his brother’s back a few times.

“You…” Dean choked from a dry and raspy throat. “You’re…” he tried again. “You’re gonna be a dad?”

“Yeah,” Sam smiled thinking of it that way for the first time, “Yeah, I guess I am.” So far, his only thoughts on Jess’ pregnancy were that it was poorly timed and likely to add to her uncertainty regarding the pictures. He was worried it would spook her away from him. He was afraid of losing her and the baby.

Only now, at Dean’s mention, did it occur to him that whether he lost Jess or not… he was going to be a father either way. Part of his domestic dream would come true even if she left him. “I’m gonna be a dad!” he shouted loudly and joyfully.

Dean laughed and yelled with him. Once the shouting started… it was like the dam holding back chicks had broken and the boys were surrounded with girls who wanted to buy them drinks and give them hugs. Soon half the hoochies in the bar were shouting and congratulating them with hugs. It was nauseating.

“Should we get out of here?” Dean shouted to Sam.

“Yeah,” confirmed Sam, moving to the bar to settle their tab.

When the brothers spilled out into the street they were arm in arm. “I’m so fuckin’ happy for ya, Sam!” enthused Dean. “You’re gonna be such a great Dad!”

“And you’re gonna be an uncle!” he said, clapping Dean on the shoulder.

Dean nodded as a grin spread across his face, “Uncle Dean…” he mused, “fuckin’ awesome!”

As they walked, Dean nodded towards a quieter-looking sports bar on the next block and they went in. As they settled into a booth, the crack of pool balls breaking and men laughing surrounded them. A waitress came by and put a napkin in front of each of them and offered menus.

Sam looked at Dean, and they nodded together, taking the menus. They ordered beers and when she returned with their drinks they ordered chili cheese fries. Settling in comfortably to talk, Dean
asked Sam how he felt about Cas and Dean being involved with his baby.

“What - you mean because you guys are together?”

“Yeah… exactly.”

“Dean, do you really think I give a shit?”

“I’m just checkin’ Sam. I don’t want to make assumptions.”

“Well from now on, Dean, just assume it. Okay?”

“Okay,” he smiled. “So, how long do we have to wait to find out if we’re buying blue clothes or pink?”

“No clue,” laughed Sam. Taking a long swallow of his beer he then changed subjects. “So, you never really said what brought you to town? You just missed me or what?”

Dean leaned back against the hard wooden back of the booth. “Not exactly, Sam.”

“Uh oh. I know that look. What’s happened?”

“I have cancer.”

“Cancer?” said Sam – jaw dropping open, “fuckin’ CANCER?”

“Yep. Embryonal carcinoma and teratoma.”

“I don’t know what that means…” Sam said softly, “… is that, well, is that a bad kind?”

Dean chuckled, “Is there a good kind?”

“Prostate,” laughed Sam, “I’ve heard if you’re gonna get cancer that’s kind you want.” Sam slid into an evil grin, “Maybe not you…”

“Really, Sam?” Dean tossed a french fry at his brother, “that was below the belt”

“Literally,” laughed Sam, “but seriously, tell me what you know.”

“Ok. It’s testicular. It was a tumor on my left ball. I had it taken out the other day. Now I have to go back on Tuesday and have a lymph node dissection. Do you know what that is?”

“Yeah… it’s what they take out when they think cancer is spreading.”

“Basically.”

“When do you start chemo?” Sam asked him.

“I don’t. They’re not gonna do that. No radiation either. They say it won’t really help. They’re gonna do the dissection and hope they get it all.”

“If they get it all you’ll be cured?”

“That’s what they tell me,” he said with a nod.

“And if they don’t? If they don’t get all?” Sam pushed.
“They keep cutting and keep trying til I die,” Dean said, not bothering to try and find a way to sugar coat it for Sam.

“Fuck… fuck-shit! Dean, are you for real with this?”

“Yes,” he said, popping the p.

“Tuesday?”

“Tuesday.”

“Does Mom know?”

“Yeah.”

“How is Cas?”

Bless my brother for thinking of Cas. “He’s hangin’ in there.”

“Wow…” said Sam softly, “I’m so sorry, Dean.”

“Thanks Sam.”

“How did this come up?”

“You don’t wanna know.”

“Okay. I’ll take your word on that,” said Sam quietly.

Things got quiet for a while. Dean sipped on his beer and ate fries. Sam stared at Dean.

“You better fuckin’ be ok Dean. I mean it,” Sam told him resolutely. “Mom can’t take it if something happens to you,” Sam breathed deeply, “and neither can I.”

Dean saw his brother’s eyes getting wet. Wanting to avoid a chick-flick moment in a sports bar, Dean leaned over the table and said, “I liked it better when we were talkin’ about me being an uncle. Let’s go back to that ok?”

“Okay,” said Sam as he wiped his napkin on his face, trying to remove any evidence of possible tears.

Sam leaned forward, half joking and half serious and said firmly, “Uncle Cas and Uncle Dean are gonna watch my baby every summer while Jess and I take a nice long vacation.”

“You bet your ass!” said Dean as he tossed back the rest of his drink.

When Dean and Cas stopped by Pam’s place on Saturday night, they were stunned. The door swung open, and they were face to face with Chris. Dean watched a smile break across his face and the two leaned forward into a tight hug.

“Dean, man, I didn’t even know you were in the states!” said Chris, thumping Dean’s back warmly. “Pam, get down here!” he yelled. “We’ve got company!”
“Dude… it’s Saturday night,” said Dean. “Isn’t there always company on Saturday nights?”

“You’ve been gone too long,” teased Chris, “times have changed.”

“Holy hell, you’re not lying!” shouted Dean as he got a look at Pam. “Jesus H., what ate Pam?” Dean shouted to Cas, who was now embracing Chris.

Pam was very clearly pregnant and based on the girth pressing out against her faded Rolling Stones t-shirt, she was ready to pop any day.

Dean reached in to hug her tightly, trying to be careful of her awkward bump. His hands moved without his permission and came to rest on her stomach. Dean was surprised by his own actions. He’d never imagined being comfortable putting his hands on a pregnant woman’s stomach. But for some reason, because it was Pam, it didn’t seem foreign at all. In fact, it was quite natural. Cas moved in to hug her too.

“I can’t get over it!” said Dean, grinning as he looked back and forth between Pam and Chris.

“I know!” said Pam as she rubbed her huge belly. “I look like I’ve swallowed a basketball.”

She invited them in, and they all settled on the couches. The loft was the same, but not. It appeared lighter, brighter. Or maybe it was Pam who was brighter.

“Is this your doing?” Dean teased Chris.

“So she says,” joked Chris. “I had to do something to slow her down!”

Cas apologized for just dropping in, explaining that they were visiting and just figured they’d stop by for the party and see everyone.

“It’s been awhile since there was a real party here,” said Pam. “He’s making an honest woman out of me,” she said, beaming at Chris.

“Congratulations to both of you!” said Cas warmly.

“I send you pictures and videos all the time…” said Dean, “how didn’t I get a picture of this? Why didn’t you tell me?” he asked them.

“Um… no.” said Pam firmly, “Cas sends us pictures and videos. He may as well be your PR person,” she laughed at him. “To be honest, I’ve been meaning to get in touch and let you know… it’s honestly just been a lot going on. I don’t feel like it’s been months and months. It still feels like we just found out a few weeks ago.”

“Yeah,” Dean agreed, “Sometimes time just gets away from us like that. But,” he added, “it usually means you’re happy. That things are good.”

Both Pam and Chris had nodded along with that. The four of them spent several hours together. They got caught up on each other’s lives as well as on the gossip from their group. Toward the end of the night, when Pam was starting to appear tired, Dean said they’d better be going soon.

“It’s been great to see you guys. And I couldn’t be happier for both of you. But I have to kill the buzz.”

“What?” Chris and Pam asked in unison.

“I have cancer. That’s why Cas and I are back.”
Before anyone had a chance to get too bogged down in his news, Dean leaned in and said, “Guys, I don’t really want to have to keep repeating this over and over to everyone. It’s hard. Can you guys just kind of let people know? The people that would care?”

“Sure honey,” said Pam as she leaned in to hug him and Cas together, “And you let us know if there’s anything we can do, ok?”

They nodded and turned to leave. As they were saying their good-byes, Pam grabbed Dean by the chin and instructed him to be better about keeping in touch and agreed to do the same. As the boys stepped into the freight elevator they exchanged a look. “Wow,” said Dean as Cas nodded, “… just wow.”

Dean sat forward and repositioned his pillows. He looked around his bed. His mom, his brother and his lover looked back at him with large and uncertain eyes. They were trying to be positive, he could tell.

“How are we feeling?” asked the nurse as she pushed past the curtain.

“Well,” joked Dean, “for the second time in a week I’m in a backless gown. I could say I’ve been better.”

She smiled at him with kind eyes and then checked his IV site and took his vitals. “Getting drowsy at all?” she asked him.

“A little,” answered Dean.

“Everything is on schedule so far. We’ll be taking you back in about ten minutes,” she told him before she ducked back out the curtain and left them alone.

Dean looked at Cas and said, “You know… it’s a little late to think of this but maybe I should’ve checked around in case there’s a better surgeon… especially if it all comes down to this.”

Cas moved closer and slid his hand into Dean’s, “Do you honestly think I didn’t check on that Dean? Why do you think I’ve been on my computer so much?”

Dean smiled at his man, “I’m so lucky to have you,” he said. Out loud. In front of his mom and Sam. *Damn that sedative is making me loose lipped.*

“You are pretty lucky, aren’t you,” teased Cas with a broad smile.

They all waited in silence then, until the curtain moved again. This time it was pushed all the way back and three nurses were here. They worked as a team getting Dean’s IV lines disconnected and moving the equipment around. Then they swiveled the entire bed and began moving it out into the hall – taking him to surgery. As they walked, the lead nurse spoke to his visitors.

“You guys can walk with us to the end of this hall. The waiting room is on your right, from there.
When the procedure is finished, the doctor will come out and speak with you."

As they rolled down the hallway, Dean looked over at Cas who was walking alongside his bed. Cas felt him looking and looked back. Cas mouthed “I love you” as he stopped at the door to the waiting room. Their eyes stayed locked as Cas stood watching and Dean’s bed continued down the hall.

Dean craned his neck and saw his mom and Sam also watching him go. Mom gave a little wave and then put her hand to her mouth as if to blow a kiss – but she never did. The hand stayed over her mouth as he was pulled farther and farther from her.

When he faced forward again, they were moving him through a large set of double doors. First one set and then another. He found himself in another small room. A few minutes later the surgeon was there. He lifted Dean’s covers and pulled his gown aside. Dean glanced down at his partially shaved groin and now hairless stomach where marks had been placed on him with what looked like a Sharpie marker.

Dean confirmed his name and date of birth and listened as the doctor recited what procedure was being done and introduced the anesthesiologist who would be putting Dean under. The doctor was still speaking to him when he felt his eyelids getting heavy. He tried to look up at the doctor… tried to see his face… but he couldn’t open his eyes that far.

Sam watched Dean's bed moving away from them. He saw Cas take a few extra steps at Dean's side. He watched their exchange quietly. When his brother’s bed disappeared behind the double doors, Cas was still standing there, about four paces from them with his eyes locked on the double doors and his posture stiff.

Sam put an arm around his mom, who had her hand over her mouth. She wasn’t hanging on by much. Tears were imminent, he could tell. With one arm around Mary, he encouraged her forward and they walked together toward Cas. When they reached him, Sam put his other arm around Cas and walked between them towards the door to the waiting room.

They settled into chairs and took a deep breath, all three strung tight as guitar strings and breathing too shallow. Sam checked the clock. It was just after 9 a.m.

He thought about Jess, his baby, his mom and his dad. He thought about Cas and Dean. Then he looked at the clock again. 9:22. Damn.

At 10:30 Cas broke the heavy silence by announcing he was heading for the restroom. When he returned he brought waters for Mary and Sam. The three of them looked at the TV without really watching it and waited as the minutes ticked by. They hadn’t been given any specifics of how long the operation would take, other than to say it was a long and complicated procedure and they should expect it to take several hours. The surgeon wasn’t going to do it laparoscopically either, saying he felt better about “going in the old fashioned way.”

The noon hour came and went. No one seemed inclined to go get lunch even though it would pass the time and be a relief to get out of the waiting room for a while. It seemed that none of them were willing to leave and chance not being there if the doctor should come out for any reason.
At 1:30 Cas got up and went to the restroom again, this time returning with juice and soda. Mary took her turn to the restroom shortly after downing the bottle of apple juice she’d accepted from Cas.

At 2:45, Sam got up to use the restroom. At 2:46, the surgeon appeared in the doorway. Mary didn’t even think – she just reached out and grabbed Cas’ hand. He gripped hers tightly in his, and they rose together expectantly.

“Cas,” said Dr. Carlton, “we’re finished. And you know I’m not one to make any promises,” he looked back and forth between Cas and Mary as he spoke, “but I feel it went well.” Mary didn’t wait for more information. She let out a sob of relief and dropped her head to Cas’ shoulder. He pulled her into his arms tightly and then directed his attention back to the doctor, giving him a nod that he should continue.

“We’ll need to see him back in two weeks for labs. We’ll check for markers and hopefully we’ll be able to confirm that he’s free from cancerous cells at that time.” Cas nodded – relieved to his core, “The nurse will come and get you when he’s been set up in a room, and you’ll be able to see him. We’re going to be keeping him for five days. Once he’s discharged, he’ll still need to take it easy for quite some time. And, again, he’ll need to come back in two weeks for labs.”

“Is that two weeks from now? Or two weeks from discharge?” asked Cas.

“From now,” confirmed the surgeon. “Any other questions?” he asked them both.

Mary didn’t speak so Cas simply said, “no,” then he reached out, Mary still tucked into his left side, and extended a hand to the doctor, grasping firmly and said, “thank you. Really. Thank you.”

The doctor gave Cas a reassuring smile as he stepped away and quickly disappeared back behind the double doors.

They sank down into chairs and Cas continued to hold Mary tightly.

“Oh thank God,” she said quietly into his chest, “Thank you, God.”

Sam chose that moment to return. His panic was immediate when he saw Mary. Cas quickly spoke up, “It’s okay, Sam, the doctor just came out to tell us that the surgery is over. It went well, and we’ll be able to see him shortly.”

“Thank God,” said Sam, dropping to one knee in front of Mary.

“Mom?”

She picked her head up and slowly slid from Cas’ embrace to Sam’s. A half-hour later when the nurse came for them, all three were sitting comfortably in the uncomfortable chairs and talking about what to have for lunch.

They followed the nurse to the room and spilled in. Dean was still sleeping. The nurse said he would probably begin waking up over the next hour but would still be “pretty out of it” for a while after that.

Cas volunteered to stay with Dean while Mom and Sam left to go get a good lunch. They said they’d bring him something when they returned.

Cas settled into the only comfortable chair in the room and pulled out his phone. He plugged in ear buds and selected a playlist. Then he relaxed into the chair.
Every 15 minutes or so, a nurse would come in and check Dean’s vitals and his IV site. They’d always acknowledge Cas in some way—a nod or a wave and he’d respond to them. It didn’t take long to start getting drowsy now that the worst of his fears had been put to rest. When his eyes would stay open, they were fixed on Dean’s face. When they burned, he closed them, but tried not to fall asleep. He didn’t want to miss Dean's waking.

He was listening to the same thing he always gravitated to when he was feeling low or emotional. He let his eyes slip shut for a few minutes to rest them and then forced them open again. When they opened this time, they met wide green eyes.

Cas stood and walked to Dean’s bedside. Dean tipped his head; a request for Cas to crawl in with him. Cas didn’t hesitate. He put a knee on the small mattress and hoisted himself up, positioning his body (quite uncomfortably) on the edge of the bed. He was only using a few inches of the bed to keep from moving Dean. He braced his weight against the bed rail and laid his head down on the pillow next to Dean.

They stared into each other’s eyes quietly and finally Dean whispered, “how’d it go?”

“It went well,” answered Cas, “please try to rest ok?”

“What are you listening to?”

“Band of Horses.”

“Will I like it?” whispered Dean.

“It ain’t Metallica,” Cas chuckled.

He took one of his earbuds out and pressed it into Dean’s ear.

Dean immediately smiled. Cas was right to doubt. This was really fruity music. But for some reason, the sad and sweet guitar melody resonated with him. He closed his eyes and listened…

But no one’s gonna love you more than I do –

No one’s gonna love you more than I do.

Dean opened his eyes for a moment and smiled at Cas. Then they both closed their eyes…

Things start splitting at the seams and now,

It’s tumbling down… hard.

But no one’s gonna love you more than I do

No one’s gonna love you more than I do.

When Mary and Sam returned to the room, they had a bag of food for Cas as well as a deck of cards and some magazines for Dean. They walked in and saw the two tucked in together, eyes closed comfortably and sharing earbuds.
Sam chuckled and looked at his mom. She shrugged and put their bags on the chair and whispered, “Let’s give them some time.”

Sam smiled at his mom and nodded, draping his arm around her shoulders as they headed for the exit. Mary smiled walking down the hall with Sam. *Oh John, I really think it’s going to be ok.*
Cas didn’t realize he’d fallen asleep until he woke. Dean was stroking his forearm, and his eyes were locked on Cas. He couldn’t help but smile, “Hey.”

“Hey. Where’s Mom and Sam?”

“They went to grab lunch. How are you feeling?”

“Good. Morphine is awesome!”

Cas chuckled and began trying to move his limbs. They were stiff and sore – he must’ve been lying here for quite a while. “How long have you been awake Dean?”

“Long enough to watch the nurse give you the fish eye for being in my bed,” he said with a grin.

“They come in a lot to check on you.”

“Oh course they come in a lot. We’re puttin’ on a damn good show here… two grown men in a single bed and cuddlin like teddy bears. They’ve probably been taking pictures when we’re asleep to post online.”

Cas was working on getting out of the bed with his limbs still uncooperative and trying not to disturb Dean as he did it. “Your idea,” he said shortly as he managed to get both feet on the floor.

“It was? Huh.”

Cas smiled as he untangled his ear buds from Deans tubes and cords. It was then that he noticed the bags on the chair. He dug through them and found the cards and magazines, setting them on Dean’s tray near the head of his bed. He peeked in the Styrofoam containers. Mary and Sam must’ve been here and left quite a while ago. The food was cold and unappetizing.

“Cas, did Dr. Carlton talk to you after the surgery?”

“Yes.” Cas smiled as he repeated the information, “He said that he wasn’t going to make any promises, but that he felt it had gone very well.”

“Oh that’s a relief,” Dean breathed, “When do we find out for sure?”
“Two weeks,” Cas told him, “You’ll come back in for lab work … they’ll check your fluids for tumor markers. That will tell us if you’re in the clear.”

Dean nodded and glanced out the window, growing quiet for a few minutes.

“Cas? Can you help me with something?”

“What?”

“Will you pull down the covers and move my gown? I want to look.”

Cas was hesitant but stepped forward. He gently pulled back the sheet and blanket to Dean’s knees. Using very slow movements, he lifted the gown and drew it upwards. The reveal was startling. The incision was long, stretching from his groin up toward his chest, taking a detour around the bellybutton and then ending at the ribcage. The cut was red and aggravated – closed with staples. It looked like Dean had been stitched up by Dr. Frankenstein.

Dean’s partially shaved groin looked vulnerable... as did his pecker, which was small and lax. There was a tube coming out of it, a catheter, and liquid bubbled slowly down the clear line.

Dean sucked in a breath and dropped his head back to the pillow.

Cas covered him over gently and turned to face him. Dean had watery eyes and wouldn’t look at Cas. “I need a few minutes alone.”

Normally, Cas would do as asked. But not now.

“No, Dean,” he said quietly and taking Dean’s hand in his own, “alone is the last thing you need right now. You need to look in my eyes.”

It took a few moments for Dean to comply. Cas didn’t push because he could see the man was trying. When their eyes finally met, Cas smiled at him. “You’re all I’ve ever wanted. You’re all I’ll ever need. And the scars are part of you now, so they’re beautiful. Just like the rest of you.”

Dean nodded and breathed unevenly. Clearly the deeper of a breath he took, the more it hurt.

“Dean, what would you think if I had a giant ugly scar? Would it change me in your eyes? Would you want me less?”

Dean’s eyes snapped back to Cas, “No, man, of course not… How could you think I’d even… It wouldn’t matter at all…” he paused then and a small smile of recognition broke out. Dean relaxed completely then.

Cas let go of his hand and pulled up a chair. “Play some cards?”

“Sure, Cas.”

As Cas was dealing between them, Dean’s sense of humor returned.

Dean put on a teasing smile and said, “Good thing I locked it down with you, back when I was sexy, huh?”

“I was an easy lock,” grinned Cas.

“Come up here and kiss me, you fucker,” Dean said with a smile.
Sam had said goodbye to Mary in the parking lot with a hug and told her he’d probably come back around 6. He headed home, exhausted.

As he pushed open the door, he knew somebody was here. The TV was on. He stepped around the corner and saw Jess on the couch. He immediately dropped at her feet in a crouch, laying his head into her lap. She didn’t pull away. She even reached up and threaded her fingers through his hair.

“I was scared you wouldn’t be back,” he said into the soft blanket that was over her lap.

“I’m sorry if it’s been hard on you, but I needed some time.”

“I understand.”

“My heart tells me that you’re sincere when you promise yourself to me. And, I want to be with you. I want to take the ‘happily ever after’ that you’re offering me. But my brain is different. It’s convinced that you will hurt me. Badly. I hope I don’t end up being made a fool.”

“Never. I may have things in my past that can hurt us, but my future is only for you. I will never do anything to jeopardize what we have.”

“C’mon,” she said as she tugged him up on the couch with her, “it’s done with… you don’t have to grovel anymore.”

They re-arranged themselves so that she was tucked into his chest with his arms woven under hers and resting on her stomach. Jess had waited days to feel those hands on her stomach. It was every bit as wonderful as she’d imagined.

Thinking of Dean he asked, “How long til we find out if it’s a boy or a girl?”

“Umm… I don’t know? Maybe four months or so? I’ll ask when I see the doctor.”

“You want me to come to that, right?”

“That would be nice, Sam, thank you,” she said warmly.

Sam thought of his brother again, wanted to tell him that Jess was back and things would be ok. Instead he took a cue from his brother and Cas. He lifted his phone above them on the couch and took a photo of him cradling Jess. He sent it to Dean and smiled.

As they lay there, he told Jess about the things she’d missed while she was gone. Dean’s cancer and surgery, how it went. Things that had happened at work… and then he asked her what he’d missed in her life.

“Nothing much,” she said, “mostly I was just thinking everything over. I couldn’t see you again until I had figured some things out.”

“Well, I’m glad you’re back. I’ve missed you both so much!” he said, squeezing her tightly.

“You’re gonna be a daddy, Sam,” she breathed.
And you’re gonna be a mommy, Jess,” he hummed against her cheek.

Watching Dean sleep had become the new norm. The days soon fell into a routine that basically consisted of Dean sleeping, punctuated by brief periods of waking activity.

Cas stayed with Dean in his room. When he slept, he mostly slept in the chair, which was preferable to the couch-bed in the room.

A nurse would usually come in early in the morning and check on Dean, rousing him for the day. Then there would be breakfast. Dean didn’t have much of an appetite and had to be coaxed into eating. Soon after breakfast, the physical therapist would collect him to make sure he “ambulated” (which was a fancy word for staggering slowly down the hall with the assistance of a helper). These little jaunts usually wore him out and by the time he’d eaten a meal – he’d be back to sleeping again. He would wake up for lunch but didn’t really eat much. Cas would push him to eat more… sometimes resorting to bribery to get Dean to clean his plate. Whenever he was awake he also had a little plastic contraption that he used for breathing exercises. Sooner than later, the man would be sleeping again. And so it went on.

Nurses came in at all hours and in constant rotation. They checked his wounds and dressings, his vitals. They doled out his meds and checked his IV. They emptied his catheter.

Each of them was pleasant, but Cas had his favorites. The ones that were light hearted, joking and laughing with Dean, those were the ones he liked best.

He left once a day for a few hours while Mary or Sam visited, and during those times he’d go to Mary’s for a shower and shave. Sometimes, if he was overly tired, he’d take a nap in Dean’s comfortable bed. On the way back he’d grab something decent to eat.

When Sam visited he usually brought Jess with him, and the two of them were lovely to watch. They had a glow about them, both in love and clearly basking in the joy of impending parenthood.

Pam and Chris visited twice that week too. They joked about her planet-sized stomach and the Rolling Stones onesies they’d bought for the baby. They passed on well-wishes from other friends in Dean’s group.

Anna and Michael came by a few times as well. They brought Dean a nerf football to toss around in the room. He obviously preferred it to the vases of flowers and bouquets of balloons that had taken over his small space. He and Michael had gotten a bit rowdy with the football at one point and a nurse had threatened to take it away. Dean had smirked like an irreverent school boy being chastised – secretly proud of his unruly behavior.

One day the nurse brought in a flock of nursing students with her. They all gathered in a circle around the bed and watched carefully as they were given a live tutorial on how to remove a catheter. It couldn’t have been fun to be Dean – laying there with his most private areas hanging out while almost a dozen young girls stood around him nodding. But, the man had grown surprisingly accustomed to being poked and prodded. The addition of an audience may have bothered him, but he didn’t get pissy about it. He immediately received help to the bathroom and high-fived his nurse when a few drops splattered into the toilet.
Dean was sitting in bed, Cas on the chair, and they were tossing the nerf ball back and forth between them when Dean inquired about the resort for the first time.

Cas assured him that things were going ok. He explained that during Dean’s naps throughout the day Cas was taking out both their laptops and answering all the emails – essentially making the decisions about the myriad issues that came up and providing feedback on how those issues should be addressed. While Dean slept, Cas had been approving invoices and purchase orders as well as continually updating the procedures to be followed and answering questions about specific issues that had come up.

Dean thanked him for taking care of the business and inquired when they’d be going back.

“I hadn’t made any concrete plans without you, Dean. But I figured when you’re discharged we’ll probably go back to Mary’s. We can stay there until your two week appointment. Once we know for sure that you’re all clear, we can ask the doctor when it’s ok to travel.”

“That seems reasonable, Cas.”

“It’s going to be awhile before you are your ‘old self,’ Dean.”

“Yeah. I’m startin’ to see that.”

They tossed the ball a few more times before Dean ventured, “What if I don’t get the all clear? I know you Cas. You have a plan B. Let’s hear it.”

“That outcome is so unlikely that I hadn’t given it any thought at all,” smiled Cas. Sam ambled into the room then, having just arrived for a visit and stepped up to form a triangle with them. The nerf ball spiraled between the three of them.

“So,” Dean said firmly and taking aim at his brother, “When are you gonna marry that girl? She’s gonna need a ring on her finger when she starts showing. That’s how she is.”

“I’ve had the ring for a while Dean. In fact,” he said as he lobbed the ball back, “I had that fuckin’ ring in my pocket the night she laid Meg’s pictures on me. Under the circumstances, I aborted my plans for the proposal.”

The three men laughed at the irony of the timing and as they continued to toss the ball around they went over possible scenarios for how Sam might pop the question. He told them how he’d initially planned to propose. Dean and Cas both concurred that something more dynamic should be done. He let them razz him for his lack of creativity. But they didn’t know Jess like he did. He knew that she’d like the moment exactly the way he’d planned it. Quiet. Private. Personal.

“You’d better do it quick,” Dean challenged. “She’s got a small window before that belly starts getting big. She’s not gonna wanna walk down the aisle wearing a tent for a dress.”

Now there was something Sam hadn’t thought of. Dean was right. He needed to talk to Jess about their wedding plans quick… decide what they were going to do. That meant… he needed to ask her.

“I gotta go boys,” Sam said as he tossed the ball to Cas, “Dean’s right. I’ve got some shit to take care of.”

“But you just got here!” Dean protested.

“See you tomorrow!” Sam called over his shoulder as he headed out the door.
Cas and Dean went back to tossing the ball between the two of them.

Sam headed over to Jess’ office. When he approached her desk, she was in the middle of something. “I came to see if you wanted to go to lunch with me?”

“I’d love to, Sam, but I can’t today. I have depositions in a half-hour, and I’m behind.”

“Ok. I’ll run out and grab you something to eat before I leave then.”

“Ugh,” Jess moaned with her hand on her stomach, “I couldn’t possibly. But thanks anyway,” she said as she stood and leaned across her desk to kiss him. “Sorry you came over here for nothing.”

“It’s fine, I was over visiting Dean, thought I’d stop by while I was in the area. Where are you sleeping tonight? My place or yours?”

“Mine, I think,” she said as she gathered up her papers and put them into her briefcase, “It’s just easier to wake up sick every morning if I’m doing it in my own bed.” She smiled weakly at him as she stepped away from her desk.

“I’ll walk you out,” he said and they moved toward the exit together. As they stepped out onto the street and moved down the block to the parking garage Sam asked her, “When you wake up sick… do you prefer to be alone? Or have me there?”

“I always prefer you there,” she smiled.

“Ok. I’ll stay over tonight.”

“Great!” she said as they stepped into the shadow of the parking garage. They moved together to the elevator. “What floor are you on?” she asked him.

“Three.” He watched her hit the buttons for 3 and 4. “You think you’ll have an appetite by dinner tonight? I could bring food when I come?”

“Umm…” she stammered, “Honestly Sam, the only thing that seems to be safe is fresh or cold stuff… nothing with a smell. I’m fine if you’d rather eat before you come.”

“Naw… I’ll bring subs, salads maybe. That be good?”

“Perfect,” she said, pecking his cheek as he stepped out of the elevator.

Later that evening, Sam moved around in the kitchen at Jess’ place. He plated the subs and fruit salad he’d brought over and took it to the couch where Jess was under a blanket. Pregnant, she seemed to always be cold. And tired. And sick. Poor girl. How she could still be glowing and happy when feeling so miserable was beyond him.

He handed her a tall glass of milk with her food. “Jess?” he said as he used the remote to silence the TV which was playing a loud commercial, “We have lots of stuff to figure out. I don’t want to overwhelm you, but I want to talk about some of it… so I can get an idea of how you see things
playing out for us.”

“Okay, where do you want to start?”

“Umm… let’s start with the living arrangements. I’m assuming we’ll move in together – I just didn’t know if you had that same assumption.”

“I guess I do… I just don’t really know where we’d live.”

“Me either,” Sam admitted. “We could live here, or at my place or we could pick a new place. What sounds good to you?”

“You love your place, Sam.”

“No, Jess, I like my place. And it’s not really a place to raise a family.”

“Well, I like my place too Sam, but I feel the same. It’s not really a place to raise a family.”

“Oh, Jess. Let’s pick a place to live in for now… mine or yours. That will keep things low stress while you’re pregnant. Then, when you’re on maternity leave and have some time, we can shop for a house. How does that sound?”

“Perfect.”

“Ok… so while we’re waiting for our little bundle of joy… do you want to live here or at my place?”

“I have to choose?”

“Well,” said Sam, “I don’t really care for the instability of going back and forth between two. I don’t want to ask you where I’m sleeping each night. I just want to come home to you,” he said sweetly.

Jess’ heart melted a little with the sentiment. She wanted to stay at her place, not move to his. But she also didn’t want to demand that he give up his condo and move in with her. “How bout we flip a coin?”

Sam grinned widely and dug in his pocket. “Heads or tails?”

“Heads for my place – tails for yours,” she grinned back at him as she sank her teeth into her sandwich.

Sam flipped the coin and then locked eyes with Jess – sporting an impish grin as he drug out the suspense. Then he peaked under his hand, but didn’t let her see.

“C’mon daddy…” she cajoled him, “tell mommy where we’re living!”

“Here,” he said softly, pocketing his penny. “Home sweet home.” They ate in silence for a moment, each with a tray in front of them. “I’ll start packing up and get my condo listed,” said Sam matter-of-factly.

“Thank you, Sam,” she said to him carefully and quietly, “Thank you for all you’re doing and giving up.”

“You’re giving up things too Jess. Dean pointed it out to me today… you’re going to get big. Soon. Having the big white wedding that most girls dream of is going to be a real challenge. You’ll have
to either hurry-up and have a ‘shotgun’ wedding now – or wait until after the baby is born.”

“Prince Charming seems to be overlooking a pretty important step in the wedding process,” said Jess coyly, “I haven’t even been asked yet.”

Jess’ eyes met Sam’s and she watched his gaze fall to the tray of food in her lap. Her eyes followed his. Then she noticed it. The napkin had a napkin ring on it. A small one. Platinum, with a diamond in the center. “Oh Sam,” she said tearing up, “It’s so beautiful!”

“It’s an antique,” he told her.

He filled her in on the history of the ring and then slid the weathered Tiffany box out of his pocket for her. She set aside her tray and hugged him tightly and he whispered, “Jessica Moore, will do me the honor of becoming my wife?”

“Yes!” she squeaked against his chest, “Yes, yes, yes!”

They made love that night. Sinking into her had never felt more right. Never for a moment did Sam forget the tiny little passenger between them when their bodies were pressed together. Knowing they’d created a life together was an all-consuming thought and he held her tightly, long after they’d had their release. He held her body as close to his as possible, feeling her heartbeat, her breath on his chest, loving her completely and thrilled for the life they were going to be building together. They talked late into the evening about anything and everything. They discussed what kind of wedding they’d like to have – both contributing little details they felt were important. They discussed the honeymoon and the guest list and names for the baby. Eventually, Sam even told Jess the story of how the ring that was now nestled on her finger, had been in his pocket when she’d entered with Meg’s pictures.

She giggled at the irony of it, and he told her that he’d gone to see Meg. He told her that Meg had been sorry and that he’d agreed to call it even. “But,” Sam told her quietly, “it’s a lot easier to forgive her for doing it, now that you’re back.”

“You forgave her?” whispered Jess.

“Yeah. We’ve been friends or more for a very long time. And I know what it’s like to do something really shitty and then have to live with it.”

Jess immediately understood. “I will try to be civil if I ever end up seeing her again.” That was the best Jess could offer.

Check-out day eventually rolled around. Dean was dressed, bag packed up and sitting on top of the covers on his hospital bed… anxious to get out of there and doing his best to not fidget while waiting for the doctor to come and see him one last time.

He had refused breakfast – resisting Cas’ admonishments and saying he’d be able to eat much better food in a few hours and preferred to wait.

Now, as lunch time neared, Cas heard Dean’s stomach gurgle and let out a small huff of laughter.
“You’re taking me for a big, fat bacon cheeseburger on the way to Mom’s.”

Cas nodded and turned his eyes to the doorway where the doctor was walking in. There wasn’t much to say. Dean had been pooping (a requirement of being able to leave) and eating. Everything looked good. He told them the nurse would come in with discharge instructions.

“It’s good to be done with those stupid pantyhose!” Dean crowed when he watched Cas throw away the compression stockings that had to be worn after surgery to prevent blood clots.

When the nurse came in, she handed Cas a thick stack of information and briefly went over important things to remember. She then handed Dean an appointment card for him to come in and have his staples taken out. She double checked that they both understood how to shower until then.

With nothing further to discuss, she ushered Dean into a wheelchair. “I’m fine to walk,” said Dean.

“It’s your parting gift,” smiled the nurse, “No one falls on the way out. Hospital rules.”

Dean sank into the wheelchair and Cas put their bags of crap on Dean’s lap. Mary and Sam had taken the gifts, flowers and balloons in her SUV yesterday, but they still had a lot to carry down.

Cas left Dean and the nurse curbside to bring around the Impala. Dean shuffled into it and waved to the nurse. “Ah…” he said as baby rumbled under him, “good to be out of there.”

They stopped for burgers on the way to Mary’s and then at the pharmacy for the prescription pain pills. By the time they got to the house – Dean was shot. He headed up to his room slowly with Cas at his elbow helping him along.

Cas wasn’t tired or in need of a nap, but he put on some soft music. He couldn’t resist the urge to crawl in bed with Dean. It had been far too long. They laid together, arms and legs comfortably tangled, and Dean fell asleep almost immediately.

Cas watched over him.
The days spent recuperating at home were not all that different from being in the hospital. There were no nurses constantly checking in… but the routine was similar. Dean still slept a lot. Between naps there were pain meds to take, meals to coax Dean into eating and the ever present “ambulation,” which was to be done at least four times each day. At first, Cas just pulled Dean outside and they’d walk around the yard in the cool winter air. But eventually, they worked up to short walks down the street and out into the neighborhood.

As the days went by, Dean’s fighting spirit came through, and Cas watched him begin to take over his own care. He cleaned his plate without being prompted and pressed himself to longer and longer walks, always ending tired but satisfied that he’d been able to go farther than the previous attempt.

As Dean began to come around, they tapered off the pain pills, which seemed to keep Dean drowsier than he cared to be. He talked often about returning home, smiling warmly when he spoke about the resort. Soon he was back to checking his own emails and was getting caught up on the changes made in his absence.

Dean had clearly been through the wringer. His body, which had been so virile before, was smaller now. Between the surgery and the hospital stay he’d dropped quite a few pounds. His glowing tan was gone, too, but at least his enigmatic smile was returning. And, with Christmas just days away, the Winchester family home was a hotbed of activity.

In addition to the regular holiday activities and preparations, Mary and Jess were deep into arrangements for the wedding. They were in and out constantly as they looked at dresses and worked through their lists. Sam had made it clear that he wanted Jess to be able to have as nice of a wedding as she could have on their limited timeframe.

What they lacked in time, they made up for with money since Mary was helping cover the exorbitant affair. She was vocal about wanting to be involved since she had no daughters and encouraged Jess’ every whim.

Cas had a sneaking suspicion that her interest in paying for part of the wedding was less due to her desire to be involved than it was her way of helping out. Jess’ father was wasn’t poor, but his
ability to contribute was limited.

Dean’s first outing since his hospital stay was to accompany Cas, Mary, Sam and Jess to pick out Christmas trees. They went to the usual lot and soaked up the holiday spirit as they milled between the fragrant trees.

When the choices had been made, two trees were strapped to the top of Mary’s SUV. They stopped at Jess’ place first and Dean watched with Mary as Sam and Cas wrestled the oversized tree up and around the tiny, twisting staircase that led up to her door. They grappled the tree into a tree stand and then headed back to Mary’s to repeat the process in her living room as well.

Sam and Jess stayed for a cup of hot cocoa and then headed home to decorate their tree, leaving Dean and Cas with Mary. Dean was tired and headed upstairs for a nap. Cas put on some holiday music and cheerfully helped Mary decorate the tree.

By the time they’d finished it was dark outside, and they turned down all the lights to get a look at the newly decorated tree, softly glowing next to the fireplace.

“It’s good to finally have a tree up,” sighed Mary, “I’ve had all the other decorations up for weeks and weeks… but now it really feels like Christmas.”

Cas leaned in and squeezed her to him into a one-arm hug.

“Cas, now that Sam and Jess are expecting, do you think you and Dean will be coming home for the holidays?” she looked at him expectantly, “It’s different, you know, once there’s children. If you miss a year… you miss a lot. They just grow so fast.”

“I think we’ll be able to visit a lot more frequently now that the resort is up and running. For a while there, we really didn’t feel like we could take a day off.” Cas’ eyes glazed over as his mind traveled back to how their days had been when they’d been in the building phase. “From the time we got there until the time you visited, I don’t think we took a single day off.” He smiled remembering, “We had fun, don’t get me wrong, but we worked really hard.”

“You boys have really made your dreams come true down there, haven’t you?”

“Yes,” Cas said smiling, “it feels like that. But,” he said, reeling himself back in and looking at the tree again, “we have a lot more freedom to travel now. I mean, obviously, we’ve been gone for quite some time and nothing has imploded. Making sure to be home for holidays will definitely be easier now.”

“Cas, do you ever hear from your folks?”

“No.”

“Do you follow what’s happening to them?”

“Not anymore. Anna keeps me informed of the important stuff. I mostly just let it fall to the back of my mind.”

“Would Anna and Michael like to join us for Christmas again this year?”

“I will let them know they’ve been invited, and I’m sure they’ll be thrilled.” Cas’ heart gave an extra beat. It wasn’t just that Mary had opened her home to himself as Dean’s partner… over the years, she’d opened up her family to his family as well.
“From here on out, it’s an implied invitation for them, ok?”

He nodded, and as their eyes met, they both smiled.

“I’m going to turn in a little early tonight, I have a big day tomorrow,” she told him as she headed for the stairs. “Good night Cas,” she called with a wink.

“Good night, Mom.” He stood still for a minute or two after she left him, just looking at the tree. Mary had always encouraged Cas to call her mom, but it took some getting used to. Lately, though, it just rolled off his tongue.

Cas could think of two reasons why Mary would like him to call her mom. Most likely, that she was affording him the kindness that mothers-in-law often gave to their children’s spouses. He thought this was more likely. But it didn’t escape his attention that she knew he was motherless and had been for quite some time. Perhaps she was trying to be a surrogate for him. Either way, he loved her for it.

This house and this family had become his home over the years, and he loved them dearly. Not quite ready for bed, he moved to the fireplace and began arranging the logs to start a fire. As the first flames licked small and blue, crackling the little bundles of twigs, Dean came up quietly behind him and settled into the recliner.

“Looks like a frickin’ Norman Rockwell painting down here,” said Dean with a smile in his voice.

Cas turned and sat down on the edge of the hearth facing Dean. “Looks good doesn’t it?” he said, nodding towards the tree.

“Wanna go out and do some shopping tomorrow? We’re running out of days.”

“That sounds good. I’ve ordered something already for Anna and Michael, but I didn’t know what you’d want to do for Sam and Jess… or for Mom.” Cas was quiet for a beat and then added, “Day after tomorrow you have your stitches out, and then on Thursday we see Dr. Carlton.”

Dean tensed up a little at the mention of it but didn’t comment. “Is Christmas next Tuesday?”

“Yes.”

“Are we doing anything for the employees?”

“Yes, Sunni is taking care of it,” Cas answered, “they’re all getting a small bonus.”

“Do they even celebrate Christmas down there?” Dean asked with curiosity.

“Yes. The culture is predominantly Catholic.”

“Thanks for making sure something got done for them; I hadn’t thought of the holiday at all until today.”

As they relaxed in front of the fire, Dean changed the subject, “The wedding is at Disney, Cas. Did you know?”

“I think I overheard something about it.”

“I was thinking - why don’t we take Baby and make it a road trip?”

Cas looked at Dean, trying to decide if he was kidding, “Dean, it’s so far. They’re planning to do it
right after the holiday… I know you’re feeling better but… I don’t know if I’m comfortable with being so far from the hospital.”

“Jeez, Cas, it’s not that far.”

Cas gave him the look… the impatient teacher look.

“Cas, it’s not like I’m suggesting a trip to Tijuana.”

“Dean, Florida is like… two thousand miles away.”

“Florida…” Dean trailed off.

Cas was watching the gears turn in Dean’s head.

“Disney World, not Disneyland!” Dean laughed at himself, “Yeah… let’s fly for that one,” he joined Cas in laughter and then as he quieted down he added, “But Cas, let’s take a road trip somewhere before we lock Baby back up in the garage, ok?”

“I’d like that Dean.”

As days went by, progress was made on all fronts. Dean and Cas had finished up their shopping and stowed their gifts under the tree. Dean’s staples had been replaced by strips of tape. Mary had been baking up a storm, and Dean’s constant cookie snatching and pie eating were fast replacing the pounds he’d lost from the surgery.

This morning, Cas woke before his alarm. He hadn’t slept very well, knowing what was coming. He headed for the shower and went downstairs to put coffee on. The house was quiet and the sky outside was still dark.

As he fumbled with the coffee pot, his mind circled. He’d grown quite complacent, basking in holiday cheer and watching Dean get a little better each day. He’d pushed negative thoughts aside with surprising ease.

But now, the day was upon them. Today they’d go into Dr. Carlton’s office and find out if Dean’s surgery had been successful, or if the cancer had continued to metastasize.

From the beginning, Cas’ biggest fear had always been losing Dean. Now, it was even worse. He’d built a life and a home and a family with Dean. Cas had been so happy these past few years as they’d built this incredible life together. Dreams he hadn’t even known he’d had were coming true.

But if he imaged his life without Dean… none of it was appealing.

Would he ever care to go back to the resort again, if Dean wasn’t with him? Cas didn’t think so. And he loved Mary so much that it hurt inside. But would he still feel warm and content on her couch if Dean wasn’t there? No, he knew he wouldn’t. Imagining even a day without Dean left a hollow feeling in Cas’ chest, and the pain of it was sharp.

In truth, it all came down to Dean. Dean was the only real home Cas had ever known. What was the point of the rest of it without him? What was the point of even drawing breath?

Cas finished his coffee in silent contemplation. When the sun started to come up, he went to wake up Dean.
Walking into Dean’s room, Cas allowed himself a moment to linger in the doorway and enjoy the way the morning sun seemed to illuminate Deans freckles and bring a glow to his soft skin. His lips were soft, pink and slightly parted. His thick lashes curved against his cheeks. Beautiful. Mine.

Please, God, let me keep him?

“Hey handsome,” Cas said warmly as he sat on the edge of the bed, “brought you coffee.”

As soon as Dean’s hand wrapped around the mug, Cas was moving to the shower. The last thing Dean needed this morning was to see uncertainty in Cas’ eyes so he kept them averted. As he showered, he worked on steeling himself to be strong enough for the next few hours.

He reminded himself that the odds were in their favor. Dean was young and healthy, and they’d caught this very early on. There was no reason to expect the worst.

They drove in silence and didn’t break it as they sat in the waiting room. When they were shown to Dr. Carlton's office, they sat in the familiar chairs and Dean took Cas’ hand before giving the doctor a nod to indicate they were ready.

“Dean,” said the doctor, “the pathology results from the tissue removed during your surgeries, as well as your labs have been evaluated. I’m glad to be able to tell you that your body appears to be free of cancer.”

Both men breathed a sigh of relief and exchanged a soft smile before looking back to Dr. Carlton. It was hard for Cas to focus on what was being said. All his energy was focused on holding back the shout of joy that was locked behind his tight lips.

The doctor told them that he’d like Dean back for one more follow up before they left the country and annually after that – just to be on the safe side. Dean was to wait at least another week before flying anywhere to avoid any possibility of blood clots. Once the tape on his incision began loosening in the shower, he could remove it at his discretion. Blah blah blah… thought Cas. He’s going to live!

The Winchester camp let out a collective sigh of relief with the news that Dean was healthy again. Jess and Mary asked the boys how long they were planning on staying so the wedding date could be set, and they pulled out calendars and began to plan. The wedding date was set for the fifteenth of January and reservations were made for the wedding party and their guests to fly together and stay in adjoining rooms at the venue.

While the calendar was out, Dean and Cas also planned their road-trip. They’d leave a few days after Christmas and be gone for about a week. The destination they’d chosen was Bryce Canyon, and they’d be going the long way through Salt Lake City before turning south toward the Park. Dean seemed quite excited to make the trip – even though he would be incapable of the kind of physical activity he usually enjoyed when they travelled together.

Dean wouldn’t be doing any rafting or horseback riding, and he certainly wouldn’t be taking any all day hikes. But Cas was certain they’d be able to find ways to enjoy the trip just the same.

As the family lounged in the living room, snacking on Mary’s homemade treats and discussing
their plans, Jess began clicking a few pictures of the family. When Dean got a look at some of the shots she’d taken, his heart swelled.

“This one…” he said quietly to Cas – handing the camera to his man, “send this one to everyone and include a text that I’m cancer free and enjoying the holiday with my family.”

“Sure,” said Cas with a smile as he took the camera to have a look. He could see why Dean liked it. The picture showed Dean in the recliner with Cas tucked between his knees. Cas had a wide, cheeky grin on his face and a cup of coffee between his hands. Dean also had a cup in his hand, and his other hand was resting on Cas’ shoulder. Dean’s smile was soft and warm. In the background, Sam and Mary were visible and both wearing happy faces too.

Cas forwarded that picture along with others he liked to his own phone and then sent out a mass text to everyone in their lives… including Sunni and Roberto. Replies were almost immediate. Everyone had been pulling for Dean.

On the morning of Christmas Eve, Sam brought Jess over to spend the night. They brought a few bags with them and set up camp right next door to Dean and Cas – in Sam’s childhood bedroom. This year, Jess’ father and sister would be joining them for Christmas Eve Dinner. Her mother had died in a car accident when Jess was in high school, but Mary had invited the rest of Jess’ immediate family, wanting to get to know them.

When dinner was served, the dining room table was full. Dean sat next to Mary and Cas beside him. Anna and Michael sat to the right of Cas and to the right of them were Jess’ father and her sister Natalie. Jess sat between Natalie and Sam, who completed the circle by sitting next to Mary – across the table from Dean.

The meal was delicious, and the conversation was alive with discussion of wedding plans – not just for Sam and Jess, but also for Anna and Michael who were set to be married the following June. Clearly Mary was enjoying the get together, watching her family grow.

When the meal was ended, the men poured drinks and Dean proposed a toast to the new “poop factory” that Sam and Jess were having. When round two was poured, they all made a cheers to the pending nuptials of both couples.

Sam razzed Dean about he and Cas and the possibility that they marry one day. Dean laughed it off, but Cas caught his man looking at him over the candlelit table a few times after that. It didn’t take a genius to know what Dean was thinking of.

The ladies got to their feet and began clearing the table, staying in the kitchen to help Mary with the dishes. The gentlemen settled around the table and began a game of poker while the laughter and chatter of the ladies in the kitchen served as their background music.

Jess’ father seemed okay. He had a deep, authoritative voice and a commanding presence. But, as they played cards, they found that he also had a well-developed sense of humor that they could all appreciate.

When at last the dishes were done, the ladies joined the men at the table for cards. After a few rounds of poker, the men took mercy on the ladies and switched over to easier games. It didn’t take long for the card games to turn to drinking games – as was becoming their tradition around this table. Mary brought out spiked eggnog and shot glasses for the losers and a boisterous game of spoons broke out.

Natalie, or Nat as they’d been instructed to call her, was quite familiar with the game and took
great pleasure in watching her father lose. Again and again.

Raucous laughter plagued the house until it was quite late. Eventually, Jess’ father pleaded battle fatigue and excused himself from the festivities. He handed the keys to Nat who drove her poor, heavy-footed father back home.

The Moore family would have Christmas at his house tomorrow, but Sam and Jess weren’t leaving for that until noon. In the morning, they’d have breakfast with the Winchesters and open gifts before heading out. Anna and Michael would be heading over to Michael’s family to celebrate on Christmas.

So, in the morning, after a delicious breakfast and the opening of gifts, the crowd had dwindled down to just Mary, Dean and Cas. They lounged in front of the TV that afternoon, watching holiday movies that were family favorites like “National Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation” and “A Christmas Story.”

Snuggling with Dean on the couch while Mary lounged in the recliner, Cas found himself content. The three of them laughed at the TV screen, snacked on leftovers and dozed off from time to time. From start to finish it had been a wonderful celebration for the entire family.

When they crawled into bed that night, Dean pressed his body up against Cas from behind. His soft flannel sleep pants were warm against the back of Cas’ legs and feeling Dean’s bare chest pressed against Cas’ back sent a full body shiver down his spine. Cas took a deep breath and let it out slowly.

Being intimate with Dean without being sexual with Dean was something he’d been struggling with since the surgery. Spooning, for instance, had always been enjoyable. But now, it was different. Cas had to force himself not to let his mind wander… or his hands.

Since he’d first pulled back the covers at the hospital and let Dean look at his post-surgical body, Cas had been curious if Dean’s dick would be functional. He was surprised that Dean hadn’t been equally curious about it. Knowing Dean the way he did, he’d almost expected Dean to solicit a hand job right there in the hospital bed, just to see if he could get hard. But he hadn’t.

Once they’d gotten back to Mary’s and were sharing a bed, Cas had felt certain that sooner than later, Dean’s hands would be on him and they’d “give it a try.” But he’d been wrong. Dean was openly affectionate as he always had been, draping an arm around Cas’ shoulders occasionally or laying a hand on Cas’ thigh… even curling up together like now. But the man made no sexual advances at all.

Cas had to allow that perhaps Dean was simply not allowing Cas to see him struggle with it. Perhaps Dean was trying with every shower to coax a flaccid cock to life and failing. Cas would never know the difference. It was also possible that the man’s sex drive had been affected and he simply wasn’t feeling like having sex… completely content to snuggle up and go to sleep.

What was bothering Cas wasn’t the lack of sex. It was the not knowing. If Dean would just tell him “hey man, my junk’s not workin’ anymore” or “hey man, my shit works but I just don’t seem to feel like having sex” that would be fine. But wondering what was going on with Dean “down there” was eating away at him.

More important than Dean’s sexual function was his overall emotional well-being, though. And Cas refused to compromise that by asking questions. He didn’t want to pressure Dean or cause him any anxiety. So, out of love and respect for his man, he laid quietly in the bed with him night after night and wondered but didn’t ask. He worked hard at controlling his body’s reactions to touches
and kisses and smiles… everything that lit him up about Dean.

Cas had become a pro at the speedy shower hand job – blowing his load quickly each morning over a tight fist just like in his teen years. He kept himself as sated as possible to avoid any missteps and be sure that Dean never sensed a desire in his lover that he was unable to physically satisfy.

Even now, lying here with Dean in the dark on Christmas night, he willed his dick to lay quietly despite the presence of Dean’s palm which was resting on Cas’ hip. He focused on his breathing and closed his eyes, giving nothing away.

The few days after Christmas, Dean and Cas helped Mary take down the tree and decorations, carrying her boxes to the attic for her and dragging the tree out for pick up. They also ventured out into the city a bit. Dean was capable of walking much farther than he had been just a few weeks ago. They took advantage of this to meet up with friends.

They started by visiting Gabe. The man was now married to Robin and opening a restaurant downtown. Cas and Dean stopped by the location and followed him through the space he was leasing for the endeavor. They commented on its charm and listened as he described the kind of fun and sassy fare he planned to have on the menu here. It was good to see them again. Gabe had calmed down considerably in the past two years, but his underlying jovial personality and quick wit still made him a fun guy to be around.

The four of them went out to dinner together after seeing the restaurant site and got reacquainted with each other’s lives in more detail. Robin was happy with her work and Gabe was excited about his restaurant, but both of them professed that once the restaurant was up and running – they were ready to start a family.

“Seems to be the new normal,” says Dean to Cas as they climb into the Impala after dinner, “everybody we know is getting married and having kids.”

“Yeah. Cole’s wife is pregnant again,” commented Cas.

“Didn’t they just have a baby?”

“Yep, a few months ago,” laughed Cas, “It wasn’t planned. According to Cole, no one warned his wife that taking an antibiotic would render her birth control ineffective.”

“Wow. Tough break,” chuckled Dean. “I guess that’s something to be said for the gay relationships,” Dean said with humor, “at least there’s never a surprise pregnancy…” he turned to look both ways before pulling the car out of the parking lot, “…babies in our world are well planned,” he finished with a laugh.

They dropped in on a few other friends that week too. They went bowling with Pam and Chris one evening and had a great time. Pam was far too big to bowl and settled herself in with some junk food to cat call at the men as they took their turns.

They visited Cole and got a chance to hold the new baby, small and warm with big eyes and a mess
of dark hair. Dean looked precious (and uncomfortable) holding the bundle and quite relieved when Cas stepped up to take it from him.

Cas didn’t fear babies like most men seemed to. But when he considered having his own... even in a distant future... the thought was unappealing. Perhaps that particular dream would never resonate with him.

Right now, Cas was already living his dream. He spent his days with Dean. They’d be out on the road in the Impala soon, and Cas couldn’t wait. Once they returned from that trip, they’d be heading to Disney World for Sam’s wedding. And before too much longer – they’d be back in their treehouse. The energy and life of the jungle would pulse through them, and they’d wake refreshed each day with the excitement of cultivating the incredible oasis they’d built together.

*Life is good* he thought. Just then, both Dean and Cas got an incoming text from Sam.

“Holy sh&^%!!!!!!! IT’S TWINS!!!!”
Dean dropped their coats in the back seat on top of the duffel bags, next to the cooler. He looked back to the door where his mother and Cas were speaking quietly. He walked around to the passenger side, opened the door and sat down – one leg inside and one still resting on the driveway. He popped open the glove box and tossed his bottle of pain pills in there along with his prescription refill and a pack of gum.

Then, feeling satisfied that he hadn’t forgotten anything, he walked back over to his mom. Cas was hugging Mary as he approached them and by the time Dean got there – Cas had untangled himself and was heading for the car. Dean clapped his man on the shoulder as he passed by him and then moved to pull his mom into a tight embrace.

“M’gonna miss you, Mom.”

“You too, sweetie. You boys be careful out on the road, ok?”

“We will. We’ll take it slow.”

“I’m just a phone call away if you need anything,” she told him as she petted the back of his head.

When she released him, he backed away from her, smiling and then turned towards the car. Cas was already sitting in the passenger side, engrossed in his phone.

Dean climbed carefully into the driver’s seat and turned the key. Baby rumbled to life beneath him, and he felt the excitement of getting out on the open road prickle through him as he pulled out of the gate and onto the street. Cas looked up from his phone, clearly intent on playing the role of copilot, “We talked about going north and spending a night or two in Salt Lake City. But that’s mostly interstate driving. We could head east sooner and take highway instead of interstate? It might be a more scenic drive?”

“Sure Cas. Which way should I take out of the city?”

“Take the Oakland Bridge. The 580, and we’ll stay on 80 all the way through Reno.”
“Ever been to Reno, Cas?”

“No.”

“Me neither,” Dean grinned, “but it’s been too long since I played some blackjack.”

Dean turned on the radio and began scanning for a good song. Cas wanted to roll down his window and feel the breeze, but he knew better. It was damn cold out. Instead he leaned back to relax and watch the city slide past his window, glancing occasionally at Dean, who seemed relaxed and happy.

The city traffic hampered their progress a bit, and as the hours ticked by with nothing but concrete jungle passing by outside his window, it only took a few hours for Cas to start getting restless.

“Cas, man, what’s up with you? You got ants in your pants?”

Cas looked over at Dean, who was cool as a cucumber with his shades on, gently guiding the car with one hand and a slow, easy smile.

“I’m just ready to be out of the city I guess.”

Dean smiled knowingly, “I remember this from our last trip. You got so pissed when stopped that first night… remember?”

“How could I forget? We road tripped all day just to go to a movie and eat at Red Robin,” Cas said acerbically.

“Well, Cas, what can I say? Civilization hugs the coast. As soon as we start heading east we’ll get off the beaten path quick.”

Cas nodded, understanding, but still feeling a bit claustrophobic.

“You know what buddy? Let’s just get you out of the car for a while,” Dean smiled, “I know a good stop we can make… can you hang on for another half hour?”

Cas rolled his eyes and nodded, facing forward. “Hey,” huffed Dean, catching Cas’ eye, “why don’t you slide over here with your man, huh?”

When Cas looked over and saw Dean’s come-hither look and watched his arm stretch over the seatback, he couldn’t help but grin and slide himself over to Dean’s side. Dean moved his arm forward to rest on Cas’ shoulder, and suddenly all was right with the world.

Jess had to laugh as she rounded the corner out of the kitchen. She had a plate with PB&J sandwiches on it and a huge glass of chocolate milk in her hand. Sam was on the floor in the living room with pieces and parts strewn all around him in an arc. A rickety and sorry excuse for a baby crib was slowly taking shape under his hands.

“I don’t know why you didn’t just pay the extra $50 to have those put together,” she laughed as she walked up behind him.
“Cause I’m a man,” he laughed as he dropped the pieces he was holding and reached for a sandwich from the plate. “I’m not just a man… I’m an intelligent man,” he informed her with his mouthful, “a highly educated and intelligent man. I can follow simple directions and assemble my children’s cribs.”

“Sure you can baby,” she placated him as she set down the plate of sandwiches on the coffee table and sank into the couch. “I have no doubts about your skills.”

“Are you smirking at me?” he asked her indignantly.

“Of course not!” she exclaimed with an exaggerated face suggesting innocence.

“You are SO smirking at me,” he said as he reached out and tickled the bottom of her foot, “doubt my mad skills woman… I will punish you!”

She laughed and kicked his hand away, “Promises, promises,” she goaded him. “You’re going to have children to spank soon… I think you need some practice.”

“Oh, don’t tempt me woman…,” he said as he turned himself onto his knees and began crawling toward her, “your lack of faith in my ability to put together this plastic and aluminum jigsaw puzzle will earn you a sore bottom.”

“Oh, Daddy!” she teased him as she began to scoot away from him, “Oh, Daddy, please don’t spank me!”

He laughed out loud at her teasing. And then he lunged for her.

Dean exited the freeway onto Suisun Valley Road with no indication of what their destination was. Cas watched from the crook of Dean’s arm as they passed by a Starbucks, Burger King, McDonald’s and several motels and gas stations. Nothing seemed noteworthy.

They drove to the end of a cul-de-sac and Dean pulled into a large parking lot. The sign said “Scandia Family Fun and Grand Arcade.”

Cas turned to Dean with a questioning look.

“My family came here once when I was a kid,” Dean smiled.

Cas couldn’t help but smile back at him. Dean parked and they headed for the entrance. It was far better on the inside than it had appeared from the parking lot. Cas’ eyes swept over what appeared to be a huge miniature golf course. It was dotted with curious obstacles – a windmill, a castle, a lighthouse and many others.

There was a go-kart track too; there were bumper boats, laser tag and even some small and dodgy looking rides… and an arcade. Cas didn’t know what he wanted to do first.

This was the kind of place he’d always wanted to go when he was a child, but his parents would never have been persuaded to come here. This kind of place was just far too small, dirty, noisy and cheap for his parents. In all his childhood they’d never taken him to a carnival either. No circus, no
county fair. Cas took a deep breath and savored the smell of corn dogs and funnel cakes and looked to Dean.

“I love it…” *I love you* “…what are we doing first?”

“Mini golf?”

“Okay,” said Cas, already moving.

Dean loved watching Cas’ eyes light up and crinkle at the corners as his wide smile stretched across his face. He looked like a kid in a candy store.

Armed with clubs and brightly colored balls, they stepped out onto the first of two miniature golf courses. “You ever played before?”

“No,” said Cas as he approached the first hole, “but I’m an excellent golfer.”

“You play golf?”

“Well, I haven’t played in quite a while, but yes. I golf,” Cas said as he bent to place his ball in the little cradle.

“Ladies and gentlemen,” begins Dean, taking on the whisper of a TV golf announcer, “The MPGA tour welcomes newcomer Castiel Milton, a man with a promising game but the notable tendency to choke when the pressure is on.” Dean leans on his putter and continues to whisper as Cas shoots him a look, “Can he stand against the reigning points leader Dean Winchester? He’s at the first tee and exhibiting an enviable form as he sets up his shot… let’s watch and see…”

Cas leans in and takes a gentle swing. His ball rolls forward, heading toward the hole, which looks to be in easy reach. But the ball begins speeding up and slowing down as it bobs over hills and valleys in the green turf. Cas watches his ball almost crest one hill and then roll back down it, rolling halfway back up the previous hill and descending again. Eventually it comes to rest.

“An impressive start for the newcomer,” Dean says in his quiet announcer’s voice as he steps up to put his own ball in the cradle, “We’ll see if he has what it takes to overcome Winchester, who is the obvious crowd favorite here in Fairfield.”

Dean lines up his shot and gives a hefty swing. The ball careens over the hills and valleys – just a little too fast and out of control. Cas chuckles as he watches Dean’s ball shoot past the hole and knock into the metal border. It bounces back and rolls to a graceful stop just a few feet from the hole.

“Damn, Winchester,” smiles Cas, “you may be actual competition.”

“I ain’t the crowd favorite for nothing,” he replies with a flirty smile.

“Yes, it’s much easier to be the reigning champion of golf when the green is surrounded by a giant bumper,” he tells Dean with a smirk, “I’d like to see how you do on a real golf course.”

“If the promise of a future victory is what it takes to nurse your ego through a horrifying loss today… I’m on board,” Dean teases as he watches Cas prepare to take his second shot. Cas gives the ball a solid tap with his club, and Dean watches it over take the last little lumps in the green and roll out past the hole – about six feet from Dean’s ball.

“Ladies and gentlemen, Castiel Milton has taken his second shot on the first hole and finds himself
facing a challenging putt in order to secure a par shot for this hole. The pressure is on already,” whispers “announcer Dean,” “Let’s see if Winchester has any trouble sinking it in two shots....” Dean gently taps his ball, and it rolls obediently into the little plastic cup with a clunk.

“And Winchester ends the first hole with a score one stroke under par!” he announces boldly challenging Cas to do the same.

With his mouth locked and fighting laughter, Cas steps up determined to sink his putt. He gives the ball a tender tap and it rolls forward, but slows and stops a foot from the hole. Cas grits his teeth and clunks it again to get the ball into the cup.

He looks at Dean, “I’ve got eight more holes to bury you’re cocky ass, Winchester.”

“Bring it on, Milton.”

And so they continue. The competition is fierce, and the insults grow increasingly sly as the two navigate the first nine and then the second. They argue through laughter over the number of penalty strokes Dean has to take when his ball bounces up out of the box, rolls down a landscaped hill and crashes onto another hole’s green, knocking several balls of other golfers out of their resting place.

“That’s gonna end up costing you the game,” Cas tells him with an insuppressible smile, “Hope your fans can survive the disappointment and shame you’ve brought on yourself with your lackluster performance here at the MPGA tournament.”

“Lackluster?” says Dean incredulously. “You thought my performance was lackluster?”

“It certainly didn’t live up to the hype of your fans.”

“Tell you what, Cas,” Dean replies as he watches his ball be swallowed up by the last hole, “You help me with my performance, and I’ll buy you a drink.”

Oh my god... he’s flirting with me!

Dean winks at Cas as he takes the man’s club and hands both back to the attendant. “What do you want to do next?”

Kiss you! “Maybe the go-karts?”

“Ok, if you don’t mind me beating you twice in one night.”

“You talk a tough game for a man who beat me by one damn stroke... the FIRST time I EVER PLAYED!”

Both men are laughing as they step into the line for go-karts. The sun is going down now and the air, which was chilly before, is turning downright cold.

By the time they step up to the front of the line, they’re both shivering. When the gate is opened to them they step forward with a dozen others and move to select which go-kart they’ll be using. Cas chooses a blue one and slides into it, pulling together the little harness and waiting patiently for the attendant to come by and start it for him.

He glances around to look for Dean. Dean’s in a red one, just a car length ahead of him. The rest of the cars are filling up with boisterous teens and children riding with their parents. When the light turns green and the attendant waves the flag, Cas hits the gas. The little car is quite responsive and
rushes forward with a jerk. As they shoot out onto the track, Cas easily overtakes Dean. He catches himself engaged in a maniacal laughter and his fist shoots in the air.

Ahead now, he’s free to enjoy his first go-kart experience. Strictly speaking, they aren’t moving that fast in the cars, but since they’re so low to the ground it feels much faster than it really is. The cool wind is whipping through his hair as he bends easily into the first turn. He ends up having to slow way down to keep control of his car, and as he’s coming out of the turn he begins to accelerate again. It’s then that he sees Dean fly past him.

“Dammit!” he curses as he puts the hammer down, just trying to catch up to Dean's little red racer. He goes wide on the next turn, hoping he can keep full speed that way and catch back up to Dean. It doesn’t work; he’s barely keeping pace. It’s chaos around him too… now that he’s not in the lead anymore he’s surrounded by other cars. Some are being manned by crazy kids, and he finds it difficult to keep his speed up, constantly having to let off the gas when someone cuts in front of him or hits their brakes.

Ahead there’s a very sharp turn, it’s practically a 180. As he slows and moves to the inside, he sees Dean up ahead halfway through the tight turn… and then some other car cuts over and thumps him hard. He spins around and winds up backwards, with his metal bumper scraping along the guardrail as he tries to steer around and get back in the race. Cas grins and holds up his middle finger as he sails past Dean. *Take that you cocky fucker.*

Cas is getting the hang of this now. He’s getting a feel for how to let off the gas just a little so he can turn and then hammer the gas while still taking the curve so that as he straightens out – he’ll shoot out of the turn and overtake the slower cars. They’ve come almost a full lap when he looks behind him again and sees Dean hot on his tail. He grins and navigates to the inside and ducks his head, leaning into the curve and feeling like a race car driver for half a second.

By the time they’re finishing the second lap, he and Dean are side by side. One mistake and he’s gonna lose to Dean. Again.

They glance back and forth at each other, grinning wildly and laughing as they trade the lead back and forth. When the time's up, there’s no big finish. They’re just directed back to the starting point and told to stay in their cars until all engines are off. Because there was no finish line… it leaves the two men arguing like ten-year-olds over who actually won.

As they exit the ride, Cas asks what they should do next. “Let’s go inside,” Dean says, “it’s colder than a witch’s tit out here.”

“Colorful,” Cas grins at him and then is easily distracted. “Oh! Let’s get corn dogs!”

Dean smiles indulgently and they step up to the window, ordering corn dogs, fries and cokes. Once inside, they settle at a plastic table and survey the room as they dig into their food.

“Skeeball,” says Dean firmly, “That’s my first stop.”

“What’s that?” asks Cas, pointing to a crowd of teens gathered around a game noisily cheering, clapping, and some even dancing to the techno music blaring from it.

“It’s a dancing game. The screen shows you arrows of where to put your feet. If your feet land where they’re supposed often enough you’ll get a high score. If you do it right, you look like you're dancing.”

“Have you done that?”
“Not my kinda game Cas,” Dean says flatly.

“Because it involves dancing? Or because it’s too hard for you?”

“Is that a challenge?”

“Might be.”

“Skeeball first.”

Pinning Jess in any position was fun. But this was over the top. He’d managed to get her knees on the floor and her body face down on the couch cushions. Sam was on his knees behind her and shoving her legs apart to accommodate him. Her hands were pulled behind her back and her face was turned to the side where her parted mouth puffed heavy breaths.

“Oh, Daddy!” she squealed in a falsely childish voice… “I’m sorry, Daddy! I won’t do it again,” she called from under her pile of golden curls.

“That’s right you won’t, because Daddy’s gonna teach you a lesson. Now, how many licks do you think you deserve for your insolent tone when talking about daddy’s skills?”

“Only one, Daddy, only one, please,” she begged.

“You’re getting three… you have a lesson to learn young lady.”

“One, Daddy!”

“Three, little lady,” he said in his most authoritative voice, while he reached his right hand out and slid a finger into the waist of her yoga pants. He began pulling them down slowly to reveal her milky white fanny. When an arc of skin was exposed, he leaned in and let her feel his breath on the crack of her ass. “Three licks…

“One!” she interrupted. “Just one and I’ll suck your dick!”

A smile broke out on his face as he leaned forward over her back and put his mouth to her ear, “Little lady, this is going to hurt me more than it hurts you,” at that, he heard her sharp intake of breath.

“Yes, Daddy,” she moaned for him, “oh yes, Daddy…”

THWACK!

“Aaagghh,” she groaned as his open palm snapped against her cheek. He watched it reverberate and licked his lips. He held his hand, poised and ready, drawing out the suspense. She arched her back and pressed her rear end back towards him.

THWACK!

“Daddy! Oh, Daddy!” she begged for him.
“Is Daddy skilled? Is Daddy smart? Can Daddy put together a crib?”

“Yes, Daddy, your skills are legendary!” she was just toying with him now. He chuckled and released his grip on her hands – allowing her arms to go free. Both his hands settled on her butt cheeks and pulled them apart. He leaned in and began licking into her with passion, squeezing her cheeks as she rolled her hips under the onslaught of pleasure.

“Oh Sam, Sam, Sam,” she chanted for him – lost to the world and fully immersed in her pleasure. He tongued her and then fingered her and then pressed against her pink cheeks with the hard and heavy cock in his jeans.

She shivered when she heard him undo his belt buckle and reached under her belly to stroke her own clit.

“C’mon, Daddy…. Give Mommy what she needs!” Jess almost laughed at her own cheesiness. But she secretly loved their dirty little daddy and mommy game. Soon there was a heavy cock pressing into her slowly and then pulling back. “Yesss,” she hissed.

Sam continued to push in and pull out at a slow and easy pace. Jess wasn’t having it. “Daddy, please, I need it. I’m a bad girl.”

“Yes you are a bad girl… you’re my bad girl, and I fucking love it!” he half shouted as he grabbed her hips firmly and drove in deep. Her hot breathy sounds filled the room and he was spellbound watching his sex push into her and pull back out, wet and shiny.

“You’ve got one more comin’ little lady,” he warned her as he removed a hand from her hip and raised it high, “this is your last spankin’, naughty girl.”

“Then make it a big one, Daddy!” she shouted from beneath her hair.

He brought down his open palm on that sweet ass and watched her body convulse as she rode the pleasure/pain waves and absorbed the tingles that gathered across the pink splotch on her butt.

He pulled her up by her shoulders and drew her to him, bending her back sinfully as he did and causing her to cry out again. Then, once more, she called out his name when his hands went to her breasts and pinched her nipples hard.

“Fuck-yes-baby!” she shouted to him, “Fuck!” and with that, she flung her hair over his shoulder and put her own hands over his, both of their fingers working her nipples over until they were jutting out. His mouth watered to suck one but he couldn’t reach. He flung her back forward again and leaned in, bracing one arm on the back of the couch so he could fuck into her hard. She was keening beneath him and begging to be spanked again.

He didn’t keep her waiting, snapping his wrist as his palm struck her. A loud clap of flesh echoed off the walls, and she climaxed beneath him immediately. He was watching his slick dick pound into her and his mind supplied him an image of her, bound and taking a fucking like this… that was all he needed. He shot his load into her and shuddered against her body.

Carefully, he pulled her britches back up for her and they struggled onto the couch together. There was no way he was going to work on the cribs anymore tonight. Instead, he tucked in with her under a soft blanket and shared her chocolate milk – passing it back and forth between them as they watched TV.
When Dean and Cas exited the arcade, they’d earned enough tickets to buy a respectable prize. They stood for far longer than was socially acceptable, trying to decide which prize to claim. In the end, they’d left with an oversized rainbow colored plastic slinky and two pieces of banana flavored Laffy Taffy. Each unwrapping a candy, they walked to the Impala.

“Wanna stay round here tonight?” Dean asked him.

“Sure,” garbled Cas with a mouth full of taffy. “There’s a Motel 6 over there.”

Dean nodded, fired up the car and drove – literally across the street. They parked at the Motel 6 and went to the front desk for a room.

“I almost forgot, Dean, I have a surprise for you!” Cas said as he tossed his duffel bag on the bed in the unimpressive room.

“What?”

Cass pulled out a brown paper bag and reached inside, revealing a ziplock sandwich bag full of weed.

“Shit, Cas!” grinned Dean. “Now it REALLY feels like old times!”

Cas passed the bag to Dean and handed him rolling papers. “You do the honors… you were always better at it anyway.”

As Dean settled on the bed to roll joints, Cas sauntered over to plug in the laptop and phones. On his phone he chose one of the many playlists he’d made for this trip.

This one was meant to be played while they smoked out. It had lots of Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, The Rolling Stones, The Allman Brothers, and Tom Petty. He hit play and guitar filled the room. Dean immediately gave him a nod of appreciation.

Cas headed to the bathroom to get ready for bed, brushing his teeth and trading jeans for flannel sleep pants.

Dean leaned back, setting the stuff on the nightstand and relaxing back on the pillows with a joint between his lips. He lit it and inhaled deeply, savoring the sweet flavor and enjoying the feeling as contentment washed over him.

His eyes followed Cas as the man walked out of the bathroom carrying a wet towel and rolled it up under the door, so that no one passing in the hall would get a strong whiff of what they were doing in the room. Then, he plunked down on the bed next to Dean and held out his hand for the smoke.

“That’s some good shit, Cas” Dean commented as he passed it off. “You get that from Pam?”

“Nope. She wasn’t kidding about Chris making an honest woman out of her. She doesn’t even sell weed anymore. I got it from Zar.”

“You went to his place without me?” Dean was immediately jealous. He had to mentally remind himself that he had nothing to fear. His bond with Cas was far too strong to be endangered by
something as mundane as another man. He told himself to let it go... giving himself a reminder that he was NOT less in Cas’ eyes after the surgeries.

“I just swung by there to pick it up while I was out Christmas shopping,” he said softly. “Does that bother you?”

“A little,” said Dean – just being honest. “But I know that it shouldn’t. So don’t worry about it.”

“Ok.” Said Cas with a smile, exhaling and handing the smoke back to Dean. “I just wanted to surprise you with it. That’s the only reason I went over there without you.”

“Well done,” Dean said as he flashed his friend an honest smile, “Oh yeah…” he groaned as he leaned the rest of the way back and began to fell his body start to buzz warmly.

The boys passed back and forth for a while, the room lit only by the light from the bathroom, which was spilling out past the cracked door. The music played and Dean was soon sleeping – the day having worn him out completely.

Cas took a few more puffs and then snuffed out what was left. He moved towards the foot of the bed and pulled off Dean’s shoes for him. Then, as he crawled back again, he pulled the man’s belt off gently and dropped it to the floor before covering them both over… Cas in his sleep pants and Dean still in his jeans and shirt.

Dean woke in the middle of the night to pee. He tensed for a moment, having forgotten where he was. Then, seeing Cas’ body stretched out next to him, he relaxed and remembered what had brought him to this place. He smiled as he swung his legs out of the bed and padded on socked feet to the bathroom. He peed and brushed his teeth and then shucked off his clothes on the way back to bed.

He crawled in and reached over his man to grab the roach on the nightstand. He re-lit it and took a few puffs to keep himself drowsy and then tapped it out, curling up against Cas and waiting for sleep to return.

As he dozed off, his mind sent him flashes of the day’s events for his enjoyment. The grumpy look on Cas’ face when he’d started getting irritated in the car… it was so funny that he almost laughed out loud. Then there was the look on his man’s face when he’d surveyed the grounds at Scandia… trying to choose what to do first. Or, the grin on his face when he’d passed Dean in his go-kart and flipped him off… that was hilarious! Dean didn’t linger in wakefulness for long, and as he slipped into sleep he was warm and content from thinking of the fun they’d had today… and that tomorrow there would be more.

As Dean’s dream morphed from one landscape to another, they were dominated by a set of cobalt eyes locked on him. The feeling of warmth that radiated from the owner of those magical eyes spread over him, all night long.

When the sun streamed in the window, Cas rolled over and pressed his body up against Dean’s, falling back asleep easily for another hour or so.

Later, Cas woke for real, he headed for the shower. He did his normal business in the shower, coaxing an orgasm out with little effort. Dean had been so flirty with him yesterday… it had all his cylinders firing.

When he emerged, dressed and ready for the day, Dean was still snoring. So Cas grabbed the keys and headed off to scrounge up some breakfast.
Dean got to wake up to coffee and doughnuts. “Ooohh,” he cooed at Cas with a mouthful, “Thanks, man!”

Cas smiled and crawled back onto the bed, shoes and all. He lit the joint and puffed it a few times while playing with his phone and bringing up the maps for today’s drive. He held out the smoke, offering it to Dean. “Wake n bake?”

“Naw… I’m driving,” he said. “You go ahead.”

“Hey Dean,” said Cas with a smile, “do you know what’s between here and Reno?”

“What?”

“Folsom Prison.”

“As in Johnny Cash... Folsom Prison Blues?”

“That’s the one,” smiled Cas, “It’s not that far out of the way, want to drive by it? Get a look?”

“Hell yeah!” he grinned widely. “Do they do tours or anything?”

“No,” Cas answered, reading on his phone. “It’s still a working prison. They have over two thousand inmates.”

“Damn,” Dean said as he headed for the shower.

While he was in the shower, he got sidetracked picking at the little white tabs of suture tape that were starting to come off. Under the tape, the incision was finally healed over enough that Dean’s fear of it ripping open had started to pass.

That kind of thing did occasionally happen… there was even a word for it. If the incision had broken open and his guts had been visible – the doctors would have said it dehisced. That scenario used to cross his mind every time he bent over or coughed or sneezed. It may have been an irrational fear, but it was very real to him.

Putting the ugly imagery out of his mind, he soaped himself up and when rinsing he found himself picking at the tape once again.

Cas leaned back and finished the joint while Dean was in the bathroom, next moving to bag up most everything and getting them ready to hit the road.

Once in the car, they jumped back on the expressway, which was now beginning to angle northeast, away from the coast. They still didn’t see much countryside as they drove along… there were towns scattered along this road all the way to Sacramento, and it all bled together. It didn’t seem to take too long to get to Sacramento, but actually crossing the city took a very long time. But, by mid-afternoon, they were rolling into Folsom.

Cas navigated them through the city, which was much larger than he’d expected. They stopped near the river for lunch at a roadhouse called Powerhouse Pub, but as it turns out… they didn’t actually serve food. So the boys walked to an adjacent establishment called Hamptons. The place had a nice look to it, wrapped in balconies that offered a nice view. But it was far too cold to eat outside. They went inside to eat. The food was incredible… far better than they’d expected. The boys lingered for a bit, sampling a few brews, before heading back to the car. As they cut around the corner near the pub, Dean tugged on Cas’ arm.
“Dude, we should come back here tonight, they have a live band playing.”

Cas followed Dean’s gesture to a poster hanging near the entrance that billed the evening’s entertainment as Whiskey Maiden, which was described as “Southern rock and blues.”

“Whiskey Maiden,” Cas said out loud. “Better be hot chicks”

Dean met his eye and grinned, “Okay buddy, let’s check out the prison and then come back here.”

“There’s a dam too,” said Cas, “right near the prison… it creates Folsom Lake. If we’re just coming back here anyway – we have time to check it out.”

“Sounds good, Cas,” replied Dean as he reached out and dropped his arm around Cas’ shoulder. They walked back to the car and headed over towards the prison.

Perhaps it was silly, but Dean couldn’t help it. When they pulled up outside the prison and he saw the iconic tower… he turned around and drove back past it again… slow.

“There’s a peace officers museum over there,” Cas mentioned casually. “Want to go in?”

“Naw, this is enough, how do I get to the dam?”

“Turn around again.”

Dean was clearly enjoying the third drive-by of the prison, crawling along and eyeballing the fence and guard tower. As they headed north they eventually found themselves driving right over the dam. It was much larger than Cas had expected it to be. The lake was beautiful, too, and they drove alongside it for a while before finally turning back towards town.

When they pulled back into parking and walked over to the pub, they found the place starting to fill. It looked even cooler on the inside than it did on the outside. There was a large dance floor in the middle and long wooden tables with barstools pushed up to them surrounded it. There were booths and tables skirting the edge of the room and the stage dominated the wall opposite the bar.

The floor was concrete and the walls were wood and corrugated steel, artfully rusted. It was decorated like any pub… with signs and neon lights.

“Smells like piss in here,” said Cas when they walked in.

“That’s a sign of a good pub,” grinned Dean.

They started drinking and perched on stools, waiting for the band to start. As they drank, they talked lightly about other things they’d like to do while they were on the road. While they were engrossed in conversation, the crowd swelled and people had begun dancing. The atmosphere was perfect, and Cas soon forgot the rancid smell as he sucked down drinks.

“Dude, if there was a hotel nearby, I’d get shit faced with ya,” Dean grinned at Cas.

“Do it, Dean. There’s a hotel just down the street.”

Dean clunked his mug to Cas’ in a “cheers” gesture and downed it. Cas couldn’t help but catch Dean’s infectious attitude tonight. When the band came on… yes… hot chick. Her music was at least a B+ or better, sultry and bluesy. As they enjoyed the evening, Cas caught Dean looking at him a few times in that old way, the one that couldn’t be mistaken. It was a look that Cas hadn’t even noticed was missing until he saw it. He wants me.
From that moment on, Cas couldn’t wipe the smile off his face. When the boys finally staggered down the street to the hotel, Dean was starting to sag. It was all Cas could do just to get them checked in and make it through the door to their room.

He was far too drunk to have anyone leaning on him. But, he helped his man out of his shoes, belt and pants and then eased him down on the bed and gently pulled off his shirt. Dean willingly laid down and let Cas tuck him in.

As Cas pulled the covers over, he caught a glimpse of Deans scar. It looked much better, but it was another thing that he hadn’t noticed missing until he’d seen it. He’s been hiding that from me.

Cas stripped and crawled in behind Dean, kissing the back of his neck slowly. Dean didn’t wake to his kisses, but he did hum sweetly to the affection, almost like a cat purring.

Loose and sloppy, Cas forgot all the reasons he’d been so careful around Dean. With the man mostly passed out next to him, Cas let his hand wander down south. Through a hazy hard buzz, he rolled his own dick in his hand. It was a treat to touch himself so close to Dean. To smell the man’s skin and hear his breathing while his dick got hard. He pulled his body back a little, so he wouldn’t bump the man and began to stroke his cock.

He was never more than semi-hard; dick full of whiskey and not very responsive. But it felt great for the few minutes he was awake to enjoy it.

Sam woke to the sound of puking. This was becoming routine. He staggered into the bathroom to help Jess, although there wasn’t much he could do. He brought her a cool cloth and dabbed the back of neck with it gently while her head hung forward, panting. He gave her a glass of water and helped her stand when she was ready.

Normally, once she’d thrown up, she’s duck into the shower. Then, when finished with that, she usually laid back down for a bit before getting up for the day. But today she went straight from shower to closet and began getting dressed.

“Can I get you anything?” Sam offered.

“No, thank you, Sam, I’m late, and I have a meeting scheduled first thing.”

He looked at her sadly. He could see that she wasn’t feeling well at all.

“Jess,” he said quietly, “you’re not feeling well.”

“That seems to just be the way it is now…,” she griped as she stepped into pants. “If you feel like this and you have the flu then everyone will tell you to stay home and feel better. But,” she said acerbically, “if you feel like this and you’re pregnant then everyone just expects you to get up and go to work anyway.”

“I’m sorry, honey,” he said honestly, “it doesn’t seem fair.”

“Well,” she responded curtly, “I guess life isn’t fair. I think I’ve heard that somewhere before?” She let out a huff of laughter and settled on the side of the bed to put on her shoes.
Little dots of perspiration were forming on her upper lip.

“You know, you could just put in for leave,” said Sam firmly, “Take an extended maternity leave that starts now. Spend your days just taking care of yourself and the twins.”

She gave him the “don’t tempt me” look.

“Really, Jess,” he continued, “imagine not having to get up for the day until your body was ready… spending your afternoons shopping for baby clothes and setting up the nursery. Hell, if you weren’t working… you could spend a lot more time looking for the perfect house for us and we wouldn’t have to rush through the process after the kids are born.”

“Stop it, Sam. That’s damn tempting.”

“Why not then?” he pushed. “Tell them today.”

“I appreciate you being willing to support me while I stay home. Believe me. But Sam, I don’t do this work for a paycheck.”

“Well that’s obvious. Your paycheck barely covers…”

“Sam,” she interrupted, getting his attention. “I’m needed. I’m one of a very few really good lawyers willing to help people who can’t afford me.”

“Oh Jess,” he said as he pulled her into his arms sweetly, “God I love you for being this way!” He smiled against her hair and said, “Tell you what. Take some leave. Refer your clients to Winchester, and I’ll make sure we take them on.”

“Oh Sam, I don’t even know what to say… really?”

“Yes, really.”

When Dean woke up, he felt like shit. His head was throbbing, he was nauseous and his mouth was dry and sticky with a putrid taste. He blinked crust from his eyes and rolled a little to see if Cas was in the bed with him. Yep.

The man was facing away from Dean and he was naked, one leg under the covers and one leg hanging out. Dean took stock of himself and realized he only had boxers on. He didn’t remember undressing for bed. He didn’t recognize this room. Hell, he didn’t remember leaving the bar. But he remembered he’d been having a good time there.

The music had been good, and the drinks were, too. Cas had looked incredible leaning back on the heavy wooden table, nodding along to the music and kindly brushing off the women who looped in to hit on him.

Dean had watched Cas look to him for permission when a girl sidled up to him and asked him to dance. He could tell Cas wasn’t the least bit interested in the girl… but he felt like dancing. And since Dean was unlikely to ever be drunk enough to dance – and still manage to pull off dancing – he gave Cas the nod.
Then he leaned back and watched his man move across the floor with her. She was clearly into him, but Cas was very good at women. He managed to make them feel validated and happy to spend time with him but not escalate flirty behavior. It must be a gift. Dean had less ability in that area. To avoid drama – he had stopped engaging women long ago. He just couldn’t work them the way Cas could.

Dean’s gifts with women were far better suited to getting them into bed than getting them to leave him alone. He always tried to let them down easy, and it was a challenge he’d grown tired of dealing with.

Lately, when a woman made an attempt at him, he’d simply tell them he was here with someone. If they looked around like they didn’t believe him (which happened more often than you would think) he’d let his eyes wander to Cas and then back to the woman and give her a nod. That did it every time.

Dean counted to three in his head… forcing himself to swing his legs over the side of the bed on 3. He headed for the bathroom first. Then, having relieved himself, he moved to the phone and called the front desk for some aspirin. As he waited for the knock on the door, he sat on the edge of the bed drinking bottled water from the mini bar.

With the bottle half gone, he leaned across the bed and roused Cas, handing the man the bottle and encouraging him to drink. Cas looked like hell. His bed head wasn’t the sexy kind. It was the “I’ve been sweating in my sleep and now my hair is plastered to one side of my head” kind.

Dean reached for his jeans and pulled out his wallet when the knock at the door finally came. He tipped the man and then locked the door behind him, climbing back into bed with Cas. They each took pills and then finished another bottle of water. Dean began to doze off again, but he felt the bed dip when Cas got up, and he heard the shower start up behind a closed bathroom door.

It was after noon when they finally checked out and walked down the street to retrieve Baby.

Both men were feeling much better by then. With the radio playing softly, they ate up the miles in comfortable silence.

They stopped at a town called Truckee for gas. This was one of the many quaint little towns that surrounded the north end of Lake Tahoe and was thus a tourist attraction.

They filled up at an old-timey looking gas station and then left the car for a bit to walk around and stretch their legs. They ambled over to the old train depot that had been remade into a string of upscale shops, one of which did glassblowing. The men stood, mesmerized, and watched the artist work. He had a small crowd gathered around him and he engaged with them, telling them about the process and answering their questions.

The boys bought several items from the man. Cas selected a beautiful and elaborate vase for Anna that he told Dean would make a lovely wedding gift. With that in mind, Dean selected something for Sam and Jess’ wedding. Additionally, they picked up a piece that would make a nice fruit bowl for their treehouse.

They stopped for coffees on the way back and then stashed their purchases in the trunk before heading out on the open road again.

As the sun was going down, a dusting of powdery snow blew in on the wind. As it grew thicker and heavier, it began to snake across the road in a hypnotizing pattern. They were just coming into Reno when Dean started to get tired.
“Take 580 south,” Cas told him.

“Where you takin’ us tonight Cas?”

“Atlantis.”

Dean nodded, “I’m hungry.”

“Me too. Did you want to grab something now or just eat when we get there?”

“How far is it?”

“Twenty minutes.”

“I’ll wait.”

“They have a steakhouse.”

“Sounds perfect.”

Cas felt sorry for Dean as they were checking in. Dean was still recuperating from the surgery. And these days, once he started getting tired, he went downhill fast. They’d used the valet service and walked to the desk. Cas carried their things and requested a nice suite for them. By the time they were entering the elevator, Dean was leaning on the mirrored glass and Cas could see little dots of perspiration on his forehead.

When they entered the room, Dean went straight to the bed. Leaning in to take the man’s shoes off for him, Cas asked, “Why don’t we just order room service tonight and watch TV?”

Dean looked up at Cas, who was obviously trying to help. He worked hard at not snapping at him. “I’m fine Cas. Just give me a minute.”

“I’m tired too Dean,” said Cas – trying to sound sincere, “Really, let’s just stay in tonight.”

Dean nodded, relieved.

Cas moved to the phone and ordered steak dinners to be brought up.

“Do you need your pills, Dean?”

“Yeah,” he said gruffly, then as Cas dropped two of his prescription pills in his hand he said, “thanks,” and took the bottle of water Cas was holding out and downed his pills.

Cas kicked off his shoes and joined Dean in the giant bed, turning on the TV and looking for something to watch. Dean chose an action movie and was soon snoring through it. Cas took the opportunity to let his eyes rove over Dean. He’d been watching the man sleep for quite a while when there was finally a knock at the door signaling the arrival of their dinner.

Cas tipped the man and then roused Dean to eat.

Shortly after dinner, Dean headed to the bathroom and came out in sleep pants and a t-shirt. He hunkered down with Cas and was soon asleep again. Cas watched him for a bit longer before he began getting ready for bed. Then he began flicking channels and looking for something new to watch. He fell asleep with a full belly, his man sleeping beside him and watching something about Ancient Pompeii on the history channel.
Dean slept all through the night and most of the next morning. Cas eventually got up and showered. He checked his email and Dean’s, then he thumbed through the pamphlets in the hotel room and for the tenth time in a few short days, he cursed himself for not bringing a book. Or three.

He wandered downstairs, grabbing coffee and pastries at Gormet Grind off the lobby and wandered into the sundry shop to see if they had any books. Cas settled for a magazine and headed back upstairs.

Still waiting for Dean to wake, Cas used the time to set up some things to do today. He called and booked a para-gliding tour for them, knowing that Dean would love it.

Then, recalling how worn out Dean would be after just a few hours, he booked them for a couples massage suite right after.

He figured that was enough excitement for one day… and if Dean didn’t end up being as tired as Cas expected… they could always go downstairs and hit the casino.

Sam was stretched out on the couch, watching a game on TV at Mary’s. He looked over at the dining room table where his fiancée and his mother were hammering out the last of the details for their pending nuptials.

The ladies were using some kind of consultant offered through Disney to pick and choose all the details of the ceremony as well as the logistics of how, when and where everything would take place. The girls were obviously having fun, and doing things this way had been ideal when it came to having the wedding on such short notice.

The bigger questions had been answered already… like which country do you want to get married in? Weddings at Disney could be done at Epcot, which boasted individual areas created to look like different countries within the confines of its park.

Italy? No problem. Beautiful Italian scenery, food and wine… check.


Sam paid little attention to the details, just happy that Jess was happy. Telling her to take an extended maternity leave seemed appropriate too. She’d been so sick… how could she keep dragging herself to work every day?

Besides, Sam knew Jess very well. If things had played out the way she wanted, they would’ve dated a lot longer before he’d asked her to marry. And the engagement would’ve been long too… a year at least. Children would’ve been something they talked about on their fifth wedding anniversary – not now.

Since she was being forced into this short time table and making sacrifices for him, he felt that making her as comfortable as possible during the process was the least he could do.
After all, things were going well at Winchester Law. Jess’ plan to increase their client base and thus their profitability was doing very, very well... the company was emerging strong. Employees were secure in their jobs and earning bonuses again, and the board was pleased with Sam for his results. There was no reason why Jess should feel anything but secure in the world she was entering as the future Mrs. Winchester.

“Dude, that was fuckin’ awesome!” enthused Dean they carried their equipment to the van. Their guides, Tom and Fred, fist bumped them again, then climbed into the van and began packing in the supplies.

Both Dean and Cas were sporting wide smiles that were stuck to their faces. The experience had been incredible.

They’d been picked up at their hotel by a van that had the company logo “UpRising” lettered on the side in red and black. As they’d driven up into the squat mountains, their guides had chatted with them, getting to know each other a little.

Dean and Cas had both been parasailing before but had never glided. The tales of their guides had the boys completely enthralled. As they drove relentlessly uphill the dusting of snow on the ground became more noticeable.

Eventually, they had parked near a summit and hiked about five minutes to a launch site. It only took Fred and Tom a few minutes to get the equipment ready. Soon, Dean was settling into the little chair-like sling that he’d be riding in. Fred moved around behind him, collecting the cables in his hand and then manipulating the parachute expertly to catch a tiny bit of wind in one corner. Then, it suddenly seemed to leap in the air. It pulled hard against the cables and Cas watched with Tom as Fred wrangled the cables and moved into position behind Dean. A few clips and snap – they were lifting away.

Cas watched Dean’s chute as it was coaxed expertly into large swooping circles and then somehow tricked into climbing higher.

“Cas,” he was snapped out of the trance he’d fallen into watching the other chute and turned to see Tom indicating that it was time for him to climb into his contraption. His heart pounded with anticipation. He climbed into it and allowed Tom to get him strapped in. Then he faced forward, not looking at Tom as he prepared for the launch, but he could hear the snap of the chute when the wind caught it and he grinned, knowing it was almost time.

He hadn’t even felt Tom settle in behind him, but he heard the click of metal clamps and then a body jarring snap as the wind took them. He was propelled forward with the speed and power of a freight train and in less than two breaths, they were clearing the edge of the mountain and soaring out over the valley.

Cas’ heart was lodged in his throat and his body pulsed with the rush of adrenaline as Tom took him for a wild ride. They roared toward the cliff face, only to sail over it at the last moment. They climbed higher and higher, only to spiral back down again in a dizzying rotation.

Cas could see for miles and miles and miles. He could see Reno clearly, nestled into a flat valley,
and the surrounding ridges of elevation which rose up from the sand-colored earth, showing off green pine trees which looked like green grass from their bird’s eye view. The closer trees were a different green and were dusted with white snow. The air was thin and cold in Cas’ lungs, and he sucked in deep breaths as his heart raced in his ribcage.

They dipped and swooped and soared. From time to time they’d get close to Dean and Fred, their chutes quite visible to each other as they danced in the wind. Cas was never able to see Dean well enough to make out his face, but he knew the man had to be loving this. It was incredible.

Tom made the landing easy, too, they never even stumbled as they touched down in a field near the airport. A van was waiting here, also with the red and black company logo on it. The guides made short work of packing up their stuff and in a few short minutes they were on their way back to the hotel. Cas tipped the men generously when they were dropped off at the hotel entrance… both he and Dean still riding the high of flight.

They had almost ninety minutes before their massage, so they headed into the Atlantis Steakhouse. It was early and there were only a few others in there. They were seated near a giant circular aquarium and settled into soft comfortable chairs to look over their menus.

“Cas, thanks man. That was fuckin’ awesome!” Dean grinned.

“Yes, it was,” said Cas, still reeling from the experience as he watched the waiter approach.

They ordered drinks and food and watched the sea life swim through an enchanting aquarium while they waited.

“What’s next?” questioned Dean. “You said there was something else?”

“Yes, we can skip it if you want, but I booked us for a couples massage suite. It looked enticing.”

“I bet,” Dean said with a half-smile, “happy endings?”

“I don’t think so Dean,” Cas replied with a chuckle, watching his drink be set in front of him.

“When we leave Reno, what’s our next stop?” Dean asked him, just making conversation.

“The Canyon,” answered Cas, “I’m hoping this weather holds and we get to see it under snow.”

They talked about the trip until their food came and then dug in. It was delicious. Then, with full bellies they headed up to the spa.

Cas had purchased a package, and they were shown to their private room and told to relax and enjoy, the masseuse would arrive in about a half hour. They were given a sign to hang on the door if they didn’t want to be disturbed for any reason.

In the room there were two well cushioned massage beds as well as two comfortable chairs and a large sunken Jacuzzi tub – already rolling with hot bubbling water.

“Ahh…” said the men when they’d dropped their drawers and slid naked into the tub together. They settled in comfortably, legs intertwined. Both were submerged to the neck. Above the rolling bubbles, they smiled at each other before dropping their heads back comfortably and soaking up the experience.

There was a knock at the door, and then a head peeked in, “Good evening, gentlemen, I’m Christy and this is Michelle, we’ll be your masseurs for the evening. Can we offer you gentlemen some
“Cool cucumber water?”

“Yes,” they answered in unison. She handed each an artfully garnished, chilled glass of cool water and offered to begin with facial massages while they bathed.

“Does anyone actually say no to that?” Dean asked with a grin.

After the facial massages, they handed over their empty glasses and then climbed up out of the tub. The women were busy prepping the beds with their backs turned, so Dean didn’t even have to feel self-conscious about his scars as he dried off and walked to his table.

As soon as they were horizontal, they were covered over with warm blankets from the waist down. Then… magical healing hands pressed into muscle and worked the tension from them. It was the best massage Dean had ever had. The perfect amount of pressure, the perfect progression of movements. He was putty in her capable hands.

Dean turned his head to face towards Cas and saw his man soaking up the massage with eyes closed and a hint of a smile on his lips.

When they were finished, they were given soft, light robes and led to a room that looked like a bath house. It had several large walk-in Jacuzzis that were sunk into the floor with steps going down into them like a Roman bath. Around the pools were cushioned lounge chairs and the room was very, very warm. The soft light and sound of water moving was very relaxing and they were offered drinks, which they sipped while resting naked on lounge chairs.

Too soon, the attendant was there to collect them. From there… it wasn’t even a choice. They went straight to bed. Cas had never been so relaxed in his life.

“Cas, man, that was just Fan. Frickin. Tastic,” Dean said as he curled himself up to Cas from behind. He put his face into the back of Cas’ hair and inhaled the delicious scent from the spa, but could still smell Cas’ own unique scent underneath. Dean fell almost immediately into a deep and dreamless sleep.

Cas woke early the next morning, having gone to sleep early the night before. He moved to get out of bed and found himself being pulled back by Dean.

“Mmm, don’t go yet, stay with me,” Dean whispered in his ear.

Cas smiled and relaxed into his man’s arms.

“C’mon Cas,” Dean husked to him, barely louder than a whisper, “Back that ass up into me like you used to, huh?”

Cas’ heart leapt into the back of his throat and his body responded before his brain could even process what was happening.

His back arched and his ass pressed backward into Dean; his dick started to fill and his mind began to swim with dirty, lewd images of sex.
“That’s right,” crooned Dean, “I’ve fucking missed this,” he said as his hand stroked along Cas’ thigh.

Cas’ heart was pounding as he tried to figure out what was happening. Was this it? Were they going to try? Should he touch Dean? Was it ok to look?

Cas didn’t want to do anything wrong and make Dean uncomfortable.

“You’re thinking too hard Cas. I can feel it. C’mon, man. It’s just me,” he said softly. “It’s just me.”

Cas relaxed a little and then Dean rolled his hips forward. Cas felt it. Dean was hard. “Oh Dean,” he said quietly. “Dean.”

“Cas.”

They rolled their hips together in a rhythm, Cas pressing backward and feeling Deans hardness against his ass for the first time in soo very long. He was aching with need, and Dean whispered to him, “I’ve missed you like this Cas.”

“Me too Dean.”

“The things I want to do to you Cas…”

“Yes…”

“Got any lube in your bag?”

Cas leapt from the bed and streaked across the room; Dean laughed at his antics as he flung his bag onto a chair and dug out lube. He launched himself back to the bed and dove under the covers, pushing his face to Dean’s groin and boldly pulling Dean’s cock into his mouth. Dean stiffened even further in his mouth… not quite as large or heavy as he had been before… but Cas didn’t care at all. He wasn’t going to look a gift horse in the mouth. Dean was hard. They could fuck.

Dean’s hands found his way beneath the covers where it was warm and smelled like sex. They wound into Cas’ hair and tugged as Cas sucked in earnest. He licked and hummed and shoved himself between Dean’s legs to get around his sack and then he reminded himself to be gentle. He gently took Dean’s ball into his mouth and massaged it with his tongue. He felt Dean’s body tense up… perhaps in pleasure… perhaps with nerves. Cas poked his head out from under the covers to look at Dean.

“Cas, please, don’t stop.”

Cas grinned as he scooched back down and locked his mouth on his man, working him over and feeling his own cock leaking onto the sheets.

“Cas, bring your ass up here, man!”

He complied immediately, pushing himself down hard on Dean’s dick, opening the back of his throat as his legs scrambled to put their bodies into a sixty-nine position. Dean’s strong hands guided him the last of the way and soon, there was a mouth on his leaking, throbbing cock. *Fuck yes!*

Their moaning and slurping filled the room and Cas was melting into the bed, weak-kneed and
overwhelmed with lust. He was panting around Dean’s dick, licking it, sucking it, nibbling at it and tonguing along the vein as he worked his way back up to suck the tip again. He would never get enough. Never.

“Cas,” Dean panted, pulling off him, “can I? Please?”

“Fuck yes, Dean, yes. Just do what you want with me.”

“I wanna spank your sexy ass,” Dean said loudly as his hand clapped down. Sparks and hot flame shot from beneath his hand and into Cas – radiating out from the site of the spanking and spreading over his body in waves.

“Again,” Cas begged him, thrusting his ass in the air, “please, Dean!”

The man’s heavy hand fell on him again and lit him on fire. He jack-knifed across the bed, overcome with lust and spread his legs wide, offering himself to Dean in the dirtiest way.

Dean took one look and was on him, pushing a tongue into Cas’ puckered hole and burying his face between hot, wet ass cheeks.

“Yes!” Cas cried out beneath him, “Yes, yes, yes!”

Dean grabbed the lube, which had migrated pretty far while they’d thrashed around on the bed. He popped the cap and wetted his fingers, plunging in the first finger and fucking it in and out a few times before adding a second. Cas moaned like a whore while Dean worked him open and only got louder when he was finally being filled and stretched by his man.

Sinking into Cas was a sweet relief to Dean’s body and mind… and a tight, overwhelming sensation for his dick. He panted and tried to think of something else… drag it out a few pumps at least. But, no. He blew his load on the first push.

Cas was doubled over beneath him so he reached around and jacked Cas hard and fast, praying the man would come before his dick softened.

“Cas, man, I blew it. Can you come?” he asked as he continued to thrust and jack Cas off as well as he could.

Cas let himself go in Dean’s hand and pulsed a wet spot onto the sheet.

They dropped to the bed in a pile of sweaty limbs and breathed heavily together as they came down.

Cas rearranged himself then, to fit next to Dean.

Dean made himself comfortable too and pressed his lips to Cas’ temple.

“Sorry, man, I couldn’t hold it back.”

“That was incredible Dean, I’m so happy.”

“Me too Cas,” he said, kissing Cas’ temple again. “Me too.”
They’d laid in comfortable silence for quite a while when Dean turned and said, “Cas, did that feel normal to you?”

“Um… I’m not sure what you mean?”

“Well, it’s just that, um,” Dean stammered, “umm…”

“Dean, please, just say what you’re thinking.”

“Ok Cas,” he agreed, “I came. It felt pretty good. Fast, but good. But…” he took a deep breath, “nothing came out?”

Cas took stock of himself, moved a little, reached down and touched himself. Dean was right. The mess that should be there just… wasn’t. “So when you came, did it feel like it used to?”

“Yeah, I guess. I mean it felt like normal except, maybe, a little less powerful? And that I stayed dry – nothing came out,” he said softly, “the end, when you feel it like… ya know? There wasn’t that… warmth, I guess. I’m not describing this very well.”

“Is that the first time you’ve blown since the surgery?”

“Yeah. First time I’ve been hard.”

“I’m glad. I was worried that you were… trying? Like in the shower, and it wasn’t happening for you.”

“Nope. Mostly in the shower I’m just paying attention to the incision. I worry about it a lot… or at least… I did.”

“I was worried about you.”

“Because you thought I couldn’t get hard?”

“Maybe partly. I guess I just noticed you were getting more private. I didn’t know what was going
“You miss showering with me?”

“Yes.”

“I guess I figured when I’d healed up a bit more we’d get back to doing things like that.”

“If that’s how you’d prefer it to be,” Cas said softly, “then I can live with that. But I miss it.”

“Kinda like I miss you backin’ your ass into me in the mornings?” he laughed quietly.

“You miss that?”

“A lot.”

“I didn’t realize.”

“I understand Cas. Things are different now…”

“How are things different for you?” Cas interrupted, anxious to know more.

“Well, mostly I’m just not used to feelin’ so weak. And tired. But I also look different. I know you love me, and you’ll look past my scars. But that’s different than seeing me and wanting my body.”

Cas curled himself closer to Dean, “I still want your body Dean. I’ve been aching for you, needing you so much.”

Dean looked away. “Cas… you don’t touch me like you want me.”

“That was for you, Dean. I did that for you. I didn’t want you to feel like I wanted something you couldn’t give me. Just in case you… um… well, just in case you couldn’t get up, ok?”

Dean huffed a laugh and pulled Cas closer. “Man! When did we stop talkin’?”

“I don’t know. It seems like we were both trying to protect each other.”

“Yeah,” nodded Dean, wrapping his arms around Cas and grinning widely, “glad we’re done with that shit.” He laughed.

The boys spent most of that day in bed. They talked some, watched TV. Dean let Cas really look at his scar, rather than just catching a glimpse of it. Between the partial pieces of tape that were peeling away, it looked much better. It was pink now, instead of angry red and the line where the cut had been was completely buried under a new layer of shiny soft skin.

As they lounged, Dean toyed with his peeling tape tabs, picking at them absentmindedly as they laid in bed. Cas watched his fingers moving.

“Does it still hurt?” Cas asked him.

“It’s tender, but mostly it’s itchy.”

“Are you getting hungry?”
“I could eat.”

“I can call for room service,” volunteered Cas.

“Nah, let’s go downstairs for dinner. We’ll hit the tables for a little while. That sound good?”

“Yes,” Cas agreed as he hoisted himself out of bed and towards the shower. Dean followed him in, for the first time since the surgery. Cas took the time to suds up his man’s hair and Dean let him, not even hiding his contented smile as fingers worked his scalp for him.

They dried off after, both wrapping towels around their waists. While Cas was shaving, Dean was looking in the mirror and picking at his tape tabs again. It was nice to just be in the bathroom together… taking up all the space and catching glimpses of each other in the mirror as they moved about.

“This is the itchiest time,” Dean huffed, “when my skin is drying.”

“Want some lotion?” asked Cas.

“They told me not to put a bunch of lotion on it.”

“Yes, Dean. But that was while your cut was open. Now that the skin’s grown over it… you don’t have to worry about infection like before. That’s why it was ok to be in the hot tub yesterday.”

“Ok then,” he said turning toward the little container of hotel soaps and digging for lotion.

“Wait,” said Cas as he dug through his bag of toiletries, “here. Don’t use that perfume shit. Use this.” He tossed Dean a little bottle of lotion from the hospital.

“Thanks man,” says Dean as he begins to gently rub some into his abdomen.

Cas rinsed his shaving mess down the drain and wiped his face off, heading out of the bathroom. Dean caught his elbow, turning Cas back to him and circling his arms around Cas’ waist. Cas felt Dean’s little tape tabs tickle his stomach as their bodies pressed together.

“I meant what I said before. I don’t want you to protect me anymore. I was really weak for a while there… I can see why you did it. But that time is over. I want us to just forget the pretenses and go back to what we were, ok?”

“Yes, Dean,” said Cas quietly as he looked into Dean’s sparkling green eyes. “And that goes for you too. It means you have to forget your inhibitions.” Dean nodded solemnly. “What the hell difference does a scar make on a body like yours anyway?” Cas teased. “Sexy bastard…,” he said as he leaned in slowly to kiss Dean who was wearing a wide smile when Cas brought their lips together. Their arms wrapped each other into a tight embrace as their mouths locked into a kiss that was tender but firm and full of promises.

Sam looked around his condo as he entered. It was perfect. Every single item carefully chosen and placed exactly where he’d wanted it. He’d taken his time choosing the place and its furnishings, and he really liked it.
But, sacrifices had to be made. He set down the stack of moving boxes under his arm and dropped the bag of supplies on the counter to get to work. He folded the boxes and taped the bottoms and began packing the easy items first… the things he’d be taking to Jess’ place.

He only worked for an hour – eager to get back to Jess. He boxed up the contents of his dresser and closet and then made a couple trips down, carrying what he knew he could fit in his car. Then he headed home.

As he drove he got a text from Max saying he’d be visiting the states soon.

Sam grinned and hit the call button. The car picked up the signal. The music cut off and through the speakers he could hear the phone ringing on Max’s end.

“Sam!”

“Hey Max!”

“Missed me, eh? No text, just pick up phone to call like a lonely woman…”

“I don’t text and drive anymore.”

“And you missed me.”

“Fuck off like I missed you.” Sam chuckled.

“Ah, you know you do. How have you been Sam?”

“Good, I got engaged.”

“No shit! Congratulations man!”

“Thank you. I’m very happy,” he said honestly.

“When do you get your balls chopped off?” the man was laughing under his breath.

“What?”

“Eh, just asking when you marry?”

“On the fifteenth.”

“Two weeks?” he asked incredulously.

“Yes,” Sam was chuckling at Max’s stunned tone.

“Nein!”

“Ja!” laughed Sam, using one of the three words he knew in German.

“When were you going to tell? I’ve heard nothing of this!”

“I just asked her a few days ago.”

“Oh I see it now… Sie vater sind!”

“Dude, what?” laughed Sam.
“Baby, eh?”

“What’s German for two?”

“Twins?”

“Ja!” laughed Sam.

“You need to learn more German words, Sam.”

“Teach me one now,” he laughed as he merged onto the expressway.

“Zwillinge,” he said firmly.

Sam repeated it, “Zwillinge”

“ScheiBe! Americans cannot pronounce anything!”

“Give me a break man…” he chuckled, “Zwillinge,” he tried again, “What am I saying?”

“If you were saying it right, you’d be saying twins.”

“How do I say fuck off?”

“Ask your other German friends… I grow bored of this game with you.”

“What are doing lately?”

“Nothing new. I’m coming back to the US for a week and am going to have fun and make trouble!”

“When will you be in San Francisco?”

“No. New York!”

“Well then, you will definitely be having some fun.”

“You tell me all the good places to go, eh?”

“I’ll ask around. I’ve never been there myself.”

“I thought all Americans had been to New York.”

“Not this one.”

“I fucked the wrong American!” he laughed, “You are useless to me!”

“I don’t think you’ll have any trouble finding a good time in New York.”

“I’m glad you’ve called me, Sam. It’s good to hear your voice. I’m very glad that you are going to be a father. It will suit you. How is your brother doing?”

“He’s ok. His surgery was successful. But the scar is wicked. If he was in a better mood I’d take a picture and send it to you.”

“His mood is sad?”
“Worse. He’s quiet.”

“That is bad?”


“Well, how is his partner?”

“He’s hangin in there,” said Sam, “He’s tough. I’m sure they’ll be fine.”

“And your mom?”

“She’s awesome. She’s gonna be a grandma!” laughed Sam. “How is your family?”

“My parents are old as shit. They do nothing. But they’re very proud of me.”

“That’s great. You told them about New York?”

“Yes, but all my mother wants is for me to marry.”

“I take it she doesn’t know?”

“No. I’m hoping they will go - without knowing.”

“They wouldn’t be supportive?”

“Maybe. I don’t want them to have to be. It’s just easier to let them think what they want and be happy.”

Sam was exiting into Jess’ neighborhood.

“Hey Max, you want me to send you some pictures? My fiancé? My brother?”

“Sure. Send naked ones,” he laughed.

“Of which?”

“Both!”

“When do you head for New York?”

“Three weeks!”

“If I don’t talk to you before then, travel safely.”

“Auf Wiedersehen, Sam.”

Sam clicked off the phone and music began flowing through the speakers again. He chuckled under his breath at the man’s funny conversation. *New York has met its match,* he thought.

Cas and Dean hit the buffet first and then wandered into the casino. They pressed up to a roulette
table and began a streak of the worst luck anyone ever had.

“Maybe we should just buy coke and hookers… it’d be cheaper,” joked Cas.

“Let’s go play some blackjack. I need to sit down for a while anyway.”

Cas nodded and collected their few remaining chips. He followed a half step behind, letting Dean choose the table.

Once they were seated they ordered drinks and found their luck changing a bit. They ended up staying at the table for quite a few rounds of drinks before Dean started looking tired.

“You ready to head upstairs?” Cas asked him.

“Well, I guess it wouldn’t hurt to quit while I’m ahead for once,” he laughed.

They motioned to the dealer that they were out and tipped him as they stood from their chairs. Dean wobbled a bit and let Cas slide an arm around him for support. “How much are we up?” he asked quietly as they moved away from the table.

“I don’t know, maybe $300?”

“Hey, anytime you leave with more than you’ve lost… that’s a win,” laughed Dean, “Wait. Did I say that right?”

“Yes,” laughed Cas, “Dean, you are drunker than a prom date! Did you take pills?”

“Pills? Oh. Yeah.”

“That explains a lot,” grinned Cas as he pressed the call button on the elevator, “I’m getting lucky tonight aren’t I?”

“You’re lucky every night, fucker.”

“Yes. Just as long as you don’t puke on me,” Cas teased him.

“One time, Cas,” barked Dean as they stepped into the elevator together. “One time I puke on you - and I never hear the end of it,” Dean retorted as they stepped onto the elevator together.

“Well, I’ll puke on you someday, and we’ll see how many times you bring it up,” he laughed.

Dean’s smile was enticing and his eyes sparkled as Cas looked over at him. He couldn’t help but take a taste of those full and tantalizing lips. They swayed a little as the elevator reached its stopping point. Cas pulled away as the doors slid open, and the men nodded towards those waiting as they stepped off, still arm-in-arm, supporting each other as they walked to their door.

Once inside, they moved through the dark together, pulling clothes off as they went. Cas caught a glimpse of Deans perfect ass and bow legs in the sliver of moonlight that peeked between the curtains over their balcony doors. Cas stopped for a moment at the nightstand to feel around for the lube and once he had it in hand, he crawled carefully onto the bed, feeling for Dean.

His hand met skin, and he felt his man grab hold of him and guide him forward. They tangled easily together, not needing to see when they could feel. Cas allowed himself to be guided by Dean’s unsteady hands and soon found himself pressed against the thrumming hot body of his lover. His nipple was enveloped immediately, and his body responded by breaking out in gooseflesh. A hand snaked around his hip and pressed lower, fingers teased his crack.
Cas was overwhelmed with the urge to suck on something and buried his face where Dean’s neck met his shoulder, suckling there as Dean’s hands and mouth moved over him feverishly. Cas slid his hand along a smooth hip and wrapped his thumb around Dean’s hipbone and he began trailing his mouth lower, wanting to lick and suck there. He slowed as he passed over Dean’s nipple and sucked it into his mouth and in response, Dean’s body jerked and his breath hitched.

Encouraged, Cas continued his tongue’s journey south and ended up bumping one of the tape tabs on Dean’s scar. He felt his man tense under him, but remembered what Dean had said earlier. It was tender. So he traveled his tongue over it very lightly, pausing frequently to wet it, which kept it sliding along easily. Each time he stopped and pulled his tongue back in his mouth he’d place soft kisses over his man’s scar or exhale on it. The scar took a jog around Dean’s belly button, but Cas did not. He licked into it swirled his tongue around before tasting lower still. As he rolled his tongue lower beneath the scar and onto a hardening dick, he felt Dean relax above him. He didn’t realize that Dean had been tense while Cas licked and kissed the long scar. But apparently he had been. “Dean,” he whispered into the dark, “did I hurt you?”

“No” came the firm answer, so Cas put his head down and returned to his playing. He licked around the base and up to swirled the tip in his mouth. He sucked the man’s heavy meat down his throat and tried to swallow around it as Dean’s fingers curled into his hair.

Cas’ dick was heavy and leaking onto the sheets beneath him. He sucked his man as he uncapped the lube and began working fingers in, opening up Dean’s sweet puckered hole with slow and easy slides, teasing the good spot occasionally – just to hear another dirty moan fall from his lover’s lips.

Dean was panting now, having his dick sucked and as his ass finger fucked. He reached out and shoved Cas’ head down on his cock when he grew greedy and impatient. Welcome back, Dean.

Cas pulled off his man, but continued to lick the tip as he pushed in a third finger and heard Dean hiss. He pulled back for more lube and then he shoved in harder and hit the magic spot just as he plunged his mouth down on Dean’s cock and let it slam into the back of his throat.

Dean cried out and pressed up into it. Cas pulled back and climbed between Dean’s legs, gently spreading them apart, and lining up to begin sinking in slow and easy.

“Fuck yeah, Cas,” Dean encouraged him. Cas forced himself to move slowly. He loved the way it felt so much… that he pulled all the way back out and forced himself to take a deep breath before he sank in again. “Uugghh,” they moaned together as he pushed in deeply for the second time and swiveled his hips around.

Wanting to feel it again - he decided to do it a third time. He pulled all the way out and paused for a beat; then sank back in again, feeling Dean’s body pull him, in inch by constricting inch.

Dean was so responsive to this new game that Cas decided to keep it going. He pulled out, made Dean wait, then sank in again. One push. Then he pulled out, repeating over and over.

Dean was wrecked and begging in no time… “C’mon man, don’t tease me, fuck me. Please Cas, just fuck me. Please!”

“I’ve got you,” Cas reassured him, pausing for effect before sliding in again. It felt so damn dirty good to have Dean open, spread wide and pleading to be fucked. Cas enjoyed the exquisite feeling of penetration into tight heat, tip bumping over the tight rings of muscle on its way in and again on its way out. Juices dripping from Cas’ throbbing cock onto Dean’s greedy hole.
“So wet for me, Dean, so fuckin wet, aggh!” he cried out when he could hold back no longer.

“Yeah, Cas, yeah!” Dean encouraged him when he finally began pumping. “Fuck yeah, finally, yeah! Fuck your boy Cas, fuck your boy!”

Dean’s dick was bobbing against his tender incision as Cas laid into him, so he reached for it and held it. Held it tight; but didn’t jack it. He wanted this to last forever. Cas had him strung out like a whore, and he fuckin’ loved it.

Cas was picking up speed and the slapping of skin on skin was loud and filling the room alongside their curses and moans. Cas felt it coming on, fast. His stomach dropped like there was a medicine ball in it.

“Fuck, Dean! I’m gonna…” and that was it. The feeling of euphoria spread over him like melting butter, and he lost the power of words. All he could do was roll his hips forward, chasing the best of the feeling as it moved through him and pulsed into Dean. He pulled out and was able to push back in only once. He looked up towards Dean’s face and saw only the bottom of the man’s chin in the deep blue of the dimly lit room - because Dean’s head had been thrown back on the pillow, jaw locked open, as he shuddered his release. He jacked himself through it, but once again, there was no spurt of slippery juice to splatter onto his hand or stomach. No physical indication that he’d come at all, apart from his loud cries in the dark.

When Sam got back to Jess’ place, she wasn’t there. He kicked off his shoes and called her.

“Hey baby, how’s my babies?” he asked when she answered.

“Good, we’re at your mom’s and packing up all the wedding stuff. She’s shipping it all to the coordinator now so that by the time we get there… things will be all pressed and ready to go and we won’t have to worry about carrying anything extra on the plane!”

“That’s a brilliant idea”

“Hey, that reminds me, where are we going on our honeymoon?”

“Hawaii.”

“That sounds awesome!”

“It seemed like a good place to say goodbye to my bikini body,” She giggled into the phone. “What are you doing?”

“Procrastinating.”

“Procrastinating on what?”

“I’ll do just about anything to not sit down and finish those cribs.”

“We won’t need those cribs for a long time, Sam. But if I have to step over the mess you’ve left in the living room for much longer – I will put them together myself.”
“That works for me,” he grinned.

“Me too. If you can live with the shame - when I tell everyone you know that I had to do it because you couldn’t?”

“Point well made, my future Mrs. Winchester.”

Dean slept for over twelve hours. Cas was showered, packed up and engrossed in his laptop when Dean finally joined the waking world.

“You working?” he yawned, rolling over.

“Was. Now I’m just reading. You’ll be happy to know that it’s normal not to shoot a load when you come.”

“It is?”

“Yep. We can let the doctor know it’s happening on your follow up visit, but it says here that it’s nothing to worry about. The ejaculation can back up into the bladder following the combination of surgeries you’ve had. You’re body still makes the jizz on the side where you still have a nut… it just doesn’t go down that same tube to come out. It will come out later when you piss.”

“Well that’s good news, I guess?”

“It’s one less thing to worry about anyway,” confirmed Cas. “And speaking of,” said Cas as he moved to the bed next to Dean, “I’ve taken care of your emails from yesterday for work, but there are two I couldn’t answer.”

Dean took the laptop from him and began reading and formulating answers. Cas sat back with his phone and pulled up maps, checking the route to their next and final destination. Bryce Canyon.

When Jess got home that evening, she found her place looking a bit different. Her small dining room table had been pushed from the dining room out into the kitchen. There were two chairs with it and the other chairs were lined up against the dining room wall. There were stacks of baby blankets on them.

On the opposite wall were all the boxes of items that had been cluttering up the living room. Things they’d purchased for the babies… stroller, changing table, and dozens of bags and boxes of supplies. It was all stacked neatly against the wall. The center of the dining room, where the table had been, was now dominated by two cribs.

Jess let out a slow whistle at the progress. She ventured into the bedroom to get ready for bed and heard the shower going in the bathroom.
Her mischievous side took over and with an impish grin she checked to see if the door to the bathroom was locked. It was not. She ducked to the sink and filled up a glass with cool water, then tiptoed over to the shower curtain.

Stealthily she peeked behind the curtain to see where Sam was, and then she flung the cold water over the top of the curtain – and let out a gleeful squeal of excitement as Sam sputtered curse words.

“You will pay for that,” he barked from behind the curtain.

“Damn, baby… I sure hope so!”

“When I get out of here…,” he threatened from behind the curtain.

“Why wait?” she asked as she slid naked into the shower with him. “Have at me,” she whispered as she put hands on him.

“Oh baby!” he said as he wrapped his strong arms around her tiny frame.

She immediately embraced him and when he lifted her, she wrapped her legs around his wet body and locked them at the ankles. With her supporting her own weight, Sam was free to run his wet hands down her dry back and under her ass.

He leaned her back against the cool tile and she let out a moan as his weight pressed into her and held her up.

“I’ve been waiting all day for you, Sam. I’ve had a snail trail in my panties since noon.”

“Fuck, woman!”

“Yeah Sam… I’m so fucking wet for you… can you feel it?”

He moved a hand forward and slid two fingers up inside her. The both groaned, him with desire, her with relief at finally having his hands on her.

“Sam, what are you going to do to me tonight?”

“Mmm,” he hummed as he sucked her voluptuous breast into his mouth and nibbled at her nipple.

“Yes!” she cried out as her head dropped back to the tile.

“We need to get clamps on those nipples,” he teased her as he carried her half wet, half dry body out of the shower.

His wet feet made slapping noises on the wood floor as he carried her through the bedroom and laid her out on the bed.

She watched his glistening wet body as he moved in the fading dusk, producing a chain and clamps from his bottom drawer.

His hair was wet and rivulets of water drizzled from it, running down his chiseled chest. She watched them, eyes following lower and peeking at his huge cock which dipped teasingly from side to side as he walked across the room to her.

She shot him a very determined look, “You’ll have more luck getting those on me if I’m cuffed.”
Dean and Cas exited Atlantis with full bellies from the buffet. When the valet brought the Impala around, Dean climbed in the driver’s seat feeling well rested and ready to get out the highway. He watched his friend toss their bags in the back and climb into the passenger seat.

He took a deep breath and hit the gas, “Which way out of town?”

“Get back on 80.”

It didn’t take long to put “the biggest little city in the world” in their rear-view mirror. Soon they exited I-80 and headed east along highway 50.

“We’ll be on this road for a long damn time, Dean.”

“You can sleep some if you want. I’ll wake you if I get tired.”

Cas didn’t think he could possibly sleep any more. Adjusting his body to Dean’s low activity level hadn’t been easy. He’d been climbing the walls in the hotel room. At least now, the car was moving, even if he was still sitting still.

Cas rolled down the window. It was cool today, but not cold and the sun was warm on them as they drove, wind whistling in the window and ruffling their hair. This was perfect weather to be on the road.

Their path took them over this long stretch of highway, and Cas had estimated it would take them all day to cross it. This section of highway was known as the “the loneliest road in America,” and Cas could see why. It was similar to the Death Valley road, just not quite so empty.

When they’d crossed Death Valley, they’d felt like they were on the moon. On highway 50 it was more like they were in a Western movie. Or maybe a post-apocalyptic wasteland movie. There were little tiny towns dotting the highway. “One horse towns” with a single gas station and not much else. They stopped for gas in Middlegate, which had a sign inviting them to view the pony express station.

Pulling in, Cas and Dean chuckled. The barren wasteland was cut by only two green trees. There were a few above ground gas tanks and a collection of old and decrepit sheds, one of which was the pony express station.

As Dean filled up, Cas wandered inside to pick up some car snacks, some beer and ice for their cooler which hadn’t been used in days.

Dean scanned the vast landscape and imagined an actual pony express rider, crossing this terrain with only a trail beneath his feet and no civilization to speak of. No roads, no gas stations, just grueling desert landscape and blowing tumbleweed for as far as the eye can see.

And his oasis? His salvation? One of these tiny squat buildings in the middle of nowhere. A pump for water. He may not even see another person here. He’d rest his horse and drink brown water and then climb back on with a satchel of mail and ride out again into the bleak nothingness. If he got bit by a rattlesnake? If his horse fell? If he were injured or accosted by thieves… there was no one to help. No 911. No police. He had his horse and his pistol. Damn.
Balls, thought Dean. Balls of solid steel.

With their cooler stocked and their windows down, the boys got back on the highway. The air was dusty and before long, Baby was veiled in a thin layer of brown. Their skin was gritty too, and the upholstery. But Dean didn’t have the heart to ask Cas to roll up the windows… the man looked so happy this way.

They roared down the highway while desert dunes covered in sparse brown vegetation passed by the windows. It all looked the same. They stopped at the halfway point in a town called Eureka. They gassed up at the Chevron station and then cruised down the main street to see the town.

It didn’t look like much. It lacked the charm of the tourist towns they’d been through near Tahoe. It had the same gritty feel as the desert air around them. They parked and went into The Owl Casino and Restaurant which advertised breakfast, lunch and dinner on its sign. It was a dive without question. But the boys were hungry so they pulled up chairs to a rickety Formica-topped table with a fake woodgrain pattern.

Wood seemed to be the theme of the place. Wood floors, wood ceiling and wood walls. There were lanterns affixed to the posts that separated one area of the dining room from another. Their waitress was friendly, if not professional, and the food was surprisingly good. Both men cleaned their plates with enthusiasm.

The casino was not enticing, and they’d had their fill of gambling anyway. As they headed back to their dirty car, Dean looked around. The place still had the traces of its early roots during the gold rush era. It didn’t take much imagination to see horses on the street instead of cars, stage coach coming in once a week, and hardened people with weathered faces working their fingers to the bone as they tried to carve out a life here – where all you could see was sand and dry brush on every horizon. Dean returned his focus to the road ahead as they left town.

The hours passed slowly and they were tired when they finally approached the junction of highway fifty and I-15. They pulled off for the night in Delta. Dean was exhausted, and Cas was ready to be out of the car. They parked at the nicest motel in town. The Days Inn.

The facilities were sub-par, the beds were shitty and the walls were thin. The boys laughed as they entered the room. Cas lit them up a joint, and they took a few puffs as they dropped their bags and looked around the room.

They showered one at a time, but only because the bathroom was small and disgusting. With a beer each and a joint to share they settled in to watch some TV. Within a few minutes, Dean was liliting to the side. Cas ended up taking Dean’s beer from him so it wouldn’t get spilled in the bed. He couldn’t help but smile as his gaze lingered on Dean’s boyish face, traces of laugh lines remaining even when he relaxed in sleep these days.

Once Dean began to snore, Cas rose quietly from the bed so as not to disturb him. He moved on silent feet, gathering their dirty clothes into one duffel, snagging his wallet and Dean’s keys.

He stopped at the front desk for directions and then motored a few blocks over to a laundromat. Once he’d loaded their clothes to wash, he got back in the car and found Quality market. It was a grocery store but nothing fancy. He milled around, picking up snack foods for the trip as he went. But what he was looking for was a book. Finding none for sale here, he settled for a magazine of crosswords and other puzzles from the checkout.

Once he’d refreshed their cooler and stashed the rest of the supplies in the back seat, he headed back to the laundromat. He stopped to top off the tank at a gas station along the way and to run the
Impala through the attached car wash. Back at the laundromat, he changed the clothes over from washer to dryer. Then he settled in under harsh fluorescent lights and began working on his puzzles.

A young girl and her boyfriend were the only others using the machines, and Cas glanced at them once in a while. They were obviously biding their time, which led to mischievous behavior. He laughed as he watched the young man push her around in one of the carts, the two of them laughing and having fun.

He smiled for them as he returned his attention to the puzzle he was working on. The white noise of the machines running lulled him a bit and by the time he was folding up their clean clothes into the duffel – he felt ready to sleep for the night.

The next morning, Dean slept late again, exhausted from all the driving the day before. Cas had breakfast waiting for him when he woke.

“Have you just been sitting there watching me sleep? It’s creepy,” he barked as he stretched.

“No, I was watching for the roaches,” Cas deadpanned. “Whenever one crawled near you I killed it. You’re welcome.”

Dean chuckled, knowing Cas was joking, but the mental picture gave him the heebie jeebies anyway and he hopped out of bed.

“You ready to get back on the road?”

“Yep. Have some breakfast if you like,” said Cas, sliding a Styrofoam container over the table towards him.

Dean dug into his biscuits and gravy breakfast while Cas lit a joint. “Wake-n-bake?”

“Driving,” Dean muttered between bites. “Where we headed when we get outa here?”

“I-15 south. We’ll make the park today.”

“Got any plans on what we’ll do in the park?”

“Not really. I’m sure there’s a handicap trail somewhere for ya,” teased Cas with a grin.

“There’s prob’ly an asshole section for you nearby,” he fired back, laughing.

When they stepped out into the parking lot and Dean saw his baby all shined up, he grabbed Cas by the shoulder pulling him in and giving him a noogie on top of his head. “Aw Cas, man, thanks for cleanin’ her up!”

Cas couldn’t hold back his gummy smile at Dean’s affections. The boys were on the road again by late morning, singing along to the radio.

They got on I-15 heading south, then turned west on 70 which was four lanes. There was more traffic now and more signs of civilization. There was more greenery too, and they crossed the occasional small river, even some farmland.

Gradually, the highway started angling to the north and by the time they intersected with highway 89, the onramp was practically a U-turn to head south.

The new stretch of road ran alongside the Sevier River, bending and curving with it, which made
the driving very pleasant. The river was beautiful as it snaked through huge boulders and tall grasses. Trees swayed in the breeze and birds swooped lazily in the afternoon sun.

They began to see tall ridges rising around them, jagged against the skyline, squat, low versions of mountains that were varying shades of brown and grey. Some had green vegetation decorating the bases. Small traces of previous snows remained in some places and the sky seemed bluer with other colors to contrast against it.

They roared down the two lane highway for hours, not seeing much for towns. They stopped once to pee… yep on the side of the road. It felt so good to stand that they stayed there for a while. They nursed beers and leaned on the Impala, eyes wandering the cut of the landscape. Facing to the east they could see the river and its grassy banks backed by low snowy ridges and silvery wisps of clouds. To their backs in the west it looked like the sparse desert they’d covered yesterday.

“What a difference the river makes,” said Cas softly. “Life really does follow water doesn’t it?”

“Yeah,” nodded Dean, “pretty stark contrast, huh?”

Cas watched Dean's profile as he surveyed the harsh landscape. The man was fascinating.

“Want me to drive for a while?”

“Sure Cas, thanks,” smiled Dean, leaning in. Cas thought he was going to kiss him. Instead the man pulled his phone out at arm’s length and snapped a picture of them.

Then, Dean put a hand to his hip and pulled, turning Cas and dropping an arm around his shoulder to take another picture. “Now we have one of us in the desert and one of us in a canyon. Both from this one spot,” he grinned at his ingenuity - having taken advantage of the distinct differences in backdrops between east and west.

Cas met Dean's eye and thrilled with the spark he saw there. They climbed back in the car, Dean on the passenger side.

“I’m surprised to be driving,” said Cas. “You don’t look that tired,” he commented, watching Dean put his shades on.

“M’not. Just wanted to smoke,” he grinned reaching into the glove box and pulling out a joint with a wink. Cas grinned and started the car, pulling back onto the highway.

The radio was playing The Eagles’ “Peaceful, Easy Feeling,” and it suited Cas’ mood perfectly. They headed south, only a few hours from their destination.

The hotel Cas had earmarked was on Highway 12. When he finally turned left onto it, the sun had set. He glanced down at Dean who was sleeping, head resting partially on his coat and partially on Cas’ thigh. Cas smiled and rested his arm on his friend’s shoulder and felt his heart give an extra beat just for thinking of Dean.

Once he’d turned, it was only about 15 more minutes before he reached the turn off for Ruby’s Historic Inn. He toyed with Dean’s ear to annoy him into waking up and grinned at his cranky man when he sat up.

“We’re here,” he smiled and watched Dean’s cranky face change as he said, “and they have pie.”

They bumped elbows as they walked up to the entrance in the dark. The breeze was stiff, and it was starting to get cold. Dean blew into his hands as they stepped through the doors. It was
impressive. The reception area was two stories and looked like the inside of a cabin, post and beam construction, with a huge stone fireplace and even deer heads mounted on the walls. “I like it, Cas. You picked a great spot.”

The room had several different service counters, each clearly labeled with what they were specialized in. There was one for the hotel, one for plane and helicopter tours, one for equipment rentals and guided tours. The boys stepped up to counter for the Inn. Cas asked what they had available.

“We have availability in a double queen with jetted tub, or a double king and there’s one suite available with an in-room spa.”

“Sold,” said Dean firmly, winking at Cas.

“Alright,” said the hostess clicking on her screen. Dean lost interest at that point, leaving Cas to deal with the details and wandering around the large room. He peaked down one hall that lead to the “General Store” and another that lead to the “Cowboy Buffet and Steaks.”

Dean felt Cas step up behind him. “Dude, Cowboy buffet and steaks? You knew what you were doin’ didn’t ya?”

“Not my first rodeo,” Cas grinned for him. “C’mon let’s get our shit upstairs, and then we’ll get some food, huh?”

They locked up Baby and carried their bags to the suite. It was very minimally decorated, more utilitarian than your average suite, but it was wonderfully appointed. The beds were comfy, the pillows and sheets smelled wonderful and the bathroom was the nicest they’d had on this trip – even better than the suite at Atlantis. “Yessss,” breathed Cas as he dropped their duffels on one bed and flopped down on the other. Dean laid down next to him and closed his eyes for a minute. Cas rolled to him and laid his head on Dean’s shoulder, humming when he felt his man hug him closer.

Cas heard a phone vibrate and watched Dean pull his from his pocket, look at it and grin.

“Mom liked our pics,” he said softly, “and she sent us one,” he said as he held the phone out for Cas to see. It was a picture of Sam, who had clearly fallen asleep on Mary’s couch and been “decorated” by his mom and Jess. Their faces were in the shot winking. Sam was sporting lipstick whiskers.

“That’s awesome!” laughed Cas as he heaved himself up from the bed and walked in to use the bathroom. “Ready for pie?” he asked when he walked back out to the bedroom. Dean nodded, and they headed downstairs.

They tucked in way more food than they had room for, but everything was so good! And Dean’s pie was so memorable that he snapped a picture of it. It was a piece of apple streusel the size of his head and it was piled with ice cream.

He smiled widely as he passed Cas a fork and slid the plate over between them. “Oh… it’s warm!” Cas sighed as he shoveled down bites of warm apples-n-cinnamon and crumble topping with ice cream melting over it.

The boys fell asleep that night fat and happy, their bodies pulled together in the center of a clean, warm bed.
“Jess, are you up for going to the Armstrong dinner with me tomorrow?”

“Sure, that’s formal, right?”

“Yes. I have a limo coming at 6:30. The firm bought a table. I’ve invited Susan Robbins to come as well. She’s bringing someone, and they’ll be riding with us.”

“She looked incredible on the news the other night.”

“Didn’t she?” he agreed, “I just knew she’d do well with that. This will do a lot for her career too.”

“I’m glad you’ve been good to her Sam. She deserves a break… she’s one of the good ones.”

“I will remember that. Your opinion means a lot to me.”

“Can I get away with wearing that long blue dress you think?”

“You can get something new if you want.”

“No. Really can’t. I have meetings all day tomorrow. There just wouldn’t be time.”

“Well in that case,” grinned Sam, “Your long blue dress will be absolutely perfect!” He walked over and slid up behind her while she turned over a grilled cheese sandwich. “When are you done at the office?”

“Friday. It’s going to be so nice to have the time off. Thank you, Sam. I never would’ve done this if you hadn’t taken my clients. Everyone else is overloaded with cases… people can only do so much.”

“Anything for you, love.”

They chatted lightly while she stood at the stove, making several sandwiches for Sam while eating one herself – unable to wait. He told her about Max calling to say he’d be going to New York and trying in vain to teach Sam to say twins in German. “Oh, that reminds me,” said Sam pulling out his phone, “I promised him a picture of you.”

“Like this?” she said gesturing to her lounging around clothes, hair up in a loose ponytail.

“Hell yeah. You look hot baby,” he told her.

She frowned and shook her spatula at him… and that’s when he snapped the picture.

“You’re not…” she gulped incredulously. “You didn’t… send that did you?”

He looked up at her, “Why not?”

“I’m gonna have to teach you a lesson,” she growled.

“Hey,” laughed Sam, “he asked for a naked picture. I think I did right by you. All he’ll get to see is your belly button.” Then he grinned at her coyly, “Want me to send this to you too? You won’t be seeing that belly button for much longer.”
“Hang on to it for me. When it’s been three months since I’ve seen it you can send it to me then.” She watched Sam take down his pants.

“What the…” she dropped her jaw as he braced himself on against the counter and bent over like a bare-bottomed school boy about to get paddled. “What are you doing?”

He gestured to the spatula in her hand, “You said you were gonna teach me a lesson?”

Dean woke early the next morning. This was the first time he’d woken before Cas. He moved to the bathroom to take a piss. Walking back he passed the window, and his breath caught in excitement. “Cas! Cas! Get up!”

Cas leapt up, “What?” he cried as he fumbled out of bed. “You okay?”

“I’m fine,” Dean frowned at him, “Just come see this… it’s fuckin incredible.”

Cas exhaled a long breath and worked on clearing the crust from his eyes so he could see… fat snowflakes swirled lazily against a bluish-purple sky and the ground was covered in white. It looked like a holiday greeting card. The boys grinned at each other like they were ten years old. They threw on clothes and raced down to the lobby. There was bustling activity everywhere. As they stood, looking around for which counter to step up to, a lovely young woman with a clip board approached them. “Good morning gentlemen, may I help you?”

“We saw the snow…,” they looked at each other and then back to her.

“Might I make a suggestion?” she pressed.

“Please,” said Cas warmly.

“Because of the snow, we’re doing sleigh rides to the rim of the canyon today.”

Dean immediately gave her the nod when he saw the way Cas’ eyes lit up.

“We have departures leaving every ninety minutes. The next will be at 9:30. I suggest bundling up. It’s very cold and windy – especially when you’re near the lip of the canyon.”

“Sign us up, Sweetheart,” said Dean with a wink. She smiled warmly back at him, asking for his name and room number, then adding it to her paperwork.

“The departure is from right out front. Enjoy the trip.”

“Thank you!” they said in unison.

“Well, that worked out nicely,” says Dean – shoving Cas’ shoulder with his own, “Let’s go to the store and get properly outfitted.”

“Okay, but um…”

“Yeah?”
“Dean, I really don’t want to spoil a mood by talking about money. But I have to tell you something.”

“Okay?”

“Well, up until now, we’ve been spending from my account. The one that I paid for the flight with, you know, the rent money for my condo. I just wanted you to know that after today, that money will be gone and we’ll be back to spending out of our personal account.”

Unexpectedly, Dean smiled. “Cas, you mean all this time? Everything on this trip, Christmas, everything? That all came from you renting out your condo?”

“Yes.”

“Well then,” he said with satisfaction, “things are better than I thought.”

“If that’s true, then why haven’t you been worrying more about money?”

“I put it out of my mind. I told myself we were fucked when I had the operations. I’m pretty sure the bills for that are gonna sink the ship, Cas, we both know it. Honestly, whatever happens. It happens and we’ll deal with it like we always do,” he said firmly. “Besides, how can I be unhappy, huh? I’m alive. I’ve got you. And I’m gonna enjoy it. And we’ll cross the bridge to financial ruin together,” he laughed, “right?”

“I want to kiss you, Dean,” he admitted softly.

“Kiss me then.” He smiled warmly, stepping forward.

“Here?” Cas looked around the lodge. There were people everywhere.

“Here,” said Dean firmly, pulling him in and laying his mouth over Cas’ with pride and affection. It was short and sweet and for Cas, it was dizzying. “I love you, Cas,” Dean told him huskily as he watched a smile, warm as the sun, spread over Cas’ face.

“Love you too, Dean.”

“You look incredible, baby,” Sam told her as she emerged from the bathroom.

“Back atcha,” she said, letting her eyes rove over her sexy man in his tux. “I’m a lucky girl,” she grinned as she leaned into the mirror to put in her earrings. “I hope the dinner is good. I’m starving.”

“You want me to grab you something for the road?” he asked her.

“Damn. I hate to sound like an old lady, but yeah. Can you grab some crackers or something?”

“Sure,” he said, moving toward the kitchen.

She spent a few minutes touching up her make-up and then heard Sam call to her that the limo was here.
The ride over was uneventful, but it was nice to catch up with Susan again. The evening would be fun, if they were sharing a table. Susan was a lively girl.

When they arrived, they had to do pictures first and then they moved to find their table. Once they had greeted those they’d be sharing the evening with, they moved to the corded off area at the edge of the room to look over the items that were part of the silent auction.

It was here that Jess looked up and found the bottom falling out of her stomach. Meg. Meg was here.

Dean and Cas moved through the general store picking up hats, gloves, and souvenirs. Dean grabbed a few packs of hand warmers at the checkout.

After the store, they headed over to the restaurant and downed a hearty breakfast before heading back to the front of the restaurant to take their sleigh ride.

The snow hadn’t let up. In fact, it was heavier, settling on everything. The cars in the lot were buried under it and there were even little piles of it on the backs of the horses pulling the sleigh.

As they stepped out into it, Dean watched flakes fall on Cas’ nose and eyelashes. They each hung for a moment before dissolving into little specks of water. The man was beautiful. In every way. And clearly, he was thrilled as they hopped up onto the sleigh and settled in near the front.

Other couples and families filled up the covered sleigh and in just a few short minutes, they were off. The horses looked beautiful as they moved through the new fallen snow. Dean had his arm draped over the seat behind Cas and both men were feeling very warmly for each other as the horses pulled them through a winter wonderland.

When they finally arrived at the rim of the canyon… the view was breathtaking. The landscape before them was jagged and harsh with multitudes of spires of stone jutting up sharply. Snow was blanketing everything and highlighting the stark outlines against dark shadow.

The driver pulled the horses to a stop and helped everyone climb down so they could all take their pictures. Dean and Cas took turns with another couple taking pictures of each other in front of the incredible backdrop. When they moved back towards the sleigh, Dean found himself following Cas, who had become preoccupied with the horses. The driver was friendly and indulged Cas’ request to pet them. They pulled off their gloves and stepped forward, and the man put a small piece of carrot into Cas’ palm and encouraged him to put his hand out. Dean watched as a giant head swung around pressed its huge nose to Cas’ bare hand.

Dean’s favorite smile spread over Cas’ face as the carrot was lifted from his hand. The animal’s giant head bobbed as he chewed the treat loudly and soon the other horse was pushing in, seeking a treat. The man offered Dean a carrot but he waved it off – indicating that he should let Cas do it. Cas grinned and took the carrot bit, holding it out to the other horse and watching it vanish under HUGE and clumsy lips.

Dean reached out to pat the animal. When it moved to smell his hand, he held very still and felt a soft muzzle press against his cold fingers. “It’s so much softer than I expected,” he said to them, smiling. At that instant the horse exhaled hot breath on his hand with a soft snort and startled him.
He jerked his and away and popped it into his pocket, as Cas and the driver chuckled at him. “Yeah. Ha ha. Laugh it up,” he barked at them, grinning sheepishly.

Suddenly the kids seemed to notice the new entertainment, and the poor driver was swarmed with requests to pet the horses. Dean shot the driver an apologetic look as they backed away and left him with a gaggle of kids to pander to.

They moved back to the sleigh to climb aboard and headed to the back for the second half of the trip, allowing others a chance to sit in the best seat.

They had a few minutes before the sleigh was again filled and ready to take off, during which they sat quietly and watched the snow falling over the natural wonder in front of them.

“You must’ve had something in mind for today,” said Dean to Cas, “before the snow I mean. What would we have been doing if it hadn’t snowed?”

“I told you,” teased Cas, “handicap tour.”

Dean elbowed him in the ribs and pinched his thigh. “Ow! Ok… uncle,” hollered Cas, “I thought we’d rent four wheelers to see the canyon. They do guided tours or you can just be on your own. I was going to ask you which you’d prefer.”

“Oh definitely the guided tour,” said Dean. “They’ll know all the best places to go.”

“We can do that tomorrow if you’d like?”

“Sure Cas.” He smiled warmly. “What are we doing with the rest of today?”

“I don’t know… there’s some stuff to see around town? We can probably walk to all of it. We won’t even have to dig out the car,” said Cas sagely. “Work for you?”

“Yep.”

Just then, the sleigh started moving again and the men turned to watch as the canyon view disappeared behind them.

Jess instinctively reached for Sam’s hand when her eyes found Meg. She found skin, but it belonged to Susan, not Sam. “What, honey?” Susan said, leaning in. Clearly, she knew by Jess’ posture that something was wrong.

“Where’s Sam?” Jess asked her, turning.

“He went to get drinks… what’s wrong?”

“That woman…” Jess whispered to her, “In the overdone red dress… over by the huge vase” she breathed, “evil, arch enemy.”

“Do you want to go back to the table?”

“Don’t make any sudden moves. Maybe she won’t see us,” Jess said quietly, putting her back to
Meg and finally looking Susan in the face.

“She saw someone,” said Susan, taking Jess by the other hand and turning her slowly.

Jess focused in on Meg as she moved through the crowd… towards the bar… and stood behind Sam.

“That unholy fucking bitch!” cursed Jess.

“Wow…,” Susan was dumbfounded, “Jess… what did she do?”

Jess whispered the story to her in bits and pieces as the line they were in moved slowly from one table to the next, each displaying an item in the silent auction. The ladies kept their eyes on Sam at the bar as Meg engaged him. They were discreet but with eyes like a hawk.

They both gasped as they watched Sam smile at her and then lean in and hug as if she were an old friend. Then they both stared in horror as Sam proceeded to pull out a stool for her and encourage her to sit at the bar with him. They talked there for several minutes before Jess came to realize that Sam wasn’t going anywhere. It stung.

Jess turned her back on the hideous scene in front of her and forced herself to focus on the items displayed for auction. She bid high on several items, with only a glimmer of satisfaction when she thought of the checks her fiancé would have to write when she won these worthless items.

Susan was as supportive as she could be. Sometimes, unexpectedly, the solidarity of another woman ends up being a god-send. Without Susan’s arm linked in her own, Jess would never have made it back to the table. She’d have gone straight to the ladies room and cried in a stall.

Cas stuffed his hands back in his gloves as they walked down the street. It was getting colder. As the temperature dropped, the big and beautiful snowflakes disappeared and were replaced with tiny white specs instead. The boys ambled in and out of the tourist attractions - starting with the most obvious – a block of storefronts built to look like a historic mining town settled in the old west. It housed a jail and a country store (which now sold mostly candy and novelty souvenirs) among other things.

Dean grinned as he held up a can of bacon flavored soda, then a cap gun set. “Man, I haven’t seen one of these since I was a kid!” Dean chuckled it into their basket.

“You’re gonna scare the shit out of me with that, aren’t you?”

“You know it!”

Cas then leaned in and picked up a bag of rock candy. The kind that actually looks like rock. He put several in their basket. “Souvenirs,” he said when he saw Dean looking. Then Dean watched the gears turning in Cas’ head. His man had an idea. Without looking at Dean again, he began loading dozens of bags of rock candy in their basket, this time it was the brightly colored kind that’s stuck to wooden sticks.

“Easy Cas,” Dean chided. “Leave some for the other suckers.”
Cas laughed and continued on. “I have plans for those,” Cas said mysteriously, gesturing towards the brightly colored rock candy on sticks.

“Sexy plans?” asked Dean, flirting a little.

“Nope. But I want to show you - not tell you. So, just give me the benefit of the doubt for now, ok?”

“If you say. This better be good… you’ve got like $150 bucks worth of candy here Cas.”

Cas leaned in and whispered, “If you end up thinking my idea sucks… I’ll make it up to you in blow-jobs.”

“Well, I sure want to support your creativity…,” Dean couldn’t suppress his wolfish grin as he followed his man to the checkout.

Sam had yet to be served at the bar when he felt a touch to his elbow. Turning, he came face to face with Meg. She looked lovely. The dress was familiar. She’d worn it the night he gave her the vibrating undies. “Wow,” he said to her, “that sure brings back memories.”

“Oh, Sammy, thank you. I almost didn’t come to say hi. I was a little afraid you’d blow me off.”

“I don’t blow off my friends Meg,” he told her reassuringly as he leaned in for a hug. “It’s great to see you. How have you been?”

“A little better. I’ve gotten over my psycho ex-girlfriend phase, and moved on to the much healthier jaded and bitter phase,” she teased. “Table for one!” she laughed.

Sam laughed with her and invited her to sit down. “Sam, I can’t tell you what it means to me that you forgave me for what I did. I don’t know how I could’ve let myself act that way. You know me. I’m not one of those girls.”

“Meg, I hate to disagree. But I honestly think that EVERY girl is one of those girls.”

“You know what they say,” she replied, “Hell hath no fury…”

“Yeah. I had yours and hers,” Sam said pointedly.

“She forgave you though, didn’t she?”

“Yes.” He confirmed. “How did you know?”

“Because you’re Sam Fuckin’ Winchester!” she barked at him. “No one’s kickin’ you to the curb.”

“Well, if anyone would… it would be her.” He smiled thinking of Jess, “she’s one tough lady.”

“Did you propose yet?”

“Yes,” he confirmed. “We tie the knot on the fifteenth.”
“Fifteenth of what?”

“January,” he said, laughing at the look of astonishment on her face, “that’s right… as in two weeks from now.”

“What’s the rush? Get her locked down before she comes to her senses?”

“I have a bun in the oven.”

“Really? Sam? You’re going to be a father?”

“Twice blessed,” he grinned to her.

“Wow. I never pictured you as a father.”

“Oh I did. I always knew I’d do it someday. Maybe not this early in life… but someday.”

“I don’t think I ever will.”

“You may change your mind one day,” he told her as the bartender finally got to him. “A double whiskey, a Long Island iced tea and a large orange juice please,” he said to the bartender before looking back at Meg.

“No way. No rugrats for me. They’re dirty. Messy. Expensive. And they’re attention stealers! No one sees you anymore once you have them.”

“I never knew you felt that way.”

“I would’ve told you if the subject came up. But I avoid it like the plague. It’s horrible to admit how selfish I really am. But the truth is… I’m way too self-involved to ever want kids.”

“Honestly, Meg, living the way I have, it’s no wonder you always thought I felt the same,” he admitted morosely, “but in all honesty… the ‘no kids’ thing… it would’ve been a deal-breaker for me. I can’t imagine myself giving up the dream of having kids one day. It just wouldn’t have been possible.”

“I have to say, I might have tried to make my peace with having one, if that’s what it had taken to please you. But I’m certain I would’ve been a horrid mother.”

“You know what Meg,” said Sam reassuringly, “if more women were as honest with themselves as you are… there would be a lot less horrible mothers out there. I see women in the store all the time with their kids and the way they act with them… I just want to shout ‘Why did you bother having kids if that’s how you’re gonna treat them?’ I think it’s good that you know yourself well enough to avoid the whole thing. Contrary to popular belief… it’s not for everyone.”

The bartender offered to have his drinks sent to his table. “No,” said Meg, “we’ll take them.”

Sam looked at her in surprise.

“I’ll carry these,” she said taking her drink plus the large juice, “I’m assuming this is for Jessica?”

“Yes.”

“I’m going to go with you. I’m going to give her a real apology… and the chance to throw this in my face.”
Sam looked back at Meg and saw that she was only half kidding.

“Oh don’t look at me like that… we both know I have it coming.”

When they arrived back at the inn, they took their purchases up to the room and then wandered down to the same buffet for dinner. Why not? There weren’t an overwhelming number of choices in town anyway… and it was delicious.

After, they stopped at the tours desk and selected a guided ATV tour for the next morning. It was recommended that they wear snow pants, which were for sale or rent in the General Store.

The boys stayed in their suite that night. They rolled up a towel under the door and lit a joint. They put on music and sat in the hot tub, passing the smoke between them and tipping back tiny bottles from the mini bar. When they were soft and wrinkled like raisins they moved to the bed, where they made love slow and easy, arms and legs wrapped tightly around one another and whispering hushed words into soft pillows.

Sam looked from Jess to Susan in the limo. Neither woman was speaking to him. Tough night. The silence hung heavy on Sam even after Susan and her date had been dropped off. They climbed the stairs together, got ready for bed, still nothing from Jess.

“I don’t know what to do when you’re this quiet.”

“Just give me some time Sam. That was a rough night for me.”

“Ok. Is it too soon to thank you for the way you handled things?”

“Yes.”

Sam rolled over and tried to sleep. It took a long time. He laid there, thinking of the evening and how things had gone down. When he looked at it from Jess’ point of view… he understood. He’d give her time.

The ATV trip was very good. Dean and Cas had gotten suited up, donned windproof eyewear and hats and gloves and were barely recognizable as they sat down on their machines for the tutorial on how to operate them. Their group were all adults and without having to pander to younger riders, they were able to really ride hard and fast. They were out in the weather for hours, and both men were glad they’d been encouraged to wear the snow suits.

The breathtaking vistas they were able to reach on the utility vehicles were worth the trip. But mostly, Dean was digging the ride. They powered over the trails, climbing and descending steep elevations. When they hit open ground they put the hammer down and flew. It was an adrenaline
kick for sure.

When they got back to the hotel, Dean was elated but tired. They smoked out and had a nap. When they woke, they had room service and hit their private hot tub.

As they were preparing for bed that night, Dean watched Cas pull out the laptop and check in on work. He did the same. He also texted everyone that they were going to be heading back in the morning and attached a photo of him and Cas standing next to Cas’ ATV – both suited up and grinning in the snow.

A few days later, the boys rolled into Mary’s drive. The car was dirty inside and out. Their clothes were dirty, and they were exhausted.

“Welcome home boys!” Mary squealed, hugging them tightly. “You look like you could use showers and a good meal.”

“Thanks, Mom,” they said in unison. Dean left the car out – planning to wash her after they’d rested. They carried their bags up the stairs Mary told them to just push their laundry out into the hall before they laid down.

“Nice!” grinned Dean a few hours later when they opened their door after napping and found a basket of freshly laundered clothes waiting. He tugged the basket into his room, and they headed downstairs.

“It smells amazing down here!” breathed Cas. “What are you making?”

“Smoked roast pork loin and potatoes.”

“Mom,” Dean said, hugging her tightly, “You’re gonna spoil us.”

“That’s the point,” she smiled as they settled around the table. “Do you boys have any plans for the weekend?”

“Nope,” Dean told her. “We’re just going to take it easy and rest up until we leave for the wedding.”

“Good idea.”

They spent the evening with her at the table. They pulled out a laptop and showed her all their pictures and told their stories and showed her the souvenirs they’d gotten, asking her which she’d like. She chose a bag of rock candy and the package of cap guns.

Dean stared at her and saw the teasing look on her face. “Oh, I’m sorry… did you want these Dean?” she asked as she dangled them in front of him.

“Um… yeah,” he said snatching them, “Don’t judge me!” he barked at Cas and Mary who were having a laugh at his expense.

“He’s going to make my life miserable with those,” Cas whispered to Mary. “Do you know how loud that will be in a treehouse?” Cas asked her.

“Sweetie,” she whispered back to him, “you’ll be the one having the fun. Just watch him try to get those past TSA.”
Behind a locked door, the bedroom was full of soft music and Dean’s quiet moans when Cas heard his phones message alert go off. He pulled his mouth off of Deans wet and slippery cock to reach over and snatch the phone from the nightstand. He needed to check and see who would be texting him at damn near midnight.

“Who is it so late?” asked Dean, concerned.

“Anna. She needs to talk to me. Wants to meet for lunch tomorrow.”

“Is it good news or bad?”

Cas shrugged and sent a reply to his sister asking that very question.

When her reply came through, he read it out loud to Dean… “It’s a surprise.”
“Good morning, Dean.”

“Mornin’ sunshine, sorry I slept so late,” said Dean as he settled on the couch next to Cas and nursed a cup of coffee, “when do you leave for lunch with Anna?”

Cas was working on a crossword puzzle book and glanced at the clock on the wall, “At 11:30.”

“Are you nervous?”

“No. I’m pretty sure she’s going to tell me that I’m soon to be an uncle,” said Cas without looking up.

“What makes you say that?”

“What else would she surprise me with?”

“Maybe she got you a puppy.”

Cas looked at Dean as if he were a problem child.

“M’just sayin’… it could be something else.”

“It’s not. We’re gonna have little shit machines crawling everywhere next Christmas,” Cas laughed. “Little fat sticky fingers on candy canes and high chairs at the dinner table.”

“Sounds friggin awesome!” winked Dean.

“Dean?” Called Mary from upstairs.

“Down here, Mom!”

Mary popped her head around the corner at the top of the stairs, “Want to go run something over to Jess for me?”

“Sure” said Dean as he stood up, “What am I taking?”

“That box on the table,” she told him. “Thank you!” she called as she disappeared again.

“She at home?” he hollered after her.

“Yeah” she hollered back.

Dean dropped his cup in the sink, grabbed an apple from the fruit dish and headed back upstairs to get dressed.
A few minutes later, he was heading out the door. He stopped at the couch where Cas was still engrossed in his puzzle and kissed the top of his man’s head, “See you later, Uncle Cas,” he called as he walked out the door.

Traffic was light at this hour, poised halfway between the morning rush and the lunch hour. He made it over to Jess’ in record time. She made him a light lunch and they visited for a while before he headed back home.

Dean had noticed that her little one-bedroom space was overflowing with stuff for the twins and asked about their plans. She said she was looking at houses and that they were targeting the neighborhood that Sam and Dean had grown up in. They both loved the area and wanted to be close to Mary. It would be easier to keep her from being lonely if they were close like that…

“And,” Jess winked at him, “who can resist the urge to live a few blocks from the best babysitter in the world?”

Dean smiled at the mental pictures she created for him. His brother and Jess… living down the street from Mary and making her a part of this wonderful time in their lives. Mary would be so happy and well cared for. It was perfect.

When he got back to the house, Cas was still gone and so was his mom. So Dean settled on the couch and clicked on the TV. He didn’t realize he’d even fallen asleep until he was startled awake by his phone vibrating in his pocket. It was Cas.

“Celebrating the big news at Anna’s tonight. Want to join?”

“Sure, Uncle Cas,” replied Dean immediately.

Cas responded with, “Want me to pick you up?”

“I’ll drive over. Time?” he responded.

“Any time after 6”

“k” typed Dean.

With that, Dean dropped his head back on the pillow and fell asleep again. Waking later, he had that groggy feeling a person gets when they’ve slept too long and can’t even remember what day it is. He laid there in the fading daylight for a few minutes just trying to remember.

His plans to meet Cas at Anna’s slowly returned and he sat up, stretching. The house was very quiet. He checked the garage and found Mary’s SUV still gone.

Once he was dressed and ready, Dean hopped in the Impala and drove over to Anna’s. As he stepped up to her door, he heard music and loud voices. When he knocked, the door was opened by Cas who immediately pulled him inside and shouted, “Dean’s here!”

Anna and Michael were at the table with some friends that Dean didn’t know and as he stepped up to be introduced, he began to notice that he was the only sober person in the room.

Cas was giving Dean the kind of heart-eyes that only came out with the assistance of too much alcohol. Michael and Anna were both swaying, and she actually had a shot glass in her hand. Dean didn’t want to be critical – he thought very highly of Anna. But he couldn’t help himself. He leaned in and whispered to Cas, “Should Anna really be drinking?”

“Hell yes!” whooped Cas.
“Anna!” he called to his sister, “Anna! Anna!”

“Huh?” she said when he finally got her attention.

“Tell Dean the surprise!” shouted Cas.

“Oh yes.” She cleared her throat and raised her glass to the ceiling, “OUR ASSETS ARE UNFROZEN!”

The entire table cheered again and glasses clinked together. Celebratory shouts were uttered all around them. Dean was a little slow to catch on, but as he looked around the table at the celebratory faces, he caught up. Cas’ money and property were being released to him.

“Cas? You’re not an uncle?”

“Not yet!” he shouted. “But soon, right Anna?”


“Well I heard YES,” laughed Cas as he clinked his glass to hers.

Cas glopped onto Dean then, wrapping arms tightly around his neck, “We got our six years back, BABY!”

Dean’s heart stopped for a moment then started again. It gave an extra beat and then swelled a little. Cas had money again. They weren’t in financial trouble anymore.

“Come on, BABY!” Cas teased, “Call me BABY! You know you want to Dean… Come on! Call me BABY!”

“Oh yeah, Baby!” yelled Dean – wishing he could pick up his man and twirl him. “Yeah, BABY! Yeah!!!”

The days before the wedding went quickly. Mary and Jess were wrapping up the last few errands and details for the trip. Sam was working long days at the office in preparation for the absence he’d be taking to get married and go on his short honeymoon.

Dean was still operating at a much lower activity level than usual, getting tired quickly when he exerted himself. He wasn’t supposed to be lifting anything heavy but was encouraged to walk as much as he could tolerate. So Cas invested a great deal of time in finding ever more creative ways to get Dean out and walking in ways that were fun for him.

They walked around the neighborhood every morning and evening. In between, Cas would find them something to do that was fun for Dean.

Remembering that Dean had once suggested they do some hiking near the Sutro Bath area, he requested a trip over there. They rode over in the Impala and had a nice time, despite the cold drizzle that faded in and out all afternoon. Dean watched Cas heave himself up on the old
crumbling walls and balance along them, giggling when he’d fumble. They took pictures of each other with the backdrop of the angry, dark water that frothed behind them. The boys hiked up a few short trails, taking their time and enjoying the smell of the sea air and dark musty evergreens along the trails.

When Dean was starting to look tired, Cas asked to eat and they headed back to the car to cruise into town and grab food.

One day, Cas managed to con Dean into taking him to visit Alcatraz. It was something they’d talked about before and Dean had been stunned that Cas hadn’t seen the place, so it was an obvious choice. And since the tour included a great deal of walking, it was a no-brainer.

For the handful of days between the road trip they’d taken and the departure for Sam’s wedding in Orlando, they made sure to stop at local places they used to enjoy. They made it a point to have the treats that couldn’t be found in Honduras and even picked up a few souvenirs to give to Roberto and Sunni when they finally got home.

Both men were trying to enjoy their time stateside – seeing friends and family and treating this like a vacation – but as the days went by it was easy to tell that they both missed their treehouse. Both men pined for the hot sun, vibrant jungle and rolling waves of their beach.

Before too long, the day had arrived. The affair that Jess and Mary had planned was an intimate one comprised of their closest family and friends. They’d had hundreds of wedding announcements printed up that would go out to the wide social circles they moved in, but the actual wedding only had a few dozen people attending. Most everything from flights and accommodations, even meals, had been purchased as a package for the wedding party and its invited guests. Mary’s constant advice to Jessica as they planned was always to keep things as simple as possible so that she’d be free to enjoy the day without having to get bogged down in the details of everything.

As Cas watched everyone moving about in the airport… he could see the genius of Mary’s planning. It was all so simple. Everyone met here and boarded the plane together. The flight would be fun because it was full of family and friends having a good time. Upon arrival they’d all ride from the airport over to the resort in the same bus. Everyone was staying on the same floor of the same hotel too. Each person had an itinerary with them of the times and locations of events and no one had to worry about cars or parking. When they wanted to go somewhere… the monorail train rolled past their resort in short intervals all day long.

Wedding party and guests could ride it from the hotel to the parks. They could also jump on a bus to get around the resort anywhere the monorail didn’t reach. Mary hadn’t been kidding. This was going to be the only “low stress” wedding there ever was.

It was Friday morning when they all boarded the plane for Florida. They had the entire section, so they didn’t have to worry about bothering any of the other passengers, and the flight attendants had champagne in everyone’s hand in record time.

Jessica’s sister Natalie was her maid of honor and Jessicas “bestie” from college was her other bridesmaid. The two of them and Mary had put together a little bit of an impromptu shower for Jess to be had on the plane. They played goofy shower type games during the flight for silly prizes. Jess seemed to be having a blast and the entire group was in on the fun. Sam was the butt of a few jokes during the shower and took it all in stride.

Dean was Sam’s best man, of course, and also standing up for Sam was his old buddy from Stanford. Dean had met Matt many times before so they fell right in with the old rowdy ways… once the man scraped his chin up off the floor as he met Cas. Dean didn’t make it easy on the man
either, taking every opportunity to fuck with him as he blushed and stammered over Dean’s change in sexual preference since they’d last seen each other.

“Dude,” Dean said to Cas under his breath, “it coulda been worse… it’s not like I whipped out my scar at him or told him I was down to one testicle.”

Cas had to chuckle. It was good to see Dean returning to his old self.

As the shower wound down, Dean heated things back up by introducing the “in flight movie,” which was actually a montage of pictures and video clips starring Sam. Cas and Dean had edited it together with a bit of help from friends.

The flight attendant queued it up for them and the music started… it was set to the song “I’m Too Sexy.” It began with pictures of Sam in his childhood… many of which had come from Mary. As the slide show progressed it moved into pictures of high school and college… and it got funnier. And more embarrassing. Jess and the girls laughed and heckled Sam while Sam shot eye daggers at Dean. The final parting shot was the picture of Sam sleeping, decorated with lipstick cat whiskers while Mary and Jess winked in the background.

Dean climbed out of his seat and moved to the front of the section to hug his brother, “Congratulations, Sam,” whispered Dean as they hugged it out, “I’m so happy for you.”

“Thanks Dean,” said Sam as he cleverly pulled Dean’s shorts into wedgie in front of everyone.

“Payback’s a bitch!” grinned Dean as he waddled to his seat, tugging briefs out of his crack.

When they touched down in Florida, they moved as a group and were intercepted by a representative from Disney who guided them to the correct bus. The raucous noise and laughter continued on the bus trip and soon they were all unloading.

Dean let out a low whistle as he stepped off the bus. “Nice,” he commented as he surveyed the resort where they were staying.

“Welcome,” said their guide – who was wearing mouse ears, “to the Disney Grand Floridian Resort and Spa. Where is the bride?”

Whooping and cat whistles followed as Jess moved to the front and was given her own set of mouse ears. The ears actually had a sheer white veil sewn into the back which marked her as the bride.

“And the groom?” she asked.

Sam stepped forward and was given his own special top hat with mouse ears. They were officially the most adorable couple to ever live.

The guide asked Jessica loudly, “How many frogs did you have to kiss before you found your prince?”

Clearly, Jess had been hitting the champagne hard. She practically leapt into Sams arms and laid a sloppy good kiss on him. Her crowd of friends and family cheered for her as the couples giant mouse-ear hats bumped together.
They all followed the guide, who took them to the front desk where their bags were all sorted and everyone received their key cards and began flooding into elevators to check out their new digs. There was nothing on the agenda for anyone for the rest of the day, so once bags were settled into rooms, most folks headed out into the park in small groups.

Dean called Mary to see if she’d like to go see the park with him and Cas, but she politely declined having booked herself into a full-day spa treatment on the grounds.

Dean walked out onto the balcony where Cas was leaning on the rail and watching the activity below. They had lucked out and gotten a room facing the lake. The lakeshore had been made over to look like a beach and nearby there were kids frolicking in pristine pools. Adults lounged in cabanas and on beach chairs while kids ran around wildly, splashing and playing.

“Mom’s doing a spa day, so it’s just us. What would you like to do first?”

Cas was obviously elated to get out into the park. “I don’t even know what to do first,” he grinned.

“Well,” said Dean as he leaned forward and pressed his shoulder against Cas, “This place has a couple different kingdoms. We can go to any. Magic Kingdom is the one that has the castle. It’s been around the longest. Then there’s Epcot. That’s the one with the giant ball. It’s probly gonna be your favorite cause it’s all educational fun,” he said with a chuckle, “and then there’s MGM, which is like a movie studio with rides, and there’s an animal kingdom too.”

“Let’s start with the castle one,” Cas said, showing Dean his gummy smile. “It’s the one I’ve seen the most on TV.”

They changed into shorts and t-shirts and comfortable shoes before heading for the lobby to catch the monorail. As they waited for the next train to arrive, they chatted with others from their group who were also waiting.

Everyone told everyone where they were headed first and what they were most excited to see. Sam and Jess stepped onto the platform and everyone cheered again. Their smiles were wide. Dean loved seeing his brother so obviously happy.

As it turned out, most of them were headed the same place as Dean and Cas so the boys were swept along with them as they all exited the train at the gate to the Magic Kingdom. Their room keys doubled as their tickets so they simply slid them to move through the turnstiles.

Upon entering the park, they walked down a few blocks of charming brick paved streets which were lined with all kinds of shops. Souvenir shops, ice-cream parlors, coffee shops, candy stores… you name it. It was here. It didn’t take long for their large group to dissolve into smaller ones as some stopped to shop and some stopped to take pictures while others pushed forward (like Cas) anxious to get to the real attractions.

Dean happily followed his man as he pressed toward the Castle. Dean tugged his arm once at a key location and suggested they stop and take a picture. They took several in front of the castle before they finally crossed the drawbridge and walked through its iconic doorway.

As they stepped inside, they were enveloped in cool shadow. It was like walking through a tunnel
and they could see bright daylight and crowds of people on the other end. As they moved through
the tunnel, which was entirely stone block and brick - like a real castle, they saw entrances for a
restaurant and a very upscale souvenir shop. The doors to these places looked like real castle doors.

“This is where Sam and Jess are staying after the wedding,” Dean said conspiratorially. “There’s
actually a few suites up in the top of the castle. You can sit on your balcony and watch the
fireworks. The room looks like a real castle and everything... Sam showed me pictures.”

“That sounds incredible!” enthused Cas, “This is so cool!”

“What do you want to ride first?” Dean asked as they stepped out the back side of the castle and
moved out into the park, “Are there any little kid rides you always wanted to go on and never got
to?”

Cas looked at Dean with kind eyes. “You’d really do that wouldn’t you… you’d get on and ride
Dumbo if I asked you to.”

“Of course I would Cas!” said Dean, laughing. “And you’d keep your damn mouth shut and never
tell anyone, right?”

“Don’t worry,” he said as he fumbled his park attractions map out of his pocket, “I don’t feel a
need to go on the Dumbo ride.” He looked at his map and said, “We’re close to the Haunted
Mansion. Let’s start there!”

He was already moving and Dean had to double time to catch up with his man. The Haunted
Mansion had received some upgrades since he’d been here as a kid, but the overall experience was
about the same. Erie and fantastic. They moved around the park, hitting the rides they were most
excited about first. Each ride took about an hour by the time they stood in line and got their turn.
They did Peter Pan next, then Big Thunder Mountain and Splash Mountain.

When they exited Splash Mountain, Dean suggested taking a break and sitting down for a while
since they were wet anyway. They ended up taking the jungle cruise, which was very relaxing and
by the time they were finished with that, they were mostly dry.

But Cas could see that the short break they’d had seated for the boat ride wasn’t enough rest. Dean
was tired. So they settled in at a table outside under an umbrella and relaxed over a snack and
smoothies.

Around them, they watched the kids. Some were a joy to watch, brimming with excitement. Others
were funny. Some were downright unsettling. “I should put out a sign that says, ‘if your kid needs
spanked bring them to me’ and just sit here with my belt off,” laughed Dean. “When did it become
ok for kids to be so damn mouthy?”

“Dean, I don’t know. You know I didn’t get away with that shit.”

“Me either,” said Dean firmly. “My dad woulda taken me over his knee for that right there,” he
said firmly, nodding toward a shrieking child who had dropped to the ground in a tantrum.

They chuckled watching the mother try to wrestle the child into a stroller that he was clearly too
big for. She was obviously looking for any possible way to restrain him.

“You ever think about havin’ one of those?” he asked Cas.

His man swiveled large eyes to him and locked. “It’s crossed my mind.” He answered, “Have you
thought about it, Dean?”
“May have thought about it some,” he replied.

They each nodded but their eye contact didn’t break. Not much needed to be said now that they’d been together for so long; they read each other so well. Dean watched carefully and saw the set of his man’s jaw, his brow, the tilt of his head. Then he saw Cas’ elusive little hidden smile tug a corner of his mouth for a split second and found his own mouth fighting to not return the smile. Within a moment they were both grinning ear to ear as they said, “Nah!”

Dean kicked his legs up onto the chair next to Cas, crossing them at the ankles and relaxing a bit in his seat. Cas leaned back too, resting his hand on Dean's shin and letting his eyes wander again to watch the people moving past them. “Sam says we’re required to keep his brats every summer while him and Jess go on vacation.”

“Well, that’s fine,” Cas said firmly, “that right there is about the perfect amount of parental responsibility for me.”

“Me too,” agreed Dean, “I like my freedom too much. Kids tie a guy down.”

“Yes,” agreed Cas, “I love kids… but in small doses.” He laughed. “I think I’d much rather be Uncle Cas than Dad.”

“I’m with you, buddy,” grinned Dean, “besides – we didn’t think to freeze my sperm before they cut me. And we sure as shit can’t have our lil bastards lookin like you!”

Cas tossed his dirty napkin at Dean and shot him the bird. Dean winked at him as he put his shades back on.

*I love it when he winks at me.*

The afternoon sun looked different here than it did in California. It was heavier. Perhaps it was the humidity. But the early evening didn’t bring a cool down with it like Dean would’ve expected, and there was no breeze either. It was almost too still. If it were summer it would be quite uncomfortable, he was sure. But since it was only about 80 degrees… it was nice. Stagnant, but nice.

“You ready to move on?” Dean asked.

“Yes!” smiled Cas looking down at his map. “Let’s head for Tomorrowland!”

Sam and Jess were exhausted when they finally sat down alongside the lake to view the nightly fireworks. They’d spent most of the day at the Magic Kingdom, but as the sun went down, they’d headed to Epcot which was known for the best fireworks show. Sam settled in with his back against the base of the fountain, and Jess settled between his knees, leaning back on him. It didn’t take long for the entire area to fill up as more and more people crowded in around the lake to get the best seats for the show.

“We’ll have to go to MGM tomorrow night,” said Sam, “I want to see the Fantasia light show they do there at night.”
“Works for me,” said Jess, “I’m kinda sad to miss the Parade of Lights at the Magic Kingdom,” she said, “But you’re right. That’ll be something we’ll save for when we visit here with the kids.”

“What else are we gonna take the kids to see when we bring them?”

“Mickey and Minnie’s houses!” she squeaked, “I loved those when I was a kid!”

“I’ll be honest, Jess. I wasn’t so sure about this whole getting married at Disney thing when you first suggested it. But it’s incredible. It’s perfect for us. I love it.”

“Me too!” she said, delighted, “your mom has been amazing too. I think that she’s really made the difference…”

“Can we take her around with us for a while tomorrow? I don’t want her to wind up alone in all the confusion.”

“Sure. When we get to the room, why don’t you just call her room and invite her to go to breakfast with us in the morning? Then we’ll just pull her right along with us.”

“Thanks, Jess.”

The music started as they were speaking, and they both climbed to their feet and turned to face the water, Jess leaning back on Sam as the lightshow and fireworks burst to life before their eyes.

“Why are all the rides closing down?” asked Cas, “the park is open for another hour.”

“Nothing runs during fireworks,” replied Dean, “we should find a seat for that, I’m getting tired.”

“Dean,” said Cas, grabbing his man’s elbow, “let’s ride that!” he said gazing up at the Astro Orbitor. “Look… they haven’t shut it down yet, and there’s hardly anyone waiting.”

“Ok” said Dean, turning toward the ride, “better hurry.” Even though he was tired, he tried to rally for Cas who was clearly having the time of his life.

They managed to squeeze in on the last run before the Astro Orbitor was shut down. Cas ran around the gangway to choose his ship. Dean, rather than trying to choose a ship, slid in behind Cas. His legs parted as he slid down snugly, and felt Cas settle between his knees. He relaxed into the seat and waited for the ride to start. Cas leaned back against him and rested his head on Deans chest. “Thank you, Dean.”

“Sure, Cas,” he said as he pressed his lips into Cas’ soft dark hair. He breathed in his lover’s scent and pressed a kiss there.

Against a dark sky, the giant orbs representing planets of varying size, glowed in brightly lit colors and as the ride started. Cas was having fun using the lever to move their ship up and down as they sped through the incredibly large and colorful clusters of planets.

The wind blew in their hair as they swooped and dipped. Dean had forgotten how much fun this ride was and he’d never been on another ride quite like it anywhere. The backdrop was the dark night sky and below them swirled the lights of Disney World at night as they sailed between
comets and planets together.

Dean was sorry when he felt them slow and descend as the ride came to a close. They sat there in their little spaceship for an extra minute together before they got up and left the ride.

Cas walked next to Dean towards the front of the park. It was the direction that everyone was heading to settle in for the parade and fireworks. As they neared the gate, he looked over at Dean and said, “Let’s just skip the fireworks and head back to the hotel.”

“No Cas, I’m fine. We can stay.”

“I’m tired too Dean,” he lied as well as he could, “let’s just call it a night.”

Cas wasn’t fooling Dean, but he appreciated the gesture. “Thanks, Cas,” he said as they headed out and stepped onto the monorail platform together.

The Grand Floridian had lovely and spacious rooms. The décor was classy and their bathroom nicer than expected. As they entered the room, Cas moved to shut the balcony doors that he didn’t realize they’d left open before. As he turned back towards the bed he watched Dean sink down onto it – absolutely exhausted.

He moved to the bathroom to get ready for bed. While he brushed his teeth, he decided that tomorrow he’d bring Dean back to the room for a siesta in the afternoon. To be out in the park all day from morning til night was simply too much for his man right now.

When Cas exited the bathroom, he glanced at the bed and saw Dean… dead to the world. He smiled softly as he took off his man’s shoes and socks. He carefully removed the belt too and then pulled the covers up over him.

Cas grabbed his latest Stephen King book (Duma Key) from his duffel and settled into bed next to Dean, reading by lamplight until he was drowsy enough to go to sleep. Despite his dark reading, his dreams that night were lighthearted and full of flashes of color and sound from his day at Disney with Dean. It had been incredible.

Jess and Sam picked up Mary at her room the next morning and took her over to the Crystal Palace for breakfast. The building itself was stunning and their food delicious. As they tucked in fresh fruit, pancakes and eggs with all the trimmings… Winnie the Pooh, Eeyore and Tigger moved about the dining room stopping at each table to hug the children and mug for photos.

Jess clicked tons of pictures as Sam goofed around with Tigger, then took a beautiful shot of Mary with Pooh and then tossed her phone to Sam while she climbed into the snuggliest hug she’d ever received, cuddling into Eeyore with a wide grin for the camera.
After breakfast, they headed out into the park, letting Mary choose what to do. At Sam's urging, they decided to head over to MGM studios that afternoon so they'd have time to do a few rides before the Fantasia light show.

When they stepped into the monorail they ran into Cas and Dean. “It’s a small world after all!” joked Cas. He explained they’d just come from the hotel and were headed over to ride the Aerosmith Rockin’ Roller Coaster. The four of them decided to do that together.

“It goes over 70 miles per hour!” Cas marveled as he read over his pamphlets. Dean grinned at his enthusiasm and nodded to his mom, who seemed to enjoying Cas’ antics as much as he did.

The roller coaster was something new since Dean’s childhood trip here, and he found it to be quite exciting. The entire thing was indoors and it hurdled them through pitch black which was periodically broken by huge neon signs and plastic palm trees. The coaster spun and corkscrewed them to dizziness.

“Best damn roller coaster I ever rode!” Dean declared when they exited. They stopped to look at the pictures on the way out and purchased the one taken of their car because the look on Sam’s face was priceless.

After that, they rode the Tower of Terror together. Another incredibly exciting ride. Afterwards Sam, Jess and Mary begged off to go get seats for Fantasia since it was right next door. Dean and Cas could care less. They knew they could squeeze in at least one more ride… maybe two. So they said goodbye and headed over to the other side of the park.

“Star Wars is top priority, Cas,” said Dean as they walked briskly, “Indiana Jones if there’s time, agreed?”

“Yes, Dean!” Cas concurred as they hurried along, sporting ear-to-ear grins. Dean and Cas were some of the few people heading this way. The crowd was starting to move against them and towards seating for Fantasia, so they knew the lines ahead would be shorter at least.

They gaped as they walked under one of the giant ‘Walkers’ from the Star Wars films. Then they grinned as they stepped up in line to go on the ride. They didn’t make it to Indiana Jones. But Star Wars was worth it.

When the rides were all shut down, they meandered slowly toward the gate, uninterested in getting a distant look at the light show. Instead, they were rewarded with not having to deal with the crowds as they exited the park and headed back to the hotel.

Dean had fared far better today since they’d taken a nap. So tonight when they tucked in, they slid towards the center of the bed together, melting into one another like cream into coffee. Fluid and smooth. When Deans stomach touched to him, he noticed that there was no tickle. The last of the tape tabs must’ve washed away in the shower that morning. There was nothing but skin between the boys as they began moving softly together.

Their mouths stayed close as their bodies rolled – gently at first and then gradually with more and more enthusiasm. They teased each other’s tongues and panted soft breath, moaning as their dicks slid together and lit up the lower half of their bodies. It was warm where their groins met, and the curl of delicious want pulled their hips towards each other again and again, their hardness trapped between them and overheating.

When they came, Cas pulsed a mess between their bellies and for once it felt normal to Dean because there was slick, soft jizz where it should be. He shivered with delight as the tip of his cock
slid through it.

Eventually, their grinding slowed to a stop. But Dean didn’t move to clean up. He didn’t want to. They traded lazy kisses as they fell asleep, still wrapped up in each other.

Jess popped up, ramrod straight in the bed. “I’m getting married today!” she squealed.

“Me too,” said Sam with an eye roll.

“Oh yeah… sorry…,” she grinned sheepishly at him, “WE’RE getting married today!”

“Ok, my lady. Love of my life – tell me how this is going to go. I need to know how it’s all gonna play out.”

“Well,” she told him as she scooted out of bed, “We can play until 3. Whatever we want to do. Then at three we head over to Epcot to check in. We have an area there to get showered and you are going to get a massage while I get my hair and nails done. Then we take some pictures and by six the guests should be arriving. The actual ceremony is at 6:30 and then after it, we have a few more pictures to take. Then we have the dinner and dancing. Then, our carriage will be here to take us to the castle!” She caught herself squealing again as she narrated and took a deep breath, trying to calm down. “I get to be Cinderella tonight!” she rejoiced – abandoning all pretense of adulthood and skipping around the room.

Sam smiled and caught her up in his arms. He carried her back to the bed bridal style and said, “I think we need to do something with all this pent up energy you have.”

“Oh my prince charming,” she grinned, “you want me to suck your dick, don’t you.”

“Wouldn’t hurt!”

Dean and Cas went out that morning to Animal Kingdom. It was the one place they hadn’t seen at all yet. As they headed to the park, they agreed that if they had any extra time, they’d go back over to Epcot and try to get on the test track. Dean was itching to be in a racecar.

Cas wanted to be sure Dean was well rested for the ceremony tonight, so he planned to head back to the hotel around 1:30 or 2:00 for a nap between activities. They enjoyed the Animal Kingdom, starting with the tree of life and watching a 3D movie. It was funny and during the show, there were actually physical things that happened to them. When it was windy onscreen – fans blew a
cool breeze over the audience. When splashes happened onscreen – water sprayed them. And when a bee stung someone onscreen – a little plastic toggle shot out of their seats and poked them gently in their rear ends. It would’ve sounded cheesy if someone had explained it them. But the experience of it was actually quite unique.

They skipped the safari and dinosaur land – uninterested - and left the park soon enough to get over to the test track at Epcot... and it was worth it just to see Dean's face light up when he settled into the race car.

Back at the hotel, Cas couldn’t nap, but he crawled in bed with Dean anyway. When Dean began to snore, he scooted up onto a pillow and opened his book. At 4:30 Cas woke Dean with a gentle hand on his shoulder. “Let’s go watch your brother marry Jess.”

Forty minutes later as they were getting ready to walk out the door Cas says to Dean, “Hey best man. Have you got the ring?”

Cas watched Dean’s face crumble as he patted his pockets and found them empty.

“Here,” said Cass as he tossed Dean the ring box.

“Dude, do you smell that?” Dean asked him with laugh as he caught the ring, “I’m pretty sure I shit my pants just then.”

When the boys arrived at Epcot they headed around the lake, passing through other countries on their way to Italy. When they got there, they headed towards the pier. The entrance to it was closed off, and a security guard (with a badge shaped like a mouse) was posted there. He swiped their room keys, which identified them as invited guests. He then pulled back a velvet rope and wished them a lovely evening. As they moved down the pier, which had a huge pavilion at the end of it, they passed a row of gondolas, which was a really nice touch.

When they entered the pavilion, the backdrop of the water was beautiful and their decorations were lovely too. Jess had chosen red and black. There was a red carpet laid out down the aisle between a few rows of white chairs.

Jess and Sam were having their picture taken in a variety of poses. Her dress was lovely. Not over done but still elegant. The only color was a red sash around her waist, which looped into a graceful bow behind her back. Her hair was done up in large curls and partially pulled up. Crowning her head was a set of black mouse ears topped with a red bow like Minnie Mouse wears. Sam looked debonair in his black tux – also sporting red accents – and his mouse ear top hat. It was fucking adorable.

Mary was talking to Nat, and Dean had to chuckle. Nat’s bridesmaid dress was red, and she was wearing mouse ears too. Dean looked at Cas, “You don’t suppose…” Dean trailed off as Jess’ other bridesmaid Brie popped up also wearing ears and holding out a set for Dean to wear.

“Yes,” grinned Cas, “I suppose.”

Dean put the headband on and gave a lame smile to Brie who rolled her eyes at him and moved on.
“How come you don’t have to wear ears?” demanded Dean to Cas.

“I’m not standing up for anyone,” he said slyly. “In fact, I’m going to go sit down with Mary while you guys get your picture taken.” Cas moved away from Dean and over towards Mary. The two greeted everyone who came in and answered questions while the wedding party got pictures from every angle. Eventually Jess’ Dad and Sam's Mom were also brought into the photos.

The sun was sinking low when the photographer took her exit, and that’s when the music started. Lights came on overhead and the effect was quite magical. The wedding party headed towards the back as the guests began filling up the few rows of seats.

Soon, Sam was queued to move to the front and the wedding march was played. Shocker. The officiant wore mouse ears.

The groomsman and bridesmaids made their trip up the aisle, and then Jess’ father walked her to Sam. The service was short and sweet, and when they were pronounced husband and wife, they exchanged a very sweet kiss. The applause rang out and then the audience all laughed as a real live Mickey and Minnie Mouse skipped down the aisle holding hands and hugged the happy couple.

Flash bulbs went off again as pictures were taken of the bride and groom side by side with Mickey and Minnie. The wedding party got in a picture with them too… and the characters didn’t leave until they had hugged every guest.

Everyone’s attention had been on the characters and no one had even noticed the staff coming in to move the rows of chairs and set up round tables for the reception. Each was covered in a white tablecloth and red rose centerpiece with black accents. It was absolutely lovely.

The dinner was delicious and the cake was small but unique… topped with a small white version of the Enchanted Castle that dominated the property. As they ate and drank, the speeches were given by the best man and maid of honor. The couple stood afterwards to thank everyone for being here to celebrate with them. Then, the band began playing as the staff refreshed drinks and collected empty plates.

The newlyweds moved out onto the dancefloor to oh’s and ah’s. Dean watched his brother twirl his own Disney princess around the floor and smiled.

“They look lovely don’t they?” asked Cas as he slid up next to Dean.

“Sam could’ve cut his hair,” pursed Dean, “I’m tellin ya. Give me five minutes and some clippers,” he chuckled.

“You look stunning in your suit,” said Cas warmly. Dean smiled in response and opened his mouth to speak…

But just then, Mary slid up to them and asked how they thought it went.

“Oh, Mom, you know it was perfect!” smiled Dean, “You have such a sense for these things. It’s exactly what they needed.”

Dean though this mother looked radiant. But he couldn’t help wondering how empty this was for her without his father there to loop his arm around her and swing her out onto the dance floor. Or stand with her and bid the guests farewell… or any of the other things that his father would’ve done had he been here.

Wanting to do something for her, he pulled her out on the dancefloor. Applause followed them
briefly, and he did his best to make her proud as he turned her around the floor.

When that song was over, Cas pulled her into the next one. Dean had a drink and was soon dancing with Nat and then Brie. Begging off to get another drink, Dean found himself seated again. He sipped his champagne and watched the couples moving around the dance floor. Cas was presently out there with Nat.

“What’s up?” said Sam as he slid up next to Dean.

“Watchin’ your woman dance with Matt. He grabbed her ass, ya know,” Dean teased, trying to get a rise out of his brother.

“Cas is dancing with Nat. Again.”

Dean nodded.

“Don’t you think you should take your turn pushing him around the floor?”

“Not much for the dancin’ Sam.”

“Liar. You used to dance with girls all the time. You’ve danced with girls tonight. You think Cas doesn’t notice that you won’t dance with him?”

“Cas is fine.”

“Dean. This isn’t Honduras. You’re surrounded by friends and family… in ‘The Happiest Place On Earth.’ You can dance with Cas here.”

“Sam, why do you care?”

“I don’t know. But if Cas was my man, I’d dance with him.”

Dean chuckled. “That’s funny, Sam.” Then he looked his brother in the eye. “What would you know about it, huh? Better stick with advising the straight guys.”

“Oh Dean,” he laughed, “I have more experience than you think.”

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

“It means exactly what you think it means. Now,” he said as he laid his hand on Dean's shoulder, “I swear to god if you don’t go ask your man to dance… I will. And I’ll grab his ass Dean, I’ll do it!”

He finished with a laugh.

“Dude,” Dean looked directly at Sam, “Are you tellin me…”

“Yep.”

“Fuck, Sam. When? Who?” Dean sputtered, completely stunned.

“Um… it was while we weren’t speaking. His name is Max. We still talk.”

“Does Jess know?”

“Yeah dude. I took your advice. She knows the worst of everything.”

“What did she say?”
“About Max?”

“Yeah.”

“She said it was hot.”

“Hot damn - what a woman!”

“Don’t I know it,” Sam smiled at his brother.


“Curious, I guess.”

“And?”

“Gross Dean. So not gonna talk about it with you.”

“Pitcher or Catcher?” he pushed.

“Dean… catcher, ok? Jesus. You know enough now. Go dance.”

Dean nodded to Sam and moved out onto the floor. Cas was dancing with Mary now, and Dean cut in. “Mom,” he smiled, “I think Sam wants a dance.”

“Of course, sweetie,” she said as she turned Cas over to Dean.

He leaned in to put his arm around Cas’ waist and looked his man in the eye cautiously. “Who leads?”

“You can lead, Dean,” said Cas softly as he moved into Dean's embrace with a shy smile. This was the first time the two had ever really danced together. Dean didn’t look around to see if anyone was talking about them. He kept his eyes locked on Cas the entire time, and it was easier than he’d thought. He was glad that Sam had given him a push. Clearly, Cas had wanted this more than he’d let on. He just hadn’t wanted to make Dean feel uncomfortable. Relaxing into it now, Dean let out a sigh and pulled his man closer. He pressed in and kissed his cheek, smiling into Cas’ skin.

Soon the band was announcing it was last song. Dean and Cas stayed out there for it, until Jess stepped up to separate them. “I’m the only one who didn’t get a turn,” she grinned at Cas. Dean moved to sit back down by Sam who was sitting with his mom. The three of them watched the last of the dancing together.

Suddenly Mary sat forward and said, “Oh my… would you look at that!”

The boys followed her gaze back toward shore. At the end of the pier, a team of white horses had pulled up. They were hitched to Cinderella’s pumpkin coach. It was white and glass and lit up from the inside. The spectacle of it arriving was noticed by guests of the park as well as guests of the wedding. There was even a footman in full uniform riding on the rear. People were pointing and taking pictures of it.

“Is that for you and Jess?” Dean asked Sam incredulously.

“Yes!” squeaked Mary, “to take them to the castle!” Her smile was infectious.

Sam thought she looked every bit as excited as Jess had that morning when she’d been bouncing around their room.
“Holy shit!” cackled Dean, “You’re riding away in that?”

“Yep.” replied Sam, “Why is that funny?”

“’Cause!” Dean laughed, “for one night only… I’m not the gayest brother!”

Watching his brother help his real-life princess into a carriage and ride away with her was surreal. Dean and Cas sat together watching the fireworks with the rest of the guests in the pavilion. Shortly after, the guests dispersed back to the hotel.

Dean and Cas stayed up a bit longer, watching the lake from the balcony of their room as the moon tracked across the sky. They sipped beers from the mini bar and talked about the trips they’d been on lately and what they wanted to do when they finally got home.

“Pretty sure we’ll have some nasty shit to throw away in the fridge,” joked Dean. “When we left we were plannin’ to be gone for two damn days. We’ve been gone for well over a month.”

“We won’t need to throw it all away,” chuckled Cas, “we can just open the door to the fridge and it will crawl away on its own.”

Dean huffed a laugh and added, “I’m pretty sure we’re gonna find a line of ants moving through the kitchen too… there were bananas on the counter when we left and I’m sure they’ve rotted black by now.”

“If we had thought of it sooner… we could’ve had the cleaning crew go in there for us. But now – now I’m too ashamed of it to ask them”

“What’s the first thing you’re doin’ when you get back?” Dean asked.

“Hmm… I don’t know. Sounds like I’ll be cleaning,” he joked, “But I think I’m looking forward to waking up there I guess… In our bed. It’s too quiet waking here.”

Dean nodded understanding. It was impossible to sleep through the sunrise in their treehouse unless they’d been up all night or drunk and hungover. The dawn brought with it a chorus of birdsong that swelled to a crescendo of epic proportions.

The tree animals usually started moving around then too; so there was usually some scampering on the roof or even down the outside of the walls. It was nothing compared to the roar of the monkey huts they’d stayed in… but still it was almost impossible to sleep through.

It was easy to greet the morning when the animals heralded its arrival with such vigor. Their energy was infectious and it made you WANT to get out of bed, whereas an alarm made you feel
like you HAVE to get out of bed. Dean hadn’t realized how much he’d missed it until Cas mentioned it.

“I’m looking forward to getting back to work,” added Dean. “I know I’ll have to take it slow, but I’m excited to get back to it.”

“Me too,” Cas agreed. “I’m going to sell my condo and buy us the plane with that money. Hopefully there will be enough to do that and at least partially fund building you the hangar you wanted.”

“Really Cas?” Dean perked up.

“Oh yes. I haven’t even looked at planes yet so I have no idea what we’ll need to spend. But that’s my plan. I’m selling my car too. Even when we’re here I barely use it. If I need a car I can always use Baby, right?”

“Of course,” reassured Dean.

“It’s a few years older now, but it’s been well cared for. I should be able to get at least fifty-grand for it. That can go towards the hangar too, if you’d like… whatever you think.”

“Oh Cas, this couldn’t have come at a better time.”

“I know. I’m so glad.”

“We would’ve already been late on payments if we’d started this project with only what we were able to finance. We’ve put so many of our own millions into this… between our savings from my condo proceeds and my dividend checks that we’ve funneled into this business over the last couple years… and we’d have still been screwed if it wasn’t for your money too. The hundred-grand or so that we’re spending on my surgeries would’ve shortened our time to make a profit by almost another year I think.”

“Likely,” Cas agreed. “You know… that would’ve only left us twelve more months to be making enough on the resort to fully support it and ourselves.” He paused but then went on. “You know, that’s a long time to most folks… lots of people start business hoping for profitability within the first year.”

“Yeah…” added Dean, “and that’s why most fail in the first year too. It’s an unrealistic expectation.”

“Well, hopefully this influx of cash will be enough to get us the rest of the way to profitability,” said Cas quietly. “The first thing I’m doing is replacing what we’ve taken from our account and getting us back the timeframe we originally planned on. That was comfortable for you, right?”

“Yeah, Cas. But it wouldn’t hurt for you to do some your magic number crunching and make sure that our present financial growth is on track to meet that goal. Can you do that?”

“Absolutely.”

Dean looked over at Cas’ profile in the moonlight. “I can’t wait to get you back home. As soon as our work is caught up… we’re goin out to have naked time again.” He said with a dazzling and devilish smile.

“Bet your sweet ass we are, Winchester.”
The following morning was the farewell breakfast. They all got to hug the characters who came through while they were eating at Cinderella’s Royal Table, which was the restaurant in the lower level of the castle that Sam and Jess had begun their honeymoon in the night before. No fluffy characters today… it was all princesses. Ariel, Bell, Snow White, Cinderella. Dean and Cas watched with wide grins as Jess pressed Sam into getting their pictures taken with all of them.

After the breakfast, the entire group boarded the bus back to the airport. Sam and Jess waved goodbye as they headed to a different plane, which was bound for Hawaii. They’d be gone another week enjoying their honeymoon. The rest of the group was flying back to San Francisco.

The return flight was quiet, as most everyone slept through it. When Dean, Cas and Mary pushed through the front door at home… all three were exhausted. Dean and Cas headed straight up to bed. Tomorrow afternoon they had their follow up with Dr. Carlton. If all went well – they’d be home in a few short days.

“I feel like I could sleep for a week,” sighed Dean as he tossed his bag onto the floor of his room.

“Me too,” answered Cas. This time it was the truth.

“You boys push your dirty laundry out into the hall, ok?” hollered Mary from the base of the stairs.

“Gonna miss this nice wash-n-fold service,” Dean chuckled as he threw their dirty stuff in a basket and shoved it out into the hall.

They shucked off clothes and crawled into bed while it was still daylight outside, exhausted. Dean locked eyes on Cas across the pillow. His tan had faded now, but his skin was looking warm in the late afternoon sunshine that filtered through the blinds on the window above them. Deep blue eyes met his intuitively, and they each moved a little closer without a word between them.

Dean felt Cas reach for him beneath the covers, and he let out a sigh as long expert fingers slid down inside his boxers. Smiles played at their lips as Dean reached forward too, sliding his index finger down Cas’ bare chest achingly slow.

Cas pressed his package up into Dean's palm as it reached his boxers, and his breath hitched when his cock leapt to life under his man's commanding touch.

“Can you reach the music Cas?” Dean whispered. “I don’t want Mom to hear us.”
“Dean, wake up.”

“Huh? Wh… what?” sputtered Dean as he blinked awake.

“Everything’s fine,” reassured Cas, laying a hand on Dean’s knee, “We’re just getting ready to land and since this is the first time we’ve ever actually landed on our own runway, I thought you might want to be awake for it,” he said, smiling.

“Yeah, man, thanks,” said Dean as he took in his surroundings. They’d chartered a plane back to the resort and Dean had slumped back in his seat, exhausted, shortly after take-off.

Mary had made a farewell dinner for them last night, inviting Anna and Michael to join. When the meal was finished, games and drinks had followed. As the hour grew late, Mary and Anna had both gotten a little tipsy and made a game of ganging up on Dean relentlessly. Their antics had been so funny that he couldn’t even hold it against them. Anna’s presence over the years had been good for Mary and it was obvious that Anna adored her.

Unfortunately, by the time they’d wound it down for bed, they only had a few short hours to sleep. Waking while it was still dark outside to head to the airport had made both men a little bit cranky. Mary had crawled out of bed early too… pressing warm cinnamon rolls and strong coffee into their hands as they prepared to leave.

She then hugged her boys warmly at the front door and wished them a safe flight before letting them jog out into an icy, gusting rain. They’d tossed their bags into the airport shuttle van and waved good-bye to her. It was hard not to get choked up as they left. But both were anxious to get home. It was time.
Sleeping on the plane had left Dean's mouth dry and his neck was stiff. He rolled his neck and shoulders as he watched Cas sit down in the seat across from him and worked to stifle a yawn as he looked out the window. They were descending now, preparing to land. He buckled his seat belt and smiled at Cas to show that he was fine now.

As they sank lower for the approach, Dean eyed the difference in shades of blue between the ocean and the lagoon. His eyes wandered the sliver of land that separated the two bodies of water and found the channel that marked the edge of their property to the north. As his eyes wandered south over thick green vegetation, he spied the dirt runway at the south end of their property which they were preparing to land on.

Dean’s smile got wider as the pilot lined up with the runway and prepared to land. It was impossible not to get excited while thinking that someday he’d be making this approach himself - as a pilot. The thought was thrilling.

The landing wasn’t as rough as he’d expected it to be and as the plane slowed and began to turn, Dean saw a company jeep waiting. Roberto and Sunni were waiting to collect them.

“You want to stop at the office Cas? Or are we going straight home?”

“Just a quick stop at the office if you don’t mind. I’d like to grab some things.”

“Sure Cas.”

As they moved forward to exit, they invited the pilot to come in and have a meal before heading back out, but he declined.

Dean stepped off the plane and walked towards the jeep. Roberto pulled him into a warm embrace and then turned him loose to hug Cas next. The affection was unexpected, but it shouldn’t have been.

“It’s good to be home.” Dean smiled to the couple as they flopped their bags in the back and climbed into the jeep.

“Adonde?” inquired Roberto, asking where they wanted to go.

“Oficina,” answered Dean.

The boys hadn’t ever been driven around their own resort like this. It was weird. As their jeep turned out onto the main road, Dean smiled. It looked even better now than it had when they’d left.

The small mountain of dirt that had been engineered to be the base of their windmill and water tower had been covered in fledgling banana plants when they’d left. But in the seven weeks they’d been gone – the baby plants had flourished. Now they were the size of small trees with wide, broad leaves crowding each other out. No more dirt was visible… green covered everything.

After the cool, dreary fog and rains of a San Francisco winter… this place looked like the Garden of Eden. The pool loomed up on their left, cut into the jungle and looking like paradise. Women lounged poolside, kids played under the artificial waterfall and the swim up bar looked packed. Dean smiled over at Cas as their jeep left the pool area behind and slowed to pull into the parking lot for the main office building.

As they parked and headed inside, Dean walked next to Roberto and asked if the man had any trouble with the yacht while they were gone, “Tuviste anvt problemas con el yate?”
“Me daba miedo al principio, pero estoy bien ahora,” Chuckled Roberto, indicating he’d been scared at first but was fine now.

“Yo tambien!” laughed Dean, remembering how petrified he’d been the first few times he took the yacht out without George.

As Dean and Cas moved through the lobby and down the hall towards the owners’ offices, executives stepped out of their office doors to greet them and welcome them back. They shook hands graciously with their well-wishers and thanked everyone as they passed by.

When they arrived at the end of the hall where Dean’s and Cas’ offices were located, the boys both stopped, stunned into silence.

“What is all that?” Asked Cas as his eyes roved over the stacks of colorful items piled onto a fold out table in the hall.

“Gifts.” Said Sunni quietly – speaking for the first time since she’d greeted them on the runway. “The employees… many wanted to leave you gifts for Christmas and some also brought gifts when they heard an illness had descended. We weren’t sure what you’d like to have done with them, so we’ve made a place for them here. Most of these items were hand made for you,” she said with a rare smile.

Dean looked at Cas and saw his man utterly blown away by the gesture. The table was stacked with colorful rugs and blankets, baskets and bowls and various knick-knacks. The wide variety of items looked like a table in a souvenir shop. Dean’s eye caught sight of a few soccer balls and American footballs mixed in. It was quite moving. They spent a few minutes looking over everything; Sunni and Roberto explaining the cultural significance of the more obscure items.

The inboxes that perched outside each door were full. Mail, memos and notes were overflowing. Each man took a moment to empty his and then they each pushed into their own offices. Cas gestured for Sunni to sit as he thumbed through his armload of paperwork and sorted it neatly onto his desk.

*I’ll deal with all that tomorrow,* he thought.

Cas picked up his laptop and his notepad and headed for Dean's office. Sunni followed, shutting off the light and closing the door behind them.

The four spent about an hour having an impromptu meeting in Dean's office. The couple asked if there was anything they could do to help while Dean finished his recovery. Dean told them he’d get in touch if there was anything he needed and let Roberto know that he’d only be working partial days for now and that he wasn’t able to do any heavy lifting for another month or so.

Cas leaned in and conferred quietly with Sunni, asking her to send someone from the restaurant over to their treehouse each day to bring lunch to Dean until further notice. She agreed and asked how they were doing. Cas gave her a reassuring smile and nodded that all was going to be fine.

Just as Sunni sat back, relieved, Roberto cursed in Spanish. Both Cas and Sunni swiveled heads toward the sound and saw Dean with his shirt pulled up to his chin – showing off his giant and still gnarly looking scar to Roberto.

Sunni averted her eyes to the floor. Cas barked at Dean to put his shirt down and when Sunni looked up again, he shot her an apologetic look.

“We’d better get moving,” Cas hinted to Dean, “I have some cleaning to do when we get home.”
“Oh yeah… I almost forgot,” laughed Dean. “There’s a mold monster waiting to be released from the fridge.”

When they were dropped off at the treehouse, Roberto reassured both of them that they should take all the time they needed and that he and Sunni would continue to do all they could to make it easier on them.

The four exchanged another round of hugs, the boys thanking the couple for all their hard work and dedication. Roberto reminding them to take it easy and call if they needed anything, Sunni nodding along.

Once they were alone, they climbed up the ladder. Dean paused for a moment to look out over their railing and watch the waves roll up onto the beach. Guests milled around on the sand and in the shallows. Dean took a deep breath and smiled. “It’s good to be home, Cas,” he said as he turned and saw his man holding the door open for him.

“Yes Dean. I’ve missed this place,” he agreed warmly.

The mess wasn’t nearly as bad as they’d been anticipating. The bananas on the counter had indeed rotted, black and mushy with a puddle of clear fluid spreading out around them. But the fridge didn’t look too bad. Cas took a few minutes to clean up the bananas and dump out the soured milk while Dean moved to the bedroom.

As Cas was wiping down the counter, he heard steel drums and smooth voices swell from the bedroom. Dean was playing a record. Bob Marley singing Dreamland.

Cas moved fluidly through the tree house and leaned in the bedroom doorway, watching Dean light a joint and ease himself down on the bed. Cas smiled, fighting the urge to sing along…

_We’ll get our breakfast from the tree-

_We’ll get our honey from the bees.

_We’ll take a ride on the waterfall –

_And the glories, we’ll have them all.

_And we’ll live together on that dreamland.

_And we’ll have so much fun._

Dean looked up at Cas and patted the bed with his palm, indicating Cas should come join him. Cas settled in next to his man, and they passed the joint back and forth between them. The music played on, lulling them into an easy sleep.

When Cas woke a bit later, Dean was snoring loudly and the record was over. Birdsong from the trees around them was the only noise. It wasn’t dark yet but the fading light was a warning that the day was slipping to its close.

Cas slid off the bed and dug into his bag for his book, then he settled back in against Dean’s solid body to curl up and read. When Dean woke, they decided to go up to Tree Tops for dinner.

It was busy, and they had to wait for a table. They settled in at the bar with beers to pass the time.
Cas smiled to himself as his eyes wandered over the restaurant. There were couples tucked into the nooks and crannies around tree trunks where they were partially obscured from view. The large tables out in the open were mostly dominated by families.

The sounds of the jungle at night were magical, not scary, because of the warm glow from lanterns and fairy lights that hung from the great bows of trees above them. The canopy of leaves over the open air restaurant glowed in a soft green. Looking up into the trees from here was magical. Knowing you were high up in the trees made it a novelty.

This was exactly how Cas had pictured it when he’d sketched it out crudely on a piece of notebook paper for Miguel. There had been no blueprint for this. Miguel and his men had come up here… a few days at a time… whenever there was time to fill. Just by knowing Cas and Dean; being familiar with what they were trying to build here – the man had brought Cas’ vision to its fruition.

As they relaxed on stools, Cas ventured to tell Dean about something that he was hoping to do soon.

“I’ve been thinking…” he began quietly.

“Shit. Nothin good can come from that,” joked Dean lightly.

Cas huffed a laugh and continued, “I’d like to set aside a lump sum of money, somewhere between fifty and a hundred thousand. I want to start a charity with it… for the staff.”

Dean smiled warmly, “Whatcha got in mind?”

“Well, I’ve no idea what to call it. But I’d like the staff to be able to make requests for money if they need something. You know… like if they have a medical crisis in their family or someone’s house burns down… just any random thing. We could set up a committee – or better yet we could have the staff elect one. That committee would review all the requests and determine which requests to honor and how much to give them.”

“That’s a great idea Cas,” encouraged Dean, “I like that we put it in the hands of the people to decide how the money’s used. It will make sure they don’t blame us if they don’t like the decision.” He chuckled darkly, “but it will also demonstrate that we have faith in them to handle their own affairs. That way we’re not over-controlling who gets what.”

“Exactly,” said Cas as he reached over and clinked the neck of his beer bottle to Dean's, “I think that we could keep it going easily enough… we’ll just put the committee in charge of fund-raising. Then we can pledge to annually match whatever funds they raise on their own.”

Dean nodded, eyes wandering over the restaurant.

“I think Sunni will like the concept. Remember how she didn’t want us to give away too much… make them feel like they were taking charity?”

“Mhmm,” agreed Dean, tipping back his bottle.

“The fact that they raise a lot of money for themselves… they do the work… I think that will keep them from feeling bad when they have to ask for money from the fund. And I think it will give them a sense of community here as well.”

Dean met Cas’ eye now. “You’re a good man, Cas. A real good man.”

“So you’re on board then? Is this a yes?”
“Sure Cas. Whatcha need me to do?”

“Nothing. Just tell me how much we should earmark for setting this up. I’ll meet with Dominic about how to set up the actual charity.”

“I’m comfortable with whatever you decide, Cas.”

“Thank you, Dean.”

Sam and Jess were enjoying their honeymoon. Both were working up spectacular tans. Their hotel was one of the best on the beach and they were enjoying being pampered. They made love on cool white sheets, ordered room service and got massages. They also took jeep tours of the island and went hiking along the cliffs. They took a guided tour around a pineapple farm and the volcano that was actively belching out red lava.

They laughed themselves silly as they fumbled through their surf lessons. And, they snorkeled several times – one of Jess’ favorite activities. There was an abundance of sea turtles to see here while snorkeling and Jess adored them. When they stopped for souvenirs she picked up Sea-Turtle-Everything.

Sam couldn’t remember ever having felt quite so content.

Cas didn’t want Dean to feel pressured to hurry up and return to work, so he kept his days at the office short. When Cas got home, they’d usually go for a walk down the beach before dinner. Often they’d bring a ball with them so they could toss around a football in the sand or kick a soccer ball along as they strolled. Dean was starting to get a feel for the soccer ball and was teaching Cas how to throw a decent spiral. The man’s ineptitude for “football americano” was comical at first. But under Dean’s gentle coaching - he was learning.

Most nights they ate their dinner on their balcony watching the waves roll in as the daylight faded; and often they’d climb up to their crow’s nest when dark had settled. They’d start a small fire in their little fire pit up there and enjoy the sounds of the jungle around them and the crackle of the flames as they watched the moon hang over the dark ocean.

Often, they’d smoke a joint up there as they enjoyed the outdoors. They had quite a few left from what Cas had surprised Dean with on their road trip. They’d never been able to have any weed in Honduras… obviously not willing to risk bringing anything on board a commercial flight. But having chartered a plane to come back in? Yeah. That meant Cas had been able to pack their little stash into his bag and carry it home with him.
Cas had been looking at planes and doing research for days when he finally approached Dean about it.

“I think I have a proposition for you Winchester,” smiled Cas as he handed Dean his laptop. “Here is the plane I think we should buy. Why don’t you read up on it a little… do some comparison shopping and let me know if you find something better.”

Dean took the computer and sat down on the couch. Cas had bookmarked the details of a used plane for sale in Texas. It was a Cessna 208B Grand Caravan EX.

“This is bigger than I was picturing,” said Dean cautiously.

“Me too,” agreed Cas.

“Tell me whatcha like about it,” said Dean, tipping his head in an invitation for Cas to join him on the couch.

“Well,” began Cas with thinly veiled excitement, “first of all, you can change out the landing gear for skis… it’s capable of both land and water landings. I like the idea of utilizing the plane to take people to Roatan for snorkeling in small groups. The wait list for the ‘Yacht Party and Snorkeling’ excursion indicates it’s by far our most popular. So I think we should increase the number of trips we offer there. This plane can actually fit 14 passengers, but we’d have to get a waiver on FAR regulations to be able to carry more than 9.” He paused for a deep breath before continuing, “Anyway, it can also be fitted with oversized tires for landing on dirt runways. I think that’s important, because even if we pave ours, that still leaves you landing on dirt runways more often than not. Only two of the airports in this country have paved runways.”

Dean smiled, encouraging Cas to continue, “I also love that it has upgraded windows,” he said, “They’re oversized, which will be nice for sightseeing with the passengers. And, it has an upgraded engine by Pratt Whitney that makes the altitude climb significantly easier. With a full load of passengers, I’m betting you will be glad to have that.”

“Damn Cas,” grinned Dean widely, “My man does his homework!”

Cas leaned in to look at the picture again. “Dean this plane was engineered for rough use… jungles, deserts, whatever. And I like the way it looks. We can order decals so it will have our name on it.”

“How much is this?” Dean asked cautiously.

“Just a hair over 2 million.”

“Fuck. Cas? Really?”

“We can always sell it later if we change our minds about it. Planes don’t depreciate the way cars do. If well cared for, they last a very long time.”

“How much are you asking for your condo?”

“2.3”

“So this plane would eat up all the money from your condo selling?”

“Yes. And the initial quotes to pave the runway and build a hangar of the size we discussed are coming in right about $175,000 total.”
“And you figured in the taxes you’ll have to pay on the condo proceeds, right? Cause that’s a big chunk of cash.”

Cas nodded and Dean continued, “So if we do the whole enchilada… we’re over budget by about 800 grand? Is that right?”

“750” Cas smiled sardonically, “selling my car too.”

“When you have some time, can you dig us up some numbers on what we’ll add in revenue by flying folks here direct instead of having them fly commercial?”

“Sure,” said Cas as he kicked his shoes off. “Don’t forget, Dean, I’ve just shown you the plane that I think is the perfect one. We can always compromise and get something that fits the budget better.”

Dean nodded in agreement, already a little sad at the thought of not getting THIS particular plane.

The day that Cas’ funds were wired in, he transferred over the $600,000 they needed to get their accounts back where they were supposed to be. That left him with just a little over $400,000 which he immediately transferred over to their joint personal account, closing his individual one.

“This is it, Dean.” he said firmly, “Everything we have is consolidated now. I’ve closed all my individual accounts.”

“I still have one account in just my name,” clarified Dean, “It’s the one that my dividend checks get deposited into. It’s empty right now anyway, but I don’t want to change the way that’s set up. We can just add your name to it, if that’s ok?”

“Sure Dean. Whatever works.” He smiled. “I’m all in.”

“All in,” repeated Dean with a smile.

“Did you know,” Sam asked as he leaned in conspiratorially over their cozy dinner table, “That people can die from being hit with falling coconuts?”

He laughed as he watched Jess’ jaw drop. “You’ve got to be kidding!”

“Nope. While you were in the shower there was a story about it on the news… some lifeguard got hit with a four-pound coconut. He’s got a fractured skull.”

“Oh my god that’s hilarious!” she laughed at first – then she willfully forced herself to stop smiling, “I mean… that’s so sad. The poor man.”

Sam grinned at her, “It’s ok. You can laugh. I won’t tell anyone,” he teased her.

“So,” she smiled widely, setting the full force of her blue eyes on him, “What are we doing today?”
“Kayaking.”

“What about tomorrow? Our last day?” she asked him.

“Your choice,” he smiled, “whatever you want.”

“Mmm,” she said as she gave the matter some thought, “Couples massage…” she trailed off letting her imagination take over.

As weeks passed, Dean grew stronger. He began to work progressively longer days and soon they were back into their normal routine. The return of their suntans went a long way toward restoring a “healthy look” to Dean's body, and he was slowly gaining back the weight he’d lost.

The boys had spent a lot of time looking at planes. Cas had entered negotiations for the one they really wanted, but they weren’t rushing anything. The runway had been paved and Miguel was back on-site building them their hangar.

The boys invited him and his crew out for dinner at Tree Tops one night, and it felt great to spend some time with their old contractor. He’d once been a very big part of their lives and though neither man would admit it… they missed him a little.

Over cold beers and good food, they complemented the work he’d done building the restaurant and got caught up with him on his family life. They told him of Dean's cancer scare and Dean got the pleasure of hearing Miguel’s entire group curse in Spanish when he showed them his scar. They also announced that they were soon to be uncles to twins.

It was a nice evening out, and rather than walk back from the restaurant on the rope bridges, Dean and Cas abandoned the treehouse network. They headed down the stairs that spiraled around a tree trunk beneath the restaurant and opting to walk along the rough jungle floor underneath the treehouses instead.

There was privacy here, in the dark shadows under the trees, only the smallest traces of light spilled far enough down to reach them. They could hear footsteps and voices above them, but on the ground they were alone.

As they poked along in the half-light they talked about the dinner and how nice it had been to see Miguel again.

“Want to take a few days away from the office and play lumberjacks with your man?” Dean asked him.

“What do you have in mind?”

“Well, I’d like to work on manicuring the trail to the banyan tree. That way we can start offering it as one of the attractions. I think we can do most of the clearing for the trail with machete and scythe, and then I’d like to set some lights at the base of the tree to make it really pop when people see it at night.”

“That sounds excellent. Let’s see if we can clear our schedules for the week after next. It’ll almost
be like a vacation…”

Dean reached out for Cas as he stumbled over a tree root. They chuckled over it and kept walking; Dean’s fingers slid along the soft underside of Cas’ arm as he pulled away and felt himself smile in the dark.

“That tree is special to me, you know,” said Dean softly, his mind reaching back in time to the day they’d found it. Cas – on his knees in the dirt sucking pleasure from him while the wild animals watched nearby… two naked men moaning with desire between the vines, dirty and sweaty and filled with palpable lust.

“Me too,” agreed Cas. “Seems a shame to open it up to the public. I kind of like it just being our secret.”

“It can stay our secret if you’d like, Cas.” Things were silent for a moment before Cas broke the tension.

“We could hang a swing in that tree,” he replied. “You know… a swing.”

Both men laughed at the innuendo.

“Let’s go ahead and clear the trail,” sighed Cas. “The tree is incredible. Everyone should see it. It will look even better all lit up at night… and if we happen to take a stroll down the trail in the dark now and then… well then that’s enough for me.”

Dean stopped walking and pulled Cas against the trunk of a huge tree. They melted into each other, Cas releasing a sigh into Dean’s mouth as their lips came together.

Electricity shot down his spine when he felt Dean suck his tongue into his mouth and his hands reached forward, locking Dean’s frame to him tightly as their kiss deepened.

The soft hum of insects in the trees became noticeable to Cas as his more animalistic senses awakened beneath Dean’s rough hands.

Cas worked to rebalance himself as Dean kicked his legs apart roughly and moved to stand between them, pressing the hard line of his body against his lover.

Lips trailed along the edge of Cas’ jaw and nibbled at the lobe of his ear. “Want you, Cas,” Dean whispered in his ear.

Cas wrapped his arms around Dean’s middle and cupped Dean’s ass in his hands, squeezing firmly, encouraging the man to rock into him. He let his head fall back against rough bark as Dean’s lips worked over his neck, raising gooseflesh in their wake. “Ugghh” was all he could formulate for words as he felt Dean roll his hips and press his hardening cock against Cas’ own. *Fuck yeah.*

Cas felt the lower half of his body begin to ache with want as Dean humped into him between Cas’ spread legs. He was pressing Cas against the tree with his own weight and little by little, Cas was lifted, feet coming off the ground a few inches… farther and farther with each thrust of Dean’s hips. Cas pulled his legs up then, wrapping them around Dean’s waist. He locked octopus arms around Dean’s neck and threaded fingers into long hair, fisting it to pull Dean’s head back and expose his neck for licking and sucking.

“Yeah man,” said Dean in a husky voice, “put that mouth on me.”

Dean’s words shot straight to Cas’ dick and his body rocked against his man as he thrust. The need
was overwhelming, and Cas bit down on soft skin.

Dean cried out in the dark then, loudly, giving away their presence under foot to the guests above.

Both men froze and waited with bated breath to see what would happen. Everything was very quiet. All footsteps above had stopped and there was a hush over all voices.

In the tense quiet, Dean moved slowly away from Cas who climbed down from straddling Dean and put both feet back on the jungle floor. The moment stretched out – tense.

“Is someone out there?” ventured a voice from above, calling tentatively into the dark jungle.

Dean grinned sheepishly towards Cas in the shadows and then called out his answer to the guest above without stepping into view.

“Yes, custodian,” he replied.

“Are you alright?” came the follow up question from an unseen guest.

“I’m fine. Just tripped and twisted my ankle. Should’ve stayed on the path.”

“Alright. Good evening to you then,” came the response. As if a switch had been flipped the footfalls and idle chatter of guests resumed above them.

Cas stepped forward and placed his hand on Dean's shoulder. As Dean turned his attention to him, Cas used his leverage to spin Dean forward and press his chest against the tree trunk.

“Noisy fucker,” laughed Cas quietly at Dean's back, “almost got us busted.”

“Damn, I miss being noisy with you, Cas,” sighed Dean, “back when this place was wild… and we were the only ones here.”

“Yes,” agreed Cas, “I miss it too.”

Dean turned slowly and rearranged his feet so he could face his man.

“You have anything scheduled for the morning that can’t be put off?”

“No,” answered Cas cautiously, “why?”

“Let’s take the boat out Cas. Now. We can go to the sand bar. Have naked time, fuck loud, see the stars. Call in sick in the morning and relax a little before we come back here.”


Dean grinned as they pushed away from the tree and resumed walking home. They were there only a few minutes, tossing a few things into bags and grabbing keys.

As they drove over to the marina, Dean called Roberto and said he’d not be in tomorrow until after lunch. Roberto said he could switch things around but that the boat would need to be back by 11:00 the next day for a tour that had been booked. Dean expressed his appreciation to Roberto for accommodating the last minute changes and then hung up.

“You need to call anyone?” Dean asked him.

“Nope.”
They parked at the dock, untying as they stepped on board. Dean headed for the captain’s chair and started the engines. The boat came to life, vibrating with power. Cas headed toward the galley, grabbing beers from the fridge before joining Dean up top.

As they glided out of the harbor and into the channel, Dean drank the beer Cas had brought him and watched the water. The slight breeze from being in motion felt nice on his face and he relaxed into it. When they hit open water, he sped up, heading East out to sea.

As they cut through the gentle waves under a partial moon, they boys watched each other as they undressed slowly. Cas’ body was stunning in the pale blue of moonlight and Dean licked his lips as he watched his man unzip. Cas’ shorts slid to the floor, and then his thumbs tucked into the waistband of dark boxer briefs and slid them down taut thighs. He stepped out of the pile of clothes on the floor and kicked them aside.

Dean continued to sip on his beer as Cas stepped up to him and reached out slowly, popping the button on his friend’s shorts and curling those long fingers expertly between flaps of denim to grip Dean's zipper. It came down slowly and Dean could feel the whisper of a touch on his package as it happened.

Cas sank to one knee as he pulled the shorts down, pressing his face in against the soft cotton that still hid Dean's growing cock from view. “Mmm,” he hummed as he took in Dean's scent and the heat that radiated from between his man’s legs.

Dean reached down with a firm hand and gripped Cas under the chin, guiding him to his feet. “Not yet,” he husked, “I’d like to enjoy this for a while first?”

A little disappointed at the prospect of waiting longer for Dean's dick in his mouth, Cas nodded agreement.

“Not that I don’t love seeing you on your knees for me,” Dean teased him, “but we’re not even there yet,” he said with a wink.

Cas leaned into Dean, seeking touch as consolation. A warm arm slid around his waist and pulled him in. “Nice moon tonight,” he commented.

Cas followed Dean's eyes to the sky. There were only a few wisps of clouds floating, and the moon was bright white, crisp and clear in contrast to the dark sky.

It didn’t take long to reach their destination and when the sandbar came into view, Dean slowed them down. The boat bobbed in the water as their wake caught up with them. Dean cut the motors and anchored them while Cas grabbed more beers from the fridge.

They met on the swim platform and settled in, feet dangling in the water, thighs touching and lazy half-smiles as they eyed each other’s chests in the silvery moonlight.

Under a hot sun, these waters were turquoise and clear enough to see down six or seven feet. But under the moon, the water appeared black beneath them. The surface was shiny with reflected moonlight and anything below the surface (like their feet) disappeared from view completely.

Cas swirled his ankles in the temperate water as he nursed his beer and enjoyed listening to the sound of water lapping against the boat and feeling the warm body beside him.

When Dean had finished, he tossed his bottle back onto the lower deck and slid off the platform into the water. Cas watched his lithe back as the man swam out away from the boat a few dozen yards and then turned back.
Cas slid into the water and pushed away from the platform, enjoying the feel of the water caressing his skin. He tipped his head back to get his hair wet and floated like that for a minute or two, eyes watching the dark sky. Soon he felt the water swirl as Dean drifted into his space. He felt a purposeful hand clasp into his and closed his fingers around it, not taking his eyes off the stars overhead.

“It’s so quiet out here,” said Dean as they floated.

“Mhmm.”

“Peaceful.”

“Yes.”

Dean gave a little tug on Cas’ hand and pulled him closer in the water. Cas came upright in the water with that tug and allowed Dean to pull them up chest to chest. As he did, his feet found sandy bottom. He looked around, not having realized how far they’d floated from the boat.

They were only a yards from the sandbar now as Dean's arms encircled him. They stared into each other’s eyes for a long moment… not in a cheesy way. Just looking.

Dean leaned in and kissed Cas on the mouth. First softly, then again, playfully. He pulled them towards the beach and they flopped down on the sand, naked in the moonlight. Stretched out on their stomachs with their arms folded in front of them to cushion their heads, their eyes stayed on each other.

“This is nice,” said Dean softly. “Thanks for coming out with me.”

“Of course.”

“You know, we should start working on this place. I loved mom’s idea of sinking treasure and stuff out here for kids to snorkel. I think we should put a skeleton down there too… like half buried in the sand. It’ll be awesome.”

“Ok, but we don’t own this Dean,” reminded Cas with a laugh, “we got fined for the bridge. Let me at least look up what the penalty is for us dropping shit out into the open ocean before we start, ok?”

“Yes sir,” replied Dean in good humor.

The sand packed under Cas’ body felt strange on his cock and he shifted his weight around to make a little divot for it before settling back in.

“Oh yeah, meant to tell you,” said Dean, “I overheard a couple guests talking on a tour the other day… they had been to our monkey huts.”

“Really?”

“Yeah. They were talking about it as if it the experience had been terrifying… they said they liked our tree houses better.”

“That’s awesome!” grinned Cas, “I can see why some people might be afraid of the rush of monkeys up there… but I love it.”

“Me too.”
It was quiet for a moment and then Dean asked, “Where do you want to go on our next vacation?”

“When is this happening?”

“I don’t know… I’m just daydreaming I guess.”

“Are we still confined to the continental US?”

“No,” said Dean firmly, “definitely not.”

“Well then… Australia,” said Cas. “I want to get certified to dive first though. I can’t believe we haven’t done that yet. But when we go, I want to dive the Great Barrier Reef. And I want to take an outback safari… see kangaroos and wallabys and dingoes!”

“Cas… I’m pretty sure a wallaby and a kangaroo are the same thing.”

“No, Dean. A wallaby is smaller and… cuter.”

“You’ve got a thing for cute animals dontcha?”

“Would you rather I have a thing for the ugly ones?”

Dean chuckled, “You know, a kangaroo will kick the shit out of ya.”

“You’d love that, wouldn’t you, Dean?” laughed Cas. “You’d record the whole thing and send it to all our friends.”

“Only friends?” he challenged, “I’d send it to everyone… post it on Youtube.”

“Where would you want to go next, Dean?”

“I don’t know… Rio maybe? I’d like to hit Carnival before I get too old to really party.”

“Tempting,” smiled Cas, his mind already wandering to the sexy good times they’d have there. “You know the people who live there… they literally party for five days straight. They don’t go home. They pass out somewhere and wake up again and then party some more.”

“You have to admire the commitment,” Dean grinned.

“What about Europe?” Cas asked him, “You said you’d never been there.”

“Um… no offense buddy but that’s just not my thing… it’s pretentious. Snooty.”

“Well, some of it, yes. But Dean there are things you should see there. Things that should be on your bucket list. Things that you would love.”

“Like what Cas? The Sistine Chapel? The Mona Lisa?”

“No Dean, I wouldn’t expect you to enjoy those things. But we should go to Greece. You’d love it there. And Austria…” Cas picked up his head and leaned in to Dean’s space, “Dean… Amsterdam.”

“I’ll be honest, Cas. Europe is still not real high on my list. But I trust you to know what I like and make it fun for me, so I’ll go with you someday. But we HAVE to go to Australia first. Let’s make that our next trip.”
“Great! When do we leave?” Cas enthused, drawing even closer to Dean's tempting smile.

“We probly better put in a few more months of actual work before we try to tell our employees that we deserve a vacation,” he answered as he leaned into Cas’ kiss. “Mmm,” he hummed as their lips touched. Dean ran a sandy hand along Cas’ arm and shoulder and began to get up.

Cas followed his lead and they stepped back into the dark water together, swimming leisurely back toward the yacht. Cas put one arm up on the edge of the swim platform and watched as Dean drew closer to climb out of the water. He came right up to Cas and gave him another kiss before he heaved himself up on the platform.

“Want to sleep under the stars?” Dean asked him as they toweled off on the deck.

“Sure,” he said, “the weather is perfect.”

They moved inside for a few minutes, gathering bottles of water and beer, blankets and pillows. Cas watched Dean slyly pull lube from his bag and grinned. They carried everything up to the sunbathing deck and spread out on the cushions.

Heads on pillows, still naked, they looked up at the stars. Slowly, Cas turned to look at Dean and saw him looking back. He reached, then, putting his hands on Dean's damp skin and enjoying the feel of his man coming to life under his fingers.

Cas leaned in and latched his lips to Dean's nipple, listening as his man's breathing sped up. He sucked the nub with increasing force and pinched the other, rolling it between his fingers.

Dean pulled Cas’ body close, running hands up and down his muscular thighs, grabbing handfuls of meaty ass to squeeze as Cas rolled on top of him and worked his nipples over enthusiastically. Their breaths were coming faster and louder now as their dicks got hard.

“Yeah, Cas, been waiting for this,” he said with a sly grin on his face, “want to be able to scream out your name… put your mouth on me, man.”

Cas was up on his knees now, straddling Dean and still sucking and biting his nipples. Dean put both hands on the top of Cas’ head and pushed him downward forcefully towards his crotch.

“C’mon, man, suck me,” he said. “Suck my dick, Cas.”

Cas grinned wickedly as his man shoved his head down, secretly enjoying the rough treatment. He loved it when Dean got aggressive… it made his dick so achingly hard.

“That’s right,” encouraged Dean when Cas finally took him into his mouth, “That’s right Cas. Suck me off good.” Dean smelled like the sea and Cas was full of lust – having been kept waiting to get off. His dick was hard and leaking already and his hips wouldn’t keep still as he went down on Dean. “You’ve got such a mouth on ya, Cas. Dammit you’re good on my cock.”

Cas worked harder, loving Dean's praise and wanting to earn more. He shoved his mouth down and took Dean all the way back. As hard, heavy dick slid over his tongue and hit the back of his throat - his eyes began to water with the effort. He loved the scratching of Dean's fingernails on his scalp as his head was shoved down lower.

“Wish I’d brought a vibrator to shove in that fine ass while you suck me,” Dean growled. Cas felt himself grow impossibly harder at Dean's dirty talk. He was slurping loudly now and his chin was wet, spit leaking out the corners of his mouth as he bobbed on his man forcefully. Dean shoved his head back down each time Cas came up for air and held him down for long moments with his
strong arm, releasing Cas only when he started to choke or gag.

“That’s right, you can take it,” he said as Cas buckled under his hands, “oh yesss,” Dean hissed at him, “Dammit Cas, you’re so fucking hot on my cock. M’gonna let you fuck me hard tonight,” Dean promised him, “You’re gonna get to fuck me raw Cas, I can take it.”

Cas thrilled at the thought of fucking into Dean's tight hole. Every surface his dick touched got wet… he was leaking shamelessly over Dean's legs… and he was moaning like a whore as he worked his man over. Dean was loudly praising him now – telling him how good he was, how hot. Cas swelled with pride and scenes flashed behind his eyelids as he tried to choose what position he was going to twist Dean into when it was finally time to fuck.

Too soon, Dean was pulling Cas’ head off of his dick with force, not wanting to come before the main event. Dean now had a hand clamped around the base of his cock and was working to calm his breathing. Cas wiped his mouth on the back of his hand and noticed how sweaty they’d both gotten.

Cas pushed Dean's legs farther apart to fit between them and slid lower, threading his arms around the outside of his lover's hips and encouraging Dean's legs to rest over his shoulders. He dropped his head back down to Dean's groin and sucked the tip – just to torture his man more as he continued to hold back an orgasm with this bare hands.

“Fuck, Cas! Stop it man, don’t wanna come yet!”

“Hmm?” Cas hummed innocently with the tip still held tightly between his lips.

“You're killin me man, c’mon,” laughed Dean, dropping his head back onto his pillow, “S’too much.”

Cas finally had mercy and released Dean's throbbing cock. He licked around the base and over Dean's fingers and finally down to the hole he planned to enter. Dean pulled his knees higher, making room for Cas to lick into him deeply.

Cas fumbled around for the lube and handed it to Dean, expecting his man to hold it for him. Then he held out a hand and Dean squeezed a glob into his palm. He selfishly used it to stroke his own cock which had yet to be touched and was still leaking profusely. “Oh yes…,” he said softly, more to himself than to his lover.

He returned his palm to Dean for more lube and then began working Dean open, one finger at a time. He teased with licks and nibbles around the hole as he stretched it – engrossed in what he was doing and paying no attention to anything else.

He watched, fascinated, as he pulled his fingers out and pushed himself upward on his knees. He wrapped his arms around Dean's legs and hips again, Dean's legs once more perching over his shoulders. He made short work of lining up and pushing in, far too eager. When he bottomed out, balls pressing against Dean's ass, he looked at Dean with a question in his eyes.

“Why so quiet, Dean?” he teased his man. “Couldn’t shut you up before…”

“Just watchin you work, man” said Dean with a smirk as he gave Cas the nod to go ahead and start moving.

Cas pulled back and thrust into him forcefully and they both groaned at the feeling. Cas was entranced with the tight heat pressing down on his long-suffering dick, which had been kept waiting too long. Dean was feeling the slide and the little bump to his sweet spot. He adjusted his
hips a little hoping for a bigger bump on the next pump. “Ye-esss,” they both said in unison as Cas sank in again.

Dean rolled his hips as Cas began thrusting into him in earnest. He arched his back off the cushion and met his lover thrust for thrust. He panted Cas’ name as the man lit him up from the inside. “That’s right, Cas, fuck me good,” Dean encouraged as he watched his lover getting lost in the thrusts. His mouth was stitched into a tight line and his brow was furled in concentration. He was glorious.

Between them, Dean's dick was rock hard and ready to blow. Each pump from Cas took him a step closer. His eyes slid shut without his permission as his release crept up on him.

“Yeah, baby, yeah!” he called out into the night as Cas fucked into him harder and faster, “That’s it, right there!” he called out. “Right there!”

Cas heard his lovers cries and locked his body in the position that Dean was praising. He fucked in harder, faster and when his thighs and ass started to burn from it - he pushed harder. He felt his blood rushing in his ears and a high from endorphins coursing through his body as he worked harder for their pleasure. “Yes!” Dean called again. “Yes! Yes! Oh god YES!”

Cas literally flopped down on Dean with exhaustion when they finally came. There was no mess on Dean's belly, Cas was getting used to that now. In fact, he didn't mind at all. It was less clean up. But he knew Dean missed it and for that he was a little sad each time.

But he had filled Dean's red and fucked-out hole. Now as he pulled out he watched, rapt, as his juices spilled out of Dean - running down his crack.

He laid down next to Dean and watched the stars over them as their breath slowly returned to normal. Dean pulled a blanket over them, and they rolled together beneath it. Cas didn’t recall if he’d been loud or not. He didn’t remember if Dean had been loud either. But it had been very nice to not have to pay attention to it, to not have to worry about what people would hear, and just let go. Cas felt very satisfied.

They laid under the blanket and watched the stars as they fell asleep, shoulder to shoulder.

Over the next few months, a lot of changes were made at Jess and Sam's place. They found a house, set a closing date and began packing up her cozy apartment.

“Thank goodness I put these damn cribs together… just so we could try and figure out how to move them,” joked Sam. “Should’ve procrastinated like a normal dad and just moved the boxes,” he snarked to Jess.

She grinned at him, tolerant of his antics. It was easy to be patient when everyone around you was telling you just sit down and let them handle things. She eased herself into a chair, rubbing her hands over her swollen belly, and laughed along with her man as he packed them up.

A few weeks later, they’d had a crushing disappointment when the sellers backed out of the sales contract and decided to stay in the home. Jess was so sad about it that she cried. Sam consoled her the best he could… and immediately stopped packing.
When Jess rebounded she hit the streets again – in search of another possible home in their target area.

Her days were quite enjoyable. She didn’t have to go to work so when she didn’t feel well it easy to stay in bed until it passed. She had plenty of time to look at houses, read books to prep for their impending parenthood and attend her many doctor appointments.

She’d retained her flat stomach longer than she had expected to. But once it started growing – it grew scary fast. Each day she woke up bigger. She kept having to buy new maternity clothes as shirt after shirt became too tight for her.

The appetite for pickles and ice cream and other weird food combinations never plagued her. In fact, she didn’t have much of an appetite at all. Six months in and she still couldn’t stand the smell of meat cooking. It made her gag.

Sam was quite patient with the lack of hot meals, but it was hard to keep a man of his size filled up on cold sandwiches and bowls of cereal.

Her doctor was encouraging her to gain weight… going so far as to encourage her to eat French fries and milkshakes. He seemed to have no idea how disgusting that sounded to her.

She choked down meal replacement shakes for the good of the twins in her belly and hated every moment of it.

Sleep was uncomfortable now too. She slept in the fetal position, one pillow tucked under her belly, one between her knees and one under her arm. “That’s four pillows to make one small woman comfortable!” she fumed at Sam. “Four pillows, goddammit. It takes ten minutes to get comfortable and in ten minutes I’ll have to roll over again! Ugh!”

Sam tried to be supportive and Jess tried to apologize when her crankiness got the better of her. But seriously! How uncomfortable can a person be!

*Three more months of this?* she thought to herself. *Just kill me now!*

Dean’s phone was ringing in his office when he walked in. He answered as he settled into his chair.

“Hello, Dean.”

“Hey Cas, what’s up?”

“I got him down to 1.89 million. How do we feel about that?”

Dean smiled, “I feel like buying it,” he said firmly. “How do you feel?”

“Relieved. I was hoping you’d say that because I bought it an hour ago.”

“That’s my man!” he laughed. “Remember how bummed you were when we bought the yacht?”

“Yes, Dean, but that was only because I didn’t know how to operate it.”
“You don’t see a parallel there?” he teased.

“How many hours do you have left to be certified?”

“Twelve with the instructor and then ten alone. Even then I will only be certified to carry one passenger. I’ll need at least 200 solo hours before I can get certified to fly our guests.”

“Well Dean, at least you’re in the process of learning to fly. I’d never operated a boat in any capacity when we bought the yacht.”

“You were so pouty. You said we may as well have bought a bulldozer.” Dean chuckled at the memory.

“Well, Dean, it is a bit disconcerting to buy something when one doesn’t know how to use it.”

“Did you say that the first time you bought a vibrator, Cas?”

“Don’t talk dirty to me on your work phone,” Cas reprimanded him.

“Don’t boss me around,” Dean tossed back at him. “When do we pick up our plane?”

“He’ll store it for us for up to three months.”

It was March now, so that meant they had until mid-summer to arrange for the plane to get here. “The sooner the better,” said Dean firmly, “the hangar looks sad sitting there empty. See you for dinner?”

“Yes, Dean.”

After they’d hung up, Dean called Sunni and asked her to come to his office.

When she settled into the chair facing his desk, he told her that he needed her help with two things. “Qué necesitas?” she asked him.

“First of all,” he began, pulling her into English, “Cas and I would like to take on a secretary. Can you find us someone that is trustworthy?”

“Of course. I assume they must be bilingual?”

“Yes.” Then he grinned, adding, “and patient... we can’t have this person getting irritated that they speak English better than I speak Spanish.”

She laughed. A rarity. “Are there any other defining characteristics you’d like this person to have?”

“Experience would be nice but it’s not necessary. You know Cas and I well. Just try to find someone suited to our personalities.”

“Alright. I will get in touch with you when I have someone in mind. You can interview them and see what you think.”

“Thank you, Sunni.”

“Certainly.”

“Now, there is something else I need your help with.”
“Yes?” she prompted when he fell silent.

“I want to have a ring made. Can you help me with that?”

She got quiet for a moment then said, “Surely that is something that you could simply order online? Or go to a jewelry store in Tegucigalpa?”

“No. I want it to be something hand-made. Here. Preferably by a local craftsman. Do you know of any locals who make jewelry?”

“Will you give me a day or two? I will try to find someone capable of the kind of quality work you’d appreciate, Mr. Winchester.”

“Sunni. You’ve known me far too long to be calling me Mr. Winchester. The ring is a secret. Can you keep this between us please?”

“Certainly,” she said with a smile.

After she excused herself, Dean called Miguel and said he had a very small job and asked if the man wanted the work.

Miguel said he’d build anything for them large or small.

So Dean explained that he wanted to enclose the alcove outside their offices and create a space for a secretary.

As he spoke his eyes roved over the table full of gifts that had been given to them by their employees while they’d been in America. He and Cas had no idea what to do with all that stuff. They had no space for extras in their tree house. They’d discussed sending the items to their American friends, but it didn’t feel right to “re-gift” things that had been hand-made for them.

As his eyes had roamed the empty walls of his office while speaking with Miguel, inspiration had struck. “Hey Miguel, while you’re here to build a space for the secretary, I’d like to have some shelves put into my office. Nice ones. Can you do that as well?”

Miguel reassured him that he’d do his best, and they made an appointment for him to come to the resort and look at the spaces to give a proper estimate.

Jess and Sam were sitting idle on the couch. They’d found another house and the closing was set for next week. Not wanting to jinx it, they’d decided not to start packing again until they were the official owners.

Jess was as huge. Everywhere she went, she had to negotiate her planet-sized stomach around obstacles. The other day she’d dropped something on the floor of the car. Sam had damn near pissed his pants watching her try to retrieve it until she was red-faced and panting.

“Fuck it!” she’d finally said, flopping back on the seat.

Hearing her swear only added fuel to the fire, and he’d laughed even harder.
“And fuck you too!” she’d barked at him. But watching him try to suppress his laughter finally broke her and she laughed with him.

“Jess, I swear! I thought you were gonna break your water trying to pick that up!” he’d been laughing so hard he hadn’t seen the light turn green and they’d been honked at.

Now, as they lounged on the couch, she asked him to rub her shoulders. He wiggled around and started to give her a massage. Just then, the commercial ended and the news was back on…

“And in local news, millionaire and local businessman Charles Milton the third was sentenced today. This decision was handed down by San Francisco Superior Court Judge Curtis Karnow. Mr. Milton was detained at today's sentencing and will serve a minimum of three years without the possibility of parole for his involvement in executive decisions that contributed to the deaths of three people…”

“Jess, sit forward,” said Sam as he tried in vain to crawl out from under her, “I need to call my brother.”

Dean was in the bathroom, brushing his teeth and getting ready for bed. Cas was on the phone with Anna. They had spoken several times today after the sentencing. Both were heavy hearted. It was a tough blow. On the one hand, the man deserved some punishment, neither would deny it. But both seemed to feel terrible. Three years is a long time for an old man to be in prison. Even a minimum security one… and Cas’ father was in his early sixties now.

Dean had tried to be supportive of Cas. Even when he’d considered flying home to visit his estranged father in prison. Thank God that Anna had been the one to talk him out of that.

He was just leaving the bathroom when his phone lit up. Not wanting to bother Cas, he took his phone and headed out to the front porch.

“Hey Sam.”

“Hey Dean. I just saw the news. How is he?”

“Shitty.”

“Are you with him now?”

“No. He’s on the phone with Anna right now so I’ve stepped outside.”

“Well, in that case, how are you Dean?”

“M’fine.”

“No you’re not.”

“If you knew… why’d ya ask?”

“Point well made,” said Sam, “Anything we can do?”
“Nope. Nothin’ anyone can do. That’s what’s eatin me up. He’s hurting, and there’s just nothin’ I can do.”

“An excellent time for distraction.”

“You’re not gonna give me sex advice are you Sam?”

“Definitely not. Gross, Dean.”

“How’s Jess?”

“Almost as big as Jupiter.” Dean heard an audible smack through the phone, “Ow! Sorry honey. You’re not as big as Jupiter… yet.” He teased lovingly.

“Well,” laughed Dean, “with half your genes… those aren’t regular babies she’s carrying. She’s got moose babies in there…” Dean laughed harder, “No… sasquatch babies. Big hairy ones!”

“She’s due near the end of June. You think you guys will be able to visit then?”

“We wouldn’t miss it, Sam.”

Just then, a weary looking Cas stepped out onto the porch and Dean gave him a nod.

“Hey man, I gotta let you go. Call me when the magic happens, and we’ll be there.”

“Bye Dean.”

“Bye Sam,” Said Dean, watching Cas settle into the chair next to him.

Cas was looking very tired. “Rough day, huh?” Dean prompted.

Cas could only nod. His head rested on the back of his chair and his eyes were shut, body limp. Dean took a deep breath of the night air, smelling the salt from their nearby beach.

“Burn one?” Dean asked him.

“Definitely”

Dean went inside, grabbed one of their last few joints from the band-aid box in the medicine cabinet, snatched a bottle of whiskey from the cabinet in the kitchen on his way through and returned to the porch with Cas.

Cas reached for the bottle like a drowning man reaches for a life preserver.

“You wanna tap out?” Dean asked him.

“Yes.”

“I still have some pain killers left from my surgery that I’ve been hoarding. I’ll get them for ya, but you gotta take it easy on the whiskey, ok?”

“Thank you, Dean.”

The days after Cas’ father was sentenced were a little tense. Cas was frustrated, angry and sad in equal measure. Dean did his best to be supportive without getting in the way, but that was more
Cas’ specialty than Dean’s. He tried for distractions but it didn’t work.

“You know what pisses me off?” he asked Dean one night.

“What?”

“I can’t decide if he should’ve gotten more time or less.”

Dean nodded thoughtfully.

“I just don’t even know how to feel about it… if I could just be okay with the punishment I could probably move on. But I can’t. The punishment doesn’t fit the crime. It’s either way too much or way too little depending on my mood – and I’m not sure which is right.”

“What’s Anna saying?”

“Anna is Anna,” he chuckled darkly.

Dean pulled Cas into a hug and tried to be strong for him.

Eventually, Cas began to come out of his funk. Dean had finished his minimum schooling and flight hours. Now, having taken the test and paid the fees, he was just waiting for his certification to come through. Once it did, they planned to fly commercially to Texas and then Dean would fly the airplane back to Honduras from there.

Miguel was around, working on the offices, when Sunni had brought Krizia to meet him. Dean recognized her immediately. She was the single mother who they’d hired in the first wave of employees. She’d been living in a little shack that leaned on her parents shack and trying to raise her baby with no job and no marketable skills.

When they’d hired her, Cas had been elated. “This is it,” Cas had said to him. “This is the beginning of us really starting to help these people.”

Now, to look at Krizia, it was obvious that they had helped her. She walked with pride, carried herself well, and spoke very smooth English.

Her clothing was tidy and her hair well kept, teeth white. She looked incredible compared to the homely and scared young girl with dirty clothes who’d cowered during her interview.

“Dean,” said Sunni firmly, “This is Krizia…”

“Of course, I remember you, Krizia, how have you been?” he asked her as he reached over his desk to shake her hand.

Sunni smiled at him over Krizia’s shoulder so he knew he must’ve done something right by remembering the girl. Sunni didn’t smile much and it always meant you’d done something VERY well.

“I’ve been well, Mr. Winchester, thank you,” she answered him confidently.

“Call me Dean,” he smiled, “and please have a seat.”

As she settled into her chair, Sunni handed Dean a file folder containing Krizia’s employee records.
Krizia started with the housekeeping staff,” said Sunni with pride, “but she worked hard on her English and transferred to the call center a few months ago. She’s been doing very well there. She’s received several awards for her customer service skills. And,” said Sunni while giving Dean the fish eye, “she’s got a reputation for being very patient.”

“Perfect Sunni, thank you. Would you like to join us?”

“No, thank you. I have to get over to the restaurant,” she said softly, and she closed the door on her way out.

“So, how do you find it working in the call center?”

“It’s very exciting,” she told him, “I love it.”

“How is your son?”

“He’s well, thank you for asking.”

“What kind of jobs do you like the best?”

She sat quietly for a moment, thinking. Then she answered, “The ones that people don’t think I can do. I love to show them that I can.”

“So you like a challenge?”

“Yes.”

“Tell me something you don’t like about the call center,” he challenged her.

“I don’t like the decorations on the walls, and the chairs are uncomfortable.”

Dean laughed out loud at her answer.

“I don’t know if you’d like being a secretary, Krizia. Compared to the call center, this place is quite dull. Mostly what Cas and I need is someone to just make phone calls for us, schedule things, run errands, take care of the filing and the memos. Maybe help plan the employee events and things like that. Does that even sound interesting to you?”

“It sounds like it may be dull from time to time,” she said slowly, “but it would be an honor of the highest level to work for you and… Cas,” she said firmly, deciding on the fly to call the other owner by his first name.

“Well then, let’s give it a try. If you decide to go back to the call center at any point I won’t take it personally. But if you do that, you’ll be stuck helping me replace you. Fair enough?”

“Yes, thank you,” she said, obviously elated.

“Ok. I’m going to call upstairs and let your supervisor know that you won’t be returning to work. I have only one thing for you to do today and when you’ve finished you can leave.”

She nodded to him.

“Here,” he said as he leaned across the desk towards her, “here are the keys to my jeep. The red one parked out front. Take it and drive over to the restaurant up in the trees. You know where that is?” She nodded yes. “Ok, find Sunni there and ask her to give you the ring. She’ll know what you mean. Bring it to me here, ok?”
“Yes, sir,” she said as she rose from her chair.

“Krizia?”

“Sir?” she stopped in the doorway and turned to face him.

“When you see Sunni, please also tell her that Cas and I need a private table at Tree Tops tonight and that I need her to cook the special dinner she’s been planning for us. We’ll get there at 9.”

“Yes, sir,” she said again.

Later that day, Cas fumbled over the mess of cords and debris from Miguel's work and stepped into Dean's office.

“What’s all that?” he asked as his eyes roved over the shelves that Miguel had been working on.

“Built in shelving. M’gonna put the gifts on them.”

Cas looked at the table, laden with the gifts from their employees, and then back to Dean. “Can you ask him to put some in my office too?”

“Sure, Cas.”

“Dean, I came in here to tell you that your other certificate came through. You’re certified to fly now, both here and in the US. If you have a minute, we could look at our schedules and plan when to leave for Texas?”

“Can we do that tomorrow Cas?” he asked, “I’m in the middle of something here.”

“Ok Dean, just call me sometime tomorrow and we’ll set it up.”

Dean nodded and stared at his laptop screen waiting for Cas to leave.

“Are you alright Dean? You seem tense.”

“Do I?” … that seems appropriate… “I’m fine. Just busy. See you later.”

Cas nodded, dismissed, and headed back to his office.

“Hey Cas?” he called as the man neared the door.

“Yes?”

“Do you remember Krizia?”

“Of course,” he smiled warmly thinking of her.

“I just hired her as our new secretary.”

“You’re kidding.”

“Nope. I would’v consulted you first. But I knew you’d approve.”

“Yes. Thank you, Dean,” he said as he left.
Dean refocused on his laptop. He began writing up what he’d say tonight at Tree Tops. Not because he needed a script. But because he wanted to give some thought to the words he’d say and not leave out anything important.

After work, Dean headed home. He had a ring in his pocket and sweet words on his mind. He pulled the dock from its place on their bedside table and wrapped the cord around it, taking it to the jeep with him. He drove down the road and parked at the entrance to the tree house network, heading for the restaurant.

When he got there, they were busy. The small kitchen was lit with activity as Sunni moved quickly from one end of the kitchen to the other, barking harshly at the young man she was training to run the kitchen. Wait staff moved in and out around him as he watched, fighting the urge to chuckle. Sunni was very honest. Brutally so. And this poor young man was clearly not used to a firm hand. He seemed ready to cry.

*Hang in there buddy* – he thought. *She’ll make a man out of ya.*

Dean, not wanting to get in the way, found a home for his dock in a corner. He waited for Sunni to catch a glimpse of him. When she did, she nodded to acknowledge that she’d seen what he’d brought. Satisfied, Dean left.

When he got back home again, Cas’ jeep was there.

Dean came in to find Cas on the bed, relaxing and listening to music. Dean flopped down on the bed with him. They spent the early evening smoked out, laughing and singing along to records. They even talked a little.

When Cas rolled up against Dean and said he was hungry, Dean had to stall. “Shit Cas, I forgot to tell ya, we’re havin dinner tonight with a VIP from the suites. We’re meeting in the restaurant at 9.” Dean smiled his best smile and hoped Cas wouldn’t ask too many questions. He ducked out to the kitchen and grabbed an apple from the fruit bowl. He tossed it to Cas, to quell the man’s appetite and said, “How bout we take a ball and go down to the beach for a while to pass the time?”

“Sounds good Dean, it’s been a while.”

They kicked around a soccer ball for a while, playing the game where they try to get it past each other as they walk down the beach. By the time they came in, it was time to clean up and get ready for dinner. Because of the smooth lie about VIPs, Cas didn’t even ask, he just put on one of his sexy suits and emerged from the bathroom looking like a male model.

Dean put on the suit he thought Cas liked best, and they headed over to dinner. Dean had chosen a later hour because he knew the crowd would’ve dissipated by then, and there wouldn’t likely be any noisy children running around. When they stepped up to be seated, the waitress nodded to Dean and then seated them alone, behind a tree where they’d have privacy. She took their drink order and left.

Clearly she’d told Sunni the boys had arrived because in the time it took their waitress to walk back to the kitchen, music began to play.
Dean had created a playlist comprised of a dozen or so songs that were all meaningful to him and Cas. It was set to run on a loop. No matter which of these was playing when Dean gave Cas the ring, it would be a good memory for Cas. After all, the music in the background was important to your memories. Cas had taught him that.

When their drinks were delivered, the waitress told Dean that their food would be ready soon. Cas looked at Dean with a question in his eyes. “We didn’t order yet. What’s she talking about?”

“Cas, we’re not meeting anyone tonight. I just said that to getcha all dolled up and sitting with me here… like this.”

Cas nodded, clearly interested in what Dean had to say and waiting patiently.

“Cas, I’m not a man for a lot of words. You know I hate the chick-flick moments. But a year or two ago, someone started giving me shit about marriage. A few people have mentioned it since then too. I’ve always dismissed it, and with good reason.”

Cas took a sip of his drink and then rested his chin on his palms, looking adorable.

“I know that the only place for me is by your side. I will be yours always. And if there’s a life after this one, I’ll be by your side for that too.” Cas’ eyes were large, focused on Dean, and wide with emotion.

“What you and I have is far more profound than anything as common as the institution of marriage. I’ve known that for a very long time. I may not have ‘put a ring on it’,” he said with a chuckle, “but I’ve been yours body and soul for so long that I can hardly remember a time when you weren’t mine… or how I was able to survive without you then. ’Cause I surely can’t now,” he said with a nod. Cas hadn’t said a word or looked away from Dean even for a heartbeat.

“I don’t need a marriage certificate from the courthouse, or the words of a minister or a huge reception to bind myself to you. I’m already bound. But I wanted to give you a ring, and ask for your hand… just in case you needed any of those things.”

Cas had a tear tracking down his cheek and Dean felt his own eyes growing cloudy as well. “Cas, give me your hand, man. I’m gonna put a ring on it,” Dean said as he slid to the ground at Cas’ feet.

Cas put his hand in Dean's and squeezed. Dean pulled out the ring and pushed it onto Cas’ finger. “This ring was specially made, here, by a local craftsman. For you. And it’s meant to be a physical reminder that for you… and you only… I am always a man on my knees.”

Cas slid off his chair and onto the floor with Dean, embracing him fiercely. A small corner of Dean's mind reached out to listen, wondering which song was playing as he’d given Cas the ring, because he knew Cas would remember it forever.

The sweet strains of Bread singing “Baby I’m-A Want You” reached his ears. He smiled at the sweet words he was hearing over acoustic guitar…

**Baby I’m-a want you, baby I’m-a need you.**

**You’re the only one I care enough to hurt about.**

**Maybe I’m-a crazy, but I just can’t live without your lovin and affection –**

**Givin me direction-**
Like a guiding light to help me through my darkest hour.

Lately I’m-a prayin that you’ll always be a-stayin beside me.

That was perfect he thought.

When the waitress returned with their food, she found two men seated at the table and wiping wet eyes on the sleeves of their suits. Both were smiling and laughing self-consciously as she put their food in front of them.
The boys shucked their suit jackets and got down to business, eating the delicious steaks Sunni had grilled for them. Dean watched Cas look at his ring a few times while they ate. Once, Cas caught Dean watching him look at his ring. Almost a little embarrassed to be caught looking, he smiled and said, “I love it Dean. Thank you.”

Dean couldn’t help but smile as he watched a blush color Cas’ cheeks. He winked at Cas and continued eating, having never felt more content.

When their plates were cleared, they ordered another drink and their waitress asked them if they were ready for dessert.

Dean smiled and nodded to her. Cas didn’t ask; he just waited.

A few minutes later, a delicate white dish was set down in front of each of them.

“You had Sunni make Crème Brulee for me?”

“It’s your favorite, right?”

“Yes, Dean. Thank you. You’ve made this a very special night for me.” He tapped his spoon into the dish, hearing the crack as the delicate burnt sugar shell on top broke apart.

He watched Dean carefully as the man also dug in and took a bite. He smiled when he saw Dean's head bob in a nod of approval – enjoying the smooth texture of the sweet crème filling and lite crackle of the thin crust on top.

Later as they laid in bed, wrapped in the afterglow of tender lovemaking, Dean was still watching Cas. The man was holding up his hand in a shaft of moonlight that cut across their bed. As Cas turned his hand, the light caught on the platinum band, and Cas was just studying it.

“It’s got an inscription inside,” Dean whispered.

Cas pulled his hand back, realizing he’d been caught admiring his gift. Again. He slid it off gently and peered inside the band.

*Forever My Angel Castiel*

Cas turned his face towards Dean on the pillow and whispered, “It’s been a long time since you’ve called me angel… I thought you’d gotten over that,” he grinned in the dark.

“Why would anyone want to get over having an angel?” said Dean sweetly, tightening his arm around his man’s waist.

Cas put his ring back on and went back to admiring it. “I’d like to reciprocate this, Dean,” he said.
quietly. “Would you wear a ring too?”

“From you? Of course.”

“Should I use the same ring maker?”

“I’m sure he’d appreciate the business, Cas.”

It was quiet for a few minutes before Dean spoke again. “What about the rest of it Cas?” he prompted, “A wedding? A reception? A giant cake with two little dude dolls on top?”

Cas never took his eyes off the ring as he answered: “I have everything I need Dean.”

Dean laid still and let his man press a kiss to his temple. “Me too, Cas,” he sighed.

The next morning, as Cas stood at the stove frying bacon and eggs, Dean moved to the little calendar that hung next to their fridge. There wasn’t much written on it. Both men had detailed schedules at work to keep track of their meetings and deadlines. But this little calendar was primarily for keeping up with family events… for instance when someone sent them a wedding invitation or birth announcement – it was added here. Mostly this calendar was used to be sure they never forgot to send cards for birthdays and such. Dean leaned forward and added “Dean and Cas Anniversary” on one of the little squares.

Clearly neither or he nor Cas was in need of a wedding in the traditional sense. But, from now on they would celebrate an anniversary each year… on the date Dean had proposed. April 2.

Satisfied, he moved over to the stove and wrapped his arms around Cas’ middle. He pressed a kiss into the man's neck and said, “It’s the first day of the rest of our lives Cas, what do you want to do with it?”

“Well, I’d like to get wet. Let’s do something in water.”

“We could go have naked time,” suggested Dean. He felt his cock wake up a little at the mere suggestion.

“Mmm,” said Cas as he stirred their breakfast, “that sounds perfect. Hey, if we’re going to the sandbar anyway, we may as well take the stuff with us. The treasure chest and the skeleton are both ready - they’re in storage at the lakeside rental hut.”

“When did the skeleton come in?”

“It was on last week’s boat.”

“Have you seen it?” asked Dean with obvious excitement.

“No, it’s split between several boxes.”

“What about the doubloons?”

“Not in yet,” Cas said as he scraped a meat and eggs scramble out onto their plates, “at least not that I know of.”
They carried plates of steaming breakfast out to the porch and sat there, in their boxers, watching the guests on the beach as they ate.

The tree line between them and the beach was the perfect height. From the beach, one had to look really hard to spy the boys’ tree house. But from their balcony, they had a relatively uninterrupted view of a large section of the beach. When they’d chosen this tree – they had chosen well.

Cas had done a great deal of research about building reefs. He had explained to Dean that the concept was fairly simple… sink anything in the ocean and the sea life will flourish. But, there was something about the composition of concrete blocks that attracted numerous forms of life to it. Time lapse videos of reef building projects showed the early signs of life on submerged concrete blocks at just a few weeks and within a year… they were completely covered in new life and unrecognizable in color and texture.

So, the boys had ordered a custom skeleton made of concrete from a man who creates front yard ornaments. There were several pieces. The skull and chest were two separate pieces, then there were separate pieces for each arm and each leg.

The intention was to drop the skeleton into about ten feet of water, and he would look like he was partially buried in the sand. Over time, he’d be covered in barnacles and coral. The same with their treasure chest. Additionally, they planned to create a broken looking wall with the blocks they’d ordered. The wall would be quite long and eventually, the things they submerged here would grow into a small reef. As their figures became more and more unrecognizable, the observable sea life would be worthy of snorkeling here for real. They could always add more later if they wanted to – like a work in progress.

For the first year, as they offered this up as a kids’ excursion, they’d be scattering fake gold doubloons over the treasure chest as the boat was anchored each time. That way, as kids snorkeled, they’d be able to dive down and retrieve them as souvenirs.

Dean and Cas were both excited as they talked of the project over their breakfast. Dean couldn’t help but think of Sam’s kids coming here someday and how fun it would be to take them to this attraction.

There was a lot to be excited about these days. Next week the boys had their entire schedules clear; this would allow them to finally get out and cultivate the trail to the banyan tree. Dean had been looking forward to this project for a while now, mostly just eager to get out of the office and do something labor intensive with Cas. Dean was looking forward to working side by side with his man, sweating in the jungle like they used to.

Most exciting of all… the last week in May they were set to fly to Texas and retrieve the plane. But they weren’t bringing it back here right away… they were going to fly to San Francisco for Anna and Michael’s wedding in it. But that was just the beginning of another adventure.

Dean needed to rack up hundreds of hours of solo flight-time in order to request the certification needed to fly passengers in his plane. So, he and Cas were going to make a “road trip” out of it. Each day they’d fly to a new location – spending as many hours as possible in the air. Then they’d land, find a hotel and see the local sights before taking off again for a new destination. They planned to be gone a total of three weeks including the wedding. This was a huge expense, so they had already decided to put off their trip to Australia indefinitely.

They were finished eating now, just leaning back in their chairs with empty plates on their laps and feet resting on the railing as they talked and watched the ocean.
“Hey Cas,” said Dean softly, “why don’t we just plan on taking our Australia trip as a first anniversary celebration?”

Cas gave only a nod of agreement, but Dean saw it… that little flick of a hidden smile at the corner of Cas’ mouth. It was almost like a tic - it came and went in the blink of an eye. But Dean caught it and loved it. He knew his man had loved hearing him say “anniversary.”

He secretly loved it too. After all, the years with Cas were starting to fly by. It was good to start marking time. Otherwise, it would be gone in a blur and over like a flash. He didn’t want to wake up an old man someday and wonder where all the time had gone. From now on… he’d be keeping track.

“Ya know, the yacht won’t be back from Roatan til about 6:00, what do you want to do between now and then?” Dean asked.

“I don’t know, maybe just hang out on the beach? I’m into a book.”

“Sure, Cas,” Dean nodded. “We’ll take a ball down with us.” They headed inside then, leaving their dishes in the sink as they headed for their room. They changed into trunks and threw a few things into a bag before climbing down the ladder and heading for the beach.

They spent the remainder of the morning on beach chairs, partially shaded by huge umbrellas. When they got too hot, they’d head out into the cool water.

Dean had been working with Cas on his football skills. The man was throwing a pretty respectable spiral these days. So when they played ball today, Dean started working Cas into catching a pass in-motion. The first few attempts were bumbled, but Cas caught on quickly.

When they were good and tired, they took a dip to cool off again. They tossed the ball around in the water, dunked and splashed each other, even played a little with the children who frolicked around them.

The sun was hot overhead as the noon hour came and went. When they were withered up like raisins, they climbed out of the water and headed back to their lounge chairs. Both men put on shades to cut down on the glare. Dean watched Cas stretch out, cross his legs at the ankles and pull a book from his bag. His eyes roved over Cas as he lounged there… tan, muscular, lookin’ all sexy with his sunglasses and shiny wet hair. Cas was tantalizing.

Dean didn’t even realize he’d fallen asleep until he woke, hot and sticky. The sun was tracking noticeably lower in the sky… afternoon was changing to evening. He sat up and put feet to the sand, looking over at Cas. The man was asleep, book having fallen to his side.

“Cas”

“Huh?” grumbled Cas as he woke up.

“Hey man, you ready to head in?"

Cas got to his feet and stretched as he adjusted to the waking world. Guests were still milling around on the beach, but there were fewer now. Cas bent to gather his things. They headed back home, grabbed some sandwiches and then piled into the jeep. It was a lot of work carrying the heavy boxes of cement from storage to the jeep and then from the jeep to the boat. They had moved less than half of what was being stored and still ended up panting and sweaty by the time all the boxes were stacked on the deck of the yacht.
Once they were moving away from shore, the boys stripped down. “I love naked time,” grinned Dean as his eyes wandered over his man. The wind caressing their sweaty bodies felt incredible.

“Me too,” said Cas, stepping up behind Dean. He clamped his hand firmly on Dean's thick hipbone and put his mouth the man's ear saying, “Winchester, you’re a wet dream all sweaty like this.”

Dean couldn’t help but smile. He watched the haze of the early evening settle in, waves rolling dark blue against a sky on fire with pink and orange. His package was heavy as he felt Cas’ other hand come to rest on him too, now framing his hips with long fingers.

He let off the throttle as they approached the sandbar and slowly cruised out past it, turning to face south – parallel to shore, which was only a sliver from this distance. Once anchored, the men moved to the back of the boat and began moving the stacks of boxes, one at a time, out to the swim platform. Dean grabbed a snorkel and jumped into the water.

Surfacing, he laughed out loud, “The joke’s on us… it’s already too dark.”

“I’m not carrying that shit back again. We’re sinkin’ it now,” laughed Cas.

Dean waited, treading water, while Cas opened the first box. “This is a leg… you want it or should I find you the head?”

“Cas, man, I can’t see shit down there. I’m not gonna be able to make it look good.”

“That’s fine, we’ll just drop the shit for now. We can come back later and move it around I guess.”

“Yeah, after we pass the diver certification,” said Dean. “Then we can just put on weight belts and stay down there while we work.”

“Here, you ready for the first piece?”

Dean nodded and swam forward to take it from him. Cas watched him take a deep breath and as soon as Cas handed him the giant concrete leg, he sank with it.

When he surfaced he looked over towards land and then back at Cas. “Dude, we better hurry,” he said firmly, “we’re losing daylight fast.”

Cas gave a resolute nod and began tearing open boxes looking for the other leg. He was making a mess and Dean was heckling him from the water. When he found what he was looking for he lowered it into the water and watched Dean, again, take a deep breath and sink with it.

While Dean was under, Cas turned to find the next piece. He wanted the body section next. He opened a few more boxes before he found it and carried it back towards Dean.

“Fair warning… this bitch is heavy,” grunted Cas as he walked it to the edge of the platform. “You’ll want to back up a few feet before you go down with this one so it doesn’t land on top of the legs.”

“Uh… no Cas. As soon as you hand me that – I’m goin’ straight down like it or not.”

Cas stood there – holding the a very heavy stone skeleton chest – thinking. Then an idea came to him.

“Wait a sec,” Cas said as he sat down the stone and turned his back on Dean, walking back to the equipment locker.
“Bring me a beer,” he heard Dean yell from the water.

When Cas reappeared on the swim platform, Dean saw his wide grin and laughed as Cas held up an inner tube. It’s purple… one of the doughnut shaped tubes they’d played with many times since buying the yacht. He tossed it to Dean. “Hold this,” he said as he bent to pick up the body of the skeleton again.

“Bring that up here,” Cas said. Dean swam up to the platform with the inner tube. “Hold it still man,” Cas barked as he worked to position the heavy stone on the tube.

“Oh I see where you’re goin with this!” Dean grinned.

“Yes, if you can just pull it a few feet away from the boat then when you sink, you’ll be far enough from the legs not to have to worry about breaking them.”

“You gotta get in and help me,” Dean said, noticing how tipsy the tube is.

Cas slid into the water and took one side of the tube. They doggie paddled together about four feet. “Here?”

“Sure. Can you lift a little from your side and keep it steady so it doesn’t slam into me?” Dean asked him.

Cas levered the tube as Dean worked to submerge his side of it enough to roll the giant rock towards him. He went under with it, and Cas looked around. Dean had been right, they didn’t have much daylight left.

He swam back towards the platform and heaved himself onto it. When Dean surfaced, Cas was already maneuvering the next piece, a cement arm, towards the water. They stabilized it on the tube and Cas eased himself into the water again to help tow it out farther. The less waves they made the better. They continued in this fashion, managing to get the arms both done.

Cas was naked, wet and dripping as he tore open box after box trying to find the skull head.

“Take your time,” Dean goaded him from the water.

“Figures” Cas muttered as he tore open the last box and finally found it.

When Cas turned around with the skull in his hands he let out a bark of a laugh. Dean was lounging in the inner tube, still naked of course, floating leisurely and whistling a tune with a shit-eatin-grin on his face.

“Fuck, Dean, get over here,” he barked with a laugh.

Dean flopped gracelessly out of the tube and paddled back to the edge of the platform, working to hide his grin. Cas lowered himself again, carefully handing the last piece to Dean, who braced his arm across the tube and held the piece as he steered away from Cas. “I got this one,” he said as he used his feet to push away from the platform.

Cas began breaking up all the boxes and compressing them so he could throw them away. When Dean was back at the platform all that was left was about three dozen plain blocks.

“May as well just start the boat and head south at idle speed. I’ll toss these in as we go.”

Dean flopped the tube towards Cas, laughing and hoisting himself out of the water.
“Ok buddy,” Dean said, thumping Cas on the head as he walks by.

“You can just go about 20 feet and stop Dean.”

Dean nodded, taking the tube back from Cas and heading onto the yacht to start it moving. Cas sat on the swim platform and waited, watching the last sliver of sun slip behind the horizon. As the boat crawled forward slowly, he began chucking the large stones off the back. Each made a loud plunk when it hit the water. When the stones were gone, Cas sat and waited for Dean to cut the motor. The beautiful vibrant colors of sunset were gone and the last traces of soft orange light hover on the western horizon where the sun had just vanished. The stars are becoming visible.

“Hey, I brought a trash bag,” Dean said over Cas’ shoulder, startling him.

“Thanks”

They both worked on getting all the cardboard broken down and stuffed in a trash bag, then headed back towards the captain's chair to get under way. The breeze had picked up a bit, bringing a chill with the night air. And with the cooler air on their wet bodies - “naked time” came to an abrupt end. The boys slide their clothes back on.

Cas leaned into Dean contentedly as they set out towards home, chasing the last of the sunlight in the west.

“Have mercy!” whined Jess at the top of her lungs.

“What?”

“I have to pee again!”

“You just went,” said Sam, like a jackass.

“You think I don’t know that?” she said as she pushed back from the table. “This sucks, Sam. Fucking sucks.” She bitched as she tried to stabilize her huge, swollen belly over her spindly little legs. “I don’t know why I leave the house,” she bit at him, cranky.

“Would you like a hand?” he asked her kindly (even though she was spitting nails at him).

“No… you’ve done quite enough, thanks.”

Sam watched an older man at a nearby table huff a laugh at their dialog. Yeah. A restaurant may not have been the best idea Sam’s had all day. He meant well, though. He felt she needed to get out of the house.

Now, he realized he was wrong. What she needed was babies out. Now.

She was headed for the restroom and while her back was to him, he bent his head and chuckled again at her antics. Even when she was nasty-cranky-psycho-bitch-pregnant… she was still adorable. Her snarky words carried no real weight, and her constant complaining was sprinkled with enough laughter and lame apologies to keep him from really wanting to punch her out. Even at her worst, she was preferable to every other woman he’d ever spent time with.
He watched her toddle to the bathroom. She was walking like a penguin these days. And swearing like a trucker.

*These babies better come soon.*

Soon the boys began their work on the trail to the banyan tree. It was taking longer than expected, and the work was grueling. But both men found themselves enjoying the days as they worked side by side, sweating and dirty in their jungle, just like old times.

And at the end of a long day, they walked past the banyan tree and neither man could look at the other without a Cheshire cat grin.

On a whim, Dean tossed his machete aside in the waning light and stepped up behind Cas. He pulled him into an embrace, pressing his chest up tightly to Cas’ back and turning him to look towards the tree.

Dean felt his man stiffen in his arms and leaned in to solidify his intentions with a lick along the ticklish part of Cas’ earlobe.

Cas then pushed his ass back and groaned as he felt Dean's body behind him. When Dean curled his hand around front to cup Cas’ package, he found the man already hardening for him. “Oh Cas, it’s been too long,” he lamented.

“A day is too long,” responded Cas, laying his hand over Dean's and pressing his cock up into the man's palm.

Dean began moving forward, stepping slowly, pushing Cas ahead of him towards the tree. They moved slowly, Cas still locked in the circle of Dean’s muscular arms, navigating the vines that ran from high up in the tree all the way to the ground at their feet where they had taken root. The rough bark that covered the vines brushed against their bare arms as they stepped between them.

Dean's nose was at Cas’ ear as they stepped together and he breathed in the scent of a man who’d been dirty and sweating all day… and he fucking loved it.

Cas’ pulse was pounding and Dean could feel it – he could even feel the heat his lover's body was radiating. Dean pressed him deeper into the multitude of spindles that connected this tree’s branches to the ground they walked on.

Dean's mind was flashing with images of him and Cas under this tree years ago. But this time, it was Dean who pulled Cas’ arms up high over his head. It was Dean who guided his man's hands to grip tightly to a set of vines that stood on either side of him. He felt Cas’ chest heaving deep breaths as he kissed his neck from behind. His tongue slid in the slick film of sweat that covered his skin. It was dirty, gritty and salty on his tongue. “Damn, I love it when we fuck dirty,” Dean praised as he moved both hands to Cas’ belt and undid it.

The last of the daylight was gone now, but in the shafts of moonlight that fell around them, Dean could see Cas’ stark outline stretched between vines, arm and back muscles tense.
As Cas held his position obediently, Dean worked his shorts down and let them drop down around his ankles. He tapped Cas’ legs, one at a time, as a silent signal to lift his foot so Dean could pull his shorts away. Then he abruptly kicked Cas’ legs apart and slid his leg in between them, letting Cas feel his thigh pressing forward. Immediately, the man pressed his ass back against Dean, seeking friction and expressing his desire to be filled.

As his bare skin rubbed on Dean's cargo shorts, Cas let out a filthy moan. He waited then to hear the clink of Deans belt buckle. Instead he felt a hot hand reach around his hip and lock on his shaft. Dean’s sweaty palm was hot to the touch, and Cas’ body betrayed him by releasing a whine without permission.

He clamped his lips shut and willed himself not to start begging too soon… but he wanted it. Bad. He was overcome with desire and here… in the dark… under this tree… he wanted Dean to split him open wide. He wanted to scream out into the jungle and frighten the animals who’d grown quiet around them.

His mind gave him permission to – whispering that they were alone out here – that no one else even knew about this trail – that they were free to be noisy here one last time.

Cas focused his efforts on gripping tightly, holding his body taut. Secretly he was hoping for a little bit of rough treatment before his lover gave in and fucked him.

“Yes…” he whispered, encouraging Dean when he heard the telltale clink of a belt buckle being undone. He felt his body tense again when he heard a fffth fffth fffth sound… the sound of a belt clearing belt loops.

Dean let his pants fall and hung on to the belt. He stepped back to admire the body strung up for him in the tree and just then a pulse of white light snapped around them. It lit up the jungle like daytime for a split second and in that flash, he saw his lover lit up as if standing in a spotlight. In that split second he saw Cas’ head snap up to the sky, arm muscles flexed, a glorious flash of man as if he were naked under a strobe light.

A heavy breath later, a roll of thunder pealed across the sky. The light was still dancing behind Dean's eyes as he gripped the belt tightly and wrapped the leather around his hand twice. The rest of the belt dangled to the ground at his feet like a whip, and he felt the electricity of a pending storm flow through him. The leaves at their feet began to rustle as a breeze picked up and all the jungle held its breath – waiting for rain.

Dean didn’t move… he waited fixed to the spot… belt coiled and ready. He wanted to see if Cas would break. Would his man fold and grab his pants? Would they run together towards the trailhead and back to the jeep to avoid the rain?

Dean’s eyes didn’t move from Cas and Cas didn’t break form. The sky lit up again, flashing several times before going dark again. Cas was still stretched between vines and Dean's body crackled with electricity. He stepped backward and then forward again, putting his body weight behind the belt and snapping it as if it were a dishtowel. He heard the connection of the leather to ass cheek. He saw Cas’ body buckle with it and bow forward.

As thunder rolled, Dean stepped up behind Cas and slid his hands around his man. His empty hand reached out to cup Cas’ dick and balls. His right hand, still wrapped in leather, splayed out over his chest.

To Cas, it was likely just an embrace, but Dean was checking on him. Checking his breathing, checking to be sure he was still turned on. This was meant to be fun. He knew how Cas liked it and
wanted to indulge his dramatic side… the storm was a lucky coincidence.

The clouds were lighting up miles away with silent lightning as the heat of the waning day met with an incoming cold front. A storm was brewing there. With the wind picking up, it was likely to be here soon. Rain was coming.

Finding Cas to be agreeably turned on and panting heavy breaths, he backed up and prepared to lash him again. He took a deep breath and then snapped the belt, making a stinging connection to his lover’s ass, right near the crack.

As Cas’ body vibrated with pain and pleasure from his lashing, Dean was on one knee in the dark, digging through his discarded cargo shorts. Over the years he’d become quite the boy scout and there were two things he was never without… his swiss army knife… and a pouch of lube.

He felt around in the dark for a moment and then was blessed with another lightning strike with which he was able to locate the pouch he needed.

He stepped up to his man and embraced him again. This time, just to tease, he ran the belt around Cas’ neck and released it to hang there while he cupped a heavy cock with one hand and pinched a hard nipple with the other. Cas exhaled a long breath and Dean put his mouth to Cas’ neck again, sucking heavily as his hands worked his lover. It didn’t take much. Cas was ready for him.

The man was pressing his ass back into Dean, body begging for dick, wanting to be fucked. The breeze carried the smell of rain now as Dean tore open the pouch with his teeth and squeezed it all into his palm. He cupped the precious liquid… knowing there was no more.

He used a little to start fingering his man, pressing in two fingers slowly and loving how tight it was. His dick pressed forward, reaching for Cas impatiently as he began working the man open. Cas was rocking against him now, voice carrying to Dean's ears on the breeze, telling him firmly to go faster.

Dean pulled out and smacked his mans ass for his bossiness and grinned with pleasure as he wetted his fingers and slid them in again. Just when his eyes had gotten used to the dark again, another flash of lightning lit up the sky and the image of his lover’s form was burned into his retinas. Dean was salivating with desire for Cas and with every thrust of his fingers, his dick became more jealous.

Cas’ voice was getting rough and hoarse with desire. He shouted over his shoulder for Dean to fuck him. Dean thrust in a third finger and finally cupped his own dick, spreading lube all over it. Not wanting to waste any, he stepped up and gave his man the reach-around, jacking him slow and firm with the rest of the lube in his palm.

With his other hand, he opened Cas’ crack and guided his heavy member in. Cas dropped his head back and looked up at the sky as Dean leaned in to fill him. Cas’ biceps flexed as he arched his back for the angle. Dean slid home faster than he meant to, but Cas didn’t seem to mind. He was already moving.

Standing front to back, Cas hung from vines and Dean grabbed his man's perfect hips to move with him. They slid forward and back in a sensual rhythm – not thrusting – moving together as the beginning of a storm swirled around them. A soft pulse of pleasure began to grow bigger between them as they moved.

When lightning flashed again, Dean noticed it was getting closer. He’d barely pulled in a breath when the thunder clapped behind it. He broke the languid rhythm they’d been building and pulled.
back to begin thrusting. Just as he drove into Cas the lightning flashed again, and they felt the animals react. Monkeys were calling out in the trees, and ground animals scuttled back into their holes. It wouldn’t be long now.

Dean thrust wildly into Cas and watched the back of his man's head. When Cas turned he put his ear close to hear what he would say.

“Harder” was the command. *Can do.*

Dean pulled back and drove into his man with all he had. As several lightning strikes fired off in succession, Dean drew back his arm and began to dish out a slap to Cas’ perfect ass with each thrust. Cas called out into the night loudly, “Fuck yes! Dean, fuck yes!”

Dean felt his body tense. His euphoria gathered in his middle and he hated for it to be over so soon… but they were running out of time. He gripped tightly, thrusting with as much force as he could muster. He dealt the man one last slap on the ass as he thrust his last time and then came.

Cas hadn’t come yet. So as soon as he was able, he reached around and grabbed Cas’ cock tightly, he stripped it heavily as his own cock quickly wilted and slid out. Cas only needed a few pulls and soon there was warmth spilling over Dean's hand. Cas’ head tipped back and he said, “Dean” as his body went limp.

Dean quickly caught Cas’ weight in his arms as the man let go of the vines and collapsed. Dean held on to Cas and eased them both to the ground. They panted there for a few moments – nothing but a pile of arms and legs.

When their breath had calmed, Dean leaned forward and nuzzled his lips into Cas’ neck where it met his shoulder. Cas hummed in pleasure. The sky lit up again around them and the thunder was right on top of it.

“We need to go Cas, this is gonna be a wicked storm.”

Cas nodded and began to collect himself. Both men were a mess, dirt and dried leaves sticking to them as they found their pants and tugged them on. When they stepped back onto the trail, Dean couldn’t find his machete.

“Let’s go,” said Cas poised and ready to run.

“Dude, I can’t leave my blade – what if a kid finds it!”

Cas nodded and began to help him search. It was hopeless until another flash of lightning brightened up the trail for them.

“Got it!” Dean yelled. And then they were running. They were at least a half mile from the road. They covered almost half the distance before the first fat drops of rain began to hit them. Neither man broke stride. The first few minutes weren’t too bad, but soon they were trying to run in a monsoon.

Their shorts weighed ten pounds and since neither man had a belt with him anymore, they were having to run with one hand holding their sagging drawers up. Dean had a machete in his other hand and as the dirt beneath their feet turned to mud he slowed, fearful that he’d fall with it and injure himself.

Ahead of him, Cas slowed too, not wanting to leave Dean behind.
When they got to the jeep they had to wrestle the top over it. Only now were they able to climb inside and out of the downpour. They were both breathing heavily and laughing. Dean reached over the seat and dropped his machete to the floor in the back.

Dean started the engine and wipers as torrential rain covered them. “Damn,” he huffed. “Fuck. Shit. That was somethin’”

Their bare chests were still heaving from the exertion and their shorts were wet and heavy. Their legs were covered with mud… you couldn’t even tell what color their shoes had been through the layer of mud. Dean grinned as he pulled the jeep out onto the dark road.

“Worth it,” said Cas as he wiped his wet hair off his forehead and settled back into his seat.

“Fuck yeah,” grinned Dean.

They had to run through the rain again when they got home, climbing the ladder to the treehouse in a veritable monsoon. They shed their muddy shoes and shorts on the porch and walked naked to the shower.

Hot water relaxed their muscles, and they exchanged a few soft kisses as they lathered up together.

“I think my underwear is still out there,” chuckled Cas.

“Is that it, hon?” asked Sam.

“Yep. Nothin’ in here but your old hag and freakishly large babies,” Jess said as she rubbed her hands over her huge belly.

They stood together and watched the movers carry the last few things out. “Did you say we’re sleeping at Mary’s tonight?” she asked him.

“I did,” agreed Sam, “but then again, I’m a dirty rotten liar.”

“Well then, where are we sleeping?”

“Tonight, my lady, you’re sleeping in a deluxe suite,” he said as he laid his hand on the small of her back, “but the big surprise is that you’re set to get a massage there,” he continued as he led her out of her empty apartment.

“Oh Sam, you’re so good to me!”

Once they had crossed into the hall, he turned her back towards the apartment that she’d called home until today. “Say goodbye, Jess. It was a lovely place, but I’m taking my princess to her new castle tomorrow.”

“I love that you’re still calling me princess even though I’ve been acting like an evil stepmother.”
Time passed quickly for the boys as they continued to work through multitudes of changes around the resort in almost every area. They constantly strove to improve processes – not just to benefit the guests or the employees but also to improve profitability. After all, this was their living now. If they don’t turn a profit – they will lose this place in a grand fashion.

Cas having his money released to him had given them the time they needed to get ahead, but it didn’t buy them forever. It bought them a few years to get things right.

They worked long hours, but it didn’t feel like overwork. It was satisfying to see things steadily improving day by day. This place was more than just a way to earn a living. It was like a garden to a gardener or a painting to an artist. It was their own dream they were tending.

This whole endeavor had the feeling of a win-win. Because as they prospered… so did the local people. Cas and Dean still shopped the local markets of the neighboring villages – but now they bought loads of bananas and fish for their restaurants and they bought handmade trinkets from the villagers to stock their gift shops. They employed a staggering number of locals from villages in every direction, and they had even set up the charity that Cas had suggested to support the random needs of their staff. It ended up being aptly named Random Requests (Peticiones Aleatorias) and was well received by the staff.

Things were going very well, and for Cas it felt like the blink of an eye and it was already time to pack. They were returning to the US in a few days. Roberto and Sunni would again be in charge of the resort for the three weeks they’d be gone.

Dean and Cas invited the couple to their house for dinner a few nights before they left. They’d gotten used to doing things together with the couple, but it had been a while. Cas cooked lasagna for dinner and they flitted back and forth between Spanish and English throughout the meal as they traded funny stories about friends, family and guests of the resort. After eating they played cards, and the boys taught them how to play bullshit.

It was absolutely hysterical watching Sunni try to lie, especially to three men she clearly respected. She wasn’t very good at it, but as she got progressively more and more drunk, she began to improve. She began laughing more too. She had an incredible laugh. It filled the room, and her smile stretched wide across her face.

Roberto was always game for a laugh, but Sunni was much more subdued. It was fun to watch her loosen up a little. Cas watched her in the low lamplight as they played. She definitely had an unconventional beauty, and she glowed with warmth and life. Roberto’s affection for her was unmistakable.

After their games wound down, Cas pulled a dessert out and dished everyone a bowl of it. “What is this Cas?” asked Dean. “It reminds me of that green fluffy salad you used to make.”

“It’s the same base,” confirmed Cas as he watched their guests poke at it with forks, “but I crushed up Oreo cookies in it instead of adding fruit.”

“She’s good!” enthused Dean when he tasted a bite.

Their guests nodded along too as they dug in, enjoying the simple treat. It had been a lovely night but it was getting late, and they all had to work in the morning.

Once they’d said their goodnights, the men got ready for bed. They said goodbye to the day
slowly, sprawled out on their bed and smoking their last joint while they listened to records.

Their hands wandered freely, exploring each other while they lounged there. Little by little they peeled each other out of clothes and the two of them laid naked, touching softly and exchanging lazy kisses for quite some time. Eventually, they rolled together, each taking the other’s cock in hand. They worked one another over until they came breathily into each other’s palms.

When they came, Cas noticed that Dean took the spunk that Cas had pulsed onto his hand and rubbed it over the tip of his own dick, which always remained dry now. Cas made a mental note.

When the day arrived for them to head to America, Roberto drove them to the airport in Tegucigalpa. As usual, Dean shot a few stiff drinks to take the edge off the flight. Between that and a Dramamine, he easily slept through most of it.

When they landed in Houston, they checked into a hotel at the airport and made contact with the owner of their plane, arranging to meet him the following day.

Exhausted, the boys then took a nice long nap. When they woke, they went for dinner. After dinner they fucked and then they fell asleep again. The extra sleep did them both good.

Buying the plane was the most exciting thing they’d done in quite a while. When they were finished, it was time to take delivery. For Dean this meant actually getting in the plane and flying away. He’d been very excited at the prospect of this for quite a while now.

But reality was different from his daydreams.

After being cleared for their intended landing at SFO, Dean actually had to take off from a worse runway than any in Honduras. This man had kept the plane in his barn. And his landing strip was an empty wheat field. Dean was nervous.

Cas could tell Dean was nervous, and it made him nervous. “Funny,” he said to Dean, “it’s my turn to need a double whiskey before takeoff.”

“You ain't the only one,” Dean said gruffly.

*Do or die time.* “May as well get in,” he told Cas resolutely, “overthinkin’ shit never helped anyone.”

Then Dean clapped him on the shoulder as he walked past.

They climbed into the front seats. Dean handed Cas a headset. He took it and put it on. Then he worked himself into the safety harness, looking to Dean to be sure he’d done it right. He got a nod of approval and relaxed a little.

Dean was self-conscious as he looked over the gauges. These were different from the plane he’d learned on. He forced himself to take his time and after a while, he started seeing the similarities. When he felt he was as ready as he’d ever be… he initiated takeoff.

The plane bumped and bumbled over the rough ground in the manner of an ATV. The faster he
went the worse it got. Cas kept his eyes forward, watching the tall brown wheat come at them, not letting Dean see his eyes because they were full of fear. The plane was vibrating as if it may shake itself apart.

As they neared the end of the field, a barbed wire fence loomed into view. Just when Cas started to really panic, the plane leapt forward and things were instantly smooth.

Cas relaxed back into his seat once they were airborne, and kept his eyes on the clouds above, not the ground below as they ascended.

When he felt he was relaxed enough that fear wouldn’t show in his eyes, he chanced a glance over at Dean, expecting to find him nervous.

Nope. The man was exhilarated and grinning ear-to-ear. Tangible excitement rolled off of him in waves. Cas couldn’t help but smile just seeing his radiant face.

Dean reached forward and clicked a button. Instantly Cas could hear Dean's breathing in his ears, coming through his headset, followed by his tinny voice, “We bought a fuckin’ plane, man! Cas! We’re flyin’! In our own plane!”

Cas couldn’t speak. He could only nod to Dean and smile in wonder at his man. There was just no one else like Dean. As Dean enjoyed his new toy, Cas was thinking.

Dean had told him once that after he listened to Pink Floyd — he couldn’t listen to any other music for a while. It all just felt flat and soulless in comparison.

Well, that’s how people are for me, thought Cas. No one else has a soul that shines like Deans. When he leaves the room – everyone else is just dull and lifeless in comparison.

Just then, Cas felt his stomach drop out. He turned wide eyes to his pilot, feeling his heart thump wildly against his chest in fear. But to his left, Dean was calm a the controls and smiling as he dipped a wing low and banked the plane steeply.

Dean's voice came through his headset, “Just stretchin’ her wings, buddy,” he said to reassure Cas.

Dean was obviously elated and was taking Cas for the ride of his life. Cas grinned, exploding with joy for Dean. “I knew you’d love flying,” he said with a smile.

“You were right Cas. This is the shit!”
Flying

Chapter Notes

Many thanks to MoniJune for editing this story!

Flying with Dean was fun. His enthusiasm was palpable, and his antics had Cas enjoying the flight as the hours ticked by. They passed towns large and small, forests, fields, rivers, lakes and even desert. They scooped low when things caught their attention and they would frequently turn circles over points of interest to get a better look.

Dean behaved like a teenager on a joyride for the duration of the trip, and his enthusiasm was infectious. He laughed loud and often as they bantered back and forth on their headsets.

When they finally approached San Francisco, the afternoon was slipping into evening and the shadows of trees and buildings became noticeable as the light changed.

When Dean made his first radio transmission to air traffic control, Cas found himself equal parts impressed and turned-on.

Dean always had a sexy way, but damn. Aviator sunglasses and headset? Gulp. Husky voice over the radio pumped through Cas’ headset? Double gulp.

“ATC this is Cessna N9947Q inbound for landing. Twelve miles East at 4800 and in receipt of current ATIS. Requesting permission to land.”

Fuck. I’m gonna hit that.

An unknown voice responded in the headset, “Cessna, altitude confirmed. Enter holding pattern, monitor tower”

“Roger control.”

Dean clicked a switch and then nodded to Cas that they could speak again.

“You’re talking like a real pilot,” marveled Cas.

“I am a real pilot you bastard!” laughed Dean.

Cas laughed too and watched Dean work the controls.

“What?” he prompted when he noticed Cas smirking at him.

“You’re sexy.”
“Jess? Are you home?”

“In the bathroom!” she called.

Sam stepped into the doorway and leaned against it, smiling at his beautiful wife who was relaxing in the tub and buried in bubbles. “How was your day?” he asked her.

“I’d tell you it was rough, but you wouldn’t believe me,” she grinned, “how was yours?”

“It was great. Got the numbers I’ve been waiting on and we’re actually a little over the projections.”

“That’s terrific! I take it the ‘new Dean’ is working out?”

“Um yeah. Don’t let anyone else hear you call him that,” he said with a soft smile, “but yes, Tom is doing a great job so far… speaking of Dean though… he flew in today with Cas.”

“Do they want to have dinner then?”

“I’m not sure. I can ask if you want? Are you up for having dinner?”

“Of course,” she smiled kindly, “what’s the worst that could happen?”

“Your water could break in the restaurant in front of a hundred people. And Dean.”

“Oh wait, I need a second to enjoy this,” she giggled as she shut her eyes tight. “I can actually picture Dean's face and it’s totally worth it!”

“… and Cas,” Sam laughed loudly as he settled on the edge of the tub. “Oh my god the two of them… it would be WAY too fun to watch them squirming.”

“When did they get in?”

“I have no idea,” he said as he pulled out his phone and unlocked the screen, “I only got this,” he said as he handed it to her carefully.

When she turned the phone to see the screen, she was looking at a selfie that had clearly been taken by Cas while they were in the air. Both men were wearing headsets and sunglasses and were holding up middle fingers at the camera. In the background Jess could see the wheel and controls and a sliver of blue sky out the window behind Dean's head.


“I know,” said Sam while trying to lock down the grin that kept pulling the corners of his mouth up, “but at least he’s taking it seriously,” he spat out as he surrendered to his laughter.

“I’ll call them and see if they want to get together tonight,” he said as he took his phone back from her carefully, trying not to drop it in the tub. “We’ll probably just end up at Mom’s anyway,” he reassured her as he moved to leave the bathroom.

When he reached the doorway he paused and looked back at her, “Do you need anything before I go?”

“Yes, but it can wait til after you’ve called Dean.”

“Ok. I’ll be right back,” he said with a smile. He walked to the closet and hung up his suit jacket
while he placed the call. The phone went to voicemail so he hung up and texted a message. He sent
the same message to Cas’ phone as well before dropping it to the dresser where he also abandoned
his tie. He liked living in this house more than he’d expected to. It had almost felt too big at first,
but Jess had quickly made it feel like home as she got them settled in. She’d painted the nursery
with her friends and tenderly opened all the boxes and bags they’d been collecting over the past
months.

Everywhere Sam looked… it was home sweet home.

Opening his top buttons to loosen his collar and rolling up his sleeves as he walked back into the
bathroom he asked, “What did you need hon?”

“I need my husband to rub my tits for me.”

“What?”

“You heard me,” she said with a wicked grin on her face, “I need you. To rub. My tits.”

As she spoke, she scootched up a little in the tub, and he could see her milky white and shiny wet
breasts peeking out through the bubbles. He took a step closer and craned his neck. He was
rewarded by glimpses of warm pink skin, taut nipples, bobbing wet and inviting. His mouth filled
with saliva as he watched the peek-a-boo game before him while the bubbles clung to velvet skin
and then slid slowly down.

On some level, Sam knew he was staring. He knew he should look up at his wife’s face as he
spoke to her. But he just couldn’t look away from the feast of flesh in front of him. “Jess…”

“Oh Sam,” she practically whined, “I’m sooo horny, and I haven’t been properly fucked in sooo
long!”

“Me either,” he husked to her as he leaned in over the edge of the tub precariously, “I can’t help it
though. The babies are so big. It doesn’t feel right to put my dick up in there so close to them,” he
finally found the will to look away from her tantalizing breasts and meet her eyes. “What if one’s a
girl? It wouldn’t be right. I can’t do it. I’m sorry.”

“It’s okay Sam, I have a vibrator,” she smiled at him sweetly and captured him in her deep blue
eyes. “But I miss you playing with my nipples. I can hardly get off without you. I miss you that
way.”

“Aww…” he said, honestly feeling empathy for her and loving that she missed their sex life as
much as he did, “I know. It’s not the same for me either, without you.” He leaned in and gave her a
deep kiss. She groaned into it and chased his lips when he pulled away.

Sam moved to the end of the tub, behind her head, as he tore off his shirt and threw it on the floor.
He settled down on his knees and leaned in to kiss the side of her neck from behind. As he did, he
snaked his arms into the water, one on either side of her head. He cupped healthy handfuls of soft
flesh and felt her arch her back beneath him. The sensation shot straight to his dick. It filled
quickly, and he found himself moaning a little too as he played with her nipples and massaged her
breasts.

“Mmm,” she hummed as he worked her over, “thank you, Sam, that feels incredible.”

“I’m gonna do it again when you’re dried off. Gonna get out your vibrator and get you good-n-wet
too. I’ll never stop sucking on you either… wanna watch you come with battery power if I can’t do
it for you myself.”
“I’ll suck you off, Sam…” she purred as he pinched her buds progressively harder. “That’s allowed, isn’t it? I can still suck your dick, right?”

“Fuck! Yes please, woman, please suck my dick.”

“I’m ready to get out now Sam.”

He helped her from the tub and dried her off tenderly. He rubbed lotion into her belly as he’d seen her do a thousand times. When he’d finished he took a moment to embrace her and happened to catch a glimpse of their reflection in the mirror as he did. It was kind of sensual but also kind of sweet… her incredible body in front of his, belly swollen with his children and his hands cradling them with her hands resting over his. It was beautiful in a weird way. He had the urge to photograph it. Would that be weird?

He walked her slowly to the bed and left her there to get comfy while he went to the dresser and began pulling out their various toys. “This one?”

“Um… how bout the big pink one… the rabbit?”

“Yes, ma’am,” he grinned as he jogged back to the bed with the giant pink plastic dick on steroids (with an appendage?). “I think this is more complicated than Dean’s flight controls.” He laughed.

“Please do not talk about your brother while we’re in bed… it’s bad enough the babies are in the room with us.”

“Um… yeah I guess so.” He smiled weakly at her and then dropped his eyes to her knees. He dropped the rabbit to the bed and put one hand on each knee, slowly pulling them apart and feeling his dick pulse between his legs as her warm pink center revealed itself to him.

“I didn’t think this through, Jess.”

“Second thoughts?” she asked him, disappointed, “I know I’m not really much to look at right now.”

“Oh god no!” he said indignantly, “No, Jess, no. You’re incredible to look at. I promise. It’s just, with the belly being so…” shit how do I fucking say this “…in the way?” he fumbled, “I can’t reach enough to do everything I promised – at the same time. I have to choose between top and bottom,” he looked up at her face then and saw permission to laugh at their predicament. And he did. She joined him in laughter.

“Honestly Jess, I don’t know how you reach down here for anything! Are your arms even this long?” He was teasing her now, and she was laughing along with him. But it was true.

“I’m counting the days, Sam,” she told him firmly, “cause this sucks… I gotta be honest honey… these may be the only children you get. I don’t ever want to do this again.”

“And I don’t blame you,” he laughed as he started the vibrator. “For now, though. Top or bottom?”

“Stay where you are please,” she said softly, “and turn that down. You’re on high. Start low for me and work up.”

“Yes ma’am,” he smiled. And then he got to work.
Once they landed and got the plane parked, they called a cab. Having caught the latter half of rush hour traffic, they wound up being in the cab for over an hour to get to Mary’s and even then – Dean was still flying high. Cas could feel the excitement radiating from him. If he didn’t know better, he would assume Dean was on coke.

“Your landing was really good,” Cas told him again as they walked to the front door.

“Thanks buddy!” said Dean, putting his arm around Cas’ shoulders and squeezing tight.

Before they could speak again, Mary was emerging onto the porch to greet them. Her smile was wide and welcoming, and she swallowed them up in the circle of her arms, “My boys! Welcome home!”

“Mom,” they said in unison as they melted into her arms.

“How was the flight?” she asked, knowing it had been their first.

“Exciting!” thrilled Cas.

“Mom… you shoulda seen the look on his face when we were taking off!” Dean heckled, “Speaking of which… do ya need to change your shorts?”

“Oh, Dean,” said Mary tersely, smacking the back of his head playfully.

“In all fairness,” Dean said as he grinned at Cas, “the take-off sucked.”

Cas nodded, checking out his shoes and the ground at his feet. Clearly he’d not hidden emotions from Dean well enough.

“I sure liked the picture,” said Mary, who had received the version where the boys weren’t flipping off the camera.

“I flew a plane today!” he celebrated boisterously as they moved into the house, “I flew OUR plane!”

“I know you did sweetie,” she placated him like a kindergartner coming home from a field trip, “and we’re both very proud of you!” She winked at Cas conspiratorially.

Dean wrapped his arm around Cas’ waist and tugged him close as they walked to the kitchen, both wearing wide smiles.

Mary laid out some chips and fruit, moving to the counter to make sandwiches for them.

“Does Sam know you’re in town?”

“Yeah,” Dean said as he stuffed too many chips in his mouth at once.

“Do you have anything special planned?”

“Just the wedding on Saturday,” said Dean with his eyes locked on Cas, “the rest is wide open.”

“Would Anna and Michael like to come for dinner and cards tomorrow night?” Mary asked Cas.
“I’ll ask her,” he said with a smile as he pulled his phone from his pocket and began texting.

They ate the light meal and then headed for the living room to settle on comfy couches. The boys got her caught up on the happenings at the resort – especially that they’d started work on the underwater kids attraction that had been Mary's idea. Cas explained that they were going to be cultivating a reef there as well, and she seemed very impressed.

Mary told them she had joined a bowling league with a new friend and seemed excited about it. She mentioned that she and John had bowled together when they were young but for some reason hadn’t done it much once they’d settled down.

As they were chatting, Cas got the text from Anna that they’d be unable to make it for dinner tomorrow, but asking if she and Cas could have lunch tomorrow instead. He replied yes and then resumed the conversation. They spent quite a bit of time talking but around 7:00 Mary had to leave, apologizing to the boys, but explaining that she plays pinochle with friends on Wednesday nights and doesn’t like to miss because then her partner wouldn’t be able to play.

The boys decided to head out to grab a few drinks. Even now… Dean was still flying high. Cas loved every minute of it. He wanted to lick the smile that played on Dean's lips.

While they were having drinks at a neighborhood sports bar, Dean got a message from Sam about dinner. He responded that he and Cas were already out drinking. Sam took a pass since Jess couldn’t drink anyway.

The boys ordered another round and then sent texts to their friends and started making their plans to visit everyone while they were here. More than anything, Dean was excited to see Chris and Pam. They had a baby now… and were planning to be married soon. Cas wanted to see Cole and Gabe, and both men wanted to see Sam's new house.

“We also need to get a gift for Anna and Michael,” said Cas as they discussed their arrangements, “And some kind of housewarming gift for your brother.”

Dean nodded absentmindedly as he tipped back his beer and searched his mind for things they could get for his brothers house. “I know Sam. He’s meticulous. If there’s something he needs for their house… he’s already got it.”

“Perhaps we could re-gift him your door swing,” joked Cas.

Dean blew a bit of beer and foam out as laughter seized him. “Dude… you made me blow that out my nose!” he barked as he wiped his face on his sleeve.

The following day, Cas settled in with Anna at a cozy little table for two at Il Casaro. He left the ordering to Anna and settled back with a glass of wine to hear all about the wedding preparations. She didn’t tell him much about what to expect other than to hand him a card for the place he needed to go for his tux.

“I got your picture, by the way,” she said through a toothy grin.

“Did you?” he asked her teasingly, “Notice anything different about me in it?”
She looked at him sharply, clearly wondering what she’d missed. He didn’t help her right away, letting her mind wander back to the picture and consider it.

“It’s really nothing earth shattering; I can see how you’d miss it,” he told her as he braced his elbows on the table and rested his chin on his palms. He knew his fingers were framing his face—but she still wasn’t getting this.

He began tapping his ring finger on his face to a slow rhythm. Her eyes zeroed in on the movement and he could practically hear a “click” as her brain recognized the ring he was wearing. The only ring he’d ever worn. His wedding ring.

She squealed like a teenage girl and leapt up from her seat, barreling in to hug him fiercely. “Congratulations Cassie! I’m so very happy for you!”

“Thank you, Anna.”

“Oh Cas, I knew you were both in it for the long haul; I just really didn’t see you ever getting a ring out that man!”

“Oh come on, Dean can be romantic sometimes…” he trailed off and got quiet for a moment. He glanced up and met her eye as she settled back into her seat, “okay, I’ll admit it. I never thought I’d see the day.” And they both huffed a laugh.

“Did he get down on one knee?”

“Yes. But don’t ever tell. He’d be so embarrassed.”

“I know. I’ll keep it to myself,” she said with a gentle smile. “And, again, congratulations. Truly.”

He nodded and then redirected her back to the discussion of her pending nuptials. “Are you still planning to honeymoon at Niagara Falls?”

“Yes, I realize it probably sounds dull and cliché to someone like you, but I’ve always had that in my head. And you know how that goes,” she smiled as she referenced her own neurosis.

“Will you be selling your house?”

“Nope. We’re going to live in it.”

“That’s unexpected,” Cas said quietly.

“Not really, it’s near the best school.”

“Oh I see.” He smiled warmly. “You’re going to be a soccer mom.”

“No Cas. I’m having two girls, and I’ll be a ballet mom.”

“What if you have a boy?”

“You and Dean can have him,” she joked.

“Michael's going to want someone to throw a ball around with, Anna. You may want to just make your peace with that now and work a little boy into your daydreams.”

She smiled warmly at his ability to gently steer her towards unexpected outcomes and start her brain working to accept them.
Just then, their food was set in front of them. A lopsided pizza with a fire-roasted crust dominated the table and it was laden with olives and artichoke hearts and pools of melted cheese. It smelled like heaven. There were also fresh greens. Cas tipped back the wine glass and waited for the waiter to refill it. As he stepped away from them, Anna looked up at him with a serious face and began to speak.

“Cas, the wedding I’ve planned is quite small. But there’s a reason why you weren’t asked to be a groomsman.”

“What reason?”

“I’d like you to walk me down the aisle.”

Cas set down his glass and took her hand in his, laying his other hand over top. “Oh Anna, I’d be honored.” He smiled wholeheartedly. “Absolutely honored.”

Dean and Cas were going out with Chris and Pam tonight. Mary had volunteered to babysit and the couple had leapt at the opportunity to get out for a few hours without their little bundle of joy and the fifty pounds of gear that were required for his care and feeding.

They came over to Dean's in the early evening. When they arrived, Dean took care of the introductions while Cas leaned in to help carry items from their car.

“Mom, you remember Chris from my wilder days, right?”

“Of course,” she smiled warmly and reached for his hand, “It’s very nice to see you again, Chris.”

“You too, Mrs. Winchester, and thank you so much for doing this!”

“It’s my pleasure,” she said eyeing the little bundle – clearly itching to get her hands on it.

“This,” said Dean, redirecting her gaze, “is Pam. We go back all the way to prep school.”

“Pleasure to meet you, Pam,” smiled Mary, “and who do we have here?” she practically squeaked.

“This is John Paul Jones,” Pam beamed. “We call him JJ for short.”

As Mary's attention fixed on the cooing, drooling bundle, Dean fixed on Pam. “John Paul Jones? Really Pam? You named your baby after the keyboardist from Led Zeppelin?”

“Well, Chris’ last name is Jones… how could I not?”

“Damn Chris… this would be so much cooler if your last name was Page or Plant.”

“Dean,” Pam said in a schoolteacher tone, “without John… the Zep sound would’ve been completely different and only half as good. He was an integral cog in the Led Zeppelin machine.”

“Good thing… cause in order for your baby to have a cooler name… you would’ve had to take a shitty one!” he ribbed her.
She looked at him with a question mark in her eyes. “Pam Page might be ok I guess… but would you want to be Pam Plant?”

Chris thumped Dean on the back and dropped a pack-n-play into his arms. “Make yourself useful. We can’t all have a kick-ass last name like Winchester.”

“I’ll second that,” laughed Cas as he slung a diaper bag over his shoulder.

Chris chuckled. “Castiel Milton, yeah. Dude you took it on the chin when you got named didn’tcha.”

Still laughing, they made their way to the living room where Chris and Dean set up the pack-n-play. They piled the blankets into it and then set the diaper bags on the table, laying out a thick blanket so they’d be able to change the baby there.

Cas and Pam were visiting with Mary, who kept tipping her head in to smell the top of the baby’s head. They chatted for a while and then Pam excused herself to make a few bottles for the baby.

By the time she returned, the boys were starting to get antsy. Dean suggested they head out and everyone headed for the door, saying goodbye to Mary quietly so as not to wake the sleeping bundle of warmth in her arms.

Last to step to the door, Dean looked back at her and mouthed, “Thank you.”

She gave him an “I truly don’t mind” wink. He gave her one last smile and then joined his friends in the driveway.

“Where to first?” Dean asked as they all began piling into Baby.

“I’m just warnin’ y’all now,” says Pam with a wide grin as she slid into the back seat next to Chris, “I’m gettin tore up tonight!”

“We haven’t had any fun since she got pregnant,” supplied Chris.

“Um… we’ve had SOME fun, asshole.” Bit Pam in a half joking manner.

“Yes, Dear. We’ve had fun. I remember the fun, Dear,” he said, teasing her and waiting for the punch to his upper arm that he knew would be coming.

“Got any green on ya Dean?” Pam asked him.

“Nope. Sorry.”

“It’d be a whole lot cooler if you did!” she said in a totally excellent imitation of Wooderson from Dazed and Confused.

“Want me to text Zar?” Cas offered to Dean.

Dean thought about it for few seconds and then nodded, “Thanks, Cas.”

Dean headed towards the Castro district. Even if they didn’t end up going to Zars… there were some excellent places to drink in that area.

Zar’s reply to Cas was quick, so that became their first stop. When they entered there were already several people lounging on the couch. Zar was sandwiched between two beautiful and scantily dressed women, both of whom were clearly wasted. The man slid out from between them and
greeted Cas and his friends warmly.

Dean had forgotten what a presence the man had, and was momentarily overwhelmed by it. Especially when he watched how tenderly the man embraced his man.

Balthazar caught Dean giving him the fisheye over Cas’ shoulder and called a spade a spade. “Oh Dean, if you like it so much you should’ve put a ring on it,” he teased. Then, before anyone had time to speak, the man caught sight of the ring on Cas’ hand and pantomimed a faint to the couch.

He shouted, “Oh I’m such a wanker!” and he rose from the couch and held up Cas’ hand for the entire room to see his ring. “Someone’s been claimed… I’ve bloody blown my chances!”

Cas was laughing and red-faced from the attention, and Zar was heaping it on thick. Dean had to chuckle though. He knew the man was only half kidding. Cas was special. Both he and Zar knew it. But Cas was Dean’s, and it made him feel good… so good to be the one who recognized a good thing and was man enough to keep it.

Zar would pine a little for Cas tonight… no matter how drunk or high he got. Dean was certain of it.

They all settled on the couch – Dean introducing both Zar and his guests to Chris and Pam. Turns out that Pam and Zar already knew each other, and once the Brit had finished fawning all over Cas, he turned his attention to her to ask how she’d been doing.

The two of them talked art for a while – to the extent that Dean got bored with the discussion and began talking to Chris quietly off to the side. Chris said that work was going well. He’d gotten a promotion and was enjoying his new office. He still had most of the same work friends but found that he had to go to more events now… things he’d been lucky enough to avoid the past. Dinners with clients and employee retreats were unavoidable now that he was middle management level in a large corporation.

He said they’d be getting a house soon, not wanting to raise their son in Pam’s loft. But, they were having trouble finding something affordable that would offer Pam the studio space she needed. He confided in Dean that he’d never been happier.

“So fatherhood suits you then?”

“Yep. I gotta be honest… it’s dull right now. JJ just kinda lays there. Maybe he’ll blow bubbles or grip your hand. But soon. Soon he’ll play. I can’t wait for that. There will be t-ball. Soccer. I’m so excited for all that shit. I wanna go trick-or-treating and take him to ride go-carts and shit.”

“Sounds awesome. You know my little brother Sam’s wife is about to pop. She’s got twins comin’.”

“Well, that ought to keep you busy enough, Uncle Dean!”

As they were speaking, Cas walked by Dean and squeezed his shoulder. Looking around, Dean realized they were heading to the bathroom. He nodded to Chris and they got to their feet and followed the caravan.

Zar’s bathroom was huge. There was a huge tub with steps leading up to it. Dean and Chris perched up top, feet on the steps, and waited as Pam and Zar got things ready. Dean took the joint when it was passed and inhaled deeply.

Pam was bent over the counter and working coke on a mirror. She then motioned that it was ready
and Zar stepped up to do a line. Dean watched as Cas was proffered by Zar. He watched his man wave it off. Zar kind of looked at Cas like he’d grown a third head, but then nodded in submission when he realized that Cas’ harder partying days were behind him.

Cas’ eyes found Dean and locked. Dean gave his man a wink and watched Cas relax with it.

Dean slid his knees apart and tipped his head in invitation. Cas immediately crossed the tile floor and settled down between Dean's knees, leaning back comfortably. Eventually, Pam settled between Chris’ legs in a similar posture and they all chatted as Zar and two others whose names Dean didn’t bother learning took turns doing lines.

The four of them simply relaxed and had a nice time, passing a fat joint between them and laughing at Zars crazy antics while he and his friends got loaded. Dean and Cas bought a bag of weed while they were there, as did Pam and Chris.

Soon they were all back in the living room. The music had been turned up while they’d been in the bathroom, and there were more people now. They stayed for a round of drinks but soon headed out, thanking Zar for his hospitality. Dean watched Pam give Zar a warm hug and agree to keep in touch.

They were all buzzing pretty heavily and ended up walking pretty far to get to a good club where live jazz was played. It wasn’t really Dean's thing, but he didn’t mind. And Pam loved it. There were couples out dancing but most everyone was just listening from their table as they drank and nibbled on appetizers.

The venue was actually perfect. Good music, but not so loud that they couldn’t hear each other talk. They talked about everything… old times, old friends, new friends, new challenges and their hesitant transition from youth to middle age.

When they arrived back home, Mary was watching TV with the baby cuddled to her chest. Dean confessed they’d had a lot to drink and asked if it was okay for them to stay over. Mary was thrilled. It meant she didn’t have to surrender the baby yet.

Dean gave them his room and pointed out the dock for music – reminding them that Mary would be downstairs for quite a while so they should feel free to play the music as loud as they wanted. He said it to Chris with an eye waggle so they’d know they had permission to fuck.

Then he put an arm around Cas and led him to Sam's room – which still had a tiny bed from when Sam was young. They chuckled as they tugged off their clothes – uncoordinated but buzzing hard enough not to care. “I’m gettin’ laid in my brothers bed tonight,” grinned Dean.

“You need to be quiet too. There’s no music in here,” said Cas – looking around.

Dean staggered over to the tiny television sitting on a corner of Sam's dresser and turned it on. He searched until he found MTV and turned the volume way up.

“What the fuck is this crap?” Dean growled. “Remember when there used to be music on MTV?”

“Shhh” said Cas, pressing his palm over Dean's mouth. Dean nodded and Cass took his hand away.

“I’m so hot for you right now,” said Dean grabbing Cas by the hips. “Do that again if I get noisy.”

He watched the gears turning in Cas’ head and decided to shut it down early. “No Cas. You’re not stuffing my boxers in my mouth this time.”
Poor Mary… she was in maternal heaven with a sleeping bundle of sweetness in her arms. And from the upstairs hallway there was Led Zeppelin blasting from one room and lousy late night TV blasting from the other. She may have laughed a little.

“Are you nervous?” Cas asked Anna as they stood together in the back of the church.

“No,” she said calmly. “I’ve never been more sure of anything in my entire life.”

“You look stunning,” he told her honestly. She was the epitome of style and grace in her dress. Her hair was done in large cascading waves and the veil framed her face beautifully.

Without further ado the double doors opened and the organ started up. Cas linked his arm into hers and began a slow and easy march up the aisle with her. She smiled and locked eyes with Michael and didn’t look away the entire walk to him. When they reached the front, the minister stepped up and asked “Who gives this woman to be wed?”

“I do,” Cas said firmly. And with that he guided her forward and placed her hand in Michael’s. He gave a slight bow and then stepped to the side and away, moving on silent feet to join Dean and Mary where they were seated in a pew just a few rows back.

As Cas settled in next to his man, Dean took his hand and held it as they watched Anna and Michael take their vows.

The reception was surprisingly fun. Dean had never really had fun at one of these… with the obvious exception of the 15 minutes he spent either eating or fucking a bridesmaid in a closet or bathroom stall.

But this celebration was different than those of his past. First of all, he was genuinely happy for the couple. Secondly, there were actually a lot of people here that he hadn’t seen for quite a while and was happy to catch up with. And finally, he was far more comfortable celebrating someone else’s happy union when he was enjoying his own.

Not only was he completely in love with Cas and happily promised for life, but dammit Cas was gorgeous in his tux! Dean couldn’t help but lick his lips every time he looked at his man… all dark skin and wide eyes.

Plus, Cas always had rumpled hair – unable to keep it tame for long. Dean liked it that way. But Anna must’ve dropped him into a salon chair this morning because, damn. His soft deep brown locks had been artfully sculpted to appear tousled and it was sexy as hell.

_Fuck. I wanna hit that._
Later, when the lights were low and couples were dancing, Dean plunked down next to his mom. “That was a nice wedding, wasn’t it, Mom.”

“Yes, it was beautiful. Anna was beautiful.”

“Saw you dancing with that guy.”

She gave him a questioning look. “The tall one – grey suit,” he pressed.

“Oh, yes, he’s an uncle of Anna’s. One of the few from her extended family that actually came.”

“Mom, I should’ve told you this long ago. But I didn’t. Cause I’m a selfish bastard sometimes.”

“Honey, what?”

“Sam and I don’t mind if you date. It’s probably way past due. I know you’d never want to make us uncomfortable by bringing another man around. But we understand… we’ve talked about it. And we don’t want you to be lonely.”

“Oh sweetie,” she said, cupping his cheek, “I’m not lonely. I’m not.”

He nodded but averted his eyes from her, choosing instead to focus on the couples dancing. Primarily Cas who was dancing with a tiny little girl in a baby-doll dress and Mary Jane shoes. He twirled her around and smiled as she giggled, showing gaps where she’d lost teeth. Dean smiled too.

“I appreciate you letting me know that you and Sam are ready for me to date. Maybe someday I will. But I doubt it.”

“Dean,” she said firmly. He finally looked at her now.

“Dean, your father was the love of my life. The kind you only get once. There is simply no room in my heart for anyone else. He was taken from me early… and I miss him terribly. But he cannot be replaced. I curl up each night with my memories of him… and a love that’s every bit as real and strong now as it was the day I married him. Stronger.”

Dean didn’t know what to say in the face of such a declaration.

“Dean. He may be gone, but that doesn’t interfere with my ability to love him. I’m not moping around; I enjoy my life. I enjoy watching you boys live your lives too, and being part of all that. I live my life every day and love your dad. And when I get to heaven he’ll be waiting for me.”

Dean wrapped his arms around her… the most incredible woman he’d ever been blessed to know. “I love you so much, Mom.”

“I love you too Dean,” she said softly. “Now, I think you’d better go relieve your man.” She giggled.

Dean looked up and saw that Cas was being led around by several little girls who were taking turns having him spin them around. He chuckled and headed out onto the dance floor.

“Hello ladies,” he said politely to the curly haired princesses surrounding Cas.

“I need to take your handsome prince from you,” he said with a smile, “but there’s another one right over there!” The girls followed his pointing finger and zeroed in on Michael. Dean used the diversion to pull Cas by the elbow and move him farther out on the dance floor, “Can I lead
“Yes, Dean,” Cas said warmly as they began moving together.

Over Cas’ shoulder, he locked eyes with his mom and smiled.

Sam laid in bed next to Jess. She was like a mountain. He couldn’t see the TV over her bump. But he laid there next to her, thinking about how wonderful she was, and how incredible their life was going to be. When she began to roll over, he instinctively moved a pillow to right where she’d want it.

Bonus. Now he could see the TV.

“Ahh!” Jess called out loudly. Sam startled and began to sit up. “Fuck!” she cursed.

“What, Jess, what?”

“Charlie horse!” she said clamping her hand onto her calf muscle.

“Practice your breathing,” he told her as he reached for her leg and began massaging her calf muscle to loosen it.

“Fuck my breathing!” she panted, “Ah!”

Within a few moments, the pain began to pass, and she settled back down into the bed. “Sorry,” she apologized softly. He gently brushed her hair back from her face, “Soon sweetie, it’ll be over soon,” he cooed at her. But she was already falling back asleep.

The last people Dean caught up with that night before he left were the Harvelles.

“Jo!” he hollered when he saw her.

“Dean!” she called back as she slid up to him.

They both dropped into a warm hug. “How have you been?” he asked her.

“Doin’ good, can’t complain,” she said warmly. “I heard you like moved to Guatemala or some shit?”

“Honduras,” Dean smiled.

“You and Cas both? Together?”

“You bet. He’s here somewhere…” Dean trailed off as he looked around for Cas.
“Where’s Matt?” he asked, returning his attention to Jo.

“At home with the baby. I came with mom,” she smiled, “And speak of the devil!”

“He shall appear,” grinned Ellen, holding a stiff drink in her hand. “And if it isn’t the young Mr. Winchester! Give an old lady a hug!” she said as she pulled him in and slapped him firmly on the back.

“I think Mom likes you better gay,” smiled Jo. “She warned me off about you… back in the day.”

“Did she?” Dean goaded her loudly as they pulled out of the hug.

“Oh yeah. And I wasn’t wrong to warn her, was I?” pressed Ellen.

“No ma’am. You were smart to warn her. I was bad news for skirts back then,” he said – almost proud.

“You’re all grown up now though, aren’t you boy?”

Dean felt he owed Ellen more than a hug. She was on the Children’s League board with his mom. By coming to support Anna at her wedding… Ellen had actually jeopardized the sizeable donation that the Milton family made each year. Even with her father in prison, Anna’s family had far reaching fingers with which to pull strings.

Dean knew that missing out on a donation the size that the Miltons made each year could put a real crimp in their operating budget. And he knew Ellen had considered this before coming. But here she was. Clearly there were things more important to Ellen than money.

“Listen, Ellen, if the Miltons drop out on their donation this year… let me know. Cas and I will replace it.”

“Well, thank you, Dean. That’s very kind of you. Things must be going well with your hotel then?”

“Well, we’re gettin there,” he told her honestly. “At this point we’re meeting our goals. We’re not in the black yet, but hopefully we will be soon.”

“Good,” she said firmly. “You kids have fun,” she said to him and Jo as she sauntered off.

“Dance?” invited Dean.

“Sure,” she slid into his arms and they began a slow and easy box step. “You and Cas looked real happy dancing earlier.”

“Yes. We are,” he confirmed. “How bout you and Matt? Still in love now that there’s a screaming, pooping kid in the house?”

“Well,” she said, meeting his eye, “the honeymoon is over – I won’t argue that. But I love him very much, and he loves me too.”

“That’s great Jo. You like being a mom?”

“Yes. It’s a lot of work, but it’s incredible,” she breathed.

Dean stepped to the side, took her hand and twirled her around. As he folded her back into his arms he had to smile for her. She was really something, all grown up.
The sorority girl trappings had just fallen away and left the best of her behind. She had blossomed. Still a spitfire, no doubt about it. But warm, loving. Strong. Vibrant. Every bit her mother's daughter.

“You grew up real well, Jo. Real well.”

“You did too, Dean,” she said warmly as their dance came to its end.

Dean sought out the bride. When he found her, he also found Cas. The men leaned into each other and Dean could tell by Cas’ posture that he was ready to call it a night.

They both gave Anna and Michael one final squeeze before making their exit. As they walked to the car, Dean slid his hand into Cas’ again. They’d done a lot of hand holding today.

“You’re lookin damn fine in that tux, Cas,” Dean winked at his man as they slid into the Impala.

*I love it when he winks at me.*
“Labor?” asked Sam into the phone with surprise on his face, “She hasn’t even had false labor yet. Isn’t that a prerequisite?”

“Not all women have that,” said Mary as she exited the wedding reception and headed for the car. “Watch the clock. Time the number of minutes between pains. Call me back in half an hour, ok?”

“Ok mom, talk to you soon.”

“What did she say?” asked Jess from the couch.

“She said you could be in labor. She wants me to time it.”

“I really don’t think this is strong enough pain to be labor,” she told him honestly. “I’m pretty sure it’s just cramps.”

“Well, I called her. Now we have to do what she says.”

They tried to stay calm and just time the cramps. But the intervals were unsteady. She’d have a pain, then have another three minutes later. Then nothing for like twenty minutes.

Eventually, Sam called Mary back and told her the update.

She could feel his disappointment through the phone line. “It won’t be long honey,” she said to try and cheer him.

“Yeah. That’s what I keep telling her,” he chuckled.

“Tell you what,” said Mary, “I’ll stop over in the morning. We’ll plug her nose and blow really hard into her mouth. We’ll just push them out!” she giggled.

“Nice, Mom.”

“Hang in there, Sam. You’ll be a daddy soon.”

“Love you, Mom”

“You too Sam. Good night sweetie.”

Mary drove through the darkened city, thinking about her growing family and looking forward to rocking her grandchildren. When she arrived home, she locked the front door as she passed through it and headed up the stairs. She turned off the lights and headed down the hall to her room. There was music coming from Dean’s room. Again. She chuckled as she passed.

She was briefly tempted to bang loudly on their door… just to freak them out. But she went to her room instead, suppressing a giggle as she closed her own door and turned on the TV.
“Hey Cas?” Dean called from the bed, squinting in the early morning sunlight.

“Yes?” he answered from the sink in the bathroom where he was shaving.

“I got an email from Sunni, but I think she meant it for you.”

“What’s it say?”

“Say’s she’s running low on the garnish for ‘Sex on a Pebbled Beach’?”

“Oh, yes, that’s meant for me. Can you just forward it to me?”

“Sure. What is ‘Sex on a Pebbled Beach’?” Dean asked, sitting cross legged on the bed, where he was checking his email on his laptop.

“Remember the colored rock candy on sticks that we bought at Bryce Canyon?”

“Sure”

“Well, I added a drink to the bar menu. It’s basically a regular ‘sex on the beach’ but done in the blender with a sugared rim on the glass and a stick of rock candy as the garnish.”

“No shit?”

“Yes. They look awesome, we’ve been selling a shit-ton of them.”

“So Sunni wants you to get more rock candy?”

“So it would seem.”

“But she hates the show-off drinks? She hates my fuckin ‘Jungle Punch’ anyway!” Dean retorted with a little bit of bite.

“She may hate our overdone drinks… but she knows a profit when she sees one,” Cas replied with a laugh.

“So your concoction is doing well?”

“Yes, Dean. A regular ‘Sex on the Beach’ sells for nine bucks. ‘Sex on a Pebbled Beach’ sells for thirteen-fifty. That’s a four dollar and fifty cent mark up. Considering the rock candy pieces are about thirty-nine cents each… yes. It’s doing well.”

“Damn Cas. I should’ve let you buy more of that rock candy,” he grinned.

“Nah,” said Cas as he emerged from the bathroom, “I’m sure it will be cheaper per unit if I order it in bulk. Did you send me the email?”

“Yep”
“Alright. I don’t want to forget. I’ll order them once and then send Sunni the link so she can add it to the inventory.”

“You ready to head down for breakfast?” Dean asked him.

“Mhmm,” Cas nodded absently as he threw on a shirt. “You remember we’re going out with Cole and Kim tonight, right?”

“Of course,” Dean said as he snapped the laptop shut and stood, “Are Gabe and Robin coming too?”

“No. They can’t get away from the restaurant. They’re at that early stage… you remember what those days were like, right?”

“All too well,” he sighed, “Glad we’re past it. It was exciting, but draining.”

He gave Cas a shoulder clap as he walked past him and out into the hall, “Ooh! Smell that?” he said dreamily as he walked towards the stairs, “Mom’s makin’ cinnamon rolls!”

Mary was just pulling them out of the oven when they boys wandered in.

“M’gonna miss this mom… hot breakfast, hearty dinners, laundry done and folded at my bedroom door for me! You know how to make a kid wanna stick around dontcha?”

“It’s my pleasure sweetie!” she said, pecking him on a scruffy cheek, “What are you boys doing with your day?”

“Well, if Jess is up for it, I think we’re gonna swing by and get a look at the new house,” smiled Dean, “Then we’re goin’ out with Cas’ friends tonight. You remember Cole and Kim from the soccer game way back when?”

“I think so,” she said thoughtfully as she turned rolls out of a pan and onto a cooling rack, “the ex-soldier with short dark hair, right?”

“Yep. They’ve got a kid now and a new baby. We’re gonna see the kids first then take them out to dinner.” Looking at Cas, Dean said, “Did you make a reservation anywhere?”

“Cole took care of it.”

“You know where we’re going?”

“Not a clue,” he said, licking his lips as he settled against the counter and watched Mary slather frosting on cinnamon rolls the size of salad plates.

Mary smiled brightly as she plated one for Cas and held it out teasingly, watching him reach for it and then pulling it away to torment him just a little before finally letting him have it.

Dean filled mugs of coffee for the three of them as they settled around the table to eat. They explained to Mary that they were planning to keep going up in the plane each day to log as many hours as they could toward Dean’s certification. They would, Dean promised, stay close in case Jess went into labor.

When the boys were leaving to head over to Sam’s, Mary pushed a plate of rolls into their hands for Jess and told them not to get under foot over there because she was cranky these days, “…and with good reason!” she emphasized when she saw the look the exchanged.
Sam and Jess’ house wasn’t far. In fact, they could’ve walked to it. But when they pulled in, Sam was just leaving for work.

Dean looked at his watch in a pantomime of insinuation that Sam should’ve been gone by now. He simply grinned and took a roll from the plate they were holding. He didn’t even wave to them as he pulled out, hands full of sticky roll and steering with his knee.

The boys presented Jess with the sugary breakfast and settled in with her while she ate it. They chatted lightly over coffee and then when she was finished, she took them on a tour of the place.

It was impressive. The entryway was grand… more so than the home they were raised in… just half-a-dozen streets over. The floor plan on the main level was very open, and the steps to the second floor were framed by large banisters and stayed open most of the way up to the second floor.

There was a large “front room” right off the entry that connected to a larger “great room” in the back of the house. This large sunken room was full of comfortable furniture and natural light… the French doors on the back opening out onto a huge back deck and rolling yard.

Between the great room and the enviable kitchen was a tall breakfast bar and from there, if you headed back towards the front of the house, you’d find yourself in the formal dining room.

There was a huge pantry and laundry room just off the kitchen and then… surprise! A back stairway to the second floor. “Damn,” said Dean, “Sam really went all out, didn’t he!”

“Honestly, Dean,” said Jess with a smile, “It was a lot more house than we were looking for. But, the location was perfect. After the first one fell through… we jumped on this and never thought twice.”

“It’s absolutely lovely, Jess!” Cas said with obvious appreciation. “How many rooms have you got up here?” he questioned as they climbed the back stairs.

“Four. There’s the master, a guest room and one room for each of the kids,” she said, pausing to catch her breath before continuing the climb. “They’re sharing this one as a nursery,” she said as she opened the first door and gestured for them to enter, “When they’re ready we’ll give them each their own room.”

“Oh my!” Cas swooned when they entered, “It’s so wonderful. Jess, you did a beautiful job in here!”

“Thank you!” she practically squeaked at his praise. The walls had been painted in a very unique shade of periwinkle. The room would easily feminize with the introduction of some pink, or masculinize with deeper blue or turquoise touches. Gender neutral art hung on the walls… Mickey and Minnie Mouse decorations abounded. “My friends came over and helped me paint…” her voice trailed off as she leaned on the wall and put a hand to her belly.

“Jess?” both men said in unison.

She waved them off. “I’m fine… M’fine. Just gets me when one of them stretches in there…”

Dean had stepped closer to her and could see little drops of perspiration gathering on her forehead and upper lip. “You should sit…,” he told her firmly, putting a hand to her waist and trying to lead her to the rocker in the corner.

“Nope. Definitely not,” she said through gritted teeth, “… barely enough room in there when I’m
standing.”

“When’s the official day?” asked Cas.

“Due tomorrow. Officially. If I haven’t gone into labor by Thursday we have an appointment to induce.” She practically panted from where she was leaning on the wall.

Dean and Cas looked at each other, not really knowing what to say or do as she suffered.

“Oh thank fuck!” she cursed as she pushed herself away from the wall.

“It’s over? Just like that?”

“Yup,” she grinned, “Pretty sure there’s two NBA starters in there!” she joked, “They’re so tall that when they stretch it feels like they’re gonna break me!”

“Damn, Jess,” said Dean as he walked beside her cautiously into the hall, “we’re walkin’ you to your bed and then you’re stayin’ put there!”

“Don’t have to tell me twice,” she joked. They passed the guest room which was full of boxes still, and the other bedroom, which was mostly empty. At the end of the hall was the master suite, and it was incredible.

The bedroom itself was quite impressive, then there was a huge walk-through sitting area with his and hers closets – one to the left and one to the right.

The “hers” closet actually had a reupholstered fainting couch in a very modern material as well as a huge chandelier in the center. Around the perimeter were the backlit spaces for hanging clothes, racks for shoes, shelves and cubbyholes. It looked like a Nieman Marcus store.

As they walked through the sitting area between closets, they came to the entrance to the bathroom. It was stately and oversized with a huge tub dominating the center. “Jeez!” remarked Dean, “I thought Zar’s bathroom was huge. This is fuckin’ Buckingham Palace!”

“Yeah,” nodded Jess, “I get the feelin’ that the last owner had quite a demanding wife.”

“And now you don’t have to be,” smiled Cas as he helped her to the bed. Dean watched as Cas helped her get her feet up on it and covered her over with a blanket from the foot of the bed. “Take a nap sweetie, you look tired,” he cooed to her as they backed out of the room. “We’ll lock up on the way out. Do you have your phone?”

She nodded in appreciation and thanked them as they closed the door to her room.

“Jesus, Mary and Joseph!” said Dean through his teeth as they walked down the hall, “We’re not flyin’ any-fuckin-where!”

“What?” asked Cas as they started down the stairs, “You worried she’ll go into labor while we’re in the air?”

“Dude! We’ll be lucky if we get through dinner before she pops!” They were both laughing as they exited through the front door and locked it behind them.
When the boys arrived at Cole and Kim's house, they were greeted warmly. The babysitter was already there, and the family was all in the living room. The older boy, Billy, was playing some sort of toddler video game. He waved to Dean and Cas when prodded to by his parents but then immediately returned his attention to the game.

Kim was in the recliner rocking a tiny baby in denim coveralls and little baby converse. “It’s great to see you guys again!” she enthused, “Have a seat, tell us about all your adventures!”

Cole leaned in and put a beer in each of their hands, and they relaxed into the couch to get caught up. They stayed for a few beers and the swapping of several stories before Cole stood and announced they needed to head out to make the dinner reservation.

The little pink baby, Devin, was handed off to the waifish baby sitter and then Kim ran to “freshen up.” The boys all headed to Cole’s SUV in the driveway, still talking while they waited for her to join them.

Dean explained Jess’ condition earlier today and tried to make a bet with Cas on them not getting through dinner without getting “the call.” Cas refused to take the bet, feeling as Dean did that they’d soon be at the hospital.

As they ate dinner slowly and enjoyed several rounds of drinks, they heard the full story of Cole’s recent transfer to the K-9 unit; and his new partner with four paws and a drooling habit. The man seemed genuinely happy with his job. Kim was working for a finance company of some kind, but was on maternity leave for several more weeks before she’d have to go back.

The boys kept the couple entertained with the crazy stories of the locals and all the things that didn’t go as planned while they were opening the resort.

As they walked back to Cole’s SUV afterwards, Cas leaned in and quietly said, “Dammit Dean, I should’ve bet against you about Jess. I’d be holding a marker for a blow job right now.”

Dean lifted his eyebrows and replied, “I think we can work something out.” Cas gave him a questioning smile and Dean said, “Rock-paper-scissors for it Cas.”

They climbed in the back seat and as Cole was opening the door for his wife, Dean and Cas were in the back, “One, two, three, shoot!”

“Ah-ha!” Dean said loudly, celebrating.

“Best out of three,” laughed Cas, “One, two, three, shoot!”

“Yeah baby!” Dean teased loudly.

“Dammit! Best out of five!” insisted Cas.

Dean smiled and leaned in to whisper, “If you want it that bad, you could always beg me.”

“Not going to happen tonight, Winchester, you’d be insufferable… One, two, three, shoot. Fucking hell, Dean!”

“Oh, Cas… it’s just not your night,” he grinned.
“Jess, do you realize you’re doing that about every five minutes?”

“Doing what?”

“The breathing thing. Are you practicing?”

“Yeah, I’ve been getting nasty cramps all afternoon. I figured I may as well do like you said and practice the breathing… every five minutes, huh?”

“Seems like it,” Sam concurred. They were sprawled on the couch. Sam was working on a giant sub sandwich and Jess was sipping on a glass of chocolate milk.

“I guess we should time it and see, right?” she asked him – not wanting to get her hopes up.

“Ok. Just tap me when you start your breathing again in case I don’t notice,” he told her as he returned his attention to Law and Order SVU.

“Any requests?” asked Cas as he loaded his phone into the dock in Dean's room.


“Fuck you, Winchester,” said Cas brazenly as he pulled up a playlist and started the music.

“If you’re lucky,” Dean threw back at him as he crossed the room and unzipped his fly. “C’mon man, make it good.”

Cas glanced down at his man's package, just now realizing that Dean had been commando all night long.

“Dean,” said Cas as he sank to his knees, “that’s the only way I know how to do it.” And without further banter, he took Dean's half-hard dick into his mouth. Before he'd even sank down all the way, his rough hands were jerking Dean's pants to his knees and grabbing supple ass cheeks forcefully.

“Oh yeah, you know how to do it alright,” Dean said quietly as his hands came to rest on Cas’ head. “That’s my man. Suck my cock for me, Cas.”

“Mhmmm,” hummed Cas, feeling his own wood growing between his legs as his mouth was pressed firmly downward. Cas breathed in the scent of dick, of man, and felt a shiver snake up his spine.

“That’s my boy,” praised Dean as he clamped down on Cas and rolled his hips forward, pushing in deeper.

Just then, the alert went off on both their phones. At the same time.
“You have GOT to be KIDDIN ME!” grouched Dean as they broke apart and reached for their phones.

“Yep,” said Cas as he looked at his screen, “that’s an official baby 911.”

“C’mon man!” complained Dean, stroking his wet cock, “Can’t you just finish quick?”

Cas chuckled and leaned in, ready to suck dick…

But then there was a loud knock at the door. “BABY!” shouted Mary on the other side.

“We’re comin’!” yelled Dean as he started tucking his junk back into his pants. “Fuck. My. Brother.”

Cas laughed as he pressed his palm on his own hard dick through his pants, willing it to soften.

The waiting room here was much nicer than the ones they’d had to sit in outside of the ER or surgery. The lights were soft, the furniture comfortable. Dean and Cas settled together on a small couch and Mary was across from them in a chair.

“The gift shop closes in a half-hour,” said Cas to Dean. “Maybe we should run down there and grab something for her room?”

“Sure Cas,” said Dean dryly.

“I’ll come with you,” said Mary.

They all moved through the gift shop, showing each other cute things and deciding what to get. When they returned to the birthing center, they were laden with bags of gifts and bouquets of flowers and balloons.

“This is how the hospital gift shops make their money,” joked Dean, “people just get bored!”

They set their purchases down and Mary gestured to the large round table nearby, “Play cards?” she invited.

“Definitely,” grinned Cas.

The boys moved over to a table with her and began playing UNO. Within a half hour, Jess’ sister Nat arrived. They dealt her in. Then Jess’ father arrived and was dealt in too. They played for an hour or so and then took a break to hit the vending machines down the hall and use the restroom.

Resigned, they all plopped back down to play cards again. Sadly, they could actually hear some of the pained cries and shouting from the delivery room. They worked at talking louder to cover it, until it couldn’t be ignored anymore and they all burst out laughing. “We’re awful for laughing,” said Nat, “but I can’t stop!”

After another hour, it got quiet again. Shortly after that, a very sweaty and emotionally wrung out
version of Sam Winchester stepped out into the waiting room and fell into the embraces of his family.

“It’s boys,” he said softly. “Boys.”

“Awww!” broke from the ladies, and congratulatory back-slaps came from the men. Sam looked a little shell shocked.

“You doin’ ok, honey?” asked Mary.

“Yeah, Mom,” he said hugging her again. “I just can’t believe it finally happened.”

“How is Jess?” she asked.

“Jess is fine,” smiled Sam, directing his gaze toward his father-in-law and his sister-in-law. “She’s not quite ready for visitors yet,” he breathed, “but she’s fine. And the babies have all their fingers and toes.”

When Sam shuffled back into the birthing room, his eyes brightened. There had definitely been a change to the room while he’d been gone.

The macabre, bloody mess was gone. The harsh lights were off and had been replaced with soft lamplight. The babies were in the center of a cluster of medical professionals who were speaking quietly as they worked under heat lamps.

Jess looked much better too. The nightmarish attachments to her bed had been removed and she was wearing a robe over her hospital gown. She’d been covered over with fresh linens and there were two nurses fawning over her. Her sweaty face had been scrubbed clean and her ratty hair had been brushed and pulled back from her face. She was sipping on a little paper cup of cool water and seemed quite calm.

Then, she noticed he was there. When their eyes met, hers moistened a little. He felt the stirrings of love in his heart as he looked at the mother of his children, beholden to her in every way.

Her deep blue eyes locked on his and he felt something powerful pass between them – a deep knowledge that something incredible had shifted in the universe – even if no one else had really felt it but them.

Whatever invisible thread it was that had bound them before… it had been forged to a steel cable in the passing of a moment. They were unbreakable, Unshakeable. Fortified by a bond that couldn’t be seen or touched but was every bit as tangible as the structure of the building around them.

All the meaning of life had shifted now, and they both knew it.

He was no longer just this woman's husband. He was her guardian and fierce protector. He had lives in his hands, and everything he did mattered. He was an important man now. Not because he’d graduated law school, was on the board of directors, or won some cases or for any of the other things that he’d previously thought had made him a man. Nope. None of that even mattered at all.
He was the most important person IN THE WORLD to the three heartbeats in this small room. That’s what mattered. He felt a reverence for the word “father” like he never had before. It meant so many incredible things.

His eyes grew moist again as his mind settled on his own father. He now understood for the first time how truly LOVED he’d been. It was as if his mind simply hadn’t been able to comprehend that love fully until he’d experienced it for himself. Now, it washed over him like a wave.

Jess could feel it too… it was all over her face. He watched her become a mother before his eyes as he stepped to her bedside. The nurses seemed to know to move aside for them as they wrapped arms around each other and cried tears of joy for all that they had just become.

A family.

“How long do you suppose before we’ll be able to see them?” Dean asked Mary.

“Just be patient,” she told him, “there’s a lot going on back there. They have to check the babies, document the birth and get Jess taken care of. You may as well sit down and relax.” Her voice was firm.

“Yes, Uncle Dean, sit down,” encouraged Cas. “You too, Auntie Nat!” he teased her. She gave him a wide smile… so much like Jessica’s… straight white teeth, full lips and cheeks, arching eyebrows and piercing blue eyes. Nat, however, had dark brown hair, where Jess was blonde. This one difference aside, they were practically twins.

“Oh! I’m an auntie!” she grinned as she clapped her hands together giddily. “And you’re a papa!” she enthused to her father.

“That’s right,” added Dean as he turned back to Mary, “You’re a grandma!”

She looked very proud and very thrilled. She smiled at Dean and then turned her head look at something behind him. He followed the path of her eyes as they locked on something over his shoulder.

Both broke into a huge smile as Sam walked out to them again. He looked much better now. Clearly the shock had worn off. His eyes were shiny and his smile was ear-to-ear. “You guys wanna come meet the babies?” he asked.

The entire group squealed collectively and jumped to their feet, gathering their bags and gifts and following Sam as he strode confidently down the hall. He stopped at the door to the room and gestured for them to enter. They filed past him and were greeted with Jess’ mega-watt smile from the bed where she was sitting with a baby in the crook of each arm.

There was still one nurse in the room, clearly posted to be of assistance if any was needed. Two little incubators on wheels were nestled in a corner. Sam stepped behind their small crowd of visitors and raised his voice above the din of their cooing, “Everyone, meet John and James Junior.”

As everyone released a collective “awwww” and leaned in, Mary turned immediately to Sam,
stepping away from the bed and moving to hug him tightly. “Oh Sam,” she breathed into his hair, “your father would’ve been so proud and so honored.”

“Thanks, Mom. I wish he was here.”

“Me too sweetie,” she said softly. “Me too.”

Dean's attention was fixed on the two lumps wrapped in pastel blankets. “Jess,” he asked, “which one is which?”

“Ohay,” she said resolutely, “John is on my left and James is on my right.” She let out a giggle. “I can’t tell them apart yet,” she admitted, “have to check their little bracelets.”

When Jess’ father stepped closer, he said, “Jessie, sweetheart, I’m so honored.”

“Thanks, Dad,” she smiled warmly. “But unlike you… we’re going to let people call him Jim or Jimmy, ok?”

“Sure sweetie,” he said with pride and affection, “you’re the mommy.”

“I am,” she said with obvious joy.

Dean surprised himself by leaning in and asking permission to hold one.

“Absolutely, Uncle Dean. Do you need help?”

“I think I’ve got it,” he said as he leaned in and gently slid one hand under the baby, lifting and turning to bring the bundle to his chest as though he’d done it a hundred times.

“You’re a natural!” she exclaimed.

Believe me,” said Dean as he rocked the bundle in his arms, “I’m as surprised as you are!”

Cas stepped back and snapped a few pictures as Dean stood, spellbound, rocking his nephew in his arms. “John Jr. Nice to finally meet you,” he said softly. “You’re named after a great man.”

Cas turned the camera on Jess and she smiled for him so he took a few of her, then a few more as she passed James Jr. to Auntie Nat.

With Jess’ arms liberated of babies, Sam took the opportunity to slide into the bed next to her and wrap his arms around his beautiful wife again. “I’m so proud of you,” he whispered to her as their family’s attention was focused only on the babies. “You were a champ.”

“You too,” She told him. “I couldn’t have done it without you. I’m so lucky to have you.”

“Me too,” he told her, “blessed and lucky.”

When Cas glanced over and saw the couple in the bed together, obviously having a moment, he didn’t intrude. But he did snap a few pictures discreetly, knowing they’d probably like to have this moment remembered.

The room swelled with happy voices as the babies were passed around and everyone took their turn smelling the new babies’ heads and unwrapping the blankets to get a look at their tiny fingers and toes. Both Cas and Nat took a bunch of pictures of everyone and promised to send everyone copies.

Once Jess had eaten a tray of food, she began to get tired fast. It was obvious that the adrenaline
was wearing off and that this new family was ready for some quiet time. One by one they said their
good-byes.

As they moved to Mary’s SUV together, the boys and Mary all agreed they’d sleep well tonight,
and comfortable silence settled in around them on the drive home. When they got back to the
house, Mary offered a snack, and they followed her to the kitchen.

“That’s right,” said Dean teasingly, “you’re Grandma now… that means you’re required to have
cookies and milk on hand at all times!”

“Well, I don’t have any cookies now, but I do have pie left,” she smiled at him. “Would you like a
slice?”

“Always,” he said as he settled in at the table.

“It’s strawberry-rhubarb,” she said to Cas, “would you like some?”

“Yes, please.”

“Did you make this, Mom?” asked Dean as he tucked away the sweet and sour goodness.

“Nope, bought it at the prep school bake sale,” she said as she placed a piece in front of Cas.

She poured them all a glass of milk and then settled in to join them.

“I’m going to go back to the hospital in the morning,” she told them, “but I don’t think I’ll leave
until 10 or 11. You boys are welcome to come with me or ride separately, whichever you prefer.”

“Thanks, Mom. If we’re not up when you’re ready to go, you can just head over without us and
we’ll come when get up and around.”

She nodded as she cut into her pie. She was so full of joy it was practically glowing under her skin.

Dean and Cas crawled into bed together and moved to the center. The house was quiet and dark.
There was almost no moonlight seeping into the room.

“I noticed you taking pictures,” whispered Dean. “Thank you.”

“Of course, Dean.”

“Can I see them?” he asked.

Cas rolled towards the bedside table and pulled his phone to his chest. The two of them tipped their
heads together and looked intently as Cas shuffled through the photos he’d taken. There were more
than he’d realized.

“You look so handsome, Dean,” said Cas softly as he looked closely at a shot of Dean and Sam
together each holding one of the twins and smiling with bright eyes.

Dean leaned in and rested his head on Cas’ shoulder for a moment, “Look at my brother. Man, I
can’t fuckin’ believe my baby brother is a daddy.”

“Yes,” confirmed Cas as he changed the picture to one of Sam and Jess on the bed with their children in arms, “they make a lovely family too.”

“James and John,” muttered Dean. “I like it. I mean I know they’re named after their grandpas but even if they weren’t… the names still sound good. Strong.”

“They were disciples of Jesus,” Cas commented. Then he followed up with, “Sorry… the bible stuff was pounded into me.”

Dean lifted his head from its resting place on Cas’ shoulder and pressed a kiss to his temple. “Do you miss it Cas? We can go to church if you want to.”

“I’m fine Dean. It was just an offhand comment.”

“Okay,” said Dean, lying back down again as Cas changed the picture.

“You looked more comfortable than I expected with the babies,” smiled Cas in the dark.

“Thanks Cas. I didn’t think I’d feel that way. It usually freaks me out how tiny and breakable the new babies are. But for some reason, not those two… it feels right to hold them.”

“Does it change your mind at all about having one of your own?” asked Cas – almost a little worried that it would.

“Ha! Definitely not,” he said as he took the phone from Cas. “Let them have their special time as a new mommy and daddy,” said Dean as he repositioned the camera to take a picture of himself and Cas with their heads resting together, “Smile, Cas,” he said as he clicked off several pictures in quick succession while he turned his head and kissed his man. “We’ll have our special time too,” he grinned as he set the camera aside, “’cause we still get to have uninterrupted sex and sleep through the night.”

Cas turned then, putting his chest to Dean’s back and wrapping arms around him. They laid there like that for a while, embraced tightly, and soon fell asleep.

In the morning, Cas woke and shuffled to the bathroom to pee. Dean was still asleep so he returned to bed, snuggling back into the warm spot they’d been sharing.

He could hear Mary’s hair dryer down the hall and knew that they should be getting around. But he didn’t want to wake Dean. So he simply stayed in their little cocoon and listened as Mary moved about the house. Eventually he heard the garage door go up and her SUV pull out. They were alone.

“Mmm, thank god,” said Dean as he squirreled tighter against Cas, “I thought she’d never leave.”

“You’re a bad boy, Dean Winchester,” grinned Cas as he slid his leg between Dean's knees.

“Don’t I know it,” he laughed throatily as his hand slid down Cas’ smooth back and dipped under the elastic of his boxers. “The babies will still be cute two hours from now. I needed some time
alone with my man.”

“Well, now that you have me alone, what are you going to do with me?”

“Everything!” he said as he squeezed Cas’ ass cheek and pulled their hips closer together to let Cas feel his hardness. “But first things first… someone still owes me a damn blow job.”

“Oh! I thought I was off the hook for that – thought you’d forget about it with all the commotion last night,” laughed Cas as he rolled over to face Dean.

“Um… no Cas. Have I EVER forgotten about a blow job?” he asked, laughing. “Has any man, anywhere, ever forgotten about a blow job?”

“Not one of mine,” said Cas firmly, “I guarantee it.”

“I know that’s right,” Dean said approvingly as Cas began to kiss his way down Dean's bare chest. Dean put his arms up over his head and stretched to full extension, feeling his body wake up, as Cas worked his way down. Boxers were tugged down roughly but Cas didn’t open his mouth right away, pausing to exhale a few times on Dean's morning wood just to make him wait.

“You’re a fucking tease, Cas.”

“Can’t help it,” Cas said softly as he began to lick the straining head of Dean's cock, “love to hear you begging for it.”

“I ain't beggin’ for shit today,” said Dean, “I won this fair and square.”

“M’hmm” Cas acknowledged with a mouth full of heavy dick, “You’ll beg if I want you to,” he said as he pulled off Dean to look his man in the eye.

“C’mon, Cas. Don’t tease me. You know you wanna give it to me,” he admonished as he moved his fingers into the man's soft, dark hair. “You love to feel me hitting the back of your throat.”

Cas couldn’t help but be spurred on by Dean's words… because he did… he fucking LOVED the way it felt to open his mouth for Dean's dick. He dropped his mouth onto Dean's cock and tightened his lips around it, holding back a moan as his eyelids slid closed in ecstasy. His imagination lit up behind his eyelids – showing him all the dirty ways he wanted Dean to use his body.

Dean clenched beneath Cas as the man worked him exuberantly. His stomach tightened and his knees locked as his body was taken in by Cas' strong mouth.

“Uh…” he groaned as Cas opened his throat and slid lower, engulfing Dean's manhood all the way to the hilt.

“Damn Cas,” he praised loudly as he felt his man's throat constrict on his boner. The feeling was intense and his mouth opened involuntarily to suck in a ragged breath, hips rolled upward into tight heat and his hands clamped down on Cas, fingers curled into his hair.

Again, Cas’ throat tightened and he felt the tug of a swallow as though his dick was being sucked into a vacuum, “Fuck!” he cried out.

Fuck. Shit. There's no way I can last through this-

Dean's fingers were curled into Cas’ hair and he found himself pulling the man off, trying to pull
him up and away from an over-sensitive dick. But Cas was strong and held to Dean's dick like he was bolted to it…

“Cas, it’s too much man,” Dean panted, “Please… slow it down…”

Cas pulled off his lover's engorged cock and opened his magical blue eyes to Dean. “What did you say?”

Panting, Dean said, “Slow it down, Cas. I can’t last like that.”

“That’s not all you said. I distinctly heard a ‘please,’ Dean. And I told you I’d make you beg.”

“You fucker,” he said as the corner of his mouth twisted into a smirk.

“Are we going to play games all day Dean?” he teased.

“It’s tempting. I love your sexy games.”

Cas leaned in again, this time suckling down onto Dean's tender member with all the sweetness he could manage, holding back his dirtiest moves for later.

He licked around Dean's shaft and swirled his tongue gently over the tip, blowing cool air across it and watching it twitch as he toyed with it.

Then, he pushed Dean's legs apart as he sunk down, riding his tongue down over Dean's sac and sucking a ball into his mouth. Dean had started panting again, and Cas smiled as he worked over his lover, dropping his chin all the way to the mattress so he could work his tongue over Dean's entrance. As he licked and nibbled at Dean's puckered hole, he was reaching around behind himself to play with his own.

He didn’t need to push in very far, just one finger, up to the first knuckle. He worked it in and out as he licked Dean open and slid his tongue into Dean's tight and bitter hole.

Dean's leg was shaking and his breath was coming fast. Cas felt purposeful movement and opened his eyes to see Dean's thick fingers stroking his fat cock slowly as Cas ate him out. He watched Dean's hand for a few minutes, still working his tongue in and out of the man's tiny ring, occasionally pausing to suck the pleated skin there.

Then without warning he pulled off of Dean and left the man alone, breathing heavily, as he reached for the bag on the floor and found the lube. When Cas turned back to the bed, he was overwhelmed by the sight of Dean.

His man was glorious, splayed out on soft sheets, soaking up the bright morning sunshine. His skin was glowing, and his bright green eyes captured Cas like a firefly in a jar. Dean owned him.

He slowly settled on the bed, never looking away from Dean as the man pinned him with the depth of his gaze.

Cas squeezed gel into the palm of his hand and began stroking himself slowly, letting Dean watch as Cas' own hardness grew in his hand. Then, without breaking eye contact with Dean, he reached behind himself and slid in a slippery finger… then two.

Dean gripped himself too and began mirroring Cas' rhythm. Cas watched as Dean's lips fell open and he began drawing in deep breaths again. Clearly he realized what was coming as Cas moved to straddle him. Cas used a sloppy wet hand to hold Dean's stiff member upright while he slowly
worked himself down on it.

Cas artfully maneuvered his hips in the manner of a belly dancer to sink down, slow and easy, inch by inch, to the last.

Dean couldn’t help but think of how sexy Cas was. The man’s movements were fluid, but as his muscles rolled beneath the surface, Dean was reminded of the sleekness of a jungle cat. All power and graceful movement as it prowled along, stalking its prey and ready to sink its teeth in.

Dean watched Cas’ body moving until his man's eyes found him with intensity like that of a hungry panther – a promise lingering there – “I will eat you alive.”

“God yes” came out of Dean's mouth as Cas began to ride him faster. “Cas,” he said as he felt his body surrender to Cas’ rhythm.

“Dean.” he said in a gravelly voice – husky with need, “Feel so good inside me, Dean.”

“Cas, man… You. Own. Me.” he said as his gaze dropped to his lovers driving hips.

Cas looked down at Dean thinking – *Strange. I thought YOU owned ME.*
“Cas, man… You. Own. Me,” he said as his gaze dropped to his lover’s driving hips.

Cas looked down at Dean thinking – *Strange. I thought YOU owned ME.*

“Dean –”

Dean pried his eyes from taut skin and looked up at Cas’ face. He saw need. He felt Cas’ hands settle over his where they wrapped around hips.

Dean hadn’t been guiding Cas’ hips with his hands – only resting his hands there and letting them ride along as his lover rocked on his body.

Now, met with soulful eyes, he extracted his hands from where they were seated and turned his and Cas’ palms together. He felt their fingers interlace and then they were locked together.

With Dean lying prone on the bed and Cas riding him with their hands clasped together it felt like a circuit closing and the waves of pleasure passed through them in a new way. Dean’s pleasure still stemmed from the tight heat of his lover bearing down on his cock in a sensual, undulating rhythm. But now it moved through him and passed back to Cas where their hands joined. Locking eyes with the man now, Dean was lost in the depths of them as they built together.

Cas’ movements, always languid and sensual, were beginning to lose their artful exhibition as he moved faster and harder towards their end. He watched as Cas’ eyelids grew heavy and sank lower. Soon the man’s head began to tip back and his mouth slid open and he panted hot breath into the quiet bedroom.

All Dean could see of Cas’ face now was the bottom of his chin as his lover became lost in the sensations and let his head fall all the way back. Dean’s eyes dropped too, slowly raking over a strong heaving chest and roaming lower. As his eyes catch sight of Cas’ dick he blinks.

It’s poised between them at a 45 degree angle and it dips steadily in time with Cas’ movements on him.

Dean is thinking of what a nice dick Cas has. It’s the perfect size and shape and the head of it is angry red, skin shiny from being stretched tight. A release is needed desperately, but Cas hasn’t touched himself at all. He’s building with Dean and enjoying their connection… letting things go on as long as possible… not wanting it to be over. Dean understands fully. In these moments with Cas – he’s the most alive. The most connected. The most joined. The most attuned.

But now, as Dean looks at the antithesis of Cas’ manhood, he is overwhelmed by the need to have it. To touch it, suck it, connect to it in some way. He finds it strange to be so drawn to another dick. He’d been with men before Cas. But he’d never really interacted with another man’s cock until Cas.
Of the men he’d been with, the only emotional attachment he’d ever formed was with Adam. Adam Milligan, his roommate for a time at college. Dean was only beginning to discover his sexuality then. But he’d felt something for Adam. He’d been attracted to him, yes. But he’d also felt warmly towards him, and he’d had stirrings of real feelings for the boy. He’d wanted on more than one occasion to hug him. That had been completely new to Dean, and he’d never indulged the impulse.

There were a lot of impulses that he’d ignored with Adam. But not Cas. Cas broke down all his walls. Cas pulled him out of himself. Cas helped Dean match his insides with his outsides. Helped him see clearly who he really was and be that.

It’s incredible to be with someone who embraces him so fully – exactly as he is. Honestly, he feels the same for Cas. They’re different in so many ways – but he’d never dream of wanting to change anything about Cas. The man is the perfect version of himself.

Dean opened his eyes, not realizing they had drifted shut. He looked up at his lover who was lost in the throes of passion. He was an incredible sight, back arched, hips rolling smoothly, head thrown back, arms reaching forward and connecting with Dean at their joined hands. Dean gave a soft pull, bringing his man’s head and shoulders back forward. Cas opened his eyes in response and watched as Dean disconnected hands. Cas’ hands fell to his sides and Dean reached out into the sheets for the lube. Cas never broke his stride as Dean dribbled cool, viscous liquid over his mans swollen member.

Cas let out a long moan at the sensation and watched as Dean moved both his hands to encircle Cas’ aching and needy cock. Cas couldn’t hold back a relieved “Yesssss” as Dean gripped him tightly and began a snug slide of hands in time with Cas’ thrusts. It was hard for Cas to hold on after that, seeing Dean with both hands on him and watching Dean's face as he stared, rapt, while his hands engulfed the thick stiffness between them.

They called out to each other once as they hit the peak together. Cas pulsed out warm and wet onto Dean's hands and stomach. Dean's mouth watered at the display in front of him. Cas was just so erotic to watch.

When the last tremor had passed through him, Cas sank down on Dean and rolled off, falling to the side and into the crook of Dean's waiting arm. He took a deep breath and relaxed fully, satisfied in every way.

Dean, with Cas at his side, let his eyes slip closed in post-coital bliss. As he faded in and out for a bit, he found himself ruminating on Adam again.

Being in a relationship with Cas had changed Dean a lot over the years. It had been slow but steady. He’d grown more confident as he’d been loved by the man. He’d grown more appreciative of everything too. They’d been through some hard times together… fall outs with family, explosions at work, loss of income and employment. In fact, they’d been nearly broke at one point and unsure of how they’d be able to pay the bills for the coming month. It had been lucky that Dean’s condo had sold when it did or they’d have been in real trouble.

But the biggest change in Dean because of Cas had been his acceptance of himself. He’d never been certain of what he was – until he’d coupled with Cas. Now, he knew what he was and how to be the best version of himself.

Adam had been a lot like Cas. Accepting. Loving. Fun. Hell, Adam even had blue eyes. But Dean hadn’t treated Adam the way he treats Cas. He’d been young and naïve, yes, but he’d also been proud and foolish. He’d been selfish and stubborn.
Despite having finally examined and acted on his inclinations towards his own gender, he’d been unwilling to “lower himself” to the things he’d considered demeaning at the time. He’d barely ever even laid a hand on the boy’s dick. He’d made-out with Adam and had accepted blowjobs from him with startling frequency, but had never reciprocated at all. He’d never even given the kid a hand job. He’d humped with him, against walls and in bed, and it seemed to be enough for Adam to get off. In fact, Adam was so eager that it probably was. But Adam had known something then that Dean hadn’t.

Adam knew he deserved more. Better.

He’d eventually moved out and left Dean to find a new roommate. Dean had felt it immature at the time. But now, looking back, he realized that for Adam it was just too difficult to stay. Adam wasn’t the kind to ask Dean to change, but he also wasn’t the kind to settle. And after what had happened between them, staying in the same room with Dean would’ve been too miserable for him.

Dean felt deep shame now as he considered the way he’d treated Adam. The boy had been a firm and fast friend to him, had trusted him and cared for him and given him pleasure while asking nothing in return.

Dean had definitely cared for Adam. But he’d not cared enough to be decent to him. He’d treated him like a pet, metaphorically patting him on the head when he’d pleased him and then walking away while Adam trailed after him. He’d been a dick. And a fool.

He felt sickened as he realized in hindsight how poorly he’d really treated Adam and how long it had taken him to really understand what that treatment had probably done to that wonderful boy.

Eventually, thank heavens, Cas stirred and pulled him from his regret and self-loathing. “I’m gonna grab a shower, and then we can head over to see our nephews,” he smiled warmly as he slid out of the bed. Dean immediately followed, watching the sinuous movements of the lean back in front of him as they climbed into the shower together.

Cas began shampooing his hair and when Dean reached out for him, he honestly wasn’t sure who he was reaching out for.

Cas? Or Adam?

Either way, he hugged the man fiercely and scrunched his eyes shut against streaming water and soap suds.

Cas must’ve wondered what had come over him. But in true form, he didn’t question it. He simply gave himself over to Dean and hugged back tightly, reassuringly.

*Could I possibly love this man more?*

Sam and Jess were enjoying the twins. They kept the incubators in the room with them. The nurses came by and suggested that they let the babies be returned to the nursery and try to get some sleep. They politely declined, preferring to keep the babies in the room with them.

New mommy and daddy took turns holding the two bundles and even played games with each
other. They would put the babies down and then Jess would turn her back on the incubators. Sam would bring her a bundle and she’d try to determine which twin had been laid in her arms. She did the same for Sam. They were having such fun at it for a while that the night nurse stepped in and joined them for a bit.

Eventually, they tired out and cuddled into the bed together, Jess not wanting Sam to sleep so far away as the little “couch-bed” in the room. One baby or the other would wake up every hour or two and either Sam or Jess would sit up in the rocker to feed them with the tiny little bottles of ready-made formula that the hospital provided. It was still so new and exciting to rock and to feed that they didn’t mind how tired they were.

The next morning, Mary came by. As Sam and Mary sat cooing with the babies in their arms, Jess went to the bathroom with the nurse to take her first shower. Her legs were shaky after the first few minutes. She’d been up out of bed quite a bit over the last twelve hours, but this was the longest she’d actually been on her feet in a sitting. By the time she was clean and changed into new clothes she was completely drained.

She crawled back in bed. Sam brought her baby James, and she snuggled him for a while. When she started nodding off, she handed him to Mary and curled up on her side to take a nap. She fell asleep to the soft sounds of Sam and Mary talking and singing old love songs to the babies.

Jess was sleeping hard when Dean and Cas arrived. They tip-toed past her with full smiles to join Sam and Mary with the twins. Mary had been sitting in the rocker with baby John and softly singing a Beatles tune when they walked in. She stopped to greet them and Dean told her, “Don’t stop on our account.”

She was so obviously caught up in Grandma Heaven. But she did excuse herself shortly after the boys arrived, having somewhere she was supposed to be. She hugged everyone warmly and asked Sam to pass on her good-byes to Jess when she woke.

Dean had taken baby John from her when she left and squeezed into the rocker she’d been occupying. “Seems like you should get two of these in the room… having two babies,” he joked to Sam.

“Hey Cas,” said Dean thinking of the pictures Cas had taken, “why don’t you show the proud father the pics you took?”

Cas pulled out his phone and brought up the first image, and Sam transferred baby James to him. Cas settled in with the bundle and Sam began flicking through the pictures.

“Cas,” he said softly – not wanting to wake Jess, “you took so many amazing pictures. Thank you.” Cas nodded absently, his attention fixed on the sleeping bundle in his arms. “Do you mind if I just forward myself the ones I want right now?”

“Mhmm,” nodded Cas, paying Sam no attention. Dean watched as Cas began unfolding the corners of the neatly packaged baby to expose the little feet and hands. He watched his man take the baby’s little pink foot between his thumb and pointer finger.

“Tiniest little toes ever, right Cas?” Dean prompted. Cas nodded, not taking his eyes of the infant.

“Smaller than baby peas,” he replied as a smile broke over his face.

“Well,” Dean snickered, “don’t eat them.”

Cas gave a chuckle and then moved on to examine the hands. “Look, Dean, look!” he called loudly
when the baby wrapped tiny fingers around his pinky.

Dean smiled, trying not to be a sap as he watched Cas marvel over the gift of life in his arms. Then he had to redirect his attention to the bundle in his own arms as it started to cry. Its little face scrunched up and turned red as beet. No tears fell, but his lungs were very strong and noise filled the room.

“Um, Sam,” said Dean firmly, “This is when I like to give babies back.”

Sam was already moving. Dean watched helplessly, having no idea what to do to calm the baby, while his brother moved across the room and grabbed a bottle. He popped the top and held it out. “You do the honors Uncle Dean.” Dean took the bottle – feeling a bit uncomfortable. But there was nothing to fear. The little tike immediately fell silent when the nipple of the bottle passed his lips. Little John Jr. quickly settled into contented sucking noises. Dean could actually feel the bottle moving with the force of the suction. “Hungry little dude,” commented Dean.

Jess had awoken to the crying. Sam encouraged her to go back to sleep but she declined, opting to sit up and have some food. It wasn’t too long before little James Jr. was making his hungry belly known, too, and Sam passed Cas a bottle.

While Dean and Cas fed the babies, Sam crawled up in the bed with Jess and showed her all the pictures Cas had taken.

When five o’clock rolled around, it wasn’t just rush hour on the expressway. Jess’ room was a congested place. It seemed that everyone she knew had dropped by on their way home from work. Nat was the first in… politely cajoling the boys to let her hold one of the babies. Shortly after she arrived, Grandpa James came in too. Dean and Cas were standing and saying goodbyes when Jess’ work friends started coming in droves.

By the time they made their way out – the room was so crowded that there was nowhere to stand. As Dean and Cas were waiting for the elevator, Cas said, “Wow. That was really something.”

“I know,” smiled Dean, dropping his hand on Cas’ shoulder and pulling him in for a beat. “You look fuckin’ adorable holding a baby… just so you know.”

Cas almost blushed at Dean's sweet and flirty demeanor.

Later, when Mary was home, they all went over to Sam and Jessica’s house. They stocked the fridge with groceries and the freezer with some homemade casseroles and soups that Mary had made. They washed up the few dishes that had been left in the sink. On their way out, they hung a “Welcome Home Babies” banner in the entryway and put a few balloon bouquets around the front room and left gifts on the coffee table.

For the next week, life pretty much revolved around Sam and Jess and their little ones. They all helped bringing the new babies home from the hospital and took turns coming over for a few hours at a time so Jess and Sam could get a nap.
Mary had also pushed vocally for the couple to initiate a weekly date night. She said that practice had saved her marriage to John on more than one occasion. With that kind of endorsement – how could they say no? So they instigated a Saturday night ritual where Mary would come over around six and watch the twins while Sam and Jess got ready and then went out somewhere.

When she showed up for the first one… Sam and Jess hugged her tightly and informed her they were going to bed. They told her they’d relieve her at midnight and joked that they could all just pretend the couple had gone out somewhere.

Clearly the babies were a lot of work. And despite the support of family – Sam and Jess were over-tired.

When Dean expressed concerns about it, Mary told him, “Tired is part of it, honey.”

Cas and Dean exchanged a look that read empathy for Sam and Jess mixed with relief that they’d “opted out” of this exhausting spectacle… the miracle of birth.

As they walked up the stairs that night, Dean joked to Cas, “I feel like I have a seat on the fifty yard-line for this.” Cas nodded, knowing exactly what Dean meant, “I have the perfect seat to watch and feel like part of the game,” Dean continued, “but I don’t have any fear of… ya know… fumbling the ball.”

“And,” added Cas sagely, “we don’t have to be part of practices.”

Dean grinned at Cas’ analogy, and they were both laughing as they shut the door to their room, knowing they were both comfortable with their decision not to have children of their own. Clearly it was a lot of work. It was a lot of joy too… neither man would deny it. But for them, their freedom wasn’t something they were willing to trade in.

When the door to their room was shut, Cas had the music on before Dean could even make a request. Without delay, Dean was on his knees for his man and thinking about the things he’d be doing to him this time tomorrow night when they were out of his mother’s ear-shot. For tonight, he’d settle for a mouthful of hard cock on his tongue and coming quietly with his lover’s hand covering his mouth.

Tomorrow they intended to get back up in the air. Dean had filed a flight plan for Seattle. They’d be heading to the airport in the morning and from there they’d be flying north with lots to see from the air on the way. They also had a few things they wanted to do in the Seattle area once they landed and from there… they were headed to Jackson Hole, where they’d be checking out the Grand Tetons.

The boys had an overview of where they were heading on this trip. It was a bit more planned out than any of their actual road trips had been, but having to plan their take offs and departures ahead of time had made them decide to let the trip be a bit more organized than past trips. The goal was primarily to get in as many flight hours as they could stand without actually losing the enjoyment factor.

Sunni and Roberto were doing a wonderful job at the resort, and they boys sent them lots of pictures of the babies to pass around to the staff who knew them well.

Cole and Kim, Chris and Pam, Jo and Matt, Gabe and Robin, Anna and Michael and many other friends sent cards and warm wishes to the couple and congrats to the boys on their status as official uncles to the twins.
Sam walked through the dark house. For some reason, he took great satisfaction in this nightly trek. He checked each entry door to be sure they were locked and that the alarms were active, turning off lights as he went. Then he’d peek into the twins’ room on the way past to be sure they were sleeping sound and the monitor was on. Then he’d stroll into the master bedroom feeling like a military man who’d just finished his rounds. Family safe and secure… time to relax and sleep well.

Jess was settled on her side of the bed, watching the news and eating cookies. Her appetite had returned full force once the babies had been delivered and now, she was eating like she’d never tasted food before. (Or, like she hadn’t enjoyed food at all for the better part of a year. Which was accurate.)

He snuggled in beside her and asked for a cookie. She pulled the plate between them and passed him her glass of milk, clearly intending to share. As they watched the news together, she leaned in a bit and said, “I really love that you took so much time off for me and the babies. It’s been so nice having you around.”

“It’s been great being around. I love it,” he said warmly, muting the television before going on to say, “I know that neither of us would’ve made a conscious choice to have children so young. But now that it’s happened – I really don’t mind. I’m glad to be a father, and I’m going to be a good one.”

“Of course you are. I may have had my doubts about you and me as a couple… but I never questioned what an incredible father you would be.”

“Are you still having doubts about us?”

“No. Of course not,” she told him firmly.

“Are you sure? You can tell me, you know.”

“I’m sure Sam. I don’t doubt you.”

“Good,” he said biting into a cookie, “These are really good. Did you make them?”

“Of course not. Your mom did,” she chuckled.

“Hey Jess, I’m scheduled to go back to work in a few weeks. And I’ve been thinking we should get some help here. What do you think about that?”

“What do you mean by help?”

“Like anything you need. I thought we should talk about it… let’s face it… you’re outnumbered. I’m sure that it’ll be easier to keep up with both of them when they’re older and you can say things like, ‘Just a minute,’ but while they’re little babies in diapers? You need another set of hands.”

“I think I can manage,” she said indignantly.

“I’m sure you can,” he reassured her, “but I don’t want you to have to just manage.”

“I’m fine, Sam, really, I am.”
“Look Jess. I know you want to be a hands-on mom. And I want you to be. So, if you don’t want a nanny then maybe we can just get a housekeeper. That way you can focus on the mommy stuff and not get bogged down in the cooking and cleaning.”

She paused for a moment, considering. Before she could speak, Sam added, “… or we could sign up for a daycare? You know… a place where you could drop the boys off for a few hours a couple times a week and have a little time to do other things.”

She was silent, holding a cookie and staring at the muted television.

“Jess, honey, there’s two of us here now, and we’re exhausted. When I think about having to stay here and do all this without you… I feel like I might shit my pants!” he burst out laughing and she laughed along with him.

Now that he’d confessed that, and gotten her to laugh, her entire demeanor relaxed noticeably. But she still didn’t speak.

“Jess, once I get back to work, I won’t be here til six or so in the evening. And when I get here I’ll be tired. Maybe not as tired as you,” he grinned, “but tired.”

She was thoughtful, settling back on the pillow and dropping a half-finished cookie back on the plate.

“Sam, I feel that if I’m working then I should get some help with the babies. But if I’m not even working, then it doesn’t seem like I should need any help.”

“I would agree with you completely if we had brought just one baby home from the hospital. But we didn’t. We brought two. I mean really, what are you supposed to do if you’re feeding one baby and the other starts to cry? You gonna just let one cry while you rock and feed the other? You gonna prop up a bottle on each shoulder and feed them both at the same time? You’re not superwoman. I don’t expect you to be and neither does anyone else. In my opinion, we need some help when I start back to work.”

She gave him a timid nod, which he took as an agreement.

“Look, given my track record, I don’t blame you if you’d prefer not to bring a nanny into this house,” he laughed softly. “I just want you to picture how things are going to be when I’m gone at work all day and decide what’s going to be the most helpful. We’ll do whatever you want.”

“We shouldn’t have bought this big-ass house, Sam,” she said with a tiny smile playing at the corner of her mouth. “We should have just moved in with your mom.”

Dean and Cas were in Seattle. The flight had gone smoothly. The difference in taking off from a wheat field and from the runway at SFO was drastic. Cas had watched Dean smoothly guide their plane out onto the line-up and wait for their turn to take off. When cleared, he’d made a startlingly professional takeoff. Once they reached their altitude, Dean winked at Cas and flicked the headset button so they could talk.

“That was great Dean. You made it look so easy.”
“That’s quite a compliment, Cas, my father always said that you could tell a person was good at something if they made it look easy,” he said with pride.

The landing in Seattle had been just as smooth as the takeoff. Now, they were all settled into their hotel for the night and had taken a cab down to Pier 57. They were primarily here to ride the big wheel. But both men were hungry and looking for a place to eat.

This pier was clearly tourist-central. They ate at Fisherman’s, sitting outside under a blue umbrella right near the base of the wheel. They ate looking out over the water and enjoying the calm, easy breeze. They even stayed for a few drinks after the meal.

At dusk, the lights came on and the white skeleton of the giant Ferris wheel lit up in pinks and purples and blues and it was quite a sight.

When it was fully dark, they headed over to get in line. They purchased VIP tickets, which ensured a private gondola with a glass bottom and plush seats as well as a sound system. Plus… they got escorted past the line of tourists that were waiting.

When they settled in, Dean commented that it was the fanciest Ferris wheel he’d ever been on. They relaxed and watched the city lights as they climbed slowly, gondolas all stopping as they were filled, one by one, on the platform below. As they ascended, they were literally suspended out over the water, since the base of the wheel was at the end of the pier. But since it was dark they couldn’t see the water when they looked down, they just knew by the location of the lights on the pier how far out over the water they really were.

They crested the top, perched there for a moment and then began the slow descent. Both men nodded appreciation for the city at night, which was a spectacle. After the first rotation, all the gondolas were full so there wasn’t the constant stop and start. The second and third rotations were very smooth. They were lucky the night was so clear, it allowed them to see pretty far.

On their last descent, they talked about doing something else since it was still early, but decided to simply call it a night and be ready to fly in the morning. Both were looking forward to the Tetons. There would be lots of choices for hiking and kayaking or rafting. They planned to stay there for a few days, going up in the plane as much as they could to see the area from the air and rack up the flight hours as well as do some of the tourist things on the ground.

They had lots of other places planned for stops on this trip, too… Niagara Falls, NYC, Lake of the Ozarks, Chattanooga and Nashville. Cas hadn’t really seen much of the US outside his hometown, but there were places that even Dean hadn’t been that he’d wanted to see. They were going to make the most of this trip.

As they were climbing into bed, Dean said, “Hey Cas, you remember joking once about how we should go to a bath house?”

Cas looked across the bed between them as he pulled off his socks and said, “Uh, I don’t remember specifically…,” he said bashfully, “but it sounds like something I probably said. I mean, it’s crossed my mind.”

“What entices you about it?”

“I don’t know,” he responded thoughtfully as he climbed under the covers, “I’m gonna say curiosity. I’ve never done it. I should probably leave the idea alone,” he said as he settled in next to Dean, “I mean, it sounds intriguing in theory, but in real life I bet it’s just a bunch of old nasty guys hanging around and hoping for the best.” He chuckled.
“I had a similar thought. I guess maybe I’m a bit curious, too. I’ve been seeing ads since I was young.”

“And what entices you about it?” asked Cas.

“Honestly? I really get hard thinking about other people watching us have sex. But the real-life scenario is terrifying. I mean… what if a kid saw? Or a sweet old granny?”

“So you think a bathhouse would be a safe place to have sex where people could watch us?”

“When you say it like that, I sound like a perv.”

“You are a perv,” Cas said laughing and turning on his side to run his hand along Dean's stomach, “and it happens to be one my favorite things about you.”

Dean let out a low chuckle and wrapped his arm around Cas’ neck to pull him closer. He put his nose into his man’s soft brown hair and inhaled deeply. “God I love the way you smell,” he whispered.

“What do I smell like?” asked Cas – questioning if it was his shampoo or cologne that Dean enjoyed.

“Cas. You smell like Cas. They should bottle that shit and sell it.”

Cas leaned in, snuggling into the affection and taking the opportunity to put a kiss on Dean's cheek.

“I’ve been thinking about something lately.”

“You mean besides public sex in a gay bath house?”

“Yeah,” Dean said quietly, “I think I want to talk to you about it… cause it’s really starting to eat at me.”

“What?” asked Cas as his heart dropped into his stomach wondering what Dean was going to spring on him.

“Lately I’ve been thinking a lot about my first boyfriend.”

“What about him?”

“Well… I was a real dick to him.”

Cas waited to hear the rest, but nothing was coming. So he gave a little poke, “How were you a dick to him?”

“Do you remember what I was like right after my dad died?”

“Yes. I do.”

“Well, that’s the level of dick I was to this guy.”

“How long were you together?”

“I don’t know if you’d really say we were together. I shouldn’t have called him my boyfriend. I think of him that way now… because of what you and I are now. But back then… he was my dirty little secret.”
“What was his name?”

“Adam. He didn’t want to be public. He was a poli-sci major, and he hadn’t ruled out the possibility of an actual career in politics. He said that until he did… he wasn’t going to have a public relationship. It suited me fine. I didn’t want anyone to know about us, either.”

“So how did you guys even get together?” Cas asked bluntly.

“He was my roommate.”

“Oh. I see,” said Cas softly.

“I was horrible to him. I mean, I honestly didn’t think I was that bad – at the time. But when I look back on it now? Now that I’m with you, and I know what a real relationship is like? Yeah. I’m ashamed.”

“So, you said something’s been eating at you lately. Is it guilt?”

“Absolutely,” Dean said firmly. “We were messing around for a few months. You know what I can be like in the bad times Cas… that was hard on you as an adult. Just imagine what that would be like for a closeted 19-year-old kid.”

“How did it end between the two of you?” Cas asked him from the crook of Dean's arm.

“He moved out. He was nicer about it than I deserved. We’ve never spoken since.”

“What are you thinking of doing? I mean,” said Cas carefully, “you must have something in mind. That’s why you wanted to talk to me about it?”

“Yeah, Cas. I need your help. You’re the person who does all the internet stuff and connects with everyone. I don’t do shit. Can you help me find him?”

“Of course, Dean. Of course.”

“Thank you Cas. I mean it.”

“It’s ok, Dean. You clearly need to make amends, and I’m happy to help,” he finished and then let out a long sigh.

“What?” asked Dean. “What’s that for?”

“Well I guess I’m just thinking that with the list of women you’ve been through, this could turn into full time work for me.”

Dean let out a huff. “I don’t need to track down the women.”

“Why not?” laughed Cas. “You don’t think you owe them an apology too?”

“I never had a relationship with any of them. I’m not gonna call up all those women and apologize for a one-night stand that happened a decade ago. It was different with Adam… that’s why I think of him as a boyfriend. Because we said things to each other… he meant something to me… even if I didn’t treat him like I should’ve.”

“What’s his full name?” Cas said as he hoisted himself up and grabbed the laptop.

“Adam Milligan.”
“Do you know where he was from?”

“Willows.”

It didn’t take Cas long. “Dean. He’s fucking running for Governor.”

Dean sat up in bed. “Are you shittin’ me?”

“No.” Cas told him. “He’s doing well too.”

“What ticket?”

“GOP”

“You’re fuckin kidding me,” Dean said firmly – still unable to believe it.

“This the guy?” asked Cas, turning the laptop towards him so Dean could see a picture.

“I’ll be damned,” said Dean quietly, “go Adam.”

“Will you sleep better now? Now that you know he’s doing well?”

“Yeah, Cas. I feel much better. Thank you,” said Dean, lying back down.

Cas put away the computer and crawled back into bed with Dean. It was quiet for a few minutes and then Cas said, “You still feel like you need to talk to him?”

“I don’t think so,” he said quietly. “I think I’m ready to change the subject now.”

“Ok,” said Cas grinning widely, “Then where’d we land on that whole bath house thing?”

Dean laughed loudly. “I don’t know man… maybe we should just go once to check it out and not do anything… then if we find that we like it we can go back again and do something really nasty.”

“That sounds good to me. I will feel a lot more relaxed going in for the first time if I know I’m not expected to actually do anything.”

“Oh, and let’s make sure we go to a nice one… not a scurvy one,” said Dean.

“If you’re holding out for a non-scurvy bath house… I think you’re gonna be holding out for a while,” laughed Cas, still running his fingers gently along Dean's torso.

“Well, we’ve slept together in nasty hotels… I guess we can play together in a nasty bath house.”

“What would we do if someone tried to join us?” Cas asked him.

“Punch the fucker out,” said Dean firmly. “They can watch. No one’s touching my man but me.”

Cas smiled warmly at the sentiment.

Then Dean added, “Besides – I think we can agree that if anything was ever going to slide in between us in the sack – it will be a hot chick with nice tits. Am I right?”

“You are right,” said Cas as he began tickling his fingers lower. “If I’m to be honest, Dean, I may have some reservations about the bath house.”

“Like what?”
“Well, when it’s just us, I have no issues with the… the… mess?” he said gingerly. “But in front of other people I might be worried about it.”

“You’re not talkin’ about jizz are you.”

“No.”

“I didn’t even think about that. I’ve always trusted you not to care about that, and I’ve gotten so comfortable with it over the years that I didn’t even think of it.”

“You’re right, Dean. I don’t care about it. Between us. But for other people to be around and see…”

“I get what you’re saying Cas,” Dean said – exhaling a heavy breath. “I hadn’t really thought about that. But I might be changing my mind about this whole thing now.”

“I killed it for you?” Cas asked sadly. “The first time you come to me with a wild fantasy and I killed it for you?”

“You didn’t kill it for me… I think I would’ve eventually had the same thought. You just happened to be the one who thought of it first.”

“I still think we should go once,” said Cas firmly. “We should go and see what we think. And if you don’t end up wanting to fuck me there… we can still put on a show. I could get down on my knees in front of all of them and suck your rock-hard cock.”

Cas was tickling Dean’s ball and sliding his palm along his shaft, and he felt it when Dean's body responded to his filthy words.

If they weren’t going to act out Dean's fantasy in real life – then he could at least verbalize it while they got off tonight… use the scenario to further excite his man.

“You know what would be hot?” Cas asked Dean as he began kissing the man's neck.

“What?” whispered Dean, turning his head for Cas and falling under the man's spell completely as Cas worked his mouth over Dean's neck and shoulder.

“I’ve always loved it when you shove my head down on you,” he said between kisses and licks. “It gets me so hard. And to think of you doing that with people watching is very exciting.”

“Oh, Cas,” Dean moaned as he slid his arm down his own body and let his hand join Cas’ in stroking his dick.

“Yeah, Dean, I might even like to be spanked some – let people see me all bent over for you and wanting your dick, I might have to wear a cock ring just to keep from coming hard while you spank me.”

“Jesus,” husked Dean, thrusting his dick into Cas’ hand, “Cas, man, you know how to get me goin don’tcha?”

“Oh Dean. I keep waiting to run out of fantasies about you… for this to get old… boring. But it just doesn’t. There aren’t enough days in my life to have you every way that I want you.”

“You’ve waited a long time to get that alien probing device in me… maybe it’s time I tried that for ya?”
“Dean…”

“Or that double ended dildo I used to be afraid of? Maybe it’s time to get that out of the toy box, huh?”

“Oh, Dean…” moaned Cas as he pressed his hips into Dean's thigh, searching for friction, needing something to press his swollen member against.

*Two can play this game* – thought Dean with a dirty grin.

Their dirty talk escalated to epic proportions and when they came, dicks held together between both of their hands, Cas had his hand over his tip.

As warm come spilled out, he was there to cup it and spread it over onto his man's tip. He felt Dean's head tip back in ecstasy as he came – feeling wetness on the head of his dick and over the back of his hand like the good old days. He could tell it was good for Dean and smiled for his lover as they tucked in together to come down.

“You’re right, Cas,” whispered Dean softly, “There’s not enough days in a lifetime for all the things I’d want to do with you.”

“We’ll just do the best we can,” Cas chuckled softly against Dean's side, feeling Dean press another kiss to the top of his head.

Having children was like hitting the fast-forward button on life. Sam began to realize time was flying. He felt like he’d blinked, and it was the kids’ first birthday.

There had been so much chaos… he’d constantly reassured himself again and again that soon life with the babies would fall into a routine. But life just refused to be regulated. His days of meticulous organization and regimented schedule were just a daydream of the past now.

As he stumbled over a discarded toy in the living room, Sam called to Jess in the kitchen, “What time do we have to leave?”

“2:30. I’ve got the bags packed; we just need to load the van and get the boys dressed.”

“What’s going in the van?”

“The suitcases by the door, the presents on the dining room table and the diaper bags on the steps.”

“I thought you said we weren’t supposed to leave stuff on the steps anymore?” he said as he came up behind her.

“We’re not,” she said firmly. “I was a bad girl.”

He grinned with her as he stepped past her and headed for the dining room. He grabbed the two
packages he could carry and headed to the garage. As he made trips in and out of the house, packing up their things, he heard silence. That usually meant that someone was into something. But now, he assumed it meant his wife had wrangled the boys upstairs to get them dressed.

When he was finished loading, he stepped into the living room and began picking up the toys and blankets that were strewn about. Satisfied with the cleanliness of the room, he stepped to the built-in shelving around the television and began putting discs back in their covers. By the time Jess hollered for him, he had the living room picked up decently and all the dishes to the sink and the counters wiped down.

He bounded up the back stairs and as soon as he’d reached the top, he was being handed a sweet, chubby, dimpled baby. “Well, Jimmy, you look very handsome in alligators! Where’s your nose?”

The boy looked intently at him. “Where’s your nose Jimmy? Where is it?” he said, smiling. Jimmy smiled back and used a single chubby finger to point to Sam's nose. “That’s a nose alright! That’s daddy’s nose. Where’s your nose?” Little Jimmy pumped his legs excitedly and finally rewarded his father by pointing to his own nose.

“That’s my big boy!” praised Sam. “Daddy’s big boy!” he crooned as he started down the steps. “Meet us in the van Jess?” he hollered over his shoulder.

“Be right there!” she called.

On Sam’s way through the kitchen, he paused at the fridge and grabbed a bag of apple slices and two bottles of water.

He tossed the extras onto the front passenger seat and then hopped in the back of the van to put his son in the car seat. “NO!” shouted Jimmy, bucking forward and locking his legs straight.

As a method of staying out of the car seat… the leg lock was quite effective. But Sam was the master of all. He pulled his thumb and pointer finger together and said, “Don’t tell daddy no,” then he gently began applying pressure to the boy’s inner thigh with pinching fingers and the boy’s tickle reflex kicked in. The lock of legs was instantly broken, and the boy collapsed into giggles. Sam took advantage of the moment to get his boy into the seat and bring the armrest down over him. He had the boy buckled quick as lightening and was soon back to tickling. Jimmy’s laugh was infectious, and Sam giggled with him as he leaned through between the front seats and started up a movie for the boy. Within a moments time, little Johnny was being passed to him.

“I’m going back to check the house,” Jess told him as she left him with the baby. He worked to get the boy buckled in and gave him a few moments of attention as well. Then, sweaty, he climbed to the front seat and pointed the cool air vent at himself and downed half a bottle of water while he waited for Jess.

“We all set?” he asked her as she climbed in beside him.

“Yep. We’re off like a herd of turtles!” she joked.

He pressed the button to open the garage door and backed out into the warm summer sunshine. As they exited the driveway, the door was swinging closed and Sam’s eyes swept over the manicured front lawn as they pulled out. The home was a bit more extravagant than they’d sought out when they’d started looking… but it did him proud.

They headed for the airport, and soon the boys in their car seats were quiet, heads drooped over and sweet little mouths drooling.
“Do the car seats go on the plane with us?” he asked Jess.

“Yes.”

“I feel like we’ve forgotten something.”

“I’m sure we have.”

“This is gonna be fun!” he winked at her.

“I know. I can’t wait to snorkel.”

Sam reached forward and muted the movies that were playing in the back for their sleeping boys and turned on some music for him and Jess instead. By the time they were navigating the busy airport traffic, the two were making heart eyes at each other, thinking of all the alone time they’d be having this week.

“I think this is a good idea,” said Sam to Jess, “Uncle Dean and Cas are going to have these guys visit every summer while you and I go on vacation. But for the first few years while they’re little we can just stay there with them. That way we’re available if they need us or if the boys get homesick. Plus it will keep my brother from getting overwhelmed… these two can be a lot of work.

Jess gave him a smile and didn’t comment on how it was also good for Sam this way. Because it would be just as hard for Sam to be away from the boys as it would be for the boys to be away from him.

When they pulled up outside the hangar, Cas and Dean emerged to greet them. Dean immediately went to Sam and locked him into a tight hug. Cas embraced Jess and then they switched.


“Yes!” said Jess loudly.

“Let’s see how much sand my kids can eat!” laughed Sam.

They began moving bags and birthday gifts from the van to the plane.

“Where’s Mom?” asked Sam. “I can’t believe we beat her!”

“You didn’t. She’s in the next hangar getting a tour of a private jet.”

“What?”

“Dude thought mom was hot. I don’t think she knew she was being hit on.”

“How long’s she been gone?”

“Just a few minutes. I’m sure she’s fine,” he said, patting his brother on the shoulder.

When they had everything loaded on the plane, they stood around the van talking quietly and waiting for Mary. No one was willing to disturb the twins until it was the LAST thing to do before take-off.

When Mary arrived, she suggested giving the boys a dose of baby Tylenol. “Their ears will hurt when we land… the Tylenol will take the edge off. And it will keep them drowsy too… make it easy for them to sleep through the flight.”
The adults agreed, and Jess dug out the medicine and some gummy snacks. They woke up first one boy and then the other, using a medicine dropper to dose them and then pressing fruit snacks into their hands as a follow-up treat.

Dean and Cas held the boys and chatted with Mary while Jess and Sam got the carseats set up on the plane.

“Jimmy, you look so much like your daddy!” exclaimed Dean as he bounced the heavy baby in his arms, “I’m so sorry about that!” he teased softly as his eyes connected with Sam’s over the baby’s shoulder.

Sam gave him a bitch face and slid an arm around Mary. “We’re ready,” he said with a smile.

They buckled in the babies and all chose a seat. Dean and Cas moved to the front and put on their headsets. They had to wait quite a while for takeoff, and the twins fell asleep before they’d even hit the runway. Dean was artfully smooth as usual, and when they’d hit their altitude, Dean flicked the headset button so they could talk.

The flight was smooth most of the way and by the time they were lining up for the landing at the resort, all the adults were sleeping. Dean turned on the intercom and announced to the cabin that they were preparing to land and to please make sure seatbelts were on. He was wearing a broad smile, and Cas’ chest swelled with pride.

That’s MY man.

The past year at the resort had been a very good one. The changes that Cas had painstakingly researched and implemented were key to things running smoothly and becoming more profitable. The excursions that Dean and Roberto planned were constantly getting better and better.

Being able to fly their own plane back and forth to the capital gave them an edge in terms of scheduling flexibility and increased profitability. In fact, between the runs to the capital and the big island of Roatan, the plane had been a significant driver of profits. Both men were glad they’d taken a gamble and bought a plane that could seat more passengers.

Cas was still wearing a suit to the office every day, though he didn’t have to work as many hours. His focus was primarily oversight and planning these days – having delegated most everything else to their executive level staff.

Dean’s days were still spent wearing cargo shorts and a resort t-shirt as he flitted back and forth between a flight or two each day and his “trips” with Roberto where the two men would go out in search of new adventures that would be marketable as excursions.

Now that Dean, Cas and Roberto were all certified to dive, they’d begun searching for good diving sites in the area that might not have been discovered yet. They squeezed in days of exploring like this whenever they could.

Often, Sunni would ride along. She mostly sat on the yacht and helped prep and clean equipment but she would always use the kitchen to create a wonderful meal for them while they were out, and then the four of them would enjoy dinner and drinks and have a nice easy evening.

Some nights on the yacht after they ate, they’d end up swimming off the back of the yacht or just sitting on deck and watching the stars as they sipped their drinks. But always, the work they did felt more like adventure-play than actual work. The boys had settled into a very happy life at the resort and were looking forward to their first summer vacation with their nephews.
They had booked Sam and Jess into one of the suites as a surprise. The luxury and pampering would make it feel more like a vacation for them… and having them at the opposite end of the resort would remove the temptation to pester them with every little thing.

Mary was going to be staying in their “guest treehouse,” and she would be the one to help Dean and Cas as they got used to caring for the babies.

Precautions had been taken. Dean had one of the maintenance men build them removable, hinged baby gates for the tree house ladder and the rope bridge that connected their tree house to Mary’s guest house.

Cas had suggested using one of the floating houses on the ponds and just having everyone stay together, but Dean had wanted to be able to give Sam and Jess some privacy for their vacation.

Now, as they were carrying things from the plane to the jeep, the resort staff assisted them. Dean looked at Sam and said he was glad they had come.

“Glad to be here man. You have no idea how much we need some time,” he joked.

“We haven’t had a full round of sex or a good night’s sleep in so long – I’ve forgotten what it feels like!”

“What constitutes a half-round of sex?” asked Dean laughing.

“It’s like playing chess and hearing that timer going… you have a finite amount of time to take your turn so you have to think fast if you want your turn to be a good one.”

“Damn,” Dean laughed as they climbed into the jeep, “don’t over-sell it to me!”

The twins were obviously spellbound by the bright colors around them because they were mostly quiet. One of them had a dirty diaper. Dean could smell it. It was rancid.

They went upstairs at the suite while the porters brought up the luggage for them on the dumbwaiter. Upstairs both Dean and Cas stood over the bed to get a quick diapering lesson from Sam.

Once they had two fresh bottoms again, the twins were carried back down to the jeep and everyone waved good-bye to Sam and Jess.

When they got to their own treehouse, which had been baby proofed last week, they showed the porters which bags went to which treehouse and then took the babies up the ladder.

Dean and Cas carried the babies as they showed Mary around her treehouse. She said to go ahead and leave the babies with her for a little bit so they could rest up.

“I’ll take you up on that,” said Dean with a smile, “we actually had kind of a late night last night and then flying all the way to SF and back today… I could use a short nap.”

“Ok, sweetie,” she said as the boys set down the twins on her floor.

“The toy box is over in the corner there,” said Dean.

“And there’s some kids movies with the TV and special snacks in the cupboard.”

“My… you boys really thought of everything, didn’t you?”
“We’re really excited that you guys are here!” replied Dean.

“Yes,” added Cas, “we’ve been preparing for weeks.”

The three shared a hug and then Mary pulled away to follow the babies, who were crawling everywhere. Dean and Cas stepped over the baby gate and walked the rope bridge back to their own treehouse.

“Did you see how fat their chubby legs are!” laughed Dean.

“I can’t believe how much they’ve grown!” replied Cas.

“Good thing we stayed up all night fuckin’. Clearly with those two here… there won’t be time for any of that!” said Dean as he headed for their bed.

“Wanna go once more? Or do you really need that nap?”

“I really need the nap,” Dean said sadly. “How fast do you think we can get off if we do that first?”

“I don’t know,” smiled Cas as he pushed Dean to the bed, “but I’d like to find out.”
Dean had Cas’ cock in his hand. It was hard and stiff with soft skin stretched over top, and Dean was holding it tightly as it pulsed over the back of his hand. His own stiff prick, held by Cas, was warm and dry as his body locked rigidly and held during the moment of his completion.

As always now, there was an incomplete feeling at the end. He still felt the rush… the tingles still spread over him… he still “came.” But gratification from the tip of his dick was missing.

Like an Alzheimer’s patient, he waited a beat to feel it. Every time. Still. Even though he knew nothing would come out – he waited for it and then felt disappointment.

Silly and trite as he knew it was, Dean missed the feeling of come spraying out. He missed that final moment – that physical personification of the climax he was having and the way it felt as it flowed out of him. And he missed watching it splatter out on his lover.

Cas seemed to know. He always spread himself over Dean when he came. And Dean loved him for the gesture, loved the way it felt. But it wasn’t quite the same.

His dick wasn’t quite the same either. It didn’t get quite as big or as hard as it used to. Cas wasn’t complaining – hadn’t even given an indication that he noticed. But of course he had, how could he not?

Both men were aware that there could’ve been much worse to deal with after Dean’s surgery and neither was one to look a gift horse in the mouth. Dean could still get hard. They could still fuck. It was more than they’d been promised. And when they’d been back in Frisco a few months ago for Dean’s annual check-up he’d still been clear of cancerous cells. He was lucky and he knew it. But he was only human, and on occasion he would give in to thoughts of what he’d lost rather than focusing on what he still had.

He and Cas laid in the sweaty quiet for a few minutes, listening to the noise of the jungle around their treehouse and watching each other in the late afternoon sun. The light had a lovely amber glow to it and Cas looked warm bathed in it. His firm body was sprawled across the sheets and his clear sapphire eyes were focused on Dean.

Dean looked back at Cas through heavy lids. He meant to say “I love you” as he drifted off to sleep, but the words never formed – they stayed on his tongue as he softly slipped under.
Sam and Jess moved about the suite putting their few things away and getting settled in. It was short work without all the gear they typically had with them for the twins. When they were finished, Sam tucked the suitcases away and flopped down on the bed with his arm draped over his face. He listened, eyes closed, as Jess moved about the treehouse suite. She was like a cat in a new place… she wouldn’t relax until she’d scoped out everything. In the background he could hear a chorus of birdsong and the occasional light chatter of tree animals. Just as his body relaxed into that soft limbo between wakefulness and sleep, he heard the swell of music from the next room. Sam laughed out loud as he heard Marvin Gaye singing, “Let’s Get It On.”

Sam felt Jess come into the room and looked over at her. She was smiling widely and pulling the ponytail holder out of her hair. He rolled to the side and put feet on the floor as she came to him, swaying her hips like a girl who knew she was gonna get some.

And she definitely was.

Sam reached out and tugged her into his lap. She braced knees on either side of his hips and pushed into him, shoving him backwards onto the bed. Her laughter drowned out the birds and the music and it lightened his heart. He could feel her smile on his lips as she leaned down over him and pressed their mouths together. His chest swelled with excitement as he thought about having almost two weeks for just the two of them.

She pulled away from the kiss and sat back up, straddling him, and began to tug her shirt off over her head. Sam watched, licking his lips, as her perfect breasts wrapped in the deep blue satin emerged from beneath her cotton shirt. He could see the outline of her nipples through the fabric and his mouth watered to lick them. He stretched up towards her and wrapped his arms around her, grabbing fistfuls of her ass cheeks and pulled his head forward - mouthing over the satin, wetting the material as he went and pulling a soft moan from his woman.

She rolled her hips and he felt it in his lap as blood began migrating lower. His hands slid up from her ass and skimmed along the soft skin of her back. When he felt the satin of her bra strap under his fingers he wrapped them around it and worked the clasp apart. As the elastic relaxed, her breasts spilled out and the material fell away.

Sam let his head fall back on the bed and watched hungrily as shiny satin slid down her body and hung, suspended from her elbows. He skimmed his fingers down the back of her arms, pulling up gooseflesh in his wake, and slid the straps from her arms to toss the garment aside.

Her breasts moved enticingly and held his interest as she swung one leg over and sidled up next to him on the bed. Her head laid down on his bicep and her hand snaked up under his shirt seeking first one of his nipples and then the other before sliding back low again to fiddle with the button on his jeans.

“Look at us,” he whispered, “just getting naked in the middle of the day with the door open.”

“No one’s gonna cry halfway through, either!” she giggled, “We’re gonna get to finish what we’ve started.”

“We don’t have to worry about the noises we make,” Sam said roughly.

“We can play dirty little games,” she added.

“Oh baby –

“Sam, I miss the nasty things we used to do to each other when we had time.”
“I wanna tie you to this headboard and count how many times you come before I finally do.”

She was cupping his package as he said it and found herself intrigued. “Do it then. I think three is a safe bet.”

“I’m gonna try for five,” he laughed as he bounded off the bed.

“Where are you going?”

“To find something to tie you up with!” he yelled over his shoulder.

Jess rolled off the bed and walked to the dresser where they’d just put away their things. She fumbled through the drawers. “You didn’t bring a single tie did you?”

“Baby,” he said, sliding up behind her, “why would I bring a tie to vacation in a tree house?”

“So you can tie your horny wife to the fucking bed.”

“Hot damn,” he said as he headed for the phone on the nightstand.

“What are you doing?”

“Calling the concierge.”

“Be discrete. Your brother will likely see a list of things we’ve asked for.”

“Jess, he’s lucky I’m not banging on his door right now asking to borrow a set of cuffs.”

Sam laughed out loud when he saw the look on her face. “What? You don’t think my brother has cuffs in that tree house? He’s got worse than that – I guarantee it.”

“Yes, this is Sam Winchester…” he said into the phone, “… in suite B. I need to request some personal items.”

As Sam was speaking with the concierge, or attendant - as Dean was having them called, he was watching Jess sway her hips to the music and do a slow, easy strip tease. She turned away from him as her jeans slid down over her butt cheeks and revealed a deep blue thong to match the bra he’d pulled off of her already. She bent at the waist to push her jeans to her ankles and then as she stood back up straight, she stepped right out of them.

Sam had to cup his junk and press down to calm the ache he was feeling as he watched her lick her fingers and toy with the thong. He tried to speak coherently to the attendant as she strode over to him. His eyes were locked on her breasts as they bounced artfully with each step and swung tantalizingly before him.

She reached down to the hand he was pressing onto his dick and pulled it away, putting her own hands to his zipper and button, then tugging his jeans down to expose him.

“Yes,” he said into the phone as she pulled his swollen dick from its cotton prison. “Yes, thank you,” he finished and hung up the phone.

“Are you happy?” he asked her roughly, “I made an ass out of myself to the attendant.”

“Well, I guess I’ll have to make it up to you then,” she said in a fake porn-star voice as she licked a stripe up the length of him.
“Is the attendant bringing you anything?” she asked coyly as she got down on her knees.

“Yes. They’ll be here soon.” He said settling his hand on top of her head, “you might want to put your hair back into a ponytail,” he said as he guided her lower and pressed her face towards the vee of his legs.

“No way. You’ll just use it as a handle,” she teased him firmly.

She opened up then, sucking his huge dick into her mouth. His jaw dropped open as she enveloped the head and half of his shaft in her warm wet mouth. His breath hitched in his throat as she began working lower and wrapped her arms around his thighs to pull in closer. “Ah,” came out of his mouth as she began to work him over. His knees were already getting weak and his stomach was tensing with her pulls.

“Oh baby…” he crooned to her while she worked her tongue over his tip in circles and then sucked down hard. He felt himself bump the back of her throat, and he felt her entire body lock as she fought her gag reflex. She immediately began working her way lower on him, engulfing him inch by precious inch, in a slow progression.

The force of her suction was pulling a shiver from him that started at the base of his spine and worked its way upwards. He’d completely forgotten about rope, cuffs and anything but her sweet mouth when the door chime of their suite rang. He cussed at having to pull himself from her and then shot puppy eyes at her – begging her not to make him answer the door with a raging hard-on.

She huffed a laugh and stepped into the hotel robe hanging from the back of the suite door and headed out to accept their items from the attendant. The tower of boxes he handed her were wrapped in black wrapping paper with ribbons. They looked like valentines presents except that each package had a small label on it with numbers and letters that meant nothing to her. She took the slip of paper and added a generous tip to the gratuity line and signed for delivery of the packages, giving a wink to the young man who’d delivered them. He only met her eye for a second and looked away again… as if he’d never been winked at before and had no idea how to respond.

In hindsight, she realized he’d probably not expected a woman to answer the door. She smiled as the door clicked shut behind her and headed for the bedroom.

Sam’s eyes lit up when he saw the packages. She dropped them onto the bed and stepped out of her robe to climb back on the bed on top of the covers to begin opening them. “I feel like a kid at Christmas,” laughed Sam as he tore into the smooth black paper.

“Never found one of these under the tree,” Jess commented as she opened up a package and found a giant black vibrator inside.

“Damn,” Sam commented as he tore open his package, “Check this out!” he almost yelled, “Holy Shit!”

Jess tore her eyes from the next package she was getting ready to open and looked at what Sam was holding.

“What are those?”

“Restraints. Heavy ones. Jesus,” he said as he pulled them from their packaging.

“Awww... look Sam! They’re fur lined. They won’t hurt you if you pull against them.”

“These are for you, baby,” he said with a smile.
“You’ll be in them at least once before we leave,” she said firmly while flashing him a wicked smile.

“There better be lube in one of these boxes!” he laughed as he thought of what Jess would likely do to him once he was cuffed.

“Oh my god this is so fun!” she squeaked as she ripped open another box.

Cas rolled over, eyes still shut and heavy with sleep, but ears waking and becoming aware of their surroundings. He could hear the birds in the trees quieting. The sunlight was fading from afternoon to evening. His stomach gurgled and then growled. It was time to get up. They needed to get ready for dinner. Soon they would walk next door to collect Mary and the twins for dinner.

He blinked his eyes open and looked at the golden god who was sleeping next to him, leg draped over Cas’ thigh and lightly freckled face smoothed out in peaceful sleep. Cas leaned in and touched his thumb gently to the man's chin. A tender gesture he didn’t use often. He moved in closer and hovered his lips along the elbow that was resting next to Cas’ face. Dean stirred as Cas rolled then, and embraced Dean fully.

“Mmm,” hummed Dean as he woke slowly to Cas’ soft skin. “Is it that time already?”

“Afraid so. Besides, I’m hungry.”

“Ok. I’ll wake up better with a shower. You wanna join me?”

“Always,” Cas said firmly as the two rolled to the edge of the bed and got up. “Where are we taking the family for dinner?”

“Tree Tops.”

“Are you nervous about bringing the twins back here with us?”

“Nope. It’ll be fun.”

Cas smiled at Dean's enthusiasm, and they stepped into the spray together.

Jess watched Sam carefully as he wrapped her wrists in the heavy black cuffs. The fur on the inside was pleasant against her skin, and she watched intently as Sam worked all the buckles and straps. Soon he was guiding her into position at the head of the bed where he anchored one cuff to each post of the headboard.

With his work completed, his eyes roved down the dish spread in front of him. Jess’ big blue eyes were bright and clear and her full lips were even puffier than usual – swollen from heavy kissing and from sucking him off. Her skin was glowing, the only item of clothing she still had on was the
little blue thong. His dick twitched in anticipation as his eyes glanced back at her heavy black wrist cuffs again.

She was moving on the bed – anticipating what he’d do to her – unable to keep still. He watched the show she put on for him and touched himself a little as he contemplated what to do to her first.

Sam tore his eyes from the beautiful blonde cuffed to his bed and let them wander to the new toys littering the dresser nearby. He bypassed the vibrator for now, opting instead to pick up the small box containing nipple caps. They’d used nipple clamps many times but these had no clamps or chains… they were just little black plastic caps and Sam was intrigued.

He tore open the box and pulled them out, squeezing one in his hand and noticing how pliable the plastic was. As soon as he watched it squash between his fingers and then bounce back to its original shape – he understood how it worked. A devilish smile broke over his face and he strutted across the room.

She was watching him, and he didn’t speak as he crawled onto the bed and straddled her. He leaned in, holding a cap between his fingers right in front of her face, and then he squeezed it flat. He let her watch him carefully as he brought it to her nipple and neatly lined up the edges of the squashed cap with the edges of her hardened nub. Then he released the pressure on it and it tried to bounce back to its original shape. The action was slower this time since he’d created a vacuum inside it when he put it over her nipple. But slowly, it sucked air from her skin. She cried out and arched her back against her restraints as the little plastic cap sucked her nipple with obvious intensity. Within a hot second the cap was stuck there – anchored firmly in place by suction. Jess was panting now, and she smirked at him as she watched him squeeze the other cap and reach to hover it over her other nipple.

This time she was anticipating the feeling and when it clamped down on her and sucked fiercely at her soft skin she cried out purely with pleasure; no surprise. Enjoying the tingles that spread over her, she looked at Sam and spread her legs boldly. She rocked her hips from left to right which caused her breasts to roll in circles on her chest.

*Oh yeah. She knows what she’s doing* – thought Sam as he practically drooled over his mistress.

He heaved himself off of her and strode back over to the dresser to choose his next offensive. He held his stiff prick as he walked, giving himself the occasional stroke. He couldn’t deny what he most wanted to do. He grabbed the vibrator and turned it on. He held it against his shaft as he walked back across the room towards her.

She looked incredible, edible. She was all skin and flowing blonde hair, stretched long on the bed, black cuffs encircling her wrists and binding her in place, huge black nubs over the full round mounds of her breasts. His eyes raked over her flat stomach and hovered on the navel perched perfectly between hipbones. Her knees were bending, legs working to move her body seductively for him.

“C’mon, baby!” she begged, encouraging him to get there faster. Her eyes fell and grew wide as she watched the big black vibrator rest against his swollen cock. The sound of the buzzing overpowered the music as he drew close to her and let her watch him enjoy the tingles it sent down his shaft.

“Please?” she begged him to share the toy with her, “Please!” she demanded it, “Sam c’mon and put your hands on me!”

Sam smiled. He loved to hear her begging, but this he could not refuse her. Not even to tease her.
He climbed onto the bed and settled between her legs, maneuvering his under hers so that his legs spread out on either side of her and her ass was in his lap. This placed the warm wet center of her right next to his dick.

With a buzzing pleasure wand between them, he rocked forward and let them both feel it. He ground his dick against it, letting his shaft slide along it. She rolled her hips too – seeking sensation and pressure. A moan slid from both their lips as they began rocking into the vibration between them.

Jess was eye candy as she moved on him and the vibrations against his shaft shot tinges into him that his balls had picked up on. Sam pulled the toy out from between them and switched it to a higher setting.

He extracted his body from beneath hers and slowly slid the vibrator into her wet hole. Then, he left her there.

Feeling him move from the bed, she instinctively pressed her legs together to hold the buzzing inside of her. She rolled and writhed with it on the bed, hands pulling against her wrist cuffs, while some small part of her mind speculated on where her lover was going.

Sam grabbed the lube from the dresser and made his way back to the bed. He assumed his previous position, working his way under her so that she was spread out over him once more. He opened the lube and coated his fingers with it before setting it aside. Then he took the toy in his hand and began working it in and out slowly as he watched his two lubed fingers artfully work their way into her puckered backdoor.

She sucked in a huge breath at the initial intrusion and bowed on the mattress, legs clamping down on him. But, in this position, her legs were locked open for him. He had a bird’s-eye view to the sexy dish in front of him as she responded to his hands.

He worked his fingers in her entrance and as he did, he also gently pulled the vibrator from inside her. It was shiny black now, coated with her juices, and he began sliding it up and down her slit. Each time the head of the toy rolled over her clit she cursed at him, and he’d feel her body lock for moment as a mini wave of pleasure coursed from that tiny receptor and spread over her.

Jess loved to feel Sam’s thick fingers pushing into her most dirty place while she writhed under the titillating buzz of the toy, clenching in pleasure-shock each time it passed over.

Sam was engrossed in the work of his hands. He was pressing in a third finger, feeling the tightness of her clamp and clench around him. With his other hand he was working the vibrator up and down the soft pink track that ran between her legs. His eyes took in the hot wet mess between his woman’s legs, and his arousal climbed to new heights as he smelled sex in the air and felt wetness on both hands. He could hear her panting, cursing and praising him in equal measure as he worked her over.

His dick was stout, and it waited impatiently as his fingers worked open a place for it. As he pushed deeper he looked down and saw three fingers now buried inside her – spreading her wide.

Knowing it would drive her crazy, he retracted the vibrator and laid it on her belly. He felt the entire bed quiver as she jerked against her cuffs – wanting to take it in her hands and pleasure herself. He smiled at her predicament as he withdrew his fingers from her ass and took advantage of now having two free hands.

He lifted her lower body easily by the hips and slid further beneath her. Her pelvic area was now
elevated into his lap and he reached for the vibrator as it started to roll off her. He gave her his sexiest wink as he kicked it up to the highest setting. Then he began to really tease her. He pushed it back into her pussy nice and slow. When it was buried inside her he reached for the lube and coated his dick with it. As carefully as he could, he moved her hips with his big hands until she was in the perfect position.

He looked up towards the headboard and caught her eye. By unspoken agreement she pulled her feet under her knees to support her weight and locked her frame for him. He looked down and lined up his aching dick, using his fingers to bend it into position and then his hips to push forward and apply pressure until it breached her tight entrance.

The constriction on his thick cock was almost unbearable… he closed his eyes against the onslaught of pleasure as he breached her and then opened them again as he sank in slowly. Tunnel vision darkened the edges of what he could see until there was nothing left but the sight of his giant, throbbing cock disappearing into her tight heat. His jaw fell open as he watched, mesmerized, while her body loosened a millimeter at a time to allow more and more and more of him to enter. His heart was hammering as she enveloped him, and he was shocked to notice that he could feel the buzzing of the vibrator on his dick through her body.

The sight of the toy in her pussy and his dick in her ass was overwhelming, and he found himself encouraging her to take all of him.

She was answering his babble too… begging him to fill her up… telling him how big he was… praising him for making her feel so filthy good. She actually screamed out his name when he pulled back and slammed into her the first time. She crumpled on him, no longer able to support her lower body weight on her spaghetti legs. He wasn’t moving much – no big thrusts – he just rolled his hips in a circular motion and tried not to come too soon as he felt her bearing down on him and absorbed the tingles of the toy that emanated from her sweet cunt.

As she got used to the feeling of having both holes filled simultaneously, Jess began to move with it. “Hit the spot, baby, hit the spot,” she begged him loudly.

Sam didn’t know how many times she’d pleaded him to do it when he finally heard her over the blood pounding in his ears and the pleasure building in his abdomen. But when he heard her, he answered, “Yeah, baby, I got it.” and he pulled the toy from her center and slid it forward along her crevice until it bumped the end. Then, he simply moved it around in small circles here, watching and listening as the bumps to her sweet spot brought her closer and closer to ecstasy.

Her feet had found the bed again and she was working her hips now as he used the toy on her clit. Her hips and his fell into a rhythm and soon he could hold back no more. He felt his end rushing to meet him. It was coming too fast, and he tried to warn her… “I’m gonna…” but it was too late. He clamped his eyes shut against the explosion of pleasure that perfused his body and radiated from base to tip.

As he returned to himself, he took stock and realized that the vibrator had rolled from his hand. He looked up at Jess. She was smiling at him and when their eyes locked she said, “Oh good… you’re back… can you pick that up and finish me please?”

He nodded as his own words came back to bite him in the ass, “I’m gonna count how many times I can make you come before I finally do.”

He grinned sheepishly at her and she only teased him lightly saying, “We have nine more days after today.”
He nodded, his mind already taking him on a journey to their next time. He took the toy in hand and began working it on her, more purposefully than before. He pressed fingers into her pussy and scissored them as he followed the verbal cues she gave him. Within moments, she was coming hard and fast for him, even as his own member flagged completely and slid out.

He watched her heave her body against her restraints and saw euphoria pass over her face as she finished and collapsed limp onto the bed.

He wiggled out from under her, slid up the bed and unbuckled her wrists. She immediately wrapped her arms around his neck and they sank down together on soft blankets.

The next thing Sam knew, the phone was ringing. He cursed as he reached across his wife’s fucked out body to reach it. “Hello?”

“Hey, we’re getting ready to head to dinner. You still wanna join us?”

Sam took stock of the changes in the room. They must’ve fallen asleep after they’d fucked. The room was dark now, and the noises from outside the windows were different. “Yeah, yeah man,” said Sam to his brother, “we just… I think we fell asleep. Give us a few minutes to get around?”

“Sure, Sam. How bout we swing by and get you in half an hour?”

“Sounds good, Dean.” he said and then he returned the phone to the cradle without saying good-bye.

“Jess?”

“Hmm…”

“Sweetie?” he prodded her.

“I heard,” she said quietly, “we have to get up don’t we.”

“Yep. But we’re going back to that restaurant you loved up in the trees.”

“Ok. We have half an hour?” she asked him.

“Yep.”

“Good. Wake me again in ten minutes,” she said firmly as she nuzzled back down into his side.

Later, when they climbed into the jeep, Cas was driving and Dean was up front with baby James on his lap. Mary was in back with baby John. As Jess settled in between Mary and Sam, Johnny reached out for her and she took him in her arms.

“I didn’t miss you yet,” she teased him, giggling, “no I didn’t… not yet,” she pulled his chubby little fingers into her mouth grinned as she talked from between her teeth, “Didn’t miss these chubby li’l fingers at all!”

Mary smiled, watching, and Sam winked at his mom over Jess’ head. They circled the resort and
parked at the edge of the entrance to the treehouse network. Very few vehicles parked here. Most of the vehicles on the resort were constantly moving slowly along, picking up guests from one location and shuttling them to another. Others were walking up the steps to the treehouses at the same time and they were and they exchanged friendly conversation with those that waited at the entrance to Tree Tops with them.

They were eventually seated at a large table in the center, beneath the winking fairy lights in the green boughs above them. The waitress settled high chairs at either end for them and provided menus, offering drinks for them while they decided on their dinner.

Cas ordered his special candy concoctions for the ladies, and they went over well. As the table enjoyed a meal together, the conversation largely hovered around everyone’s plans for the week. Tomorrow Sam and Jess were booked into a regular tour on the yacht that would take them over to Roatan to shop and snorkel. They’d be gone all day. Mary was set up to have a day’s pampering at the spa – but she would be around for breakfast and to help the boys get started with the twins before she left.

Sam and Jess forbid the boys to take the twins to the beach. Dean blanched, thinking they simply weren’t trusted near water.

“No,” corrected Sam, “take them to the pool if you want. But they’ve never been to a beach, and we want to be there for their first time.”

“Ok,” said Dean, nodding, “Ok. Pool it is.” He was handing Johnny a small piece of melon while he glanced at Cas and smiled.

“What do they wear in the pool?” asked Cas.

“They’re called swimmers,” said Jess, “they look like brightly colored diapers.”

“Trunks over top?” asked Dean.

“Not necessary,” said Sam.

“But sunscreen…” said Jess firmly, “’bout every half hour. Trust me. If they burn… you will get zero sleep.”

“Roger that,” grinned Dean.

As they talked and ate, the twins got progressively messier. Dean watched closely how Sam and Jess fed them so he’d be able to mimic it in the coming days.

As they were leaving, Sam leaned into Dean secretively and said, “Don’t look too close at our concierge bill.”

Dean clapped his brother on the shoulder, “You shakin the treehouse Sam?”

“I’m doing exactly what you’d be doing up there man,” he quipped to Dean, “EXACTLY what you’d be doing.”

“Oh TMI dude, TMI.” Dean laughed as he braced Jimmy to his side and started walking. A few steps in, when he knew no one was paying them any attention, he whispered conspiratorially, “pitcher or catcher?”

Sam let an evil grin spread across his face, “So much the pitcher this time!”
“Atta boy!” Dean said chuckling.

“But tomorrow? Who knows!” Sam laughed, “Nine more days!” Sam couldn’t help the skip in his step as he said it, and Dean couldn’t help but laugh as he heard it.

From five paces ahead of him, Jess looked back and their eyes connected, both smiling with dirty little secrets and fantasies.

Jess had vivid and sexy dreams that night. She woke several times, clutched her own crotch and rolled into her man, wanting him again but forcing herself to go back to sleep each time.

She couldn’t recall ever having been filled in both holes at the same time before – but the feeling had been like none other. She wanted it again. She wanted to feel stuffed and stretched, and she spread her body on Sams in the dark of their tree house.

Sam woke to her warm body on his and whispered words, “Fuck me, baby… fuck my ass again.”

“Jess,” he said as he turned and snaked his arms around her.

“I want it, Sam,” she said hoarsely as she turned in his arms and pressed her backside to him.”Fuck me baby – fuck me hard.”

Again, he could not deny her. He’d been hard as soon as she’d said the word fuck. He reached for the lube still on the nightstand and coated himself before pressing into her from behind. She was still pliant from having been used so thoroughly just a few hours ago and as he pressed into her she cried out again.

He reached around her and massaged her clit as he fucked her, and he loved the feel of her in his arms as she called out for him over and over and over. He stayed hard for an unbearably long time, having just come that afternoon.

And Jess took advantage. She took his cock like a porn queen. She took it on her side, on her stomach, on all fours. From that position, he managed to get the vibrator back in her too, which drove them both wild as they tipped over the edge together.

When they collapsed on the bed, her fingers wandered around to feel her own fucked out hole and she drew satisfaction from the over-work of their bodies and the complete satisfaction that ached in her bones as she sank down to sleep with her lover.

Dean and Cas were sitting in the cozy living room of their treehouse with Mary. The twins were on the floor crawling around and playing with their toys. As the three chatted, Cas slid down to the floor and began playing with the boys. It didn’t take long for Dean to join him down there. The twins were adorable with their little dimples, large eyes and wide smiles. They seemed to prefer the
toys that made noise and laughed hysterically when you played peek-a-boo with them.

Mary excused herself for bed when she saw the boys feeling comfortable with the twins. Not ten minutes after she left… they wanted her back.

“What the fuck is that smell?” crowed Dean.

“Somebody made a dookie didn’t they?” teased Cas as he eyed the twins.

“My god that’s rank!” fumed Dean, “what is that? A dead body? Some rotten eggs on top?”

Cas was laughing and holding out a fist, “Rock-paper-scissors for who changes him?”

Dean rolled his eyes and focused on the twins, “Which one of you did that?” he chuckled as he grabbed little Johnny who giggled at the attention, “Did you make a stinky in your pants?” he prodded as he sniffed the boy’s backside.

“Johnny’s off the hook,” he said to Cas with a nod.

Cas reached out and tickled Jimmy under the chin, “Jimmy… what did you do? Huh? Did you make a big fat dookie in your diaper?”

“Dude, quit sayin’ dookie,” laughed Dean.

“What would you suggest I call it?” pressed Cas as he lifted the boy into his arms, “Poo-poo?”

Both boys grimaced as they smelled Jimmy. “Why do we have to give it a cute name, huh? It’s shit.”

“Shoot for it?”

“Sure Cas,” he grinned holding out his fist.

“One, two, three, shoot.” They said in unison. Dean laughed as his rock triumphed.

“Best out of three,” Cas demanded in a deep voice.

“You don’t have the best track record with this game Cas.”

“Come on, Dean,” said Cas gesturing at Dean's fist, “One, two, three, shoot.”

“Dammit!”

“Still stickin’ with the scissors, huh Cas?” ribbed Dean, “it’s not like that strategy has really paid off for you in the past.”

Cas glanced at Jimmy and then back at Dean. “Alright,” he said firmly, “The smell isn’t getting any better while we discuss this. In fact, it’s permeating the furniture.” He pulled the tyke into his arms and headed for the bedroom. Dean grabbed Johnny and followed behind, fishing his phone out of his pocket.

Dean braced little Johnny against his hip and held up his camera phone, switched it to video function, found Cas in the viewer and pressed record. On the little screen he watched Cas lay Jimmy down on the little mat next to the diaper bag and tug off his little trousers. The smell was ripe and Dean had to switch to breathing through his mouth.
Cas worked intently, peeling the tabs off, and raising both legs with one hand as Sam had taught them. He used wet wipes to clear the worst of the sticky brown mess and then rolled the dirty wipes into the diaper.

Just as he set a new diaper under the boy’s bottom and released his legs, a stream of urine shot out of his little baby pecker. It swirled like a lawn sprinkler and arced across the bed. Cas ducked in the nick of time, the stream passing him by.

“Fuck! Godammit!” cursed Dean from behind him, “what the fuck Cas?”

Cas looked over his shoulder and saw Dean, wet in the face, and stunned.

Cas busted out laughing at Dean – who’d been peed on.

“I don’t know!” he barked back at Dean, “who knew that could happen? I sure didn’t!”

“Well you sure took cover like you saw it comin!” he fumed as he dropped his camera to the bed and tried to wipe his face on his sleeve while still holding little Johnny. “And you seem to be fuckin’ enjoying it too!”

“Hey. I see piss coming at my face, and I duck. Don’t you?”

“Clearly not, Cas! I just got hosed!” he fumed.

“You jealous of my lightning fast reflexes, Winchester?”

“Right now?” he squinted, “Fuck yeah. I’m covered in piss!”

Cas returned to wrangling his pudgy nephew into his clean diaper.

“Whose ass do I have to kiss to get a baby wipe around here,” Dean cajoled from behind him.

Cas, still laughing, held up a wipe over his shoulder. Dean leaned down and snatched it. He wiped his face down with it as Cas dressed Jimmy back into his little cotton pants. Dean checked over Johnny for any pee and found none.

“I’m the only one who got wet,” he griped as they moved back to the living room.

Cas was still laughing as they settled on the floor with the twins. The babies went back to playing with their toys and Dean busied himself with cleaning up his phone.

“What the hell were you doing anyway?” asked Cas, trying to lock down his grin and keep from pissing off Dean.

“I was recording this moment for posterity,” he said firmly, “My man was changing his first diaper.”

“Did you get it?” Cas asked him, “Play the video I want to see the ah… face shot?”
Mary settled into the bed in her tree house. She left the windows open and enjoyed the air moving through the room and the sounds of the nightlife in the trees. She loved being here, in the middle of her son’s dream-come-true.

The boys’ vision had been brought to stunning reality, and she was so very proud of them. She’d spent the past year enjoying her new grandchildren and watching her son and his wife settle into family life. Now, both worlds were coming together here. Her family was growing.

She rolled on her side and pulled a pillow to her, snuggling around it. She was so happy for her sons and thrilled to be such a big part of their lives. She closed her eyes and imagined that John was snuggled up behind her.

You’d be so proud of our boys, John… and our grandkids. I love you.

The next morning, the first cry came early.

“Ugh, how can either of them possibly be ready to wake up?” groaned Cas as he flung his legs over the side of the bed and headed for the pack-n-play cribs in the dinette.

“I know,” moaned Dean, trailing behind him, “Jimmy was just up at three.”

“Johnny was only up once,” said Cas as he bent to pick up Jimmy who was the crying culprit, “he’s clearly the better sleeper.”

“But,” said Dean in baby talk voice as he picked up Johnny, “Jimmy’s the better pisser.”

Cas chuckled and headed for the kitchen. The sun was just starting to come up and the birdsong outside was loud. He worked far more slowly than usual, burdened down by the pudgy tot that was clamped to his side.

He got eggs and sausages into a pan and as they fried, he put his bundle to the floor. He pulled a pan out and placed it on the floor in front of the boy and slid a wooden spoon into his hand. Enjoying both hands free, he began to set out dishes and fruit. The relentless banging of the spoon on the pan was actually kind of nice. It reminded Cas of his younger siblings when they were little. Their nanny had frequently kept the young ones with her in the kitchen and would give them pots and pans to play with. He thought of Anna and wondered when she’d have her first. He smiled just thinking of it.

They all sat and ate together, giving the tots small bits of egg and fruit as they ate their own breakfast. Dean rubbed crusties from his eyes, “How long til nap time?”

Cas huffed a laugh and watched as eggs reappeared from Jimmy’s mouth and fell to the tray of the high chair. Cas picked it up and tried again to get the boy to take it in his mouth, hoping he’d swallow it this time.

“We gonna take them to the pool?” Dean asked.

“Sounds good to me.”
Dean looked up at Cas and wrinkled his nose, “What the fuck? They shit when they eat?” cringed Dean as he smelled the vile odor of a dirty diaper over the smell of sausage and eggs.

“I’m a surprised as you,” laughed Cas, “I figured they’d poo AFTER eating, not during.”

“I know that was you Johnny,” teased Dean in his baby-talk voice, “You think your shit doesn’t stink…but it does.” He wiped the boy’s mouth and pulled him from the highchair to go change him.

“Be careful,” said Cas with a wink, “watch out for the face-shot.”

“Day late and a dollar short, Cas!” hollered Dean as he walked towards the bedroom.

He laid his nephew down and began to pull off his sleeper. “You wouldn’t piss on me, wouldja?” the boy smiled a dimply smile and Dean smiled back, “You wouldn’t do that to your Uncle Dean wouldja?”

Cas was soon beside him, laying the other twin out.

“He pooped too?”

“No. But he seems to be done eating so I’m going to give him fresh pants before I set him loose to play.”

Dean finished diapering and examined his work proudly. He tugged the sleeper off and reached into the bag for a fresh set of clothes. The tot was no help at all with getting dressed, but when he’d finally wrestled him into clothes, he carried him to the living room and set him among the toys.

When Cas joined him with the other twin, they sat on the couch together for a few minutes watching them before Cas got up to go clean the mess in the kitchen. Cas had put on some Bob Marley and Dean enjoyed the background music, keeping the twins entertained while Cas worked.

When Cas flopped down on the couch, Dean pulled the man's feet in his lap and rubbed them as they watched the twins play for a few minutes. Soon, Cas slid on the floor to engage the boys and Dean headed to the bedroom. He changed the record, which was over, and made the bed. Then he packed up the diaper bag for a day at that pool, pulling on his trunks and a t-shirt. He brushed his teeth and then settled in with his nephews to give Cas a turn in the bathroom.

When they climbed into the jeep, Cas sat in the back holding the two boys and Dean drove them over to the pool. Neither man felt car seats were necessary since the jeeps crawled around the resort at about 10 mph. It took just a few minutes to reach the pool and when they went in, they found themselves to be the only guests.

They chatted with the staff for a few minutes before heading over to the baby section of the pool. There were little fountains under foot here and a walk-in baby pool that reached a depth of 18 inches. Dean and Cas took the twins by the arms and assisted them in “walking” amidst the fountains. Dean didn’t want them crawling on the cement and tearing up their knees.

Eventually, they found themselves sitting in about eight inches of water while the twins climbed all over them. That was the main event for about an hour. As they lingered there and played busy-games with the babies, Cas asked Dean, “Do you remember when we were broke, and Anna made us watch that documentary about living on a dollar a day?”

“Yep.”
“I’ve been thinking again about that. And the cocoa.”

“Tell me what you’re thinking.” Said Dean as he made a goofy face at little Jimmy.

“Well, the charity attached to the documentary was one that provided micro-loans to the local poor. Recipients used the money for things like buying a loom so they could make more money weaving, remember?”

“Sure, Cas.”

“Well, I never forgot about the cocoa. I’ve been considering ways that we could make that happen.”

“So you want to start up a non-profit that would make micro loans to farmers to help them switch from bananas to cocoa?” They’d talked of something similar before… but they’d also agreed not to make any new investments until the resort was operating in the black.

“Yes, sort of. I’ve been thinking that it should be a corporation. This would be a profit-driven enterprise.”

“That really doesn’t sound like you, Cas. You want to profit from the local poor?”

“Sort of.”

Dean looked at Cas deadpan and said, “Who are you and what have you done with my Cas?”

Cas smiled warmly and let out a small sigh. “I’m thinking there might be a way to set it up similar to a co-op. People buy stock in the company and get a loan. When the company makes a profit it’s paid back to the shareholders as dividends on the stock they had to buy to get the loan. If the company makes money… the people will continue to prosper. More and more loans will be written as profits go up. The more people we help, the more money everyone makes.”

“Cas, I’ve never heard of anything like that before.”

“There are similar models in play. There are companies marketing gum and candy… even pet food and treats. They function like a corporation, but the profits go to the cause. There just aren’t any I know of where those receiving charity are actually part of the company.”

“I really like what I’m hearing Cas. I love the way your mind works,” Dean said as he leaned in for a kiss. The babies had now discovered splashing and the couple wound up getting a face full as their lips locked.

They returned their attention to the babies for a moment, engaging in splashing and goofy faces. Then Dean said, “Cas, why don’t you do your magic number crunching. Ya know? Do some research and see if what you propose can actually be done. Maybe make a business plan for it?”

Cas’ smile was electric. He knew that if Dean had asked him for numbers, he had the man's support.

When the sun started getting hot, the babies started getting more clumsy and crying more. “It must be nap time,” said Cas, glancing at Dean.

“Awesome. I’m crankier than they are,” laughed Dean as he hoisted Johnny from the water and carried him over to their chairs to dry off.
Once they’d rounded up their things, they headed for the tree house. They deposited the twins into high chairs. The tots were quite cranky. Cute little smiles and dimples had given way to red faces and noisy protests. Cas went straight to the counter, peeled a banana and began slicing it directly onto the babies trays.

There was immediate peace. Chubby fingers grasped banana slices and mashed them to faces. Dean made peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and cut them into cubes. Dean and Cas ate the crust chunks and the babies ate the middle chunks. The tots had sippy cups of milk, too, and by the time Dean was wiping counters, the babies had heavy eyelids and slow hands.

Cas moved about, getting the diaper bags emptied and then, together, the men carried the babies to their bed to peel off their wet swim diapers and replace them with regular ones. Cas picked up Jimmy and moved to the record player, dropping the needle back onto Bob Marley.

Dean smiled as he picked up Johnny and the men stood in their bedroom, swaying back and forth, rocking the babies to the soft sounds of “No Woman No Cry.” Dean glanced over at Cas and saw Jimmy’s heavy head finally come to rest on Cas’ shoulder and he smiled. When Cas caught him staring, he just smiled back at Dean. Dean gave him a wink and started moving towards the makeshift cribs in the dinette. They made slow progress, slowing movements as they approached the cribs and then very gingerly settling the sleeping boys down for a nap.

Both held their breath as they backed away slowly. When they made it past the door to their room, they knew they were home free. They high-fived each other and sank down on the bed. The music played on as the big boys joined the little boys in their nap time.

The days of vacation didn’t fly by for Dean and Cas. The hours with the babies were wonderful, but they were long. Each day found them progressively more tired than the last. Dean could see why parents needed so many breaks. Caring for the babies was relentless.

Dean could also see why his brother seemed so thrilled to be having sex. He and Cas had the start of hand jobs once. Other than that… they had been rated G for nearly almost two weeks.

They never got to shower together anymore – taking turns so the twins wouldn’t be left alone. That ruled out their “good morning” hand jobs in the shower. In fact, any morning sex was impossible as the dawning of each new day was heralded by the screams of infants – not the swell of birdsong. Then, by the time they collapsed into the bed, they were far too tired to bother with getting any.

“You turned out to be the cutest little cock blocker that ever lived!” said Dean in sweet baby-talk voice. “My poor brother isn’t getting any more tail now than he did in junior high!”

Dean was watching Cas over the baby’s shoulder as he spoke and he watched Cas chuckle at his antics. “Let’s show uncle Cas you can give me five!” Dean enthused. “C’mon cutie!” he pushed as he gestured with his hand, “C’mon give your uncle Dean a fiver!”

When a chubby little hand came up and reached out for his palm – he just about blew a gasket. Cas leapt up to join and they continued to coax him into it again and again until the behavior was ingrained.
Needless to say, Jess and Sam were impressed with that one.

The best day, by far, was when Sam, Jess and Mary had joined them for a day at the beach. The experience had been wonderful for everyone. Mary, Jess and Cas had spent a great deal of time making a sandcastle with the babies. (Mostly the three were building and the babies were destroying.)

Sam and Dean had taken the boys out into the waves, lifting them up at the right times so that their little heads never got wet as the waves rolled in.

The twins ate a lot of sand and swallowed a lot of sea water despite the best efforts of the grown-ups. Just before nap time, Jimmy upchucked on Dean. “I swear! This one’s got it out for me!” he grinned. Not ten minutes later, Johnny puked on Jess.

The boys took the twins back to the tree house for nap time while the rest stayed on the beach to enjoy the afternoon sun.

Later that evening, the family all met up at the pool-side restaurant for dinner and then lingered afterwards to do a little swimming. Dean had always loved swimming after dark. For some reason, it seemed more of a novelty.

Their group spent most of the evening lounging at the swim up bar or sitting with Dean and Cas, who had restricted themselves almost exclusively to the baby pool to play with the twins. Dean continued teaching the twins to do a high-five and Cas had been trying to coax them into saying his name. But so far, the only thing the twins had retained from their lessons was how to splash.

The boys seemed to really like it when their uncles blew razzberries on their bellies so they did it often. The twins giggles were the most joyful sound Cas had ever heard. He and Dean traded out trying anything and everything to keep the babies laughing in fits.

They’d gone hiking one day too. They’d stopped by Sunni’s office, and she’d bound the babies each into a long piece of material, showing the boys how to do it as she bound a baby to each man. Once they were all tucked in, Dean and Cas had been able to go out and hike the trail to the Banyan tree. They found the twins to be very complacent in Sunni’s binding cloths and as they moved through the trees, listening to the jungle noises and watching bright colors the babies were clearly taking it all in… entranced.

They moved at a leisurely pace, talking about whatever happened to cross their minds. They knew they were at the halfway point when the Banyan tree came into view. The men exchanged soft smiles as they approached it.

This place was special to them. Yes, it had been the setting of some steamy encounters, but it was more than that. It meant something to both of them.

The tree was an incredible sight, a stunning example of nature’s glory. And they’d found it together, elbow to elbow, as they’d sliced through the jungle with machetes feeling like Tarzan. Then they’d tended it, sculpted it. Now it was even more beautiful. The expanse of ground that it covered was well kept by the grounds crew now, and green grasses grew at its base where dead leaves had once rotted. There were benches around the viewing area; and at night the whole thing was lit up like a centerpiece in the middle of their Garden of Eden.

Cas reached out and took Dean's hand for a few steps as they moved past it and continued down the trail.
“Hey Cas, do you remember those trees we liked in the outback?”

“The ones with the clumpy tops?” he asked.

“Yeah, like the one we sat under when we saw the flying fox bats. What were they called?”

“Myall trees,” supplied Cas.

“Thanks, I couldn’t think of it.”

“That was a great day.”

“Yep. I’m glad you pushed for that guide. He was incredible.”

“That whole trip was incredible,” sighed Cas, “I’d like to go back there someday.”

“What was the best part for you?” Dean asked him.

He thought for a minute, “The reef. It’s what we went there for… and it was even better than I’d hoped. I could have spent the entire two weeks just diving there.”

“Yeah, but then we’d never have known what it was like to sit under that myall tree and see the entire sky full of giant flying fox bats!” smiled Dean.

“I expected them to be cuter.”

“Only you would expect cuteness from an animal that has giant bat wings.”

“The platypus wasn’t as cute as I expected either.”

“Yeah. And poisonous too. Who knew!” laughed Dean, “What about the wallabies?”

“They definitely lived up!” grinned Cas, “Actually, aside from the reef, the wallaby tour was my favorite.”

“Me too,” said Dean, remembering. He had taken way too many pictures of Cas on the wallaby tour. But over the course of two days their group had stopped to swim at several waterfalls and each was more beautiful than the one before it. Plus, with the rest of the group taking too many pictures it was easy to fall into doing it. He had pictures of them under the waterfalls, next to them, climbing on them, even kissing under one.

That tour had included some excellent swimming and hiking and the showcase of different animals they’d gotten to observe in the wild was even better than they had hoped for.

The dingos had been the only negative on their anniversary trip to Australia. They were captivating animals, to be sure. They were similar to dogs in many respects, but hard. Adaptive. They’re able go days without drinking, and they have very unique paws that allow them to manipulate things in ways that regular dogs cannot. Both men had been fascinated by the animals.

But it was absolutely gut-wrenching to watch Cas learn of their plight. Cas, at times, was simply overwhelmed with the sheer cruelty of men. Dean was aware of it too – but for some reason it didn’t sicken and sadden him the way it did Cas.

Dean had to wonder sometimes – how had Cas developed such a deep capacity for empathy and compassion when he’d been raised with such a lack of both?
Regardless, anytime he saw that wounded look on Cas’ face it pulled out his protective instincts. It caused him to do things he wouldn’t normally do. In this case? To donate his entire annual dividend check to a local group that was fighting to save the poor animals and working against the law to feed the starving ones.

Dean had been cranky for days after the donation. There were so many ways he’d felt the money could’ve been better used. But for Cas, he’d do anything. Clearly.

He’d buttoned his lip and plastered on the most realistic fake smile he could muster and handed over the check. He’d laughed as he’d told himself he’d just bought the most expensive anniversary gift in the history of ever. Then he’d spent the next few days hiding his crankiness from Cas until it disappeared.

Now, as he felt Cas’ hand on his shoulder, it snapped him back to the present.

“Are you ok, Dean? You have that cranky look. Do you need pie?” Cas teased, not knowing where Dean’s mind had been.

“I always need pie,” he smiled at his man.

As they trekked on, Dean found himself thinking of the dingos again. The guide had told them that dingos mate for life. If their mate dies – it’s common for the other animal to literally grieve itself to death. Startling behavior for an animal. But Dean could understand it. He felt the same.

Dean looked down as he realized he’d been toying with his ring. He hardly noticed he was wearing it anymore; but he seemed to catch himself toying with it when he was thinking of Cas. He smiled now too – remembering the day he’d received it.

He’d climbed into the cockpit of the plane, just another day. But then, suspended from the wheel he’d seen a small burlap sack. He knew instantly what it was. Cas’ ring had come in the same little sack. He’d opened it and found a ring almost exactly like the one he’d had made for Cas. The inscription had been simple and very, very Cas…

*There are no words*

Cas was right. To try and put their love into words almost cheapened it. That’s why he’d been opposed to marriage, in a way. It was too mundane. Almost everyone gets married. Not everyone is bonded like he and Cas are. Cas was right. There are no words.

The last night of their family vacation, they all came to Dean and Cas’ treehouse. The boys had food sent over from the tiki bar on the point, and they’d all sat around the boys’ little table in the dinette and played cards until late in the evening. It was wonderful to play, passing the babies around the table, with the entire family all laughing and having a good time.

Once the babies were put down, they pulled out the shots and played spoons for old time sake. The next morning, Dean flew them all home. Dean and Cas helped load everything into Jess and Sam’s minivan and Mary’s SUV. Then they all hugged tightly and promised not to let it become Christmas without seeing each other again.

Once they’d had a bathroom break and a cup of coffee, they climbed back into the cockpit and prepared to fly home. As they sat in the line-up waiting to take off, Dean looked at Cas.
“What?” Cas asked him, probably wondering why Dean was staring so intently at him.

“You have no idea the things I’m gonna do to you when we get home.”

Cas smiled at him, “It’ll need to be pretty spectacular if it’s going to keep me awake. I feel like I could sleep for a week.”
Dean yawned and stretched in the bed. He could hear the birdsong growing louder outside their
treehouse and knew dawn was approaching. He wiggled out from under Cas’ leg and headed for
the bathroom. He pushed down the front of his boxers to take a leak and then tugged them up
again when finished. As he flushed, his eyes caught his reflection in the bathroom mirror.

He stepped closer, considering his appearance. His face had aged over the last few years. There
was no denying he was a middle-aged man now. His skin, which had been youthful and smattered
with freckles when he moved here, was now starting to look leathery from too much sun. It had
been over six years since his surgery, and his scar had faded a lot during that time. So much time
spent shirtless under a scorching sun had given him a base tan that went a long way towards
covering the red line that ran from his ribs to his groin, but it was still visible – even from several
paces away. Plus, the area around his belly button had always looked a little lopsided since the
surgery too.

Dean was far past worrying about how the scar looked on him. Cas was right, it was just part of
him now. Under the fluorescent lights of the bathroom, he found his eyes taking in his overall
appearance and appraising it. He’s not what he used to be, but it could be worse.

I don’t look too bad for thirty-six.

Dean grabs a drink of water and then crawls back in bed with Cas. The daylight is just starting to
creep into their dark room as he pulls himself back towards his friend under the soft sheet.

They’ve been wearing each other’s rings for only about five years, but they’ve been bedmates for
about a decade. After so much time together their bodies seem to accommodate each other without
conscious thought. They twine together comfortably without Cas even waking, and Dean rests his
forehead on Cas’ bicep for a moment before sinking down into the pillow.

He dozes lightly for a bit, but soon Cas begins to stir next to him. He feels the man’s leg slide out
from between his and lock into a full-body stretch next to him.

Dean stretches too and when they both relax, Cas’ hand drifts over to Dean's thigh and slides up.
Dean grins as he looks towards Cas. All he can see of the man is a patch of unruly black hair
sticking out from under the sheet, but he can feel the man's smile as he runs his hand upwards to
see if Dean is sporting a morning stiffie.

He smiles too as he waits for long fingers to wrap around the tent pole he knows has been growing
there. When he feels his lover’s grip tighten around him, he reaches out to take Cas in hand too.
Both of them shift under the light covers until they come face to face. Dean holds his breath as he
feels warm lips brush his chin and then his mouth. He nips playfully at Cas, chasing that tongue as
he begins to stroke the dick that’s grown hard in his hand. Cas hums pleasure in response and
begins to work his mouth down onto Dean's neck and shoulder.
Dean turns his face away and tips his head back to allow Cas better access to his neck. Cas seems to get hungrier then, pressing forward and kicking the sheets out of his way as he throws his leg over Dean's and brings their dicks together.

Now, with their cocks rubbing together and their hands encircling them, the two hump together and stroke. As they get closer, their breaths start getting shorter and faster. Unexpectedly, Cas pulls Dean's hand away and slides on top. Dean parts his thighs for Cas as the man continues to kiss and lick and suck his neck in all the right places.

Cas has their swollen members trapped between them and Dean can feel the man's power as he lays beneath the powerful thrusts and enjoys the feeling of his man's dick sliding along next to his own. It doesn't take long for the heat between them to make sliding impossible. Now, he's starting to feel sticky friction between them instead. It's more intense. His fingers curl into Cas' thick hair and tighten.

Cas moans in pleasure as Dean holds him securely. Dean falls into a rhythm as his man moves on him and there's a familiar churning in his belly as his body responds to Cas.

Dean loves this position. With their junk pressing together between their bodies – the head of Dean's cock will slide through Cas' jizz as if it were his own.

With one hand still knotted in Cas' hair, he moves his other hand down to cup the man's ass. Cas has a great ass. Dean has always thought so. He's going to come soon, so he looks up from the bottom and into deep blue eyes. He holds the gaze for as long as he can while Cas thrusts on him but too soon his eyes begin to slide shut against his will. He feels Cas' mouth bite down on his shoulder and knows it's happening.

The man's hips stutter and then with the very next thrust, there's suddenly slick. "Yesss," he hisses into Cas' ear as his tip slides smoothly through Cas' juices. Their bellies are wet now, dicks sliding freely in the mess and it feels so slippery-good.

Dean's mouth locks open for a moment as the initial wave of pleasure passes over him. Then, he's able to move with Cas and moan his appreciation as they enjoy the following smaller waves together.

When they still, Dean opens his eyes to the full brightness of daylight. "Good morning, Dean," Cas rumbles in his ear.

"Hey Cas," Dean says softly with a smile.

The two grimace a little as they peel apart. "Big game today," says Dean as they pad to the shower together.

"Oh shit!" says Cas, freezing in his tracks.

"What?"

"I forgot to wash my uniform. What time is it?"

"We have time," reassures Dean. "You jump in the shower. I'll take care of it."

"Thanks Dean."

Dean grabbed a wad of toilet paper and wiped his belly off. Then he went to the laundry basket and dug for Cas' dirty soccer uniform. He put it in the wash, along with the man's underthings, and
set it for the speed cycle. Then he headed back to the shower. He stepped in next to Cas, who was shampooing his hair, and as he washed up, Dean was thinking about the game. Cas would be playing and Dean would be watching. This was the last game of their second season. There would be trophies and bragging rights for the winning team.

The kids would play first at ten and then the adults would play at one. There would be refreshments during the game, and Sunni was putting together a barbeque pit near the field for a party afterwards. The dinner was new this year and had been Dean's idea.

Three years ago, Cas had come to Dean with the idea of starting a soccer league within the resort. He missed playing on the city league like he had in San Francisco. Dean had immediately thought it was a great idea. They created a soccer field near the employees’ sand volleyball pit and held sign-ups for volunteers to coach and play. Based on the number of players who had volunteered, they were able to create 4 teams that first year. This year they had five.

Dean and Cas did a lot of things to build a sense of community at the resort, and it was paying off. They had a much lower rate of employee turnover than any other resort of their size. The dollars they invested in their employees’ happiness were balanced out by the savings they enjoyed in their employee recruiting and training budgets.

The men had agreed that if the soccer went over well, they’d form a league for sand volleyball, too. The planning for that was already under way. Dean had plans to participate as a player and was looking forward to it.

As they stepped out of the shower, Dean playfully snatched Cas’ towel off and dropped it to the floor with a shit-eating grin on his face.

Cas twitched an eyebrow up at him. Rather than retrieving the towel as Dean expected, Cas just strode over to the counter and began shaving naked. Damn.

Dean moved to stand next to his man but found that as he brushed his teeth and shaved, he couldn’t keep from flicking his eyes to his man's sculpted chest and muscular thighs. He even found himself leaning back a little to peek at that fine ass. Cas caught him looking and flashed a wicked grin.

When he’d finished in the bathroom, Dean threw on shorts and a t-shirt and headed to the kitchen to start breakfast. When the washer buzzed, he stepped over and put Cas’ things into the dryer.

Soon they were sitting together on the front porch, eating French toast and watching the beach. There weren’t many guests out there this early, but a few of the families with small kids were venturing out. After many summers spent with Sam’s boys, Dean knew that days with kids start early. The little beasts have no idea how to sleep late – or why anyone would want to.

Cas takes their empty plates and heads inside. Dean sits an extra few minutes on the porch with his coffee, just thinking and enjoying a leisurely Saturday morning.

Eventually Cas emerges, fully dressed in his freshly laundered uniform. Dean checks him out. He’d always liked the way Cas looked in a soccer uniform. They’d chosen team names and as a throwback to his SF days, Cas had called his team the Hurricanes. The boldest writing on the uniforms was in Spanish, but there was English underneath. Dean threw his shoes on and they headed over to the employee-only area where the soccer field was.

They parked, and Cas was immediately swallowed up by a flock of his teammates. They were all planning to sit together during the kids game. Dean nodded at Cas as the man looked back to him. Then he headed over to the barbeque area. He checked in with Sunni to see if there was anything
she needed. As usual, she needed nothing. The woman as incredible and had everything taken care of – down to the last detail. Her kitchen staff were assisting her and everything smelled incredible.

He moved over to a nearby table where the Random Requests committee members were selling t-shirts to raise funds. Dean bought one each for him and Cas, talking with resort staff here and there as he made his way to the bleachers.

As he walked up, Dean spotted Krizia sitting with her son Carlos. Dean greeted her and said hello to the boy as he sat down with them to watch. Carlos chattered loudly about having gotten a soccer ball for Christmas and how excited he was to be able to play on the team when he finally turned eight. Their conversation effortlessly reached out to others as the seats around them filled. Soon the game was starting.

The game was fun to watch, but intimidating too. There was more skill on the field among the children here than Dean was used to seeing. In the states the kids games were fun to watch because the kids lacked skill. Their hilarious bumbles and clumsiness made for good fun. Not here. These kids were nimble and practiced in both footwork and strategy. It crossed Dean's mind that they should add another age category for the kids. As it was now, the 8-15 year olds played as kids and then the 16 and up played as adults.

Dean asked Krizia what she thought and she emphatically agreed that there should be a set of teams for those aged 5-8. They talked for a little bit about it as they watched the game and both cheered loudly.

Dean kept Carlos for her while she ran to the restroom and then took the boy to the snack bar between games. Dean had noticed a young man, whose name he didn’t know, angling to speak to the young woman. Noticing her bashful smile at his attention – he’d acted in the interest of young love and taken Carlos from her side.

Dean ended up getting the boy a t-shirt for him and his mother while they were off getting snacks – just to make it take longer.

When they returned to the bleachers to settle in for the next game, the young man didn’t leave. He settled in next to Krizia and began to discuss the game with her. Dean sat quietly on the other side of Carlos who was too caught up in watching the coin toss and kick off to notice his mother's new companion.

Dean watched Cas and chuckled at the running commentary kept up by Carlos. Dean asked him a few questions and nodded at his answers. The crowd was enthusiastic… it appeared that most everyone who wasn’t working was here. The games had been scheduled carefully to be sure that the festivities lined up with shift change. That way those that had to miss the game for work could still come to the post game party and vice versa.

When the Hurricanes scored, Carlos was on his feet on the bleachers and Krizia was fist pounding with both her admirer and her son. She reached around Carlos to high-five Dean and congratulate him on Cas’ strong assist. The opposing team scored once too. The game wound up in overtime with the other team victorious, but it had been fun to watch. Dean was slowly getting used to soccer. It was a low scoring game, but it was not short of excitement.

Dean offered to take Carlos over to the food tent and Krizia seemed quite grateful. As he moved through the crowd he was bombarded with cheers and shouts of greeting from staffers. Some he knew and some he didn’t, but he was gracious to all of them as he meandered towards the food tent.
Sunni had outdone herself. There were festive decorations and lights hanging in the tent and around the pavilion where the tables and chairs were fast filling. The food smelled incredible and the players had cleaned up their faces and were now lined up to greet their “fans.”

Dean smiled, watching Cas with his teammates. He looked so happy. Tired, sweaty, dirty and happy. Dean smiled watching despite himself and then threw Carlos up on his shoulders to go greet the players from both teams. The boy fist bumped and high five them all with unabashed excitement from his perch on Dean’s shoulders.

When they got through the food line, Dean settled next to Dominique and his wife to eat. Dominique was their accountant and his office was just a stone’s throw away from Dean's. Because of the proximity of his office the man already knew Carlos, who occasionally came to work with Krizia.

Carlos and the Winchester twins were known to cause quite a bit of trouble when they joined forces, and spilling coffee on Dominique's desk was probably the least of their offenses against this man. As he ate, Dean's memory took him back to a time when Dean, Cas and Krizia had all failed epically in the “watch your kids” department. The three-year-old twins, assisted by five-year-old Carlos, had managed to empty the entire contents of a five gallon water cooler jug onto the floor of the executive offices.

“That,” Dominique had commented as he eyed the mess, “is a billboard for not bringing children to work.”

Dean couldn’t argue. The man was right. He’d simply been unable to stop laughing long enough to tell him so.

Now, as Dean looked around the grounds in the late afternoon sun, he saw happy faces everywhere. Plates of food and bottles of beer were cluttered on tables while families, friends and neighbors relaxed. Dean didn’t see much of Cas that evening – both men being pulled in different directions. But when they finally met up, Dean still had Carlos with him. Cas took the boy off to go hang with the players for a while and Dean followed his nose to the dessert table.

Trusting Sunni, he followed her nod towards the yucca cake. Normally not his type of thing, but he was surprised by how much he enjoyed it. It was thick and moist – not really the texture of cake. It had a creamy milk sauce over top. Dean gave her his nod of approval.

Later, as the party dwindled to mostly teens and young adults, Dean stepped in to help break down the food tent and carry things for Sunni. She was leaving the drinks out, music on and lights up for the remaining partiers. But she had stacks of coolers and tables and empty catering equipment ready to be loaded up and returned to its home elsewhere on the grounds. Dean joined the workers who were carrying folding tables and coolers to a utility vehicle. That’s what he was doing when Cas finally found him.

Dean noticed that Cas was light one child. “You got Carlos back to Krizia?”

“Yes, Dean, and she’s met someone,” said Cas as he joined in helping carry things.

“I saw that. What did you think of him?” Dean asked.

“He’s a good kid. His name’s Rony and he works over in the jet ski rental hut.”

Dean nodded thanks as Cas lifted the other end of the heavy cooler he was carrying. They heaved it into the back of a resort utility vehicle. Then they walked back to the pavilion and took the last of
As they walked with it, Cas said, “Dean? Would you like to take a boat out tonight? Maybe sleep under the stars? We haven’t done that in a really long time.”

“Sure, Cas.” Dean was watching Cas in the setting sun. His friend was showing his age. He had pronounced laugh lines at the corner of his eyes. He also had permanent crinkles on his forehead from scrunching it up as he worked relentlessly on his charts and tables. The man's skin was displaying the signs of too much sun just like Dean's was – no longer just a healthy glowing tan but a leathery quality to the skin. It was most noticeable in the places that saw the most sun, like the back of his neck and his shoulders.

Dean smiled on the inside as he compared his man to the likes of Brad Pitt and George Clooney, who seemed to get sexier with age. Cas was still a walking wet dream. And those eyes… those never changed. They were cold fire and lightenig – clear, sharp and intense. The color deepened or lightened with the environment around him, but they were always striking. His man's best feature.

They climbed in the jeep and made a quick stop at the treehouse to grab a bag before heading to the marina. It was much bigger now than what they’d first built. There were no longer just three docks. There were seven. There was no longer just a yacht anchored here. There were two yachts now and also a large passenger boat that was used for the kids excursion out to the pirates playground on the sandbar. There were two large fishing boats that had been added so they could include deep sea fishing in their list of available tours. There was also a catamaran.

The catamaran was their newest purchase. It had a large canvas net stretched between the two hulls and guests could lay on it, over the water, as they splashed along. This boat wasn’t really part of any particular tour – mostly it was for VIPs. Occasionally they used it to take small groups of employees out for fun little trips. Frequently the call center used incentives like that to get the representatives to hit their goals for sales, bookings and customer satisfaction approvals.

Dean pulled out his phone and checked the schedule they kept for the boats. “The new yacht is booked, but we can take the old one out,” Dean said as they parked and climbed out of the jeep.

“Perfect. I like this one better anyway,” smiled Cas.

They climbed on board and settled in. The sun had set now, and it was dark as they entered the channel. When they hit open water, Dean put the hammer down and they sped to the east. The breeze felt great and Cas found himself stripping down even though no one had really called this “naked time.”

Dean couldn’t resist joining once he saw Cas stripping. The moon wasn’t full, but it was close, so there was plenty of light. The breeze was stiff and the water choppy, tiny white caps dotting the water ahead of them.

Anchored at the sandbar, the boat continued to bob on the waves long after their wake had disappeared. They got in and swam for a few minutes but soon hoisted up onto the swim platform.

With feet still dangling in the water and thighs pressed together, Dean told Cas he’d enjoyed watching him play today. He mentioned the idea of adding a kids league for next year and Cas gave Dean a huge gummy smile in agreement. He knew that Cas was glad they’d undertaken the soccer league and was proud that it was going over so well.

“Oh Dean I forgot to tell you…”
“What?” he prodded when Cas trailed off.

“Well, Adam is running for president. Had you heard?”

“No. I hadn’t. What makes you think he’s running?”

“He’s going to the Iowa caucus, I saw it on the news feed yesterday and forgot to mention it until now.”

“Holy Shit!” yelped Dean, “Oh my god, if he wins I will KNOW the mother-fuckin president of the US!”

“Well, the hardest part of a presidential run is the fund-raising. That’s what I’ve been told. You’re in a position to make a donation, Dean, and I think we should do that.”

“Really Cas? You wouldn’t mind?”

“Not at all. The more people donate, the less he’ll have to take from people who want to influence his politics.”

“I have no idea where he stands on any of the issues, Cas. But I’d want him in the White House. He’s a genuinely good person, Cas. He’s not the power-seeking type. He wants to do good things.”

“Dean, you haven’t seen him in a really long time… almost twenty years. People can change a lot in that time. Maybe we should attend a fundraiser, listen to his speech and maybe even meet him. Then if you’re sure he's still the same good man you knew – we can decide how much to donate.”

“I'm a lucky man,” said Dean softly, meeting Cas’ eye, “You are so damned smart. You keep me making all the right decisions.”

Cas smiled warmly at the praise and accepted a kiss from Dean. Once their lips met, it was useless to think of anything besides sex. They moved from the platform back onto the boat. They grabbed their bag and some blankets from the bed, heading up to the sun-bathing deck where they used to sleep under the stars sometimes.

As Cas lay down under the expansive sky, Dean dropped to his knees, shoved down between Cas’ thighs and opened his mouth on his man. He licked the tip like an ice-cream cone and then began working more and more of Cas’ thick manhood into this mouth. When it hit the back of his throat he groaned with pleasure.

Dean sank down lower and lower as his throat opened up and he pressed eager fingers between the man's cheeks and spread them, working his fingers closer and closer to the rosebud of soft tissue surrounding the man's entrance.

Cas was whispering encouragements to him as he drug his tongue up and down the man's crack, purposefully bumping over the soft skin around the hole but not pushing in.

Cas turned himself onto his belly and used his hand to push his dick back between his legs as they settled in. Dean stared for a moment, letting his mouth flood with saliva, then he put his wet tongue to the very tip of his man's cock and ran it up along the shaft, over nuts, along the taint and followed the crack all the way to its top. Cas was quivering. Dean gave the man's ass a firm smack and then pressed his face between ass cheeks to do it again from top to bottom.

This time when he passed over the balls he sucked them into his mouth, one at a time, and gave each a roll around his hot mouth before expelling it to take in the other. He worked his way down
the shaft and then swirled the tip before coming back up again.

Cas was a mess. He was begging already. Dean crawled up over his man's body, letting his front touch Cas’ back. Then he dropped his package between the man's cheeks and began rocking there. He could feel Cas’ pliant body beneath his, he knew he could do whatever he wanted. It was overwhelming.

“I’m having that feeling again, Cas.”

“Dean?”

“That feeling Cas…the super dirty one where I feel like I want to do all kinds of bad stuff. I wish there were people watching us.”

“Like at the bathhouse in Seattle?”

“Yes. Just like that… you all spread out for me… your hole clenching as you beg me to spank you again… guys shouting out stuff they wanted me to do to you…” Dean was panting. He took a deep breath, “Cas that was one of the hottest fucks I ever had.”

“We should make a porno,” said Cas.

“What?” asked Dean between thrusts.

“Make a porno. You and me. We could hire camera guys and set it up however we want. We won't actually sell any of it… just keep it for us… watch it once in awhile.”

Dean's cock was already heavy with need but it leapt at the picture Cas was painting in his mind. He could see them… right here on the yacht… half a dozen people behind cameras watching as they got it on again and again in all different positions. The thought exploded in his mind like a bomb. “Yes,” he growled as he smacked Cas’ ass again and again in quick succession. “That’s my dirty boy, Cas.” I love all the dirty good ideas you have!”

“Will you spank me in our porno, Dean?”

“Yeah, I will,” he said as he climbed back off of Cas and shoved his fingers ruthlessly into Cas soft hole, “What else do you want your man to do to you?”

“Lash me. With a crop – right on my fucking hole”

“Jesus Cas!” shouted Dean as his mind conjured a picture of the suggested debauchery.

“Then paddle me til my cheeks are pink and I’m crying.”

“Cas –”

“Tie me up too – and kick my legs apart – I fucking love when you do that.”

“What do you want to do to me Cas?” asked Dean coyly as he scissored his fingers with one hand and teased fingers down Cas’ shaft with the other hand.

“Cas,” he repeated, “What do you want to do to me in our porno?”

“I want to tie you up and…”

“Yes?”
“I want to…”

Dean dealt a swift and firm open-handed smack to his lover’s ass cheek. “Say it!” he commanded.

“I want to come on your face!”

“Oh Cas, you don’t have to wait for a camera crew to do that,” teased Dean as he turned his man over so he was on his back again. “Do it tonight,” he said softly as he settled his body down and between Cas’ legs and pressed a rock-hard dick into Cas’ sweet hole.

“Ahhh!” Cas cried out, “Spit on that!”

Realizing his mistake, Dean held his lower body very still as he reached for the lube. “Sorry if I killed the moment,” he said to Cas as he drizzled lube over his dick and smeared it up around Cas’ hole with his fingers.

“Oh yes,” said Cas with soft relief as Dean began pushing back in, “so much better.”

“Yeah,” crooned Dean in a sweetie pie voice as he wrapped his slippery palm around Cas’ shaft, “This is gonna be good Cas. You’re gonna come hard and fast tonight, and I’m gonna wear it proudly.”

“Ugghh,” groaned Cas as his back arched in pleasure.

“That’s right. You're gonna blow a load on my face now…” he smiled as he watched Cas’ face, “and again later in front of the entire camera crew.”

Dean was thrusting into a tight asshole now as he jacked his man, “I’m gonna tie you up, spank your ass pink and fuck you raw,” he said as he slammed into Cas with all his might, “then I’m gonna let you free and you’re gonna cuff my fine ass up good. I’ll suck you off til you can’t hold back anymore,” he delivered a stinging smack to Cas’ already pink ass as he said it, “and then your gonna spray my face and I’m gonna lick it up.”

With that, Dean watched Cas’ mouth fall open and head tip back. Cas was gonna come.

“Look at me!” he shouted as he dropped his face down low. Cas’ bright blue eyes opened wide and he watched as spurts of white came sprung up and landed on Dean's chin and bottom lip. Dean opened his mouth and let his tongue roll out to lick it. Just as he did a glop landed on it. He pretended to enjoy the jizz bath, making a show out of licking his lips.

Cas loved it, he could tell. When it was over, they both crumpled into a pile of arms and legs. Dean's heart was hammering and his blood was rushing in his ears. Hiding it from Cas, he scraped as much off his face and tongue as he could, wiping it on his stomach. He grimaced as he swallowed what he couldn’t get rid of. Fucking nasty.

As they came down, Dean whispered, “We’re gonna do all that nasty shit in front of a camera crew. And then we’ll watch that shit again and again.”

Both men chuckled and rearranged themselves to a comfortable position. Cas reached out and pulled a blanket over them and they laid there – watching the stars while the soft rock of the ocean lulled them to sleep.
Three thousand miles away from Dean and Cas’ yacht, Sam and Jess were also caught up in steamy sex. Theirs, however, was a little different. They were behind a locked door in their bedroom. The boys were still awake, in fact they had friends spending the night. They’d turned up their TV loud to not be heard in the hallway and took advantage of the boys being busy with playmates.

They’d been lucky until now… they’d had almost half an hour of woman-on-top passion. But now, there was heavy knocking. The couple stilled and Sam reached for the remote. He muted the TV.

“What?”

“We’re hungry.”

“You just ate!”

“Please, Dad, we’re hungry!”

Jess flagged. “I’ll come make you something in a sec,” she answered. Then the two held their breath for a moment to see if the boy would go away.

“Ok,” came a resigned answer through the door.

Jess dismounted and began putting on her robe. Sam rolled over on his side and waited for his boner to go away.

“You may as well finish that without me,” she said. “You know once I go down there I won't be able to get back up here.”

They looked at each other apologetically and then Jess gave a weak wave as she exited the room, locking the door behind her.

Dean listened to his lover breathing next to him as he watched the sky. Cas must’ve been exhausted after such a long day. But for Dean the day had been far less taxing. Even after his man had fallen asleep he laid awake for quite a while thinking.

Adam crossed his mind again and again. All he could think about was Adam’s homosexuality ruining his bid for the White House. Secrets have a way of coming out… and at the worst possible time. Dean knew there was no way the US was ready for a gay president, so coming clean was probably ill advised. Adam would have to keep his sexuality a secret. And Dean really wanted to help him. So he set his mind on brainstorming ideas rather than spinning idle circles. Before he finally drifted off to sleep – he had an idea.
Jess had gone downstairs and fixed fun treats for the boys. She made pizza rolls and cookies, which she took up to the boys’ room on large trays. She took up juice boxes too. For ninety seconds while she made her delivery – she was the hero.

Surprisingly, they went back to their video games and asked for nothing else. She was off the hook. Rather than going to the kitchen to clean up the mess she’d left, she opted for the master suite, hoping to be able to pick up where they’d left off.

“Sorry,” Sam joked weakly when she arrived and dropped her robe. “You told me to finish. I’m a man that does what he’s told.”

“That’s okay,” she said, snuggling down next to him, “I’ll settle for a cuddle.”

“I’ll play with your tits while you use your battery operated boyfriend if you want.”

“Nah,” she said with a smile. “I’m already all tucked in. But thanks.” She was silent for a minute and then added, “You’re a good man, Sam Winchester.”

“Oh yeah?”

“Yes. In a few short weeks our boys will start school. I’ll be going back to work, and you will have made it six years without banging the nanny.”

“Your bar for being a good man isn’t set very high if all I had to do was not screw the nanny.”

“You know what I mean,” she laughed as she pressed into him.

“Was that something you worried about?” he asked her.

“Not obsessively, no. But it may have crossed my mind a few times. I guess when it really comes down to it – I didn’t really figure she was that big of an enticement for you.”

“Jess, if you tried to pick an ugly nanny you missed the mark.”

“It’s not that…” she said smiling, “… it’s just that I figured there were bigger fish.”

“Bigger fish,” he repeated – not sure of where she was going with this.

“Yeah, Sam. I guess I figured if you ever slipped and fell into bed with someone it would be Max.”

“Oh,” he said quietly as he came to understand what she meant.

“Baby, you’ve never given me any reason to worry. And I adore Max, I do. But you two clearly have a connection. So I figured if there was ever to be another – it would be him.”

“I can see why you say that,” he told her honestly, “but Jess, the connection we have isn’t the kind that brings two people together. It’s the kind that develops because two people have been together.”

“I don’t see the difference. A connection is a connection.”

“You’re probably right. But I don’t feel a pull to hop in bed with Max, so don’t worry about it, ok?”

“Ok. But if the pull ever gets too strong let me know,” she said firmly.
“Why?” he asked her honestly.

“Cause he’d make a good third,” she said with a nervous giggle.

“Damn, Jess.”

“Sorry,” she said softly.

“Don’t be,” he chuckled. “You got me hard again.”

It was about four months from the time that Dean and Cas discussed going to a fundraiser for Adam, and the night that they actually did.

As they flew north for the event, Cas looked over at Dean in the pilot seat. “I think we should talk numbers before we get there.”

“What do you have in mind Cas?” Dean asked through the headset.

“Well, I think we should decide on a book-end. Tell ourselves that we’re donating somewhere between two numbers. If you talk to Adam and are no longer interested in helping him out – we give the minimum donation. If you have a good feeling at the end of the event – we give the maximum. Or we give anywhere in between the two.”

“Good idea. What’s the maximum that you’re comfortable with Cas?”

“Honestly?”

“Of course!”

“I think whatever your dividend check was this year. I think that makes a good maximum number.”

“I agree,” said Dean, “What’s the minimum donation that’s polite at one of these shindigs, Cas?”

“Probably $10,000.”

“Okay,” grinned Dean, “Looks like we have our book-ends. Anything else we need to discuss before we land?”

“Are we out and proud at this event? Or is it better to appear only as friends for the evening?”

“Cas, I’ll never hide you again. For anyone. I’m done with that shit,” Dean said firmly, “And I’m not out and proud as a gay man. I’m proud to be with you. Because you’re incredible.”

Cas blushed at Dean's compliment. On an average day, Dean was about as romantic as a bull fish. But once in a while… he really opened a can of whoop-ass on romance.

As Cas ruminated on that thought, he realized that over the years, Dean had changed a lot. He actually was more romantic now than he used to be. He did things now that he’d never done when they were younger. It was nice.
“How long are your brother and Cas in town for?” Jess asked him.

“I think they said they’re staying a week. They want to drop in on some friends while they’re here.”

“And we’re seeing them on Saturday?”

“No, we’re seeing them on Sunday. Saturday is Meg's wedding remember?”

“Oh yeah, I must’ve blocked it out,” Jess groaned.

“Baby, it won’t be that bad.”

“I fucking hate them both, Sam. It’s going to suck ass.”

“You kiss your kids with that mouth?” he teased her.

She looked down at her lap.

“Jess, you don’t have to go. But I will feel better if you’re there. Besides, what’s to hate about her man?”

“Crowley? Are you kidding me?” she said with utter disgust.

“You don’t have to marry him, just watch Meg marry him. Besides, I think he’s perfect for her.”

“How’s that?”

“He’s got the suit and the snark and the swagger… he’s just her type. He’s unrepentant in his underhandedness. Both of them are mischievous and manipulative and love to play games. They’ll never get bored of each other. They want the same kind of life. She’s a top and he's a bottom. It all fits.”

“You and your top/bottom thing,” she said rolling her eyes.

“Hey… it has yet to be proven wrong.”

“Whatsoever. I’ll go to the wedding with you.”

“Will you fake like you’re having a good time?”

“You know I will,” she said with a smile.

“Will you refrain from sticking toilet paper to the back of her dress?”

“When did I ever do that?”

“The night she gave you a glass of orange juice and said you could throw it in her face. The night she apologized to you at the auction.”

“That was Susan!” laughed Jess. “All this time, you thought I did that?”
“Susan? Susan did that?”

“Yep. She went to the bathroom when you asked her to give us a moment. When she came back, she had it with her. She gave me a look and I just knew. She came up behind Meg and steered her away from the table, remember?”

“Yes, but if she put toilet paper to the back of Meg’s dress in that one move… she’s slicker than I thought.”

“Is she getting a raise now?” Jess asked jokingly.

“Doubt she needs it,” he laughed. “She’s doing great.”

“I’m glad,” Jess said honestly.

“You know, if you come join the Winchester Group, you could have lunch with her every week.” Jess smiled sweetly. Ever since she’d announced she’d be returning to work, Sam had been trying to seduce her into working with him. “Thank you, baby. I love that you want me there. But my home is at legal aid.”

Dean got serious for a while when it was time to land. Cas sat quietly and watched Dean work the controls and radio the tower. Dean accounted for wind speed and direction, and then began to line up for the landing.

Over the past few years they’d taken to using Palo Alto airport rather than SFO. It was much less expensive and less chaotic too. Cas was all smiles as they touched down, and he complimented Dean on his smooth landing.

Mary had come to pick them up so they wouldn’t have to rent a car and they rested for a few hours before putting on their tuxes and taking Baby over to Berkeley for the dinner.

Both men were old hands at the fundraiser scene, though they didn’t know many people at this event. It was outside their normal social circle for one thing… and they’d been living in Central America for years and years.

After sticking his foot in his mouth as they entered, Cas leaned over to Dean and used air quotes, “I think my people-skills are rusty.”

“Mine too, Cas. But it doesn’t really matter. We’re not here representing our families or our family businesses. There’s no pressure. We’re just here for ourselves.”

Cas nodded firmly, realizing Dean was right.

“Just remember. We actually need to listen to the speeches this time,” Dean added.

“That’ll be a new one for me,” laughed Cas. “In all the years I came to these things – I don’t think I ever really listened to a speech.”

“That makes two of us,” Dean whispered as they approached the bar.
Cas and Dean were bored within the hour. Events like this weren’t exactly a trip to the strip club, but even compared with similar events, this was a snoozer.

They ate a decent meal and listened to several speeches besides the main event speech by Adam. Then, despite the tediousness, they stayed at the table. Adam and his handlers would be coming around to interact with the people who’d bought seats at the expensive tables, and Dean didn’t want to miss his chance to talk to the man.

When their eyes locked, he saw a flicker of panic. Adam smiled anyway, raised a hand in greeting and then walked the last few steps to their table. Dean reached confidently, pulling the governor from a handshake into a hug.

Cas watched the man tell his handlers that Dean was an old friend, and he’d like a few minutes to catch up. They nodded and stepped away. Cas noticed one glancing at his watch and wondered idly how long they’d allow.

Cas stood then, and proffered Adam into his own chair kindly. Dean introduced Cas as his husband. Adam grasped his hand warmly and gave a winning smile, “Very pleased to meet you, Cas.”

“You as well Governor Milligan. I’m going to grab a fresh drink,” said Cas smoothly as he gestured to the bar, “would either of you care for anything?”

“No, but thank you,” answered both men.

As Cas turned and left, Dean set his eyes on Adam fully. “How long will your handlers give us?”

“About ten minutes.”

“Okay. Obviously I’m here for a reason, Adam.”

Adam didn’t answer. He just nodded and leaned forward to hear what Dean had to say.

“I’m a very happy man Adam. It took me a while, but I’ve figured out who I am. The problem is, now that I have a wonderful man in my life, I have come to realize what a shit man I was… when I was in your life.”

“Dean I –

“Please Adam, let me get this out?”

Adam nodded again. Big blue eyes hovered over Dean’s face. The years had changed Adam, just as they had Dean and Cas. He wasn’t the fresh-faced young twink who’d given sloppy blowjobs behind the locked door of a dorm room.

Adam was a man now. A man with a strong handshake, a deep voice, a commanding presence. But beneath the polished exterior, he still had a gentle heart. It screamed at Dean from behind his smile.

“You were amazing. Somewhere deep down, I always knew you’d do good things. I was proud to see you win the election. And even more proud to hear that you’ll be making a try for the presidency. And I want to help you.”

“That’s very kind of you Dean. But I don’t want you trying to help me out of guilt.”
“That’s not the only reason I want to help you.”

“Why else?”

“Because I’d really like to go to sleep at night knowing the president is a good man.”

“That means a lot to me, Dean.”

“But, I’m worried about you. About your lifestyle ruining your campaign. The dirty laundry always comes out at the worst times.”

“Relax Dean. You’re my only dirty laundry.”

“Really? No one but me?”

“Well Dean, after you, it was hard to get back on the horse.”

“I see,” said Dean, full of shame.

“You made me feel pretty worthless. Do you remember telling me that you weren’t going to put your mouth on me? That you don’t do anything that gay?”

Dean was silent. He remembered all that and more. His mind flashed back to shoving Adam’s head down on his dick and saying, “I know you want it – now suck me off!”

The likes of that now constitute every-day dirty-talk with Cas. But it’s different now, because Dean takes as well as gives out that kind of talk. He sucks and gets sucked. He fucks and gets fucked. It’s reciprocal.

With poor Adam, it wasn’t. It was demeaning and cruel.

Dean couldn’t look at Adam. The man didn’t make him suffer long, though. He reached out and put a hand on Dean's shoulder. “It’s water under the bridge Dean. Don’t lose any sleep over it. And for what it’s worth, I’m glad you’re happy.”

“Thanks Adam. I’m not trying to buy your forgiveness with money. I really do want to help you. And I can offer you more than money.”

“What are you going to offer me Dean?”

“I own a resort. We are well shielded from prying eyes… we’re discreet. We serve celebrities and protect them from the paparazzi. I can offer you privacy, anonymity. You can meet your boyfriend there. I can take care of everything so that you guys can have time together in secret.”

Dean saw Adam sit a little straighter. “How do you know I have a boyfriend?”

“I may have pretended to be indifferent to you Adam, but I wasn’t. I know you better than you think.”

Adam gave him another genuine smile when he said that. “Here’s my card. My cell is on the back. Call when you need to get away. I’ll pick you up anywhere and your man, too. Take you to a beautiful place where you can relax and be yourself without worrying about who will see you.”

Adam took the card from him and gave Dean a look… a look Dean recognized even after twenty years. This time, he didn’t turn away from it. He leaned in and hugged Adam. “Good luck, buddy, I’ve heard this is a tough road.”
“It will be worth it,” he said firmly as he stood.

Dean clapped him on the shoulder and reached to shake his hand again. “Cas and I will look forward to hearing from you.”

Dean watched Adam take two steps and then be intercepted by his handlers. He didn’t watch any longer. He moved to the bar and walked up behind Cas. “Hey handsome,” he grinned, “wanna get out of here?”

“I thought you’d never ask.”

As they left, making the maximum donation they’d agreed on, Dean looked at his stunning blue-eyed man. “How’d I get so lucky? My man just let me donate a year’s income to my ex.”

“You also donated a year’s income to save dingos for me once.”

“Yeah, I did do that, didn’t I?” grinned Dean widely. “I think it’s cause I’m awesome.”

“I thought it was because I was awesome!” joked Cas.

While they waited for the valet, Cas looked at Dean and said, “Who’s giving road-head on the way home?”

“Nobody,” laughed Dean as he stepped to the driver's door. “We’re gonna just park somewhere.”

“Get my tux dirty?” Cas asked.

“Hell yeah!”

After the fundraiser, Dean and Cas stayed with Mary through the weekend and got together with Chris and Pam. The couple had settled into a house in the Sunset neighborhood. It was a bit claustrophobic for Dean's taste, but he could see why they liked it.

Little JJ was growing to be quite a pistol. He had punk hair and a little Pink Floyd t-shirt. They all piled into Chris and Pam’s Volvo and went to the aquarium. It was a great venue for catching up because it allowed the adults to talk while JJ got to run around and look at everything.

Chris said he’d been promoted again and was finding the work challenging but the salary increase was sweet relief. He shared in a quiet voice that they’d been sliding into more and more debt over the last few years, but now they could breathe again.

The following night, when they got together with Cole and Kim, they found a very similar theme. The couple were struggling to keep up appearances and still bring the ends of the rope together each month. Their kids were adorable – both dead ringers for Cole. Despite their money troubles, the couple seemed happy together.

Robin and Gabe seemed to have it the worst. They weren’t just struggling with money. They were going down. They were projecting about 90 days until they lost the restaurant in a foreclosure. Dean understood their heartbreak. After all, it had only been a few short years since that had also been his biggest worry. He did his best to encourage the couple – telling them he and Cas had
similar issues and it had worked out. He was trying to offer them hope, but he could see the
resignation in their eyes. They weren’t fighting it anymore… they had accepted that they were
about to lose their dream.

Just as Gabe was preparing to lose his dream, Anna was chasing hers. She and Michael were
starting fertility treatments that very week. They were determined to be parents. The boys teased
her endlessly about the possibility of multiple births and how awesome it would be to have another
set of twins around.

Dean and Cas made sure to stop by and see Jimmy and Johnny while they were in town. And when
they arrived, they brought tools and a rented pick-up full of supplies. The men then spent the next
two days in the back yard cursing their ability to bite off more than they could chew. It was touch
and go for a while, but in the end, they were proud to have built their nephews a tree house.

Sam thanked them for supplying days’ worth of comic relief as they fumbled it together in plain
view of the kitchen window.

The twins loved the tree house and were very excited for their upcoming summer trip to the resort
in a few months. They were at a very fun age now. No more diapers, no more high chairs. The boys
were playful and talkative and thrilled to spend time with their uncles. It would be a wonderful trip.

And, Dean could tell his brother was needing a break from the kids. He and Jess both were.
Vacation this year would be right in the nick of time.

The months between their trip back home and the twins’ summer visit flew by. As did the trip.
Now that the boys were older and more fun – the time went too fast. When they flew the twins
back to Frisco, Dean and Cas made Sam promise they could have four weeks instead of two next
summer.

“Oh twist my arm!” joked Sam as he winked at Jess.

Christmas was on them in a heartbeat, and then it was summer again and the four weeks were over
too fast. The twins hugged them fiercely when they said good-bye at the airport. Dean found
himself getting misty. Their days of snorkeling, hiking, riding the zip line over and over again had
still been too short. Dean got a shiver when he thought of how fast the years were passing.

One day he woke up and realized that they were about to pick the twins up for the summer… and
the boys would be thirteen this year.

It was terrifying. Cas tried to understand as Dean cried on his chest, but Dean wasn’t able to
explain it. Eventually he’d pulled himself together. They got in the plane and took off for San
Francisco. As they soared over the Honduran countryside, Dean was finally able to put it into
words.

“Cas,” he said through the headset, “I think I’m having my mid-life crisis.”

“Oh, well in that case, let’s look at sports cars while we’re in town.”

“I’m not kidding,” said Dean, “I’ve never been this scared in my entire life.”
“What are you afraid of?"

“Well, I’ve always known that I’d have a midlife crisis. And I never really understood why it freaked everybody out. So what, right? Your life is half over. It doesn’t seem like it should be a big deal. There’s still half of it left. Human’s live to be what? 75? 80? I’ve still got like 35 or 40 years left. That’s plenty of time.”

“So it would seem,” agreed Cas.

Dean wasn’t reassured by his man’s tinny voice coming through his headset.

“The problem isn’t how much time is left. The problem is how fast the first half has gone. When I think of how quickly the last few decades have gone… I realize how fast the next are going to go. I may have decades left. But it’s gonna go fast, man. Fast.”

“I see,” said Cas quietly. He had no idea how to cheer Dean. It was usually easy. Suck the man’s dick. It cured just about anything. But Dean had a point. And Cas was chilled by it.

They were quiet most of the rest of the trip, each lost in his own thoughts. They were on approach from the west, circling in over the Pacific when Cas saw Dean was about to call in to the tower. He knew that if he was going to say something he’d better do it quick, before Dean radioed the tower at Palo Alto.

“Dean?”

“Yeah Cas?”

“I don’t think there’s anything I can say to help. But I want to try.”

“Okay Cas, try for me,” he chuckled.

Cas gave a soft smile and said, “Remember how time seemed to drag when we were broke? Or when the babies were small and so much work?”

“Sure Cas.”

“But time flies when you’re having fun, right?”

“So they say,” nodded Dean.

“Well, maybe try looking at it from the perspective that your life is flying by… because it’s a good one. Would you prefer it be slower because you’d spent four years battling cancer?”

Dean was silent.

“Or because you and your brother still weren’t speaking, and you were torn up about it?”

Dean swallowed hard.

“Or because life is dull because we have to work so hard to pay for our lifestyle that we don’t ever have time to enjoy it?”

Dean nodded. He looked over at Cas and smiled. “Thanks man. I needed that.”

Cas nodded, unsure if he’d really done any good or if Dean was just humoring him.
“So,” Dean teased lightly, “what kind of sports car are you hoping your basket-case of a man will need to buy to curb his waning youth?”

Cas smiled fully now, “Ferrari California T.”

Just as Dean was opening his mouth to respond, there was a loud shrieking noise and a jarring impact. The entire cabin shuddered and exploded with noise as the world seemed to tumble out of control. Alarms were blaring. The windshield was obscured by thick black smoke… they couldn’t see anything. But Dean didn’t need to see to know the feeling that now churned in the pit of his stomach... he'd experienced it on carnival rides, parachute jumps and zip lines and he knew what the roiling in his gut meant. They were going down.
The men were grinning at each other when a sudden, blood curdling sound screamed in their ears. Then, a bone jarring impact exploded the world around them into chaos. The aircraft shuddered and began to tumble as the world went dark - inky black smoke covering the windshield from the outside.

Was that mechanical? Had something blown up? Cas didn’t know. But it was the sudden drop in his stomach that clued him in on the reality of the situation. They were plunging down; losing altitude.

As his stomach revolted Cas began to notice his limbs. They were flailing and despite valiant efforts, he couldn’t hold them still. His knees kept hitting the bottom of the instrument panel over and over and his arms were whipping this way and that. He was actually hitting himself, the instrument panel, the window, and he was powerless to stop it.

This assault on his senses and physical body kept Cas’ mind busy processing, continually working to understand the physicality of what was happening as his environment continually changed around him. Too busy trying to figure out which way was up, his addled mind was slow to understand but soon it was clear that they weren’t just falling from the sky. They were tumbling. Turning on an ever changing axis. Each time the plane rolled over, his knees would succumb to gravity and fall – hitting the bottom of the dash. Amid the confusion, something in his mind finally clicked and began working.

Suddenly, he understood that if he wanted his arms to stop flailing, the answer was simple. Grab hold of something. So he did. He pulled his hands to his chest and gripped his safety harness with both hands. Cas had never been so grateful for a seat belt in all his life. It was the only thing anchoring him to anything as they pitched and rolled in darkness.

As he gasped for breath, utter darkness gave way to flashes of light which soon spread out into long pulses. As he forced his eyes to focus on the windshield, Cas could see that with each roll of the plane, the change in direction would clear them of the smoke and let light in. But then as the roll completed, they’d be back in darkness as they returned to the cloud of dark exhaust. It was a dizzying rotation of smoke. Clear. Smoke. Clear.

He forced himself to look out beyond the glass and see how close to the ground they were – get some perspective. As the world turned upside down again and again, he squinted and forced his eyes to stay still while everything else swirled. He could see blue. Then white. Then blue. A few more precious moments waiting for the picture to become clear to him – ocean. Yes. They’d been over water. Was that good or bad?

As Cas began to gain some perspective, he realized that it was very quiet. The rush of wind and the sound of metal creaking was all he could hear. The initial piercing, scream-like noise that had
roared in their ears was gone. It was eerily quiet. Cas’ brain supplied the reason… no engine noise. His eyes found the blue of water again and saw it much closer than it had been a moment ago. They were dropping like a stone.

For the first time – Cas looked over at Dean.

Dean was intently focused on the instrument panel. He was muttering to himself and trying to press buttons, but his arms were flailing about, much like Cas’ had been a moment ago. He watched as Dean reached several times and finally got his hands on the wheel. He had no idea what Dean was doing or trying to do. He couldn’t fly. He’d paid zero attention to all the buttons and gadgets that Dean used to pilot their plane. His attention span both started and stopped at the little toggle switch that connected their headsets and allowed them to talk or not talk.

Cas did notice that the revolutions of their tumble seemed to be slowing now. He was able to control his movements more. For the first time, he turned his head to the side and looked out his window. There was no wing there anymore – just a twisted piece of metal flopping around and the sickening rotation of land and sky.

Dean was stunned by how much time he had. His mind was processing so many things at once. He was sorting out his sensory information, processing his emotions and problem solving at the same time… all while remembering advice he’d gotten from his instructor. He could hear the man’s voice ringing in his ears, “Everyone tries to pull up. But it’s useless. When you’re stalled you have to point the nose down to get enough speed and momentum behind you to actually fly. Nose down. Engine on. Then pull up. Got it?”

Got it! thought Dean. And he got to work. His eyes had trouble focusing, the cabin around him to unstable. The needles of gauges bounced around sporadically and offered him no viable information. Nothing digital was giving him a reading. He couldn’t even control his own movements until he latched onto the wheel. But once he latched on, both physical stability and emotional clarity seemed to settle over him.

If I die today - I get to see my dad. I hope he’s proud of me.

Dean was stunned to be able to work the controls and try to recover the plane while his mind simultaneously felt so many things: elation at possibly seeing his father, sorrow for his mother who would mourn him, sadness for his brother and nephews who would miss him and even guilt that Cas would die so young.

His man should have decades more, but because he was with Dean, he was probably going to die today. Even as he thought it, he knew Cas wouldn’t want to live on without him anyway. He wouldn’t want to have to bury Cas and then try to live without him either. At least if they died together, neither would be left behind alone.

Even as he thought of these things, his mind was sharply focused on trying to save their lives. He gripped the wheel tighter, forcing the nose of the plane down to the best of his ability, even though the action defied all his instincts to pull up. He could hear the shriek of the wind as they plummeted and he prepared to start the engine.

Cas looked at Dean again. The man was doing something. He was using the steering wheel for leverage so he could work the controls. He was pressing forward with all his might when the engine sputtered and caught. Both of them howled with sweet relief when the power of the engines shuddered through the cockpit.

Dean was still pushing the nose of the plane down and Cas watched him intently. His posture was
stiff and his knuckles were white on the wheel and he was chanting gruffly through clenched teeth, “C’mon, baby, c’mon.”

Whatever Dean was doing seemed to be working a little. Their dizzying revolutions seemed more under control now.

“C’mon baby, c’mon,” Dean panted as he began slowly pulling back on the wheel. Cas could feel the drag; they were pulling up. The power of the engine was working to slow their descent and push them forward instead of down. Dean was still gripping tightly, muscles locked. “C’mon, c’mon, c’mon,” he pleaded. Cas found himself silently joining Dean’s pleas in his head.

But with only one wing, flying was simply not possible. He should have known. The engine seized and died. All was silent again. There was no smoke this time, or if there was, Cas couldn’t see it from where he was sitting.

At least the death spiral was over, they were circling now, more like a wounded bird falling to the ground in wide curving circles than a straight freefall.

Cas was stunned by how much time they’d had. It felt like they’d been falling for an hour. But the water was close now and as Cas looked out his window at everything roaring towards him, he heard Dean putting in a distress call.

Did people still use the word mayday? Really? He’d thought that was only in the movies, but Dean was saying it over and over again. Cas heard bits and pieces of Dean’s conversation with the tower “…no engine… no instruments… I can see Half-moon Bay…”

Cas was thinking of the bigger picture now. They were going to die today. And it was okay. They’d had a wonderful life together. He would’ve loved to have had more time, but he had no regrets. Not one.

With that in mind, Cas turned to look at Dean again. Dean seemed to feel him looking and turned to face him too. Wanting to be sure that Dean knew he was okay, he forced a smile through his tears, fully aware that they were about to have their last few moments together.

“Dean,” he said earnestly, “I’m glad we’re together for this part.”

Dean let go of the controls and reached for him. Cas reached back. Over their clasped hands, Dean said, “Me too, Cas. See you on the other side.”

Then they impacted and everything went black.

Sam was on his way home from work when he got the call from Jess. As he waited impatiently for the light to change he tried to think positive, reminding himself that they didn’t know anything yet. A small plane had crashed near Palo Alto, but there were probably dozens a day taking off and landing there. It could be anyone. They didn’t know anything for sure yet so he shouldn’t be so upset. But there was a nagging feeling in Sam’s gut that he couldn’t shake.

Jess had seen it on the news. A small plane had gone down and rescue had been dispatched. Rather than continuing to watch for more information, she’d called Sam and climbed in the van, heading
over to Mary’s house. Her plan was to distract her mother-in-law until Sam could get there. She didn’t want Mary to know anything until she could know something definitive.

Jess raced the few blocks between their houses and pulled into Mary’s driveway – hoping she hadn’t seen anything about the crash yet. It could be just a coincidence that there had been a crash on the same day that Dean and Cas were due to arrive. There was no need to worry Mary unless they knew something for sure.

She hopped out of the van, turning her phone on vibrate as she jogged to the front door. She hadn’t even thought of what to do to distract her mother-in-law, and when the door opened for her she was flying by the seat of her pants.

“Mom, I need your help! I forgot about a bake sale, and I only have an hour and a half to bake three dozen cupcakes. Can you help?”

“Sure honey,” said Mary sweetly as she stepped aside to allow Jess in.

“I feel terrible, I don’t even have any mix at my house. Have you got any?”

“Of course,” she said as she led the way to the kitchen. Mary swung the pantry doors open and began looking over the shelves. “I’m assuming we don’t care what flavor?”

“Not at all,” Jess said honestly. This was lame. But at least it would keep her busy as she worried in secret.

Mary turned on the little TV as she walked by it. Jess walked right behind her and turned it off. “Do you mind if we listen to music instead?” she asked sweetly.

Mary nodded as she began pulling out the mixer. Jess set her phone to play music and then went to the fridge to grab the eggs. As the two settled into the process of making cupcakes, Jess’ mind was already wandering forward. Sam had been on his way when she’d called him. That meant he’d be here within forty minutes or so. When he came he’d bring the latest news.

They both gripped each other fiercely in the dark, but they were torn apart by the force of the crash. The noise was terrible; everything shuddering and breaking apart around them.

In the silence that followed, Dean opened his eyes. He was shocked to find that the cabin was still mostly intact around them. The windshield was cracked, but not broken. They were sitting at an awkward angle and bobbing in the water. Cas was limp in the seat next to him, his harness still binding him. But there was blood, lots of it. Cas’ window was broken and there was a large metal rod protruding through it and the splintered end of it was digging into the inside of Cas’ left thigh.

“How’s Cas?” Dean called out, but Cas didn’t answer. There was water coming in around his feet. Dean’s brain and body kicked into overdrive. They’d crash landed in the ocean. They would sink. Fast. He needed to act, but had no idea what to do first.

Pushing forward to get up, but unable, Dean remembered his harness. He disengaged it and when he did, he immediately fell against his door. Working to get his feet under him, he shuffled awkwardly and pushed himself up. His back screamed in protest and he buckled, but didn’t
Crouched now, half standing on the pilot-side door, he reached forward, left leg wobbly and unstable, and began pulling on the metal rod that was pushing into Cas' leg. He couldn’t move it, but he found that he could carefully guide the man's leg around it. Holding the leg forward, he used his other hand to unlatch the safety harness. As soon as he did, Cas’ weight fell on him, crumpling him and pinning him down. The man was bleeding and it was soaked into his shirt and staining the water around him. There was a trickle from his mouth but other than that - Dean couldn’t see where the blood was coming from. Dean had to remind himself not to think of injuries yet; getting out of the plane was the top priority.

Now that Cas was free, Dean was unsure of how to proceed. His fear, more than anything else, was them sinking with the plane. His mind supplied logic to argue that he’d not be able to open his door against the water pressure until the plane was submerged. He'd been seeing that in action movies all his life. But once they sank below the surface, he knew that he would have only one breath to get his head above water. Pulling Cas' weight with him? It seemed impossible. Panic was blinding him and he searched for other options as water quickly filled the cabin.

Under their combined weight was the door, but, unwilling to wait long enough to use it in his panic, Dean's eyes scanned for other options. Overhead in the lilting plane was Cas' broken window, but even as he extricated his limbs from Cas' dead weight and tried to stand, he already knew the opening was too small. There was also no realistic way to push Cas up and out of the opening. As the water level climbed closer to his waist, Dean pulled Cas higher to keep his face out of it. Desperation set in as he watched Cas' head loll and his bloody mouth gape open.

"Cas!" he screamed as his fists curled into his mans shirt desperately, "Cas! Man I need ya to wake up! I need ya man! Cas!"

Seized with the sudden fear that Cas was dead, he paused and put his hand to the man's nose and mouth and held his breath. When he felt the ghost of an exhale on his hand, Dean relaxed. Okay. Cas was alive, just unconscious.

Unable to wake his friend, Dean set his sights on moving him to the door in the fuselage. Forced to crouch in the small space, he pivoted on shaky legs and turned backward to position himself. Using their headrests for leverage, Dean squished his body between the seats and into the passenger cabin. Orienting his body to the strange angle of the plane and the rocking movement as it bobbed in the water, Dean set to pulling Cas through their seats and into the body of the plane with him. The passenger compartment was tightly packed with seats, so there were a lot of obstacles as he worked to find things to leverage against.

Precious minutes were ticking by as he worked to maneuver Cas’ limp body through the small opening. First his head and arms, then his body. With the man's legs still in the front, Dean rested the remainder of the man's body on a passenger seat and abandoned it to reach for the life jackets. With shaking fingers he clasped the buckles to secure one to himself and then to Cas. There was so much blood. "Please, God," Dean found himself whispering repeatedly, "please, please, please," as he worked. Once the vests were on, he began the work of climbing backward over the seats.

There was at least two feet of cold water beneath them, and it was rising fast. Bracing himself on a chair back and an armrest, Dean reached up overhead to release the handle and open the main door. Thank fuck the hydraulics still seemed to be working. He didn’t know if he would’ve had the strength to push the door up manually at this angle.

Because of the strange angle of the plane in the water, when he looked up through the doorway he saw only sky. Dean turned back towards Cas and felt the plane shift. The weight of the water they
were taking on must be forcing them to tip more. He watched, unable to stop it, as Cas’ head snapped back and dangled. The sight of it sickened him, and he vomited down his front as he pushed forward, crawling over seats to reach his man. Once he had an arm supporting the man’s neck again, he checked for breath and thanked God when he found it.

Pulling Cas the rest of the way from the cockpit proved to be difficult, and the more the plane tilted sideways, the harder it got. He was waist deep in water now and terrified. In fact, he was more scared now than he had been while they were falling. His heart was pounding as he worked Cas’ body over the seats, one row at a time. He was dragging the body more than he liked, but he couldn’t be on both sides of a seat to support the head while he guided the legs across. His progress was a slow progression of adjusting limbs and then dragging a bit, adjust, drag, adjust, drag.

By the time he’d gotten Cas lined up under the doorway, the water was high enough that it was pushing his life vest up around his chin. It was getting in the way. He looked up at the opening again and lined their bodies up with it. Pulling himself or Cas up through that open door was simply not possible. But his mind supplied the idea that he and Cas could just float here under the doorway and pass easily through it as the plane sank around them.

All there was to do now was wait. His job was to keep Cas’ head above water and stay lined up with the opening above. Pain radiated through his back with every movement and his left leg wasn’t good for shit now that the initial burst of adrenaline had passed and the pain was setting in. “Please, God,” he whispered ardently, “Please, please.”

Jess saw her phone light up and moved down the counter to check it. Sam had texted her that he’d be there in one minute. Jess excused herself to use the restroom and left her phone behind since it was playing music, quickly deleting Sam's message.

She left the kitchen but then walked to the door, rather than the bathroom and moved quietly out into the driveway. When Sam pulled in, she went straight to him. “What do we know?”

“It wasn’t just one plane. It was a mid-air collision involving a plane and a personal jet.”

“Do we know who the passengers were yet?”

“No names. No confirmation. But the flight plan indicates the plane was coming from Honduras.”

“Jesus, Mary and Joseph,” said Jess. “What do we do?”

“I don’t know. How’s Mom?”

“She’s fine. She thinks we’re baking three dozen cupcakes for a bake sale.”

Sam nodded. “You are brilliant. Where do you come up with this shit?”

She shrugged. “What do we do now?”

“I’ll call the airport and see if I can get anything from them. Rescue was dispatched. Maybe I can find out what hospital they’re taking the passengers to. Can you stall her longer?”
“Sure. Just text me when you know something, and I’ll come out again.”

He nodded and pulled her in tightly. “That fucker better be ok,” he said with a shaky voice.

“Yeah,” Jess said firmly, “both of them.”

The plane was turning again and Dean wanted to move so that Cas’ body was lined up with the door hole. But he was unable to touch feet to the bottom anymore, and the seats weren’t in the right place for good footing. He wound up having to let go of everything but Cas and float with him. He continually kicked his feet to adjust their position and keep them centered under blue sky. Occasionally his leg would kick a seat. It was painful each time, but he had no choice but to keep kicking.

Dean was obsessed with checking for breath. He kept Cas’ head leaning on his shoulder and hoped that rescue wouldn’t take too long to get there. Once the plane sank, he’d be out in the open water with a defenseless man who was bleeding profusely. The thought of sharks finding them was nauseating. Dean had no idea how much time had passed since they hit the water, but if he had to venture a guess, he thought probably ten minutes.

The longer he waited, the more injuries he noticed. His eye was swelling shut little by little. Whatever was going on with his back was getting more and more painful, and he was only kicking with his right leg now. The pain in the left one had him working to keep it immobile.

At least the water was deep enough now that he could reach the doorway. He grabbed hold of it with one hand and then cradled Cas’ head between the raised arm and his own neck. Once in position, he was able to hang on and keep them lined up with the hole as it grew closer.

The remainder of their time in the plane was counted in seconds. As the doorway slipped underwater, Dean pulled his bad leg around Cas’ middle to bring the man vertical as the plane sank around them. Ice cold water rushed in around them, submerging both of their heads and Dean thought that was it... they were going to be sucked down with the plane. But, to his amazement they were pulled upward by their life vests and broke the surface. They were free of the wreckage. He sputtered and coughed, trying in vain to clear his lungs which were now waterlogged. As soon as he could think clearly again, Dean positioned Cas on top of him and spread his legs in wide a vee to keep his friend as stable as possible while they bobbed on the waves.

Just as Dean started to feel tears of hopelessness roll down his cheeks, he heard the sweetest sound he’d ever heard. The thrumming of helicopter blades.

“Hang in there buddy,” he said softly in Cas’ ear. “You hang in there... they’re comin’ for us, man. You just hang on.”

Mary had just pulled the first tray of cupcakes from the oven when Sam came into the kitchen. She
said hello to him as she turned the pan over and watched the cakes roll out onto the counter. She heard whispering behind her back but didn’t think much of it as she set down the pan and began turning the cupcakes right-side-up on the cooling rack.

“Mom?”

She turned to Sam and was immediately concerned. He looked wrung out. “What’s wrong, Sam?”

“There’s been an accident near the airport. It’s possible that Dean and Cas were involved. Since I can’t get either of them on the phone, I’d like to drive down there and check. They won’t release any information over the phone.”

Mary nodded, shocked, and moved to turn off the stove. Jess took her by the arm and led her out of the kitchen.

“I need my purse,” she said in a daze.

“And shoes,” added Sam as he placed a pair at her feet.

Sam drove and Jess sat in the back with Mary. As they merged out onto the interstate, Jess pulled out her phone and started accessing newsfeeds to try and get some new information. Mary hovered over her shoulder, looking at the screen. The new information was slow in coming… but the trip was slow too. At this time of day, they’d be at least 90 minutes to get to the hospital at the south end of the bay where the passengers of the crash were being routed for treatment.

Sam’s gut instinct told him that his brother was in the plane that had gone down. If instinct wasn’t enough – logic supported the theory as well. Yes, dozens and dozens of private planes probably use the runway at Palo Alto each day. But how many are direct flights from Honduras? Sam thinks the smart money’s on just one.

Dean stayed as still as possible while waiting for the helicopter. He was watching the sky as it loomed into view and sank lower to extract them from the water. The wind was incredible, and Dean turned his face away from the pelting spray of water. He stole small glances through squinted eyes, searching for the help that seemed imminent. A rescue swimmer reached them quickly and shouted over the roaring of the helicopter and buffeting wind, “Are you ok?”

“Yes,” Dean yelled, “But my friend is unconscious and has been since impact. I don’t know his injuries, but he’s lost a lot of blood and I’m worried about his neck.”

Dean watched the rescuer swim a circle around them, touching Cas and (Dean assumed) assessing him. The man used hand signals to communicate with the helicopter and soon a basket was being lowered. Dean gently let go as the man expertly maneuvered Cas’ body in and signaled for them to raise it. Dean watched Cas’ limp figure being hoisted out of the water.

The rescuer yelled again, “Can you swim with me or do you need assistance?”

Dean leaned forward in the water and tried to fall into a regular swim stroke, but he couldn’t move his leg and shockwaves of pain rolled down his spine with each movement of his arms. He was exhausted too. It was as though Cas being lifted from the water had been his body’s signal to just
throw in the towel.

“I think I need help,” said Dean, unable to look the rescuer in the eye as he said it.

“No problem, you do your best to relax, and I’ll get you up there, ok?”

“Ok,” he said. He let the man manipulate his body and soon found himself with his arms crossed over his chest and his head cradled on the man's shoulder in much the same manner that he’d been holding Cas. The man was a strong swimmer, and Dean closed his eyes against the spray as he was towed over to the hook that had been dropped for them.

He was awake and looking around as the rescuer clipped them together and signaled the chopper to pull them up. But he didn’t remember much after that. He opened his eyes once when they were halfway up and immediately closed them again. When they reached the top, several hands grasped his harness and pulled him in. He was safe. He looked around, eyes searching for Cas.

They had him on a backboard and several rescuers were bent over him, working intently. Dean was being moved towards a wall where he slid down in a pile on the floor. He must’ve passed out there because when he opened his eyes again, he was also on a backboard. His eyes searched for his rescuer. When they found him, he said, “Hey man, what’s your name?”

“Doug.”

“Thanks for saving our lives, Doug.”

“You’re welcome. They’ll take good care of you here.”

Dean then realized that they’d landed on a rooftop. He was looking up at the faces of several nurses who were pushing his cart off a helipad, through double doors and down a bright hall. He wanted to ask them how Cas was doing, but he couldn’t seem to keep his eyes open.

Sam, Jess and Mary walked briskly towards the emergency door. They stopped at the desk, and Mary said she believed her son may have been involved in a plane crash. The nurse nodded and said, “I apologize, but we don’t have any viable information for you yet. Please take a seat over there, and I will come find you personally as soon as there is any news.”

Mary nodded and began walking towards the emergency waiting room. Sam and Jess followed. Jess had a sneaking suspicion that it would be quite a while before there was any news. She settled in a chair and called her sister Nat. She explained what was going on and asked Nat to pick up the boys from practice and give them dinner.

Now there was nothing to do but wait.
The time dragged as Sam, his wife and his mother waited for news of Dean and Cas. The TV in the lobby was on a local channel and when the news came on Sam walked over and turned it up – hoping for some information on the crash.

The three of them sat, fixated on the television, waiting to see. About ten minutes in, the anchor did a brief blurb about the accident, saying (as they already knew) that a private jet had collided with a small plane over the Pacific just off the coast. The plane had carried 2 and was inbound from Honduras. The jet carried 5 and had just taken off, heading for Seattle. The newswoman went on to say that the rescue was expedited by a series of calls to 911 from locals in the area who had seen the collision and reported it. Their information had helped locate both crafts, which had crashed miles apart. One had crashed on land and the other in the ocean. The jet had never made a distress call.

Then, everyone stopped breathing for a moment as the anchor stated they’d obtained footage that was shot by a local man who’d been recording his kids at the time of the crash.

Sam wrapped his arms around the ladies’ shoulders as they watched. The station cut to the footage and suddenly they were watching two little girls on a sandy beach playing with their buckets and shovels – messy hair and dirty hands. Then there was a loud noise and the camera shook and swayed as it refocused on the sky. The operator of the camera had to swing it around a few times before it locked on two mechanical birds in the sky. It was clear that one had just struck the other but impossible to tell which had hit which. The jet was streaking downward across the sky and was on fire, belching black smoke out behind it.

The plane was hard to identify on the grainy and poorly shot video. But Sam was almost certain that it was Dean's. He didn’t speak, not wanting to say anything to make this worse for his mom.

The plane wasn’t shooting off in a straight line like the jet was. It was tumbling from the sky. The wing of the plane had been broken off by the impact and it had fallen, along with other debris, which rained down.

The video camera moved away from the plane to search the sky for the jet but didn’t find it. Sam wanted to leap out of his seat and yell for the operator of the camera to point it back at his brother’s plane. Just then, the camera landed on the horizon and caught the tail end of a fiery blast. It could only have been the jet hitting the ground. The camera swiveled back to the falling plane but never found it again.

Mary began crying softly and Jess moved around Sam and slid to her knees on the floor at his mother's feet. Mary leaned into Jess and held on tightly for a very long time as she sobbed relentlessly. Jess looked at Sam over Mary’s head and saw him starting to fall apart.

When their eyes met, Sam leaned in, gathering both in his arms. Somehow, holding the two of them was helping hold himself together too. It was impossible to hold back tears, but he tried his best to
cry quietly.

In his mind, images of Dean flashed successively and in random order…

Dean looking down at Sam in their back yard when they were little and Dean was still taller, Dean in the driveway shooting hoops as a teen, Dean in his tux leaving for prom, Dean’s face on the day Sam watched him be fired, Dean's ten-year-old face laughing as he held Sam down and tickled him, Dean's face as he cried when their father had died, Dean toasting at Sam's wedding, Dean holding the twins as toddlers – one in each arm and smiling, Dean standing proudly at the helm of his yacht, Dean kissing Cas under the trees at the resort when he thought no one was looking, Dean laughing as he wrestled with the twins on the living room floor, Dean behind the wheel of the Impala – happy. The tears just wouldn’t stop. The images of his brother wouldn’t stop. Sam thought his heart would break wide open, or stop beating altogether. He held his mother and wife ever tighter.

My God… my poor mother… first her husband and now her son… please God, don’t do this! Don’t take him! Don’t you dare take him!

As they cried themselves out, Sam became aware that they weren’t the only ones crying. There was a lady not twenty feet away who was losing her shit. She was sobbing so hard she was gagging and there was another lady trying to console her. A few feet beyond that was an elderly couple, holding each other and crying quietly.

Sam took in the tone of the room and realized that they were surrounded by others who’d had beloved family members fall from the sky today. There were a total of seven people who may be dead and many of those around them were sitting here waiting for news, too. Based on the footage they’d just seen, anyone who had family in that jet probably just lost all hope.

Sam wished he’d been able to see the plane’s impact on the video. He wanted to know how likely it was that someone could’ve survived the impact. He wanted to know if there was any point in holding out hope.

Dean’s brain seemed to come online long before he could force his eyes open. He could hear an incessant beeping and a background noise of soft whispers.

When he was able to open his eyes, the brightness of the room was overwhelming and he had to squint against it. His eyes were crusty and when he moved to clear them, his hand was held back. Fighting the cement that bound the corners of his eyes shut, he picked up his head and peered at the room around him through slits in his eyelids. It was a hospital room. The sun was flooding in the room, but through squinted eyes he could make out his mother and Jess, huddled together on a small couch under the window and whispering softly.

His brother was sitting in a chair next to him and was holding Dean's hand as he slept, head on the edge of Dean's bed. Not wanting to disturb Sam, Dean tried to use his other hand to rub his eyes but it wouldn’t move. Closer inspection saw it immobilized with a balloon type contraption. He was able to lift his arm but not bend it. And when he tried to lift it, pain swept up his arm and his spine.
Now that he was starting to really wake up, he noticed a lot of pain. His neck was aching and his head was throbbing. He tested his left leg, and it seemed ok until he tried to bend his knee. Wiggling his toes hurt a little. He focused on not moving any more than necessary.

But, he needed to clear his eyes. So he wiggled his hand loose from Sam’s to do so. Of course this movement brought shockwaves of pain up his spine. And it woke Sam, who immediately sat up with blood-shot eyes and greasy hair, saying how happy he was that Dean was ok and asking how he was feeling.

“Like I got hit by a train,” he answered honestly.

“Or crashed a plane?” asked Sam.

The two shared a soft laugh and then Mary and Jess were standing on either side of the bed, fawning all over him.

Dean soaked up the long hug from his mother and smiled at her kiss on his cheek.

“How’s Cas?”

No one answered. Jess and Mary looked at each other. Sam looked at Dean but didn’t answer.

“How’s Cas?” Dean asked more forcefully, not wanting to accept the feeling of dread that swept over him as his question went unanswered. Dean's mind sifted through his memories. Now, fresh from sleep but disoriented, all he could think was…

*He was breathing. He wasn’t dead. He was breathing!*

“He was breathing…” Dean managed to croak out, “he was alive…”

Sam nodded and opened his mouth to speak.

“Don’t you tell me he didn’t make it,” Dean's voice elevated to a yell, “Don’t you God-damned tell me he didn’t make it, Sam!”

“He’s alive and we’re all praying for him Dean,” his mother interjected softly.

Sam nodded.

“Well, where is he? Is he here?”

Sam nodded again.

“Then why the fuck isn’t someone with him?” Dean demanded harshly, “Why are you all here with me when I’m fine…” his voice cracked under the strain, “…and Cas is clearly not? Why’s he alone right now?”

“We can’t see him, honey,” his mother said softly. “He’s in ICU and they only allow visitors for an hour a day.”

Dean nodded, unable to speak for a moment as he gathered his thoughts. Then he tried again, but slower and kinder.

“I’m sorry guys. I’m just worried. Last time I saw him he didn’t look good. Please tell me everything. I’ll try not to snap at you.”
“Well Dean, Cas has a lot of injuries. The one that they’re most worried about is called a subdural hematoma. It’s bleeding in the brain. He also had some internal bleeding that was a concern, but I think they’ve gotten that taken care of. We’re checking on him every hour; we just can’t go in and see him.”

“Is he awake?”

“No.”

“Did you guys call Anna?”

“Yes, she’s here. She’s been in to see you, but doesn’t like to be gone from him for too long. She sits right outside his door.”

Dean smiled just thinking of Anna.

“My arm is broken?”

“Yes, and your back is messed up too. They’re going to schedule a surgery to fuse together two of your vertebrae. You’ll lose a little range of motion but other than that – they say it won’t affect you too much in the long term.” Dean nodded, knowing that it could’ve been much worse.

“What’s up with my leg? That broken too?”

“No. Your knee is fucked up though. They’re gonna fix that with a surgery too. When your body is ready.”

“You’d think they’d be giving me something for the pain. I hurt like a mother…” Dean's voice trailed off as his eyes met his mother's.

Sam reached across his brother, pressing the call button.

“It’s good to have you back Dean. We were so worried about you. The boys were here, last night and earlier today, but we sent them home with Nat. She’s been staying with them.”

“Oh the boys,” sighed Dean. “Poor kids are supposed to be on a beach right now. Are they ok?”

“They’re worried about you guys. Jimmy was pissed that he couldn’t see Cas.”

“Last night? Jeez, how long have I been out?”

“You were brought in yesterday at about 4.”

“When’s the next time we can visit Cas? I want to go.”

Dean watched his family nod slowly and then all the faces turned towards the door as a nurse walked in.

“Well hello,” she smiled at Dean. “It’s good to see you awake.”

“It’s good to be awake,” he said, finally letting himself enjoy the fact that he was still alive.

“How’s your pain?”

“Well, it’s pain. It sucks.”
“Can you rate it for me? On a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being the worst pain you’ve ever felt in your life?”

“Six. It’s a solid six.”

“Alright then, we’ll get you something for that. Would you like to eat something too? I can bring you dinner?”

“Cheeseburger?”

“Sure. Fries too?”

“Now you’re talkin,” he grinned at her in response to her friendliness, even though he knew the food she brought him would suck.

“Something to drink with that? Milk? Soda?”

“Milk sounds good for some strange reason.”

“Anything else I can do for you?” she asked as she checked all the equipment near the head of his bed.

“Yes.” He said firmly, “There’s a patient in ICU. His name is Castiel Milton. He’s my husband, and I’d like an update on him as often as possible. And I’d like to see him as soon as possible.”

“I’ll check on him for you. And I will see if your doctor will allow you to be moved. If so, we’ll see about getting you up there, ok?”

“Ok. How much longer is your shift?”

“I’ll be here until 11 p.m.,” she told him.

“Ok, when you go home, will you please tell the next nurse that I need updates on Castiel?”

“Of course I will,” she said reassuringly. “I’ll be back soon with your dinner. If you’re asleep when it comes, do you want me to wake you?”

“I just woke up.”

“I know. But I also just gave you morphine. You’re likely to fall back asleep soon.”

“Ok. Well, don’t wake me for food. But wake me for updates on Cas, ok?”

“Okay. If his condition changes at all, I will wake you.”

With that, she left. Dean returned his attention to his family. “That was just to double up. I still want updates from you guys, too, ok?”

They all smiled and nodded. The nurse had been right, Dean was fading out already. “I’m gonna sleep now,” he said softly, “but wake me for Cas.”
Dean was awakened by his nurse. She was tapping his hand, which she was holding. When he opened his eyes and looked at her, she laid his hand down on the bed and gestured to his food. “I wasn’t going to wake you to eat,” she said, “but I have an update on your husband. His status has been changed from Critical to Serious.”

Dean wasn’t sure if that was good or bad. “Um… what does that mean?”

She patted his shoulder reassuringly, “It’s an improvement.”

“Thank you,” he said as he looked around the room and found it empty, “Did my family say where they were going?”

“They were headed for the lobby. I think there was a visitor that they needed to speak to? I’m not sure exactly.”

Dean looked at her name tag for the first time. “Thank you, Hanna.”

“You’re welcome,” she said. “I’m assuming you’d like to continue to receive updates?”

“Yes. Thank you,” he said as she turned to go.

“Try to eat something before you go back to sleep. You’ll need your strength.”

Dean knew she was right. He ate some of the burger, but couldn’t choke down the fries. He found some cottage cheese on the tray and ate that. The pudding too. And he drank the milk.

His head fell back on the pillow. Just eating had exhausted him, and he fell back asleep almost immediately.

The next time Dean awoke, Anna was there. She was pacing near the window, and everyone looked stressed. When Mary noticed him awake, she greeted him, and everyone put on a mask. They smiled for him and Anna moved to his side, leaning in for a hug.

“What?” he asked them flatly.

No one spoke.

“What happened?” he pushed.

“What makes you think something happened?” asked Sam.

“I know you guys know something you aren’t telling me. Is it Cas? Is something happening?”

“Nothing is happening to Cas,” reassured Anna. “It's just getting to be a bit of a zoo up there. His name’s been released on the news. People know who he is now.”

“Oh. Okay,” said Dean. “I would have thought the Milton name was old news by now. How you holdin’ up, Anna?”

“I’ve been better, Dean.”
“So who’s up there trying to get in to see Cas? Reporters?”

“Not exactly,” Anna said coldly. Dean heard the ice in her voice. He looked at her and saw her anger bubbling beneath the surface.

“What exactly?” he pushed.

“Our father is up there.”

“You’re shitting me,” he replied – completely stunned.

“Nope. And I can’t stand to see him. But since he’s family – I can’t keep him out. I’m officially hiding in your room, Dean.”

Dean’s mind revolted at the thought of calling Charles Milton the third a family member. His blood boiled when he thought of that man’s face being the first Cas would see when he finally woke up.

“Anna, I know he’s a bastard, but you can’t leave him with Cas. What if he wakes up? Can you even imagine how he’ll feel if that’s the face he wakes up to?”

“Can you imagine how it would feel for ME to sit next to him on a folding chair for hours on end?”

“No. I can’t. I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to judge you,” he said as he forced himself into a sitting position. It hurt like hell, and everyone in the room responded immediately. A loud beeping started in too. As he worked his leg over to the edge of the bed, he felt a painful tug on his junk. It overrode all the rest of the pain in his body. “Fuck!” he hollered, unable to keep quiet.

“Mr. Winchester,” said a nurse as she jogged into the room, “please lay back down.” She had her hands on his arms and was blocking him from moving farther.

“I’m getting up. I need to go to ICU.”

“Please lay back down while we discuss this,” Hanna said firmly.

“I will sit still while we discuss it,” he said firmly, trying to compromise with her.

“Okay. Listen, we can’t get you out of bed yet. Your doctor hasn’t answered my request to move you.”

“This is important,” he told her.

“I realize that. But you have a catheter in. You’re hooked to an IV. If you’re going to be moved, there are things we have to do before we put you in a wheelchair. Please be patient. Let me get the ok from your doctor, and then we’ll get you up to see him.”

“He has unwanted visitors up there,” said Dean, glancing at Anna, “His father is a monster… kicked him out when he was young. He hasn’t spoken to Cas in like sixteen years! No birthday or Christmas cards – fucking nothing. Now he’s up there… and if Cas wakes up to that man… I don’t want to think about what will happen. Please… I have to do something. He can’t be allowed to see Cas.”

“I’m aware of the situation, but there’s nothing we can do to bar him. He’s family.”

“No, he’s not. He’s far from it.”
“Well, on paper he is. More even than you, since you’re not officially married. There’s nothing we can do.”

“He’s an ex con. He’s been in prison. Can we use that to bar him from the room?”

“I’m afraid not.”

“Well you know what we CAN do?” Dean said firmly. “We can plant my fucking wheelchair right next to that homophobic asshole. I doubt he’ll stick around long after I join the party. But at least if he does – Cas won’t be alone when he wakes up from a near death experience and comes face to face with that sorry excuse for a father.”

“Everything okay in here?” asked another nurse from the doorway. “The bed alarm is still going off.”

Hanna looked over her shoulder and said, “I can’t reach it.”

The other nurse realized that Hanna was literally blocking Dean from getting up. She walked in and pressed a button on the bed. The room seemed suddenly quiet without the extra-loud beeping. The faces all looked tense.

“Do you need help getting back into the bed?” the other nurse asked, glancing at Hanna.

“No. I will get back in bed for half an hour. That’s long enough to call the doctor again. Tell him I’m getting up in half an hour whether he likes it or not.”

“I wouldn’t tell him that if I were you,” Hanna said softly. “Technically he can order you restrained. You won’t like it. Your injuries are serious. You need to be immobile. I will call him again and ask about getting you in a wheelchair, ok? Now please lay back down.”

Dean nodded, bested by the nursing staff. He looked to Sam next. “You’re a lawyer… can’t you check into this? See if there’s some kind of injunction we can get? A restraining order? Something?”

Sam looked at Dean in a pitiful way but agreed to check into it. He stepped out into the hall, saying he was going to make some calls.

Anna sat down on the couch, clearly feeling beaten down.

Dean fought his exhaustion hard. But even just sitting up and speaking harshly for a few minutes had wiped him out. He was in danger of falling asleep again.

“Anna?”

She looked at him.

“It’s okay ya know. I’m not angry with you. This is your family, and you’re safe here.”

Dean’s attention was stolen then, by Mary.

“That’s it,” she said firmly to Anna, “Dean’s right. We’re your family, you and Cas both. You stay here, and I’ll go sit with Cas.” She walked over to Dean and said, “You stay here and don’t try to get up again. Rest and get strong. I will be the first face Cas sees when he opens his eyes. Even if I have to trip Mr. Milton to beat him in there, ok?”

“Go get ‘em, Mamma Bear!” said Dean – proud to be this woman's son. “Dad would be so proud.”
She nodded her head and stepped away from him. He watched her kiss Anna on the head and whisper something encouraging to her as she grabbed her purse and walked out the door.

Sam was on the phone for quite a while. When he came back in Dean was asleep. “Where’d Mom go?”

“To take my place outside Cas’ room in ICU. Dean didn’t want him waking up to our father, and I don’t blame him.”

“Well, I don’t think she’ll be up there for long, but I’m going to join her so she’s not alone,” said Sam as he tucked his phone in his suit pocket and stepped towards the door.

“Why won’t she be up there for long?” asked Anna.

“I’ve called Meg. She knows lots of higher-ups in these circles. She’s gonna try and pull some strings.”

Jess nodded to Sam. “After all these years, she’s finally useful for once.”

Sam kissed her quickly and then headed off to join Mary.

The next time Dean woke, it was morning. The only person in the room was Anna.

“Hey you,” he smiled at her. “Where’s Sam and Jess?”

“They took Mary home for a shower. None of them had left since you guys were brought here. She didn’t have a car with her.”

“Who’s with Cas?” he asked.

“No one. Sam called in a favor, and the hospital is officially listing Cas as not able to have any visitors.”

“What happened to daddy dearest?”

“Last I heard he’d left the building,” she said with a smile. “And if Cas wakes up, they’ll open him up for visitors. They’ll let us know first thing, and we can go in. Once he’s awake – he’ll be able to say he doesn’t want to see our father and security will enforce it.”

“Sounds good.”

“How are you feeling?” she asked him.

“I’m tired of people asking me how I feel,” he teased her. “If you wanna make yourself useful, get me some decent food.”

“Name something that can be delivered.”

“Pizza.”
“Something healthy that can be delivered.”

“Put fucking vegetables on it.”

She gave him a look. He returned it. “I’d eat more vegetables,” he said jokingly, “but they taste like they came out of the ground.”

She smiled at him as she pulled out her cell phone and called Sam. Dean overheard her asking him to pick up Dean something healthy that Dean would find appetizing when they came back.

“Sorry,” she told him, “but I don’t want to be any farther from Cassie than you do. And I can’t condone the intake of greasy take-out in your condition.”

“You know, you really are like a sister to me,” Dean said, grinning. “I never had one before. It’s more annoying than I would’ve expected.”

She gave him a laugh and then settled in the chair next to the bed. “Be careful. I can control the television. You might find yourself watching soap operas.”

“How is he today?”

“The same, I guess. I can’t go in there anymore to see him. Can’t even look through the glass. But it’s better this way. I’d rather him wake to a strange nurse than our father.”

“Me too,” sighed Dean. “You know, this is the longest I’ve been away from him… for a long damn time.”

Anna whipped out a deck of cards. “In your condition, I might win at slapjack.”

“Try me at poker,” he said.

“Poker with two players?” she said with a laugh. “How ‘bout go fish instead?”

“Whatever shuts you up,” he teased.

Two games and then the nurse was following the doctor in. Anna stepped out while Dean was examined briefly. The doctor acknowledged that Dean wanted to get up, but said the best thing to do was proceed with the surgeries and allow his family to see to Cas. Dean knew that he was right. He nodded, only half listening to the doctor. At the end he asked the only question that was important.

“Once we’re done with my knee and back, how long before I can get out of bed.”

“Usually within twenty four hours,” he said, “if you’re good and do as the nurses tell you.”

“Roger that,” said Dean – knowing the man had probably gotten an earful about Dean Winchester from the nursing staff. Hanna seemed to understand him, but also be frustrated with him.

“Hey, doc,” called Dean as the physician was turning to leave, “can doctors really order their patients to be restrained?”

“Technically, yes,” he grinned at Dean.

Dean couldn’t help but return the man’s smile. He was enjoying his morphine and looking forward to tomorrow. He’d have a new ligament in his knee, a fused spine and a twenty-four hour countdown to see his man. He was finally going to see Cas in just under 48 hours.
Anna came back in and continued annoying him with children’s card games until finally, Mary came in with food.

“Surf and turf,” she told him as she began unloading boxes from a white plastic bag. It smelled incredible. Dean used the controller to move the head of his bed up higher as she slid food onto his bed tray.

A juicy steak and fried shrimp. Even the veggies smelled good.

“If you eat everything... I have pie for you.”

“I love you, Mom,” he said, joyfully sinking his fork into delicious red meat.

Once he’d eaten, he snoozed a little. Later that afternoon, Sam returned and he brought the boys with him.

The boys surged to the bed and bent over to hug him. “Hey guys,” he said warmly, “I’m sorry we’re not on a beach right now.”

“We’re just glad you’re ok,” said John.

“We were so worried about you,” Jimmy added.

The boys were a breath of fresh air. They brought fun in with them. They were rowdy and loud and annoyed the nurses almost as much as Dean did. It was awesome.

They all settled in around Dean's bed to play cards and for the first time since he’d woken, time seemed to speed up. It was 10 p.m. in no time. Sam gathered the boys and said they’d have to be getting home. They gave Dean fist-bumps and told him to hurry and get better.

Anna didn’t look too comfy on the couch, but he knew better than to imagine she’d leave. He fell asleep easily – contented and worn out from the lively visitors.

At home, in bed, John was teetering on the edge of sleep when he heard his bedroom door creak. He looked over and saw Jimmy peeking in the room.

He pulled himself halfway to sitting, “You ok?”

“Yeah. Can I sleep in here?”

“Sure,” he said, sliding over to make room in the bed for his twin. “Nightmare?”

“Waking nightmare,” laughed Jimmy, “I could hear mom and dad.”

“Aww nasty!” cringed John.

“No shit. You’re so lucky you don’t share a vent with them.”

“Uncle Dean looked a lot better today didn’t he?” John said, to change the subject.
“Yeah. But when the fuck are they gonna let us see Uncle Cas?”

“When he wakes up I guess,” John said.

“But what if he doesn’t?”

“He will.”

The bed was too small for both of them now that they were older, but they’d gotten in the habit of crawling in together for any number of reasons when they were young. Now that they were older – the cramped space just didn’t bother them. They’d grown used to it.

“Jenny looked hot today,” said John – again changing the subject.


“At the playground – she was watching you play basketball. You didn’t see?”

“Clearly not,” he said, giving his twin a nudge with his knee.

“You’re gonna have to do something about her eventually.”

“What would you do if you were me?”

“Fuck her.”

“Is that your answer to everything?”

“Yes,” he said firmly. “You should cut your hair again – short, like mine. No one would be able to tell us apart. I could just dress like you and do her. She’d think she was getting what she wanted, and you wouldn’t have to worry about it.”

“I’m not worried.”

“Then why are you putting off telling people you’re gay?”

“Cause I’m not sure I’m gay.”

“You said you were sure after you talked to Uncle Cas about it.”

“Ok. I’m sure I’m gay. I’m just not sure I’m ready for everybody to know it, ok?”

“It’s up to you. Enjoy your time with Jenny,” John said sarcastically. “I’ll take care of her for ya if you want. All it takes is a haircut!”

The boys both laughed out loud as John rolled over to sleep. It was quiet for a moment and then John said, “Get your knobby knees out of my back, fucker.”

“That’s my ass.”

“Damn. Eat something tomorrow, wouldja? That is one boney ass!”

Jimmy’s chest shook with silent laughter. Then he got a noseful of something awful – like rotten eggs. “Did you just let one go?”

“My bed. I ain’t holdin back for you.”
Jimmy pulled the sheet over his face and breathed through his mouth. It was quiet again for a moment and then Jimmy spoke quietly, “John, what if Uncle Cas doesn’t wake up?”

“He will dammit.”

“I know,” said Jimmy firmly, “but what if he doesn’t?”

Dean had become accustomed to the constant poking and prodding of hospitals when he’d had his cancer scare. So now, he didn’t think anything of it when nurses came in at all hours to check his equipment and take his vitals. He’d wake just enough to cooperate with them and then fall back asleep.

This time, though, the early bird nurse came in extra early… and she turned on the lights when she did. Dean blinked at the clock. It wasn’t quite 5 a.m. There were two nurses, not one.

“Mr. Winchester,” said Hanna, “Mrs. Wellington,” she said tipping her head towards Anna, who was sitting up from her makeshift bed on the little couch, “We thought you’d like to know that Mr. Milton is awake.”

Anna leapt to her feet. “How is he?” she asked.

“We haven’t seen him. We just got the call.”

“Can I go up?” she asked.

“Yes.”

Dean sat forward, “Anna, tell him I love him and miss him.”

“Of course,” she said as she stepped out the door.

“Mr. Winchester,” said Hanna, “you’re lucky this has happened on the night shift when it’s slow.”

She was moving around his bed and messing with all the equipment. The other nurse pulled his catheter bag from beneath the bed and laid it on top of his blankets.

“What’s going on?” he asked quietly.

“We’re taking you to see him,” she smiled.

Dean was absolutely overwhelmed. He bit back happy tears and worked to keep his expression from revealing the level of neediness in his heart. He had to swallow hard to keep his emotions from crumbling his face. But after a few deep breaths he was able to crack a joke.

“Oh Hanna, I didn’t know you cared.”

“I don’t,” she joked back to him, “I just like pissing off your doctor.”

The two women rolled his entire bed out into the hallway and down the hall to the elevator. When the doors opened again, he was clearly in ICU. The rest of the hospital was bathed in low lights
and hushed voices. But here – all lights were on and the staff were moving about as if it were the middle of the workday.

His eyes swept from side to side taking in everything as they pushed him deeper into ICU. Then, he spotted Anna. She was standing over a bed. Dean couldn’t see Cas yet, but who else would it be in that bed? There was a clear glass wall that separated Cas’ room from the rest of the unit and when Dean’s bed was approaching it, Hanna hit a button and the wall, which turned out to be a sliding door, moved aside for them. The nurses wheeled his bed right up next to Cas’.

Dean saw Anna turn towards him, surprised, but he never took his eyes off the body he’d waited an eternity to see again. The face that he dreamt of every time he’d slept. He reached out with his good hand to take the cold hand of his lover, his friend. “Hey, Cas.”

“Hello, Dean,” Cas said warmly. His voice had always been a low timbre, but now it was like he’d gargled with rocks and glass.

“I’ve missed you,” said Dean quietly to Cas.

“That’s what I hear…,” Cas said lightly, glancing at Anna, “…who’d you bribe to pull this off?”

“You don’t have to bribe good people Cas,” he said as he looked to Hanna with thankful eyes.

Dean slid over a little in his bed so that their joined hands could rest on the mattress. Already he was growing tired. Cas didn’t look good, but Dean didn’t say so. “How are you feeling?”

“I’ve been better.”

Dean squeezed his hand and Cas squeezed back. Feebly.

“They must be giving you the good drugs, huh?”

Cas closed his eyes. He’d never complain, but Dean could tell that the man wasn’t in the mood for small talk. “Anna tell you about all the drama?”

“Yes. I guess I’m on the news again?”

“So it seems.”

“And some old coot came by here posing as my father?”

“Yep.”

“That’s a lie,” he told Dean, “I never had a father. Not in the true sense of the word.”

“Do you want to see him?”

“A little,” said Cas honestly. “But only because I hope he’d want to apologize for being an ass. But he won’t. So it’s better not to let him in. He’d likely just piss me off, or find some new way to hurt me.”

“It’s so good to see you Cas,” said Dean as their audience of nurses and Anna faded into the background. “The boys were here. They were really upset they couldn’t see you.”

“I feel bad their vacation is ruined.”

“We’ll make it up to them.”
Cas kept his eyes locked on Dean, and Dean didn’t look away. There wasn’t really anything to say, but they were going to make the most of their time. As minutes ticked by, Dean could feel Hanna and her companion nurse getting bored waiting. But he didn’t look at them. He kept his eyes trained on Cas, drinking him in. Knowing it could be days before he saw the man again.

When Dean's bed was pulled away from Cas’, Dean winked and said, “I’ll be thinking of you.”

*I love it when he winks at me.*

Dean stared straight ahead as he was wheeled back to the elevators. He kept his expression firm, not wanting the nurses or those in the hall to see him crumble. But it tore at his soul to be pulled away from Cas. It was so fundamentally wrong to be away from him – especially now.

But, he forced himself to remember that Anna needed some time with him, too. And, as he was returned to his room, he couldn’t help but feel better just knowing that Cas was finally awake and back in the land of the living.

When Hanna was hooking his IV back up, he took her wrist to keep her from pulling away and forced her to look him in the eye (which she never really did). “Thank you,” he told her. “You have no idea what that meant to me.”

“Of course I do,” she said to him, scolding him as if he were a child and taking her hand back.

Then she was gone. He looked at the clock. It was almost 6 a.m. That magical time when the next wave of nurses came in and the preparations for the day began. Soon the lights would all come on. And shortly after that – Dean would be taken to surgery.

As he laid in bed, he could only think of Cas. The man had looked small in his bed. His hair wasn’t shiny and soft. It was dull. So were his eyes.

His body had been withered up and his eyes a little sunken in. He’d had an oxygen tube running under his nose, and he’d been hooked up to several machines. His hand had been so weak.

Dean prayed a silent prayer of thanks that Cas had lived, that he had woken, that the nurses had been willing to go out of their way to bring them together. And then he prayed for more. That Cas would be ok. That he would fully recover and grow strong again.
Chapter Notes

Thank you to MoniJune for editing this even though it’s the busy holidays!

The time prior to surgery passed quickly. Sam had to be at the office that morning, so he couldn’t come to the hospital. Only Mary came by to visit and sit with him during his prep, keeping his spirits light until he was taken to the operating room.

This time was far less weighted than his previous surgeries had been, since his life wasn’t hanging in the balance. It was easy to laugh and joke with his mom knowing this procedure was just fixing a bum knee and a sore back.

As he was waiting for his sedatives to kick in, his mind wandered to Cas. The man hadn’t looked very well when Dean had seen him, but according to the nurses, he’d been much improved. In fact, they seemed hopeful that Cas would soon be moved to a regular room. Dean hoped that by the time he was able to visit Cas again, he’d be seeing him in a regular hospital bed, which would mean he’d be able to visit for more than an hour.

When he woke, his mom and Sam and the boys were all there. The boys were fucking with him, he could tell. They laughed as he answered their questions and asked his. Sam was thumping them on the back of their heads for what Dean could only assume were wisecracks – but his brain was too mushy to really keep up with their banter. On some level he knew he was likely asking silly questions and repeating himself, but he didn’t seem to be able to care. He grinned at the boys, laughing along with them despite knowing that they were likely laughing at his expense.

At some point he must’ve fallen asleep because when he woke again, it was only Mary in the room. They chatted for a while. She mentioned that Sam and the boys were still at the hospital, they’d simply gone down to visit with Cas. Dean smiled knowing how much Cas’ spirits would lift with a visit from the boys. Especially Jimmy. Cas and Jimmy were very close.

“Mom? You said they went down to visit with Cas, not up. Does that mean he’s been moved?”

“Yes, he’s down in a regular room now.”

“How’s he look?” Dean asked with a smile, expecting good news.

She looked uncertain when she answered… almost as if she were trying to think of a way to answer his questions without lying. Then she said, “It’s really good to see him out of ICU. And I know he’s looking forward to seeing you honey, he misses you just as much as you miss him.”

“It feels like it’s been weeks since I’ve seen him.”

“I know sweetie,” she smiled, “but you’ll be seeing him soon.”

As they were speaking, a nurse came in and greeted Dean. She checked his IV and the numbers on his machines as she asked him about his pain. He said he was fine and inquired about when he could eat. She encouraged him to eat when he was ready and took his dinner order.
Mary said she’d be heading home now but would come back and see him tomorrow. He laid his head down to rest for a bit. As his mind drifted, he remembered the look that had crossed her face when she spoke of Cas. It was a very ambiguous look. It concerned him. There was something she wasn’t telling him, but he’d still been cloudy from the pain medication and she had easily distracted him. Now that his head was clearing he began to get a niggling feeling that he should be worried.

He used the call button to summon a nurse and ask for an update on Cas. He waited, picking at his recently delivered dinner, but when the update came it gave him no new information. Only that Cas’ condition was stable and he was resting comfortably in room 327.

When he’d choked down all he could stand of his dinner, he picked up the phone next to his bed and called room 327. It rang about six times and was then picked up at the nurse’s station. The answering party told him curtly that the patient in 327 was asleep and to try back later.

Dean's sleep that night was fitful and uneven. In his dreams, he saw Cas, but only from the back. As the scenery morphed around him, from hospital to beach to gravel road to jungle trail he found himself always running to catch up and unable to see his man's face. The little sleep he got was restless, and when he woke to the tinges of dawn at his window he easily gave up any pretense of trying to rest.

Dean's brain kept telling him to ignore the creeping dread that filled his chest. His logic tried to override his irrational fears. He’d just been unable to sleep well because his leg was restrained in a post-operative contraption that was continually flexing his knee for him. Unable to roll over he’d likely felt restrained in his dreams. His logical side also reminded him that he’d declined pain medication through the night, which had likely made it difficult for his body to rest comfortably.

Now, he sat in the bed watching the nursing staff come alive outside his door. It was after six a.m. The overnight nurses were getting ready to go home and the new nurses who would be taking over were being brought up to speed on the patients they’d be caring for.

Doctors would be going on rounds soon, and his own surgeon would likely stop by to check on him. He had declined pain meds because he wanted to be clear headed. When his doctor came, he wanted to get the okay to go down and see Cas.

Deep down inside, he knew that was the biggest reason he felt unsettled. He was away from his friend, his partner, his “mate” for lack of a better word. It was strange to Dean that after decades with Cas – he still hadn’t been able to settle on a word to label what the man was to him. Even the word husband was too mundane – he only used that word when he needed other people to grasp what he and Cas were to each other. But for Dean? In his own head? There was simply nothing that really fit.

Mary arrived but only stayed for a minute, ducking in to say she was going to go check on Cas and would be right back. He was thrilled that he’d soon be getting an update and proceeded to eat his breakfast, which was surprisingly good.

Two hours went by and finally Mary was back. “Have you seen the doctor yet?” she asked as she settled into a chair.

“Nope. How’s Cas?”

“Tired, I think. He couldn’t seem to stay awake long while I was there.”

“Is Anna with him?”
“Yes. Now that he has his own room, she’s much more comfortable. She can use his bathroom to
shower and sleep on the couch in his room.”

“Has Michael been coming to visit too?”

“He’s home with Ben,” said Mary, “they’ve been in to see her a few times, bring her things, but she
seems to prefer to keep the room quiet for Cas.”

Dean nodded. Benhaim, or Ben as they called the boy for short, was Anna and Michael's adopted
son from Ethiopia. He was just turning three this year and was a handful.

It felt like they waited forever for the doctor. When the nurse took his lunch order he inquired
about it and was told that the doctor had surgeries that morning and would likely come up
afterwards to check on patients, but no time estimate was given.

Dean ate his lunch like a Boy Scout and continued turning down pain meds in an effort to stay
clear headed and functional for when the doctor arrived, but on the inside, he was screaming for
some Percocet. His hamstring felt like it was on fire (strange) and his back ached like there was a
barbell sitting on it. He couldn’t move though, because of the contraption on his leg. He was
getting more agitated by the minute, and he knew his mom could see it.

When she offered to play cards with him for the fourth time, he accepted. But his heart really
wasn’t in it and the time crept by.

When the doctor finally came, he was quick. He reported that the surgeries were successful and
answered all of Mary’s insightful questions. He confirmed that once the catheter was removed and
Dean had been to the toilet he was free to go down, with the assistance of at least one nurse, and
see Cas.

The nurse came in shortly after the doctor left to remove the catheter and help Dean to the
restroom. With that task completed, he insisted on being taken down to see Cas. Mary sat and kept
him occupied with small talk as he waited for the nurse to come back with a wheel chair.

She disconnected his IV and helped him to the chair. The three of them then headed down to Cas’
room. As they rode the elevator down, Mary took Dean's hand and reminded him that Cas had
come a long way from the condition he’d been in when he had first arrived. It didn’t escape his
attention that his mother was trying to prepare him for what he’d see when they got to Cas’ room.

What she’d done to prepare him hadn’t been enough. When he rolled in, Cas was sleeping. Anna
was next to his bed, magazine in her lap, dozing with her head braced on her palm. Dean spared her
only a short glance and a moment’s pity. His eyes were only for Cas.

The man looked worse than he had when Dean had seen him in ICU. He was small in the bed.
Sallow. His breaths were tiny labored puffs and he still had a tube of oxygen strung from ear to ear
and running under his nose. The room was silent with the exception of the low hum of the oxygen
pump and the beeping of his machines.

Dean tore his eyes from Cas for a moment and looked up at Mary.

“Mom?” he said through a cracked and dry throat. “Why?” he asked. It was all he could really form
to words.

“Well, he was on some pretty intense diuretics to control his fluid volume because of the bleeding
in his brain. I’ve been told that’s why he looks a little…” she was clearly searching for a word,
“withered?”
Dean was blinking back tears. Anna had woken up while Mary was speaking, and she’d reached out to take Dean's hand.

“He’s got a sodium imbalance that they’re working to correct,” added Anna. “He was confused yesterday because of it… acting a little strange. They drew labs again this morning to check his progress,” she said, looking from Dean over to Mary. “He hasn’t been awake yet.”

“What other injuries does he have?” asked Dean quietly.

“Something hit him in the side of the head, which is where the brain bleed came from. Something grazed his chest, caused bleeding and broke some ribs,” she told him, “and there was a nasty puncture wound in his leg.”

Dean’s mind flashed back to the moments in the cockpit when he’d first come around after the crash. He remembered the sickening way Cas had been hanging unconscious in his safety harness. The blood. Everywhere. The metal shaft that had broken the window and forced its way into the cabin. Dean had managed to work Cas’ torn leg around the bar, but clearly that’s where the wound in his leg had come from. Had it also struck Cas’ head and grazed his chest before plunging into the man’s leg?

Dean looked back and forth between his mom and Anna. “Can I have a minute alone with him?”

“Of course, sweetie,” said his mother. “Anna would you like to come down and have lunch with me?”

Dean watched the ladies walk to the door. Anna leaned into Mary as they walked and Mary put her arm around Anna in a reassuring hug as they headed out into the hall. Dean used his arms to maneuver his wheelchair up parallel to Cas’ bed so he could reach up and take the man's hand. The angle was awkward, and Cas’ hand felt like a stranger’s. It was small, cool and clammy.

“Cas? Buddy?”

Dean waited, but Cas didn’t stir.

“Cas, man, I know you’re tired. But can you please wake up for a minute? I really,” his voice broke then as a tear rolled out and he had to clear his throat and try again, “I really need to hear you say my name, man. Can ya just wake up and let me hear your voice for sec? Please?”

Cas didn’t stir and Dean tried once more, “Cas?” he squeezed the man's hand tightly, “Cas, man, I gotta know you’re ok. You can go right back to sleep, buddy, just fuckin’ say hi to me or some shit, ok?”

With that, Cas rolled his head over towards Dean. He didn’t open his eyes, but he licked his lips and softly whispered, “Dean.”

Hearing his name was supposed to bring relief. But it didn’t; it felt like someone was driving a stake through his heart. He tightened both hands around Cas’ limp hand. “Cas, man, I miss ya buddy.” Dean felt the weak hand within his hands give a little squeeze. That was it. That was all the man had.

Dean dropped his head to the cold rail on the bed and took a deep breath.

*What the fuck is happening?* he thought.

He hit the call button, and a nurse immediately swooped in. As she approached, she looked at
Dean.

“Did you need something?”

Dean didn’t miss how fast she’d come when called. It wasn’t normal. Cas was a top priority, he could tell just by her quick appearance and the way she’d seemed disappointed to see him still sleeping.

“Yes. I have just a few minutes while my family is gone. I need you to be honest with me. What is going on with Castiel?”

“Let’s step outside for a moment,” she said as she put her hands on his wheelchair.

“I want to stay with him,” he said firmly as his hands held on to the wheels and prevented her from moving him.

She knelt down next to him and dropped her voice to a whisper. “I prefer to speak in the hall.”

Dean could tell by her steely eyes that she was every bit as stubborn as he was. He glanced at the name tag. Gwen. He nodded and placed his hands in his lap, allowing her to wheel him out. She artfully turned him to face an empty seat in the hall and locked the brake on his chair. Then she settled in across from him.

“I don’t like to discuss patients within their earshot when they’re not awake and participating,” she said by way of explanation, “You never know what they might hear. We think they’re sleeping or not listening but we don’t really know what they hear and what they don’t.”

Dean nodded and said, “I’m worried that my family is keeping something from me.”

“You’re Dean, right? His partner?”

“Yes.”

“What have you been told?” she asked him calmly.

“That he’s had a brain bleed and some internal injuries which have been treated. That he’s got a sodium imbalance and it’s made him tired and confused.”

“That’s essentially the gist of it,” she told him. “His body has been through a lot, and he’s regressed a bit since he was removed from ICU. He’s not going to bounce back overnight. We’re currently waiting on his labs. We’re running them often so we can monitor his levels as we give him the fluids. Have you ever watched the Price is Right?”

“Yes,” he answered – uncertain what a game show had to do with the situation.

“For Castiel, this is like the showcase showdown. The idea is to get just the right amount without going over.”

Dean nodded. She was clearly good at explaining things.

“When someone has an electrolyte imbalance – it throws off almost everything in their body. Nothing is going to work right including their brain. He was confused yesterday, and it’s best to let him sleep as much as possible. The last thing we want is for him to get agitated.”

Dean immediately felt guilty for trying to rouse the man – just so he could be reassured.
“It’s hard to just sit by and watch, I know,” she said reassuringly, “But that’s what he needs right now. Quiet. Calm. Patience and reassurance. If you get riled up, he’ll get riled up. If you’re calm, he’ll be calm. That’s how it usually works anyway,” she said firmly. “How bout I wheel you back in there and you hold his hand?”

Dean nodded, unable to speak.

“You just hold his hand and speak reassuringly to him. That’s the best thing you can do for him now.”

Dean nodded again. He let her park him back next to Cas’ bed. It was awkward with his left leg straight out in front of him, but he did as he was told. She smiled as she lowered Cas’ bed down to Dean’s level and patted his shoulder as she moved around him to check Cas’ equipment before stepping out of the room. He didn’t have the power to speak yet, and worked on swallowing the giant frog in his throat as he held Cas’ hand and stroked his fingers gently over the man’s knuckles.

That’s what he was doing when his mother and Anna returned from lunch.

“Dude, I’m so gonna hit that shit,” John said confidently as they walked past a group of girls from school who were loitering at the mall.

“Which one?”

“All of them. Any of them,” he said flatly as he looked back over his shoulder and watched them turn their heads to follow his movement, “Walk around with me once, and then we’ll talk to them next time we pass.”

“Why don’t we just talk to them now?” asked Jimmy, slowing down.

“Cause they need to spend the next ten minutes pissed that we didn’t,” replied John, gesturing for his twin to keep pace with him.

“You’re the master strategist,” laughed Jimmy, toying with Facebook on his phone as they walked, “But if you know so much… why aren’t you getting any?”

“What would you know about what I’m getting?”

“I know your bases,” he laughed loudly, “and you’re left fucking hand doesn’t count as third.”

“I’m a righty.”


“Sure. What are we lookin’ for?”

“Shorts that make my ass look good without being obvious.”

“Jenny will like that,” John said with a wicked grin. He’d been pestering Jimmy for a while now about the relentless crush the girl seemed to have on him. Secretly Jimmy suspected John carried a bit of a torch for the girl. Why else would he watch her so closely? (And volunteer to fuck her so
“Fuck off,” Jimmy threw back as they entered the store and passed two young girls folding jeans near the counter, “and quit shoving her in my face.” He asserted, pocketing his phone to begin looking at clothes.

Technically, they were supposed to be enjoying summer break in Honduras right now. But because of the plane crash, they were homebound for the first summer ever. With his mom and dad tied up at the hospital so much, they’d been finding ways to occupy themselves. Swimming pool, basketball court, movies and mall.

As his eyes scanned the racks of shorts on the right side of the store near the back, Jimmy’s eyes caught sight of movement and when he followed that movement – his breath stuck in his throat. There, next to the fitting rooms, hanging up backpacks with a long metal rod was Ian Moretti.

Ian was two years ahead. He had been a legend at their school and was now in prep while Jimmy labored another year in “kiddie land.” Ian was taller than Jimmy by several inches and had looked positively edible in a basketball uniform. He had olive skin and thick, dark hair that was always perfectly tousled. Jimmy felt his heart flutter and a shot of electricity move from his navel to his knees.

“I’m not rubbing anything in your face,” came John’s boisterous voice from behind him, “just reminding you of your options.”

John’s voice carried in the small store and Ian looked towards them when he heard it. Jimmy was a deer in headlights. A spaceship locked in a tractor beam. He couldn’t look away to hide his darkening cheeks. When Ian’s large dark eyes connected with Jimmy’s, he felt heat explode under his skin and breathing suddenly became difficult.

He was so certain that his biological reactions to Ian had been so cataclysmic that the entire mall had seen it, but John didn’t even seem to notice. Jimmy quickly averted his eyes, trying to play it cool.

“How ‘bout these?” said John, holding out a pair of tailored red shorts. Then he must’ve seen the flustered look on Jimmy’s face because he stopped moving and said, “What?”

“They’re ok,” Jimmy forced out. He glanced from John to Ian and then back to John; locking eyes on his brother and praying that his twin wouldn’t pick up on his weakness. Focusing on John had the immediate benefit of clearing his head enough for purposeful movement and coherent speech. But he could feel the boy’s presence at his back and longed to turn around for just a moment to see if he was still looking.

“You wanna try these on?” John asked, cautiously watching Jimmy. Clearly John knew something was up, but he wasn’t quick enough on the uptake to realize that the single most desirable boy to ever walk the Earth was just a few paces away from them… and perhaps watching their exchange.

“Sure,” answered Jimmy, trying to keep up with the conversation while his body recovered from the shock of seeing Ian.

“Hey man, can we get a key?” John asked Ian loudly over Jimmy’s shoulder.

The urge to run from the store and any further possible humiliation was overwhelming. But somewhere deep inside, Jimmy knew that if he left he’d just spend the afternoon thinking of reasons to walk back by here and catch a glimpse.
“Gotcha right here,” Ian motioned to a dressing room as he replied from a few feet behind Jimmy. Jimmy tracked the movement with ears and forced himself not to turn around. John stepped toward the dressing room doors to meet Ian there, where the boy was jangling keys - unlocking a room.

“You want the blue ones too? Or just the red?” John asked him.

Who fucking cares. That’s Ian opening a door for us.

“Jeez man…” chuckled John with an eye roll as he handed Ian the two pairs of shorts and said, “Ian, how long you been workin here?”

Jimmy watched Ian hang the shorts on the door of the dressing room.

“Just since spring break, that’s when I turned 16”

“You’re not doing baseball this summer?”

“Nah. I’m gonna just do track this year.”

“No football either?” asked John.

Jimmy stepped past his brother and into the fitting room – gratefully shutting the door and putting an inch of laminated pressed wood between him and the source of his stress and his intrigue.

Clearly John had no trouble talking to the boy. Why was it so different for him?

You know why – thought Jimmy. Because John hasn’t fantasized about kissing that boy. John couldn’t give a shit.

Jimmy listened to their conversation as he took down his cargo shorts. It didn’t escape his attention that he was stripping down and the apex of his desire was only a few inches away on the other side of the door. Then, he had to bite his lip when he looked up at the door and saw fingers curled over the top of it. Ian’s fingers. Hot damn.

On the other side of the door, Ian was clearly leaning on it and explaining to John that he’d decided to omit baseball and football after his freshman year at prep. He was certain he’d still do track and wasn’t sure yet about basketball.

John was telling Ian that he had to go out for basketball if he wanted to get any tit. Jimmy was pulling up the red shorts. He glanced in the mirror. They were at least a size too big.

A smile broke over Jimmy’s face as he considered tossing the shorts out over the door at John and before he had a moment to reconsider, his “brotherly” instincts took over. He ducked down for a second to observe under the door where John's feet were and then he snapped the shorts over the top at his brother's head.

“I've got you,” said Ian, clearly heading off to find the shorts in a smaller size. Jimmy stood in his blue boxer briefs and smiled. It was easier to be near Ian and enjoy it with a door between them. It took some of the pressure off – there was relief in knowing no one could see the expressions on his
face. That was part of the reason why the locker room sucked. He was self-conscious every moment he was in there… always worried that he’d be noticed enjoying something he was seeing. There were a lot of hot guys on the basketball team.

Jimmy loved that Ian was going to be bringing him something – even if he was being paid by the hour to do it. As he waited for something else to try on, Jimmy checked out his reflection. He was an average build, he and John both were, but John's body seemed a little more filled out than his. He ran his hand down his stomach. It was flat and smooth with a small patch of light peach-fuzz hair between his belly button and his groin. His hair was too long. He liked it, but he knew his mother would probably make him get it cut when school started up again.

“Here,” Ian said as he handed another pair over the door to Jimmy.

He took them and smiled widely, feeling his cheeks warm from the proximity of their hands. Just as he really started to enjoy the moment, there was a snap and then darkness as a pair of shorts flew over the door and wrapped around his face. He could hear John laughing on the other side.

“At least I took the hanger out first,” he cackled.

He tried the shorts and then put his regular clothes back on. When Jimmy emerged, John was still talking to Ian. Jimmy nodded to his twin as he passed by them and headed for the checkout. He tried to keep himself from looking at Ian. He’d been playing straight all his life. He knew how to do it.

When he got there, one of the girls took a break from her folding and moved behind the register to ring him up. She gave him a smile that he’d come to know all too well. He hated it, but returned it, not knowing what else would be polite.

As she rang him up, he could hear his brother and Ian getting closer, still wrapped up in their conversation. As Jimmy was paying, Ian leaned on the counter next to him. Dangerously close. The large dark eyes seemed to devour him. Did the boy even know what he was doing? Probably not. John clearly wasn’t seeing it. He just continued to ramble on and Ian nodded along for another moment before turning to Jimmy.

“Which didja get?”

“Huh?” he fumbled under the full weight of the older boy's stare.

“The shorts… red or blue?” his eyes locked on Jimmy waiting for an answer.

Holy fuck-all… is that interest?

“Blue.”

“Good.” He nodded approval and then turned his attention back to John. Jimmy forced himself not to look back at Ian again. The flicker of interest the boy had shown could’ve easily just been his own overactive imagination. He had pined for Ian when they’d been in school together – but the boy had never shown any interest in him (or any other boy for that matter).

As they left the store and headed back out into the mall, Jimmy was quiet. Could it possibly be? Could Ian’s behavior have constituted flirting?

He considered the exchange again and honestly thought there was a chance - Ian had a look in his eyes when he’d leaned in to ask about the shorts. It was the same look the checkout girl had given him. The same look Jenny always gave him. Intent.
Beside him, John walked along oblivious, having turned his attention back to the small group of girls he was planning on talking to when they walked back around the other end.

Jimmy thought briefly of texting Cas and telling him about the exchange. His uncle was the only adult he felt comfortable talking to about boys. It wasn’t just that Cas was gay. Dean was gay too – obviously – but Jimmy didn’t feel the connection to talk to him the way he did to Cas. It was easy with Uncle Cas and they texted regularly.

Now, with his uncle in the hospital, he had lost that link. Both men’s phones had been lost in the crash and replacements were pretty far down the priority list for the adults. So, he’d had several occasions where he’d begin to send a text and then cancel it – remembering that Cas wouldn’t get it. That the man was in a hospital bed.

Suddenly, Jimmy was seized by the realization that he could still text his uncle. The man may not get the text for days or even weeks. But whenever he got his new phone… all his texts would be there. And there was something cool about that. At some point – a new phone would come out of its box and be already loaded with all the thoughts Jimmy had wanted to share with Cas while he’d been “out of it.”

Now, as he considered it, he realized it had been silly to hold back the other messages he hadn’t let himself send. So he sent one as they walked the upper level. He was still typing when he and John ambled up to the small group of girls that John was interested in. They were standing in the arcade watching one of their friends play a Zombie game.

Jimmy’s text to Cas read: “Saw Ian today!!!! He’s the one I told you about. The only varsity that talked to the JV guys. He works at PacSun now. He smiled at me and talked to me. I bout died!!! The good way.”

Jimmy smiled to himself. Even the possibility of Ian was an aphrodisiac of the highest order. Jimmy knew his shower tonight would be extra-long. And he’d take one in the morning too. And he’d be seeing Ian’s eyes every time he rubbed one out… for weeks.

Dean didn’t want to return to his room, but he had to. When his nurse arrived to take him back upstairs, he squeezed Cas’ hand and told him he’d be back as soon as he could. Mary and Anna both hugged him as he was wheeled out, but stayed with Cas.

When he got back to his room, he knew he was going to be stuck there for quite a while. So he went ahead and took the pain meds he’d been offered and slept hard.

When he woke up cranky, Dean tried to be cooperative, but he could tell that the nurses were becoming less and less fond of him. He tried to care, but he couldn’t.

Getting to the bathroom was a pain in the ass. Whenever he was out of bed, he wasn’t allowed to put any weight on his left leg. He was given a walker and assisted into the bathroom and then back to the bed. He tried to barter a trip down to Cas’ room in exchange for eating his dinner, but it didn’t work.

Seeing he was stranded here – he accepted another round of pain meds and winked out again. The lack of visitors didn’t bother him – but it was very telling. The family was hovering where they
were needed. Around Cas.

When Dean woke again, it was after dark. The unit was quiet, and it was dark so he couldn’t see the clock on the wall. He hit the call button and asked to be taken to the bathroom.

The nurse who responded was a new one. She informed him she was a PRN nurse, which apparently meant she was like a substitute teacher, only working when someone extra was needed.

She wasn’t rushed like the other nurses were… she stayed and talked to him for a little bit. Maybe she felt bad that he’d had no visitors. He asked her nicely and she agreed to take him down to see Cas. It was in the elevator that she put together who he and Cas were.

“I saw the crash on the news… it looked awful.”

“You saw it?”

“Yeah, some guy was at the beach with his kids and got the whole thing on video.”

“What did it look like?”

“Like you’re lucky to be alive.”

“Did anyone from the other plane make it?”

“No. Everyone on the jet died. The FAA is going to investigate, but the last I heard they were saying that the jet had some kind of problem with its instruments and was off its heading or something.”

“So the jet just accidentally crashed into us?”

“That’s how I understand it. I’m sure you’ll get more information when you’re out of here. The insurance company will start hounding you. Something to look forward to…” she teased gently.

“Do you know anything about Cas?”

“The other passenger in your plane? No. Just that he’s alive and that he’s one of the guys from that Baxter/Milton thing a few years back.”

“He wasn’t lookin’ too good earlier. I’m worried about him.”

“Well, starting tomorrow you’ll probably be able to see him more.”

“Why’s that?” he asked as the doors slid open and she pushed him out.

“According to your chart, they’re gonna try and discharge you tomorrow. I can’t promise you anything,” she said firmly, “but it looks like they have occupational therapy coming down tomorrow to teach you how to walk on crutches and if everything’s going well you might be able to go home.” She turned the corner with him and started down the hall to Cas’ room. “Remember, I didn’t promise you anything.” She said in response to his wide grin.

She rolled him into the room, which was darkened. The red, green and orange lights from the machines and a slice of yellow light visible under the bathroom door were the only source of illumination. There was no movement, but he could see Anna sleeping on the couch.

“Should I just push you up next to him?” she whispered.
“Yes,” he said quietly, “and if you could lower the bed some – I could hold his hand.”

Dean watched the gears click into place as she realized what he and Cas were to each other. She gave him a nod and did as he asked. “I can leave you down here for an hour and come back for you?”

“Leave me for as long as you can, please,” he said to her gratefully as he threaded his fingers into Cas’ and resumed rubbing the man’s knuckles.

When she was gone, he relaxed as much as he could and just watched Cas sleep. He was definitely in a deep stupor. Dean doubted he even knew someone was here with him.

He heard approaching footsteps and turned his head to see Mary poking her head around the curtain. She didn’t see him right away, but when her eyes adjusted to the dark, she smiled at him and came in quietly. He watched her grab a chair and move it quietly over to face him.

When she’d settled into it she whispered, “I went up to say goodnight to you but you were gone. I figured you must’ve hitched a ride down here.”

He nodded.

“I bet I was going up while you were coming down,” she grinned in the dark.

He smiled and nodded again.

“I went up to see you earlier, too, but you were asleep.”

“You should’ve woken me up,” he said softly.

“No, you need your rest.”

“I might get discharged tomorrow.”

“What are your plans if you get to check out?”

“Come down here and fight with Anna over the couch.” He chuckled as he said it and looked over at Cas’ beautiful sister sleeping softly under a small blanket.

“I bet if you were here – she’d go home. At least at night. It’s not easy to be away from your family like she has been.”

“How’s Ben?” Dean asked, thinking of Anna’s adopted son.

“Rowdy.”

“How are you, Mom?”

“I’m tired, but I’m ok. I’m grateful that you two are alive.”

“It doesn’t feel like Cas is out of the woods yet.”

“I don’t think he is. The doctors and nurses don’t say that… but I can feel it.”

“Thanks for not trying to lie to me about it. It wouldn’t have made me feel any better.”

She nodded and they sat quietly together for a while. When he noticed her starting to nod off, he
reached forward and put his hand on her knee.

“Mom, you can go home and get some sleep. I’m okay, really.”

“I won’t argue,” she said with a smirk, “I’m beat.”

“Drive safely,” he told her as she hugged him and left.

In the dark he relaxed again, still holding Cas’ hand, and let his mind wander. The beeping of the machines faded into white noise as his mind skimmed from place to place with no purpose or agenda. He thought of Cas, mostly.

Initially, his thoughts hovered around how Cas had looked in the ICU and how he looked now. Then he found himself experiencing happier memories.

Lulled into a dreamlike state, he envisioned the bright colors of their jungle. He smiled thinking of the time when they’d first come to the property. It had been wild with unknowns and scary at the time… but exhilarating as well.

When he thought of the happiest days of his life – this is where his mind went. Starkly empty beaches – lit only by the moon. The shrieks and cries of animals in the trees at night. Slicing through undergrowth with a machete – side by side with Cas as they explored their Neverland.

Some undefinable time later, he was jarred awake by the safety lock on his wheelchair snapping. He looked around and saw that his nurse was back. She whispered, “I have to take you back up now. I’m coming off in an hour.” Dean nodded to her but then said, “Stop.” He said it louder than he’d meant to, and she froze like a statue.

“What is it?” she whispered.

“Look! He’s squeezing!” said Dean in a voice that landed somewhere between a whisper and a regular voice. It was loud enough to rouse Anna.

Dean could see her stirring awake and sitting up in his peripheral vision, but his eyes were glued to Cas. The first hints of dawn were coloring the sky outside the windows, and he could see his man’s face clearly. He wasn’t awake. His breathing was slow and shallow. But his hand was squeezing Dean’s faintly, fingers no longer lax but wrapped around him.

The nurse whispered, “Is that the first time he’s done that?”

“I don’t know. I’ve been sleeping. I just noticed it now. Is there any way you can leave me? I don’t want to let go - if he’s holding on.”

“I’m sorry… I have to take you back. I’ve left you down here too long as it is.”

“It’s okay, Dean,” said Anna stepping up, “I’ll take over.”

“Thanks,” he said. His voice cracked a little but probably just from having slept all night in a wheelchair.

He gently pulled his sweaty hand away and Anna slid hers into its place flawlessly. Then, as Dean was pulled away, she slid Mary’s chair over to Cas’ bedside and tried to get comfy.
Sam sat behind his heavy desk and looked at the pictures on it. There was the one of himself and Dean as kids, leaning on the Impala. It had been the first picture he’d placed on his desk when he started at Winchester Law. He’d kept it all these years. It was even more special to him now that he’d been in Dean's office a few times and seen that his brother had the same one framed on his desk too.

Sam had moved offices and changed desks several times as he’d advanced his position within the company over the last decade or so. And he’d added pictures to it too. His wedding picture had found its way onto his desk and so had pictures of his boys on their first day of school. In addition, there was a lovely picture of his entire family with Mary, Dean and Cas all squished together along the rail of Dean's yacht, poised against a backdrop of glistening turquoise water.

When his phone rang, it startled him. He hadn’t realized he’d been sitting there, drifting on memories. He forced his mind back to his work and then at 2:00 he headed over to the executive conference room, which had been booked for a party.

As he entered, he was immediately caught up in the festivities. There were drinks and hors-d’oeuvres circulating as well as a giant cake on the table. The men in the room were loud and rowdy and soon broke into singing “For He’s a Jolly Good Fellow” as Norman Spencer stood at the head of the table laughing and flipping them all off.

This was Norman's retirement party. He wouldn’t be returning next week. His office would sit empty for a while out of respect. But soon, someone would be rewarded with it. Sam knew he’d still see the man at board meetings – but the day-to-day operations would have to move on without Mr. Spencer. As Sam moved about the room, shaking hands and making witty remarks, his mind was far away.

He was thinking about how different things would be if his father was still alive. What this place would look like if John Winchester was still the captain of this ship. He’d likely be on the brink of retiring himself. He would probably have spent a lot of time with Sam over the last year or two as he prepped his son to take over his business.

For some reason, Sam's mind began to weave a scenario where Dean hadn’t been fired, either. He pictured himself and his brother working side by side under his father's tutelage. Each would have had their own set of special gifts that John would work to maximize as he redistributed the leadership of his company between his boys. Things would be so different.

Sam and Dean would have continued attending charitable events and company functions together over the years. Dean would’ve eventually settled down with someone – probably Cas. They would’ve lived close enough to stop by each other’s houses when the whim struck them. They’d have been able to cover each other’s asses at work and hit happy hour on their way home a few evenings a week.

If Dean had stayed at Winchester Law and settled in Frisco – he and Cas would’ve had children. Sam was sure of it. With both men working a regular 9 – 5 gig and ignoring their wanderlust and sense of adventure, kids would have been their big adventure (much like it had been for Sam). He and Dean would be able to joke about banging each other’s babysitters but neither would actually do it, because they’d keep each other honest. Sam would have someone to drag him to the titty bars and get him plastered on New Year’s. Jess would’ve had her work cut out for her.

Dean had never really held a grudge regarding his removal from Winchester Law. In fact, his brother was obviously happy in the life he’d made with Cas. It suited him far better than the one at
the law office ever had. Sam knew this was true. But he couldn’t help but feel that his actions in their youth had put Dean on a path that had led his brother away from him… and that Sam's life was lesser for it. He had often wished that he and Dean could be physically closer and that they could spend more time together. But in the end, he had no one to thank but himself for Dean being so far away.

Thinking of his brother had him wanting to get over to see him. With a mind set on leaving, Sam headed over to say his goodbyes to the guest of honor. As he neared, he extended his hand and Norman Spencer gripped it tightly.

“Congratulations, Mr. Spencer.”

“Oh, thank you, Sam. It’s been my pleasure to work with you over the years. You’ve really done your father proud.”

“I wish he were here,” Sam said honestly.

“Me too,” said Spencer quietly. “Me too. He was one of the good ones, your old man.”

“As are you Norman. You’ve helped me over the years… more than you know.”

Mr. Spencer smiled widely at Sam and wrapped his fingers around a cigar. “The place is yours now. You and Brad are the most senior of the executives now, so run it into the ground as you see fit,” he teased.

“Mr. Spencer, you helped my brother too, didn’t you?” asked Sam – still thinking of Dean.

“I’m not sure what you mean?”

“The day we fired my brother… I saw him give you a look. I know what it meant. He trusted you. And he felt indebted to you. He counted on you to set everyone straight, regarding what my father did and didn’t know.”

“Well, Sam, you could say that Dean and I had worked together on an ‘under the table’ project. Your father facilitated it. I’m not at liberty to go into details about it, even now. But if you count secret-keeping as ‘helping,’ then yes. I’ve helped your brother. There’s not a man on this floor who isn’t keeping at least one secret for the others.”

“My old man included?” Sam asked him, “My dad had some secrets?”

“That’s not really for me to say, Sam,” he said quietly, “but most people do. Even the ones you’d never think of as having a skeleton in the closet… dig deep enough into just about anyone and you’ll find something.”

“That’s so discouraging,” said Sam dejectedly.

“Not really,” replied Spencer. “Remember, Sam… as people… we are what we repeatedly do. That means that excellence isn’t an achievement. It’s a pattern. So are goodness, kindness, patience. The more we cultivate our virtues… the less transgressions we’ll have living as skeletons in our closets.” He paused and reached out for Sam – gripping his shoulder tightly, “So, if we are always working to do good, then we are good. Remember that as you make your decisions in work, family and life. Strive to always do good. That way, when you fall short and have to bury a secret, it will be just a very small part of who you really are.”

“Wonderful advice, Mr. Spencer,” said Sam with a smile, “as usual.”
“You’ve got good instincts Sam. Just like your old man. You’ll do fine.”

“Well congratulations again, sir,” he said as he stepped away.

Sam began moving toward the door, just as Susan Robbins was coming through it. She’d secured herself a desk on the executive floor shortly after Sam had. Her television personality had been every bit as charismatic as Sam had hoped when he’d pushed her into that role, and it had been largely responsible for an influx of new clients at a very crucial time.

It was that, combined with her calculating tactics and quick thinking, which had won her the key to the metaphorical executive washroom she’d been gunning for. They’d celebrated together when the announcement was made and he’d helped her win acceptance among the board members who were all men, and somewhat gun-shy of allowing a woman to join their ranks. Once Sam had helped ease the way for her – she’d slid in easily among them. She was sharp and smooth and Sam knew that his father would’ve really liked her if he’d known her. The board members had no choice but to respect her.

“Long time no see,” she smiled as he stepped towards her. She looked good in her expensive suit. It was a far cry from the Jessica Rabbit dress she’d worn the night he met his wife.

“Step out of the courtroom for an hour sometime and we’ll catch up,” he teased her.

“No way! That’s why you pay me the big bucks!” she retorted. “How’s your brother doing?”

“I spoke with my wife earlier, and she says he got discharged today.”

“That’s wonderful!”

“Yeah, he’s got a special brace on his knee… it’s locked into a straight position right now and will start bending more with therapy. I think he’s in a lot of pain from his back too. But it could’ve been so much worse. We have a lot to be thankful for.”

“Absolutely. How is his partner doing?”

“Not as well. He’s stable, or so they tell us, but he doesn’t look good. He was confused and agitated the other day, and it scared the shit out of the twins. The hospital is saying it’s a sodium imbalance and that they’re working on correcting it. Honestly, he’s not awake much. The nurses literally come in and turn him every few hours as if he were a geriatric patient. It’s disturbing. We’re pretty worried about him.”

“I’m sorry to hear it,” she said honestly. “You’ll let me know if there’s anything I can do, right?”

“Of course,” he said, smiling warmly at her, “thank you.” And with that, he nodded a farewell to her, stepping out into the hall and heading back to his office. He had decided to call it an early day. His mind wasn’t focused enough to accomplish anything anyway.

Dean nodded along with the nurse when she went over his discharge instructions. He accepted the little cards she gave him as reminders for his follow-up and therapy appointments. Then, when he was finally ready to leave, he was forced to take a wheelchair ride to the curb of the hospital.
It was laughable. Everyone knew he was going to walk right back in and take the elevator up to Cas’ room. But policy is policy. He had to be taken to the curb.

As soon as the nurse turned away from him, walking the wheelchair back into the hospital, he pushed forward on his crutches and followed her back in. The trip through the hospital on crutches wore him out, but the moment he entered Cas’ room, he felt better. And worse.

It was good to be back with his man. And it was good to know that he’d be staying as long as he wanted this time. But it was hard to see him looking so drained and small. Cas’ condition was clearly worse now than it had been before. Dean looked back and forth between Mary and Anna — waiting for one of them to speak but neither did. They just looked at him as if he were a child whose pony had a broken leg and needed to be put down. It sickened him. But he loved them both dearly so he simply said, “any update?”

“He’s the same,” Mary said quietly. Anna looked down, then, examining her shoes. She seemed smaller too. As Dean looked at her he realized that she’d lost weight. And Anna was small. She didn’t have much to lose. Clearly both women were worried.

He hobbled in and settled into a chair. Mary moved another chair over to brace his leg on. He nodded thanks to her and shuffled himself closer to Cas’ bed so he could take the man’s hand.

“Can you lower the bed, Mom?” he asked, knowing the position would be more comfortable if it were lower.

“Sure, sweetie,” she said as she pressed the buttons. “Would you like a few minutes alone with him?”

“Yeah. Thanks,” he said with a nod. He wasn’t looking directly at his mother, but he could see her in his peripheral vision as she leaned in and pulled Anna to her feet. Both ladies left the room together. Both were clearly exhausted and feeling low.

Dean resumed rhythmically stroking Cas’ knuckles, quiet and searching for something to say.

“Cas, buddy, I’m here,” he croaked out. “I’m here and I’m stayin’.” That was all he could think to say.

The sunlight filtered in through the curtains, the machines hummed and beeped and flashed. Other than that – it was dead silent.

As the clock ticked out minutes, his mind began to wander. He thought of Cas in his suits, sleek and sexy. He thought of his swim trunks and aviator sunglasses… his bare chest sweating under a hot tropical sun. Dean’s mind transported him to the cockpit – where he looked sideways at his man. He looked good in his sunglasses and headset – sitting in the co-pilots seat – beaming with pride as he looked at Dean.

But then, without warning, the image of his sexy, confident man was replaced by the bloody, limp image of Cas when they’d crashed into the ocean… the sickening way that his head had lolled with the bobbing of the plane in the water. Dean had to grit his teeth and force himself to put away the image.

It took several seconds to replace that image with a better one. He remembered Cas on the night they’d met. The man had been wearing an incredibly sexy tux. Dean had noticed his build, the way he’d carried himself… but those eyes were what really hit him hardest. When they’d sat down to smoke a joint together, that was when Cas had set the full power of his eyes on Dean. Dean had
been like a fish on a hook. Once he’d been taken in by those bright eyes, Dean had never really looked away.

Any shred of playboy in Dean had evaporated away once he’d met Cas. There was simply no one else who could hold Dean's attention for even a moment. All he saw was Cas. And now, here they were, decades later and Dean was still captivated.

There was just something about Castiel. The man was so many wonderful things. He was good inside, and he was brave and true and loyal. It was pointless to try and name the man's attributes. He simply had a light inside him. Maybe that’s what made his eyes so beautiful and deep. It had always been there – the brightness of his soul shining out from deep inside and it lit him up.

It didn’t matter that they were older now, greying and wrinkling, scarred and small compared to the younger and healthier versions of themselves. The light still shone bright within the man and refused to go out. It gleamed there still - in his eyes, his smile.

When Cas finally left his world – it would be a gloomier place. Dean hoped he never had to live a day in the cold darkness of a world without Castiel’s light shining.

Please – he thought selfishly – let us go together or let me go first.

A knocking on the door broke his inner lament. He said, “Come in.”

A nurse he didn’t recognize walked in and began puttering around at the sink. She introduced herself as Sarah and said she was here to give Cas his lunch. Dean nodded, and then looked back at Cas. He was still staring at him when the nurse asked if she could move the bed up a little. He nodded agreement and then watched, expecting her to bring Cas into a seated position and wake him for his meal.

Nope. Instead, she left the head of his bed just slightly inclined and pulled up his gown gently. Dean then noticed tubing he hadn’t known was there before. There was tubing disappearing into Cas’ abdomen. He watched the nurse pick up the tube and attach a giant syringe to the tubing and pour water down it – straight into Cas’ belly. Then she proceeded to pour a cup of orange liquid into the syringe as well. There was no plunger on the syringe – the liquid rolled easily into the tube. Then she added a premixed substance next and followed it up with more water before removing the syringe and capping off the line.

She must’ve noticed the look on Dean's face because she said, “These are his medicines and some nutrients. He’ll get the rest from the IV.”

“Why?” Dean whispered, “Why are you feeding him like that? He can eat if you wake him, can’t he?”

“He probably can,” she said quietly, “but he won't. He hasn’t been. That’s why we’re feeding through a tube.”

Dean swallowed hard as he watched the horror show in front of him. No wonder Anna looked so wrung out, if this is what she’d been seeing.

“I know it’s a lot to take in,” she placated him as she hung a bag of milky white liquid on his IV rack and started the pump, “but this is better for him than straight IV feeding. It will keep his GI tract from shutting down. The more we can keep the body performing its natural functions, the better.”

Dean nodded, stunned into silence. As he was watching, the thing that bothered him the most was
Cas. As the nurse manipulated his tubes to feed and medicate him… he didn’t even stir. His hand remained limp inside Dean’s. Cool and clammy and half dead. As Dean watched the nurse finish up, he had to swallow down puke in the back of his throat. Dread swept over him bringing a cold sweat with it.

*I might actually lose him.*

When the nurse had gone, Dean maneuvered his leg over and pulled himself to standing. He pushed the chairs out of his way and used the button to lower the bed down until it was about thigh high on him. He carefully maneuvered around the tubes and cords and gimped his way up into the bed with Cas. It wasn’t easy to get his crippled ass into the bed without jostling Cas, but he did it. When he was tucked up next to the man from shoulder to ankle, he let his arm creep over the man’s chest and cupped the side of his face.

“Cas. Buddy, you can’t go,” he said firmly.

“You just can’t. You have to come back to me. I can see you leaving. You’re checking out… a little more every day. But I think it’s just cause I haven’t been here for you like I should’ve been. If I had known what it was doing to you… I would’ve told ’em all to fuck off and just come. I’m sorry, Cas. I’m so sorry.”

Dean was working hard to hold back tears now. He felt like he was trying to send an urgent message from one submarine to another… Cas was just so far away.

“Cas, we’ve had a good life together, and maybe you're satisfied with it and feeling like you’re ready to let go. But you can’t. You just can’t. We have shit to do man! You’ve got a new company halfway built… the cocoa farmers need you. The staff at the resort need you, too. The natives will kill me if I come back without you! You have to come back there with me, man. And… and… we still have trips to take too! You said I have to go to Europe. You said it should be on my bucket list… and you goddam know I’m not going without you. So you fuckin’ come back to me, ok?”

Silence.

“Okay Cas?” Dean pleaded, “Cas!” he said louder now, “Goddammit! You shake off whatever fuckin’ fever dream you’re in and come back to me right now. I need you man, I can’t go home without you… please, Cas, please! I can’t live without you…”

That’s when Mary and Anna walked into the room. Dean was aware of how pathetic he looked, curled into Cas’ bed, crying and pleading. At least they had the decency to look away.

Anna gathered her things quietly and left as Dean laid there with Cas, silent tears streaming down his cheeks.

When Anna was gone, Dean felt Mary’s steady hand on his arm. He didn’t look at her. Couldn’t.

“Honey,” she said firmly, “you need to get control of yourself. Cas wouldn’t like seeing you like this.”

“Look at him, Mom,” he protested, “Look…”

“I know,” she said as she stroked his arm, “but he’s the sick one. He gets to be weak.”

She cleared her throat and continued, plainly seeing that Dean needed some tough love. “It’s harder for you, because you have to be strong. Strong enough for him and for you and for all of us too. I don’t envy you, son. But you need to put away the tears and be what he needs.”
“What does he need?” asked Dean softly.

“He needs you to be strong,” she said resolutely. “You know him better than any of us. You know what he needs. And it isn’t your tears and begging, is it?”

“No,” he said as her logic began to sink in for him.

“I know it’s not fair, but you’re going to have to get stronger fast. He’s going to need you,” she told him, “And I’m here for you, ok? Whatever you need.”

“Thanks, Mom.”

She didn’t stay. She began gathering her things as she said, “Anna needs some rest. I’ve insisted she go home to her family at least until morning. Now that you are here… she can go home for a while and leave him in your care… have dinner with her husband and son… sleep in her own bed. I am heading out, too, but if you need me I can come back.”

Dean nodded, knowing she was right. About all of it.

“Thanks, Mom. I needed that.”

She smiled at him knowingly, then added, “Your brother and Jess are coming to visit shortly. I’ll see you in the morning.” She hugged him tightly and then left.

Dean dropped his head back on the pillow next to Cas. He leaned in pressed a kiss to the man’s cool temple. He listened to the machines with his eyes closed and tried to imagine being in Cas’ place. Tired and weak. What would he need?

If Cas had given up and was just letting himself die… what would bring him back from the edge?

Sam and Jess dropped the boys off at their friend Phillip’s house for the party. They made the boys promise they would not leave the premises and also promised them in return that if things got out of hand, they could call their parents for a ride – without questions or consequences. Then they said their goodnights and pulled out of the drive.

On the way over to the hospital, they got a call from Mary. She explained that Dean wasn’t coping well and asked them to be gentle with him when they saw him. They both agreed and said they’d call Mary when they left the hospital to let her know how Dean was doing.

They talked on the way up to Cas’ room about things they might be able to do to help Dean, but when they got to the room, Dean didn’t seem so bad.

Sam went first, knocking on the door as he stepped in and moved around the curtain.

“Hey man,” Dean greeted him, “good to see ya.”

“How’s he doin’?” asked Sam as they moved around to Dean’s side of the bed.

Sam watched Dean shrug. He was sitting in a chair next to Cas’ bed with his bad leg in a brace and resting on a nearby chair. There was reggae music playing softly and the curtains were wide open,
letting in the sun.

Dean had Cas’ hand between his hands reverently.

“Anything you need, Dean?” asked Jess as she followed Sam in.

“Ya know, I think dinner. Would you mind runnin’ downstairs for me?”

“Of course,” she said, smiling – clearly happy to have something to do.

Sam watched her go before dragging another chair over and settling down next to Dean. Neither brother spoke for a while. But after a few minutes of quiet, Dean dropped his head onto the side of the bed next to where his and Cas’ hands were joined.

“Sam, can you even believe that there was a time when I wouldn’t hold this hand in public?”

Sam had no answer.

“I can’t believe how stupid I was. Look at me now. I can’t let it go…” he snorted a laugh, “… not even to take a fuckin’ piss.”

“You need to piss?” chuckled Sam.

“Fuck yeah. But I’ll be god-damned if I’m gonna let go of him now,” said Dean, lifting his head to look directly at Sam.

“Why not? It barely takes a full minute to piss,” Sam responded.

“I don’t wanna let go. I don’t think he’s hangin’ on by much. What if he feels me let go and then he lets go?” Dean whispered.

“I got this,” smiled Sam as he threaded his hands into place like Anna had done before, “go ahead and go Dean.” said Sam as he held Cas’ hand.

Dean nodded and then awkwardly gimped over to the bathroom, not bothering to close the door as he dropped trou and pissed – long and loud.

Sam laughed as Dean hiked his pants back up and turned to come back to the bed.

“Oh no you don’t,” scolded Sam. “You get back in there and wash those hands if your gonna hold his.”

“Oh, yeah,” Dean smiled sheepishly at his oversight. “Thanks,” he said when he’d finished washing up and returned to his bedside position.

“What are we listening to?” asked Sam.

“Bob Marley.”

The men sat, Dean holding Cas’ hand, and they talked quietly until Jess came back in with Dean's dinner. Then Sam took over again, holding Cas’ hand while Dean shoveled in pasta and garlic bread. After eating, he used the restroom and brushed his teeth so he’d be able to settle in with Cas for the night.

When he returned to the bed, Jess was plugging a phone charger into the wall.
“Whose phone is this?” asked Sam as he gestured towards the source of the music.

“Sarah, the nurse. Mine sank in the crash, and I wanted to play music for Cas.”

“That was nice of her,” chimed in Jess as she connected the phone to the charger, “Now we won’t be leaving her with a dead battery.”

Dean made an effort to visit with his brother and Jess in a regular voice with happy tones. They talked primarily of trips they’d like to take on vacation in the future as well as talking about some of the highlights of their summers at the resort and holidays here in Frisco.

When his brother and Jess were ready to go, he asked them to please call Roberto and Sunni. He gave the couple their numbers and requested that they be brought up to speed on the situation, as they must be worried by now. He knew the couple would take good care of the resort while he and Cas were gone – they always did.

Dean told Sam to ask if Roberto and Sunni could get them new phones and have them shipped to Mary. Jess took pity on Dean left her own phone for him. He knew eventually the nurse would want her phone back and Dean would need it.

When Sam called Mary from the car on the way home, he was able to reassure her that Dean was doing better.

Dean, as he settled back into the chair next to Cas’ bed, nodded along to the cheery music. At his mother's urging, he’d thought long and hard about what Cas needed… and his mother was right. The man didn’t need his begging or his tears. He needed to hear happy sounds. Something to entice him back. Cas had been the one who taught Dean how important music was in our lives. Now, when Cas needed it most, Dean wouldn’t leave the man to linger in the dark and quiet with only the beep and whir of machines to listen to. Cas loved music and Dean would play it for him.

All through the night, Dean kept the music on for Cas. As he sat with one hand holding Cas’, he used the other hand to sweep through a music service and select songs and albums into a playlist. He filled it with the stuff Cas loved most. He made sure to play their proposal song often, and he never let go of his hand.

Dean didn’t talk often, but when he did, he was careful to speak happy things. He talked of trips they’d planned to take one day, funny stories about the twins and firm reassurances that everything would be fine; that Cas should rest all he needed to because they’d all be here for him when he was ready to go home.
Chapter Notes

This work is being edited by MoniJune

Jimmy and John walked into Phillip's living room, which was stately and empty. They headed up the stairs and down the hall to their friend’s room and upon opening his bedroom door were greeted loudly by several boys who were all sprawled on the bed, bean bags and floor playing the new Call of Duty. Those who weren’t playing were watching and commenting, beers in one hand and phones in the other.

The scent of weed hung in the air and just as the boys were settling in, the doorbell rang.

“Pizza!” hollered a half-dozen hungry boys. But no one moved. Phil began kicking at Pete, who was sitting closest to his feet.

“Go get the door, loser.”

“Fuck off, I’m busy,” he snarked with his eyes locked on the portable gaming system in his hands, “make the J’s do it – they haven’t even sat down yet.”

“You heard the loser,” said Phil to Jimmy, “Door’s for you.”

“Fuck that,” said Jimmy, kicking at Phil, “I’ll get stuck for the fifty bucks of pizza you pigs ordered.”

“Forty,” he laughed, “and you won't pay to drink.”

“Me AND John won't pay to drink,” he countered firmly.

“Yeah, yeah,” he agreed as Jimmy walked in front of the screen extra slowly to annoy him. “Move your fat ass, Jimmy,” he laughed. Hearing this, Jimmy slowed down and swung his ass around in front of the TV, blocking the view and earning shouts from all the players. He laughed as his friends shouted at him to move – everybody’s game going to hell because they couldn’t see around him to shoot.

Jimmy headed back down the stairs and yelled that he was coming when the doorbell rang for the fourth or fifth time.

He retrieved a stack of pizzas from the driver and paid. Including tip it was over $50. “Fuckers,” he mumbled as he carried the pizzas to the kitchen. “Damn,” he said softly as he looked around. There were at least a dozen bottles of hard liquor on the counter, and there was a stack of cases of beer near the fridge.

Not wanting to drink warm beer later, he opened the fridge intending to put it in there, but he found the fridge already crammed full of beer. “Somebody means business,” he mumbled to himself as he pulled one out and cracked it open. He held the rest of the six pack under his arm and grabbed one pizza box with his free hand, heading back up to Phil's room. As he went up, he saw another car
pull in the drive through the tall window over the entry.

He took the stairs two at a time and pushed through the door. He dropped the pizza on the floor at Phil's feet and said, “It was fifty, you fucker. You owe me.”

“Yeah, yeah,” he said without looking away from his game, “Ja bring me a beer?”

“Nope,” he said as he flopped down next to John and passed his twin the rest of the six pack. “The first chicks are here though. You gonna shower? Cause you smell like pits.”

“Fuck you, Winchester, my pits smell awesome.”

“Oh yeah… all the chicks are gonna wanna hit that shit,” laughed John. “The hot ones LOVE the smell of ripe pits and sweaty cock.”

Just then the doorbell rang. Everyone froze for half a second. Only girls would ring the doorbell. Suddenly it was chaos as they all jumped up at once and headed down the stairs. Jimmy followed behind, watching the display of male posturing as the door was opened and a flock of flighty birds fluttered in, circling until they could find a place to roost. Suddenly, the party was on. Bodies crowded into the kitchen, resting on stools and counter tops and leaning on walls.

Jimmy watched his friends as they moved around the girls… showing off for the ones they liked. The boys’ antics were met with sparkling lip-gloss smiles and flicks of hair – girls had their own form of posturing. The shoulders came back and tits pushed outward (no matter how subtle a girl thought she was, it was always obvious).

A girl’s walk changed when she knew she was being watched – this was one of the things Jimmy found most entertaining about girls. That – and the way they looked at everyone EXCEPT the person they wanted most as they preened.

John was in his element. He moved between the girls, passing out shots and recommending different kinds of alcohol for them… laughing as they grimaced when they tried to swallow what he poured for them. Jimmy moved out to the sound system in the pretentious living room area and started up some solid house music. The sun was low in the sky but hadn’t set yet, and already it was a party. He smiled to himself as he thought about his conversation with John last night.

They’d been sharing a bed again. No particular reason this time, just had gotten to talking and John had never gotten up to go to his own room. He’d admitted to Jimmy that he had a thing for Jenny, and that he was hoping, eventually, she’d start talking to him when she got the message that Jimmy wasn’t interested.

“Maybe instead of me cutting my hair… you should grow yours long. Clearly she likes it that way. It’s the only thing that’s different about us.”

“It would give her something to hang onto,” laughed John.

Jimmy had smiled, knowing John didn’t mean most of the crass things he said. He was just one of those guys who had trouble admitting he wanted something – or someone. He didn’t like to be perceived as weak so he’d intentionally say things to make himself sound tough and uncaring. But he really just ended up sounding like a dick most of the time.

“I know you have a thing for Ian, that’s why I told him about the party tomorrow,” said John as he rolled over and softly thumped his twin in the arm.

“How did you know?”
“How could I not? You were panting like a dog in heat and your tongue was hanging out.”

“I didn’t think you had noticed,” Jimmy admitted shyly.

“Yep. Sure did. I don’t think he’s gay. At least, I never did before. But the way he was leaning in on ya when you were paying? I kinda have to wonder ’bout him.”

Jimmy’s heart leapt in his chest at John’s words. He’d been hoping there was something to that. It was thrilling to even imagine that there could someday be something with Ian.

“Thanks for not outing me…” he said quietly.

“Please, fucker. Like I’d do anything to smash your chances.”

“Dude! Watch it!” shouted a shrill female voice. It jerked Jimmy’s mind back to the present. He looked over and saw Christy, a girl in his class, wiping beer off her shirt. Derek had spilled it on her during the boisterous telling of a story and was now falling all over himself to help her clean up and keep her from getting too mad at him. Jimmy looked past their small scene and caught John’s eye… something was happening. He turned, following John’s eye line and saw it. The thing that tipped John’s world upside for a second. Jenny was here. She was just coming through the door with a group of friends and was heading his way.

Jimmy watched John's face fall as he saw his prize move towards his brother. He decided on a spur of the moment that tonight was the night he’d do what he could about this.

John watched Jimmy squirm as Jenny cornered him. How could she not see how uncomfortable he was? How could she not see that his twin wanted her desperately? Turning away from them, John moved back out to the kitchen area and began looking around. The lights in the kitchen were on now, as the daylight was waning. He moved about, talking to chicks and messing with his friends. A rowdy drinking game was forming at the huge table in the adjoining dining room, and now that music was bumping, it was starting to feel like a real party.

John may be a little strung out for Jenny, but he was far from lost on her. He reminded himself that his real mission tonight was to get some ass. Get laid if possible… but a good solid grope and chance at the ever-elusive third base was the next best thing. Bare minimum he planned to unhook a bra tonight.

“Needja out here,” said Phil loudly as he thumped John on the back. John followed without question and found himself enlisted in moving furniture up against the interior wall. The huge oriental rug was rolled up and shoved into a closet and blankets from the guest room were thrown over the couches and chairs. “That should keep us from fucking up anything my folks will notice,” he said loudly over the music. “Fuck! I forgot to lock the rooms upstairs.”

“What, you afraid someone might get laid up there?” teased John. “No one gets to fuck until you do? Is that how this works?”

“No, dumbass,” laughed Phil, “I don’t want to have to clean every fuckin’ room. And I sure as fuck don’t want anyone in my parents’ room. Someone fuckin’ sneezes in there and the two of them will know.”
“Let’s go then,” said John.

They trotted up the stairs together and began systematically locking all the doors on the second floor except Phil’s.

“You realize this means that when I get laid tonight – it’s happening in your bed.”

“Fat chance fucker,” Phil laughed as he clapped John on the shoulder, “You couldn’t get laid if you paid.”

“I gotta better shot than you do, fucker, you could melt paint with that breath!” John brushed past him then, heading back towards the stairs, “You gonna lock the guest room downstairs?”

“Guess I better.” He nodded as he thumped down the stairs with John.

“Dude… looks like your bro’s gonna beat ya to the punch tonight.”

John had to work hard to look nonchalant as he watched from the stairwell as Jimmy took Jenny by the hand and led her to the guest room. It was like a kick in the gut. He reminded himself that there would be lots of girls here tonight… lots of chances to get some. He continued down the stairs behind Phil and moved back into the kitchen to get another drink. But he was a little tender. It had hurt watching his brother go off with his girl.

Jenny was leaning into him as she talked – and taking every opportunity to put hands on him. She brushed something off his sleeve. She put her hand on his chest when she laughed. Jimmy had already decided that tonight was the night he’d set her straight. Now seemed as good a time as any. He made a split-second decision that he knew could end up being a huge mistake or a huge relief… either way at least it would be done.

Jimmy looked around the room tentatively – the furniture had been moved aside and the lights had been turned down. Some were dancing in the cleared area and others were leaning on the wall watching. There were people perched haphazardly on the furniture, which had been piled up against one wall. The music was thumping and it was noisy. The party had swelled quickly and a near constant flow of new people were coming in the door.

He reached out and put his hand on her for the first time. Ever. He took her hand and said, “Can we go somewhere quiet to talk?”

Her eyes lit up and she smiled eagerly, so he tugged her behind him, cutting across the makeshift dance floor and heading for the guestroom that was just off the living room. He turned on the lights and closed the door behind them, gesturing for her to have a seat on the bed.

When he approached her and sat down, she immediately moved closer. He took both her hands in his, just to keep them from roaming on him. He looked into her eyes and tried to determine how drunk she was. Not very, he thought.

“Jenny, there’s something I need to tell you.”

She nodded and smiled at him – as if she could imagine no scenario where those words led to
something she didn’t want to hear.

“Jenny, I have a secret. I’ve never told anyone. But I’m going to tell you.” He took a deep breath and released it before continuing. He summoned up his courage… knowing that depending on her reaction he may be coming out of the closet tonight.

“Jenny, I’m gay.” There. He’d said it. Now, he held his breath and waited to see what would happen next. He hadn’t even told his parents yet. This could be a huge mistake. Especially if she ran from the room and told everyone at the party. He didn’t like to consider that some of his friends may not want to hang with him anymore once they knew. But it was a bitter possibility that he couldn’t ignore. He watched her face carefully as she digested the news he’d just given her.

“You’re gay? You don’t like girls? At all?”

“No. I’m sorry. I like you Jenny, I do. Just not the way that you want me to.”

“That figures,” she said dejectedly.

“It does?”

“Yep. You’re the nice one. I like the way you talk and the things you say. You’re different from the other guys… that’s why I like you so much. I keep hearing my mom say that all the good ones are either gay or married. So… it figures.”

Jimmy had to smile at her sentiment. On some level he was different, and she’d picked up on it. It just didn’t mean what she thought it meant.

“So, you like guys?”

“Yes.”

“Anyone specific?”

“Not really. You’re right, most of them aren’t very nice.”

She laughed fully at that and then leaned back on the headboard. “I really thought I was going to have my first kiss tonight,” she said, obviously disappointed.

“I haven’t had mine, either,” he told her honestly, “but I think about it a lot.”

“Me too. Who do you think of it with?”

“There’s been a couple. But right now it’s Ian Moretti.”

“Um… yeah. I thought of him some, too.” She smiled meekly and he returned it. It was the first time he’d smiled at her genuinely – not to be polite.

“Hot,” he said coolly.

“Yep,” she agreed. “Is this a secret?”

“Well, I’d prefer you not out me tonight in front of everyone. But I think I’m done hiding it.” He took a deep breath and then explained, “I really hate the idea of having to go around and tell everyone and then hear what they have to say about it. I think I’d rather just let them see my boyfriend and figure it out.” He laughed, “But how will I EVER get a boyfriend if no one knows I’m gay?”
Now they were both laughing loudly. “Tell you what, Jimmy,” she said as she slid towards him on the bed, “I’ll keep this secret for you, if you promise we’ll stay friends.”

“Deal,” he said firmly.

She got up to leave, and he reached out for her hand, pulling her back.

“Jenny, is it too soon to ask my friend for a favor?”

“Yes,” she said decisively, “but go ahead anyway.”

“Well, my brother kinda has a thing for you. Can you maybe just talk to him or dance with him tonight… anything?”

“You don’t mean, John.”

“I’ve only got one brother.”

“He’s such a douche! He can’t possibly like me. He’s a total ass to me all the time!”

“That’s just how he is because he’s pissed that you like me and not him. He’s really one of the nice guys. He just hides it REALLY FUCKING WELL,” laughed Jimmy.

Jenny laughed with him and gave him a mischievous grin, “You think I might still get my first kiss tonight?” she asked him boldly.

“Without a doubt,” he said confidently, thinking of John.

Dean was awake as the nurse came and went every few hours to check on Cas and all his equipment. He faded in and out for a while, head growing heavy and rolling to one side or the other. Each time it happened, he’d startle awake and look over at Cas. The man was still silent and sleeping, and Dean continued to hold his hand. But eventually, he had to succumb to sleep.

He set the playlist on random and then pressed his lips softly to the back of Cas’ hand. It was just a kiss, but it conveyed all the love in his heart, and he hoped that Cas could feel it – wherever his mind happened to be. Dean yawned and laid his head down on the mattress next to their joined hands and slept.

Jimmy returned to the party and made for the kitchen. His new mission was simply to get hammered. John watched Jimmy hit the bottle and begin pouring shots for those around him and stepped up to take one. The boys clinked their shot glasses together and Jimmy gave John a nod to indicate he’d done it. He had no idea if John understood fully, but clearly he’d been underestimating what John noticed. So this time, he gave his twin the benefit of the doubt.
John downed his shot and thumped his brother on the shoulder as he walked by. His sights were set on Jenny, who was standing with her friends and watching Jimmy.

John decided to work another angle – jealousy. He moved over towards her group intending to ask one of her friends to dance. But as he got closer, she was looking at him. Directly at him. She was so earnest that he couldn’t walk past her. He just couldn’t. So he leaned in and asked her to dance, and when he did, she didn’t hesitate.

They moved out onto the floor and started dancing, but the song was fast and John was far more loaded than he’d thought. Finding and keeping a rhythm was difficult. Derek, who was dancing nearby, started giving him shit about it. He laughed it off and pulled Jenny in closer – chock full of liquid courage. “I was really hoping we’d have a slow dance,” he said into her ear.

She nodded and moved in closer to him, “let’s have a slow one then.” She slid her arms around his neck and began to sway gently from side to side. He put his hands around her waist and followed her lead. As he leaned into her, the smell of her neck almost made him cum in his pants. His breath hitched, and he had to work to control little Johnny. Her breath was on his ear and it sent shivers down his spine. He smiled as he leaned in closer and rubbed his hands up and down her back. When she didn’t pull away, he knew he was in.

“Wanna go somewhere quiet to talk?” he asked her.

She almost rolled her eyes at having heard that same line twice in the same night. From twins. But she kept herself silent and nodded for him. When she met his eyes, she saw what she’d never seen in Jimmy’s. He wanted her.

This is more like it – she thought as he led her from the dance floor and up the stairs to Phillip’s room.

When they entered, she sat down on a beanbag on the floor, it seemed less slutty than sitting down on the actual bed. She didn’t want to give the impression that things were going to go that far. John settled into the beanbag next to hers and asked if she wanted to play a game.

They ended up playing Dead Rising. They laughed together as they mowed over zombies and even talked a little. Someone barged in on them once – wanting to use the bedroom to make out. John chased them off and locked the door to secure their privacy.

When he sat back down, he didn’t pick up a controller. He leaned over and braced his arm on her beanbag, carefully lowering his mouth to hers. With each inch he moved and she didn’t pull away, he got more and more excited. When their lips met, there was a spark. And they both felt it. John could tell because she startled a little bit. As if she’d been surprised by something – even though his approach had been slow and deliberate.

She opened her lips for him and he pushed in his tongue – feeling her wetness and heat – tasting a unique combination of cherry chapstick and cinnamon schnapps. Without realizing he’d done it, he rolled towards her. It was awkward as he fumbled off of his beanbag and onto hers. But she spread her legs so he could fit between them and it was the single most erotic thing that had ever happened to him.

He was hard as nails in the blink of an eye. Her skin was soft, and she hummed a little into the kiss. The sound went straight to his groin. He was overrun with desire for her. He didn’t dare break the kiss and risk breaking the spell.

He concentrated hard on finding his hands. When he had, he began sliding the left one up her thigh
until he found the hem of her shirt. He slid his hand up inside it and prayed for her not to stop him... that she’d let him keep going. Please, please, please his mind chanted as his hand worked steadily higher.

He felt her arms moving and thought that her hand was coming up to stop his hand and pull it back out of her shirt. But no. She wrapped her arms around his neck and hung on tight as his hand continued up the bare skin of her side and felt the smooth silk of her bra. As his fingers skimmed over it, he felt his dick twitch in his pants and he had to take a breath. He broke their kiss for the first time, breathing heavily on her neck before finally dropping his lips there and tasting the skin that he’d be dreaming about for weeks.

Because of the nature of beanbag chairs, he would not be able to work his hand behind her back to undo her bra strap. So he moved his hand forward instead, fingertips riding along the satin around the curve of her body and onto the softness of a breast. He felt it give a little under his hand and he squeezed it gently.

Jenny breathed in his ear, it was almost a moan. He rolled his palm over the silk, which felt amazing and inspired pictures to pop up behind his eyelids. He was enthralled. He felt her moving under him and again remembered the feeling of her spreading her legs for him. It sent a new wave of shivers up his spine. But the magic was over too soon. She reached up and put her hand over his signaling him to stop. He wanted to keep going so badly, but he knew that pushing at this point was futile. He leaned back and looked at her face.

She was beautiful – blushing with soft eyes and smeared lipstick. He wanted to have at her again. But he did what he knew was best and retreated to his own beanbag. As they each settled in again, he picked up his remote and un-paused the game. She joined him and soon they were fist bumping as their zombie kill count hit ten thousand. This was ok, too. He glanced at her out of the corner of his eye and she caught the movement – met his glance. They smiled. John’s dick had taken a long time to settle back down, but his body was still bed warm from laying with her… and the promise of meeting those lips again was his prize.

When the morning nurse came in to do Cas’ feeding, Dean pulled himself back to a sitting position and blinked the crusties out of his eyes.

“The Beatles?” she asked him as she set to work. Dean noticed it was Gwen, the nurse who didn’t like to talk about patients while they slept.

“Yes. One of his favorites. He’s got all their stuff on vinyl.”

“Is he a collector?” she asked as she began filling his tube with water.

“I think so, but he says not. He doesn’t like to be called a collector anyway.”

“I love the Beatles. And the Stones,” she volunteered, “and the Doors.”

“You’ve got good taste,” he told her as he shifted in his seat. He leaned forward while they chatted and took his hand from Cas’ only to replace it with the other. He wiped his sweaty palm on his jeans. As he woke up more he began to realize he had to pee. And he was hungry. And stiff. And his body was aching from being in the same position too long.
When the nurse had finished her feeding, he asked her to take Cas’ hand for a few minutes while he used the restroom. She agreed warmly and took over his position. He stood and stretched and then headed for the adjoining bathroom. When he’d finished and washed up he came out feeling much better. He settled back into the chair and took his lover’s hand back from the nurse.

“Thank you,” he said to her softly.

“He’s better,” she said bluntly.

Dean swiveled his head to look at her. “He’s better,” she repeated. “Look at his color. Yesterday he was ashen, today he’s got color in his cheeks. His skin is warmer and not so moist.”

“I’ll be damned. You're right,” he smiled to her.

He watched her buzz around the room and then on the way out she asked if he’d like breakfast.

“Can you do that?”

“I can order it for him. When he doesn’t eat it you can. And maybe smelling it will be good for him… stimulate his appetite.”

“Thanks, Gwen.”

“You bet,” she said as she left.

Dean leaned back, comfy again, and began humming along to the Beatles. He felt so much better that he couldn’t hold back. He began singing along. Singing to Cas.

“Yeah, I’ll tell you something – I think you’ll understand
Then I’ll say that something – I wanna hold your hand
I wanna hold your hand, I wanna hold your hand!
Oh please say to me, you’ll let me be your man
And please say to me, you’ll let me hold your hand!
I wanna hold your hand…..”

Dean was stunned to be joined in singing. By a beautiful female voice. He floundered for a minute as he turned awkwardly in his chair to see who had busted him in this moment of cheesiness.

It was Anna. She was singing along with the song too, and she smiled at him so warmly that he couldn’t help but join her…

“And when I touch you I feel happy inside,
It’s such a feeling that my love, I can’t hide,
I can’t hide, I can’t hide –
Yeah you got that something I think you’ll understand
When I say that something, I wanna hold your hand!”
They finished the song together with Anna standing at Dean's side and looking at Cas. When it was finished, she leaned in and hugged Dean fiercely.

“I forgot how good you are for him. Look at him. He looks so much better already.”

“Must be my sexy singing voice,” he laughed softly.

“Have they drawn any blood today?”

“I don’t think so,” said Dean, “but I really wasn’t watching for that. They may have done it, and I didn’t notice.”

“I can’t wait for Mary to get here… he looks so good. This is the best I’ve seen him since ICU.”

Dean didn’t think he looked that much better. But his expectations were higher. He wanted Cas to sit up and talk to him. But now that his attention had been drawn to it… the man did look a little better. A little more *alive* than he had yesterday.

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When morning sunlight began to hit Jimmy’s face, he tried to roll over and pull up covers. That’s when he remembered he wasn’t in his bed. He was half on and half off of a couch in Phil’s living room. As he began to really wake, he immediately longed for the sweet relief of sleep. His head was pounding, his neck was stiff and sore – as was his body. He wanted to get more comfortable, but he was sharing a sofa with Derek and the boy had not only wound himself up into the only blanket, but he had also used his superior body weight to take over far more than his fair share of the couch. That’s why Jimmy was hanging halfway off of it.

He rolled back towards the back of the couch – throwing his leg over Derek’s comatose body rather than trying to move him. Now he was a bit more comfortable, but he had to get up. The movement had awakened his bladder, and he suddenly felt like he’d burst if he couldn’t take a piss. He rearranged his limbs again, hoisting himself up into a seated position and preparing to stand.

He looked around and saw the scattered bodies of his friends here and there… all passed out in the early morning light. The house was quiet but messy. Red plastic cups were everywhere mixed in with other debris.

As Jimmy’s mind came back online, he began remembering bits and pieces from last night. Ian. Ian had been here. He smiled just thinking of it.

Then, as he rose to his feet, his stomach revolted against him. He slapped a hand over his mouth tightly and ran for the bathroom – hoping he’d make it.

He didn’t. He spewed vomit on the floor of the bathroom as he crashed through the door and left a trail to the toilet where he puked forcefully. He gagged, trying to catch a breath between heaves, but it was useless. His body wanted rid of everything he’d put into it in the last twelve hours and there was no stopping it.

Eventually, he hit the bottom and all that was left were a few dry heaves as his stomach caught up
to the fact that there was nothing left down there. He rested his head against the rim and tried not to think about the fact that this was where EVERYONE ELSE put their ass.

Slowly, his breathing calmed and he became aware of the foul taste in his mouth. He staggered over to the sink and ran warm water. He rinsed his mouth with it and then searched the medicine cabinet for mouthwash. Grateful to find some, he swished with that too. Then he took several aspirin from a shelf and downed it with warm water, crossing his fingers that it would stay down.

As he wiped his face with a warm, wet cloth he smiled. He was so miserable now; but he’d had the time of his life last night. He’d gotten hammered with his friends and his brother. It was fun. He’d danced with several girls – including Jenny. He’d had far more fun with her now that she knew his secret, and he found her to be pleasant company.

At some point, he’d found himself dragged down to the kitchen floor for a game of spin the bottle. He’d been too drunk to find a slick way to get out of it… but he REALLY hadn’t wanted to play. He understood the game for what it was – but he hadn’t had his first kiss yet (unlike most of his friends) and he wanted to have it with a person of his choosing. No way was he going to admit that to his friends, so he’d found himself with no way out of the game and settled in to see who he was going to end up kissing. Jenny had been his saving grace.

“I’m out,” she said as she’d stood. Simple as that. She walked across the circle, stepping over the empty wine bottle, and reached for Jimmy’s hand, “Come dance with me?” she asked boldly.

“Sure,” he said pulling himself to his feet and leading her out of the kitchen. He loved how she was now. He’d never known the pushy/confident side of her to be a desirable trait because he’d been trying to escape it. But now that she knew about him and had pledged her friendship – she was a stunningly steadfast ally already. One look at him and she’d known he needed an out. And she’d given him one.

“Thanks,” he said as he pulled her out among those who were dancing in the living room.

“No big,” she replied smiling as she put her arms around him and swayed slowly with the song. “Is this ok?” she asked, wondering about having her arms around his neck.

“Sure,” he smiled at her warmly.

“It happened, ya know,” she told him with a giggle.

“What happened?”

“My first kiss,” she grinned.

“Was it like you hoped it would be?” he asked her, genuinely wanting to know.

“Yes. And more,” she replied with a soft smile.

“My brother?”

“Yep. You were right about him.”

“What? That he’s nice?”

“Mhmm”

“Well, don’t tell anyone – he’d hate if anybody knew.”
As they were swaying there and talking, he saw the most amazing thing happen over her shoulder. A group of prep school guys walked in – Ian among them. He looked amazing, and his eyes scanned the room as if he were an A-list celebrity checking out the crowd.

Jimmy’s heart had skipped a beat and the rhythm of it stayed erratic for quite a while as he watched the new group move into the room and be greeted like movie stars by the “kids” at this party. For them, having the older prep school guys stop by their party elevated their status and marked this party (which had already been quite good) as the party of the year.

Jimmy continued to sway with Jenny, leaning in to whisper that Ian and his friends had just come in.

“Is he here for you?” she asked him – knowing there must be a reason why guys who had their licenses and could drive anywhere would stop by a party full of eighth-graders.

“Technically, I think he’s here for John,” he answered her. Then when she looked puzzled he added, “We saw him in PacSun the other day, and John told him about this party.”

“What do you want to do?”

“Keep dancing if that’s ok with you?”

“Yeah,” she said following his gaze as the crowd parted for the older boys who were headed for the kitchen.

“Shit,” cursed Jimmy when Ian caught him looking.

“What?”

“Ugh, he caught me staring,” said Jimmy, averting his eyes and trying to play it cool.

“So?” she challenged, “How else will he ever know you’re interested if you don’t let him see you staring?”

“I don’t want him to know I’m interested! What if he doesn’t want me? I’ve never even seen him with a guy. For all I know… he’ll throw a punch if he finds out I like him.”

“Or perhaps not,” she laughed. “Don’t look now, but he’s coming over here.”

“He is?” squeaked Jimmy. “Really?”

“Jesus! Winchester, be cool!” she chastised him. And she was right. Oh how quickly he’d become one of the girls.

Get your shit together! He told himself firmly.

“Hey Jenny, Jimmy,” said Ian as he stepped up to where they were dancing, “Ya seen John? He’s the one that thought I should stop by.”

Jimmy turned to face him, keeping one arm on Jenny and said, “He went down the block with Derek and Phil to tee-pee a house. He’ll be back.”

“Well,” said Ian teasingly as he glanced at Jenny and then back to Jimmy, “you can at least get me a drink while I wait for him, can’tcha?”

“I can,” he said, trying hard to play it cool. Ian wasn’t making it easy. He stood just a little too
close for Jimmy to feel calm.

He stepped forward, pulling Jenny with him by the hand, not wanting to ditch his friend on the dance floor. As he headed for the kitchen, he noticed that the rest of Ian’s crowd had already made their way to the kitchen ahead of them.

“What do you like?” he asked when they’d arrived and were looking over the half empty bottles.

“What have you been having?” Ian asked him.

“Root beer barrels,” Jimmy smiled now, loving how Jenny just stepped away smoothly and left them.

“I’ll try one,” said Ian, leaning back on the counter and looking like a greek god.

Jimmy moved about, pouring a beer into a red cup and adding a shot of root beer schnapps. He tasted it, just to be sure it was good and then handed the cup to Ian. He stared for a moment before turning to make himself one too. The stare was long enough to see Ian turn the cup so he could drink from the same place that Jimmy had.

*That’s it. I’ve just died* - thought Jimmy as he tried to keep his hands from shaking in excitement while he poured one for himself.

“It’s good,” Ian told him with a nod. “Surprised you’re not wearing the new shorts.”

Jimmy nodded, not sure what to say.

“Those are nice, though,” he commented as his eyes tracked down Jimmy’s body and back up again.

No way am I misunderstanding this – thought Jimmy. He’d played straight for a long time. Straight guys didn’t talk like this. *He’s checking me out!*

“I can’t stay long,” he said. “My friends want to roll on soon.”

Jimmy nodded, not sure what to say.

“No way am I misunderstanding this” – thought Jimmy. He’d played straight for a long time. Straight guys didn’t talk like this. *He’s checking me out!*

“Can’t stay long,” he said. “My friends want to roll on soon.”

Jimmy nodded. Unable to come up with anything witty to say, he settled for, “We could go down the street and find John if you wanted to see him before you go.”

“He’s not the one I really came to see,” said Ian boldly.

Jimmy smiled, unable to contain it.

“You wanna dance?” Ian asked him without pretense.

Just like that. Simple. Yes. Jimmy wanted to dance. He wanted to do whatever Ian would suggest. Run with bulls? Yes. If Ian asked, the answer would be yes.

But was it that simple? What was going to happen? They’d just walk out on the dancefloor and no one would stare? No one would call them out? Where did he get the confidence?

“Um…” Jimmy stammered, “I do. But…”

“But you’re not out?” he asked quietly as he stepped a little closer.

Jimmy shook his head and took another drink, unsure where to put his eyes.
“It’s okay,” he said reassuringly. “It took me a while, too. My friends were all cool with it. It’s been easier than I thought. But I don’t know that it’ll be that way for you, too. Wanna just come with us? That way your friends won’t know.”

Jimmy’s heart was hammering so hard he was afraid that Ian could see it through his clothes. He knew he’d promised his parents he wouldn’t leave. He couldn’t leave with Ian. But he’d never wanted anything more in his life.

If his mom and dad found out that he’d left this house… he’d be grounded the rest of the summer. But to ride away with Ian and his friends? So. Fucking. Tempting.

Then, in the background, his eyes caught sight of Jenny. She was standing with her friends and watching him without being too obvious. He remembered telling her that he wished he could just be seen as gay without having to tell everyone.

Now here’s your chance – he thought – grow a pair and just fucking do it!

“Fuck it. Let’s dance,” he said. Ian set down his cup and turned towards the living room. Jimmy followed, terrified and elated at the same time. He walked behind, letting his eyes take in Ian’s back and arms and ass. Magnificent.

Ian didn’t stop where the others were dancing. He walked to the corner where a group was clustered and acting as DJ for the room. “Can I getta play?” he asked.

That’s all it took. The song playing was ended and “Take Me to Church” played in its place. Jimmy, still following, was lost to the world.

He was aware that a room full of his peers were watching him. Fear permeated his joy as Ian turned to him and leaned in, wrapping arms around Jimmy in a much more confident and assertive way than he’d done himself with Jenny. With anyone. Ever.

Ian wasn’t subtle. He left nothing to question – no one watching would wonder. They would know. Jimmy had been claimed. He looked up into dark eyes and found himself tucked tightly against the older boy. Their bodies were pressed together, and Jimmy had never wanted anyone more. He worked hard to control his breathing.

The room was too quiet, but he didn’t look away from Ian to see how this behavior was being received.

Ian tipped his head forward, bringing his lips to Jimmy’s ear, “How are you feeling?”

“Tough one to answer,” he answered honestly.

“I think you’re out,” Ian said just as honestly. “I hope you end up being glad.”

“I don’t know what it’s going to be like now… but for what it’s worth, I’m glad it was you.”

And with that, Ian kissed him. Right there. In front of everyone. His first. He’d remember this forever. He was swallowed up with that kiss. He heard nothing, saw nothing, felt nothing but Ian. It was over too soon. Their eyes met for a moment as Ian pulled back and smiled at him.

“I think you’ll be ok,” he said with a laugh. It was then that Jimmy’s senses came back online. His ears picked up clapping. Applause. He looked around at the room – his friends were smiling and clapping. The girls first and then the guys. Everyone had seen. No one looked pissed. Around them the applause swelled and Jimmy felt a smile spread across his face as he looked back at Ian.
Jimmy found himself smiling at the memory even now, with his body aching and throat burning and his head ready to split in two – he still smiled and his heart pounded as his mind relived it. He pulled his phone out of his pocket and sent a text to Uncle Cas. “It happened. I’ve been kissed!”
Dean and Anna talked for a while as they watched Cas sleeping. The sun was streaming in the window now and the music changed several times while they visited.

She told him she’d been grateful for a night at home with her family. Ben had been acting out lately and she knew it was because of all the time she was spending away from him. She told Dean about things he’d never thought to ask of. Like, how much Ben liked his school and what they had planned for the rest of summer break.

“When are you going to bring him to the resort?” Dean asked her.

“I think when you two are back to normal, we may visit. Michael has been so stressed at work lately and now with me gone so much… we’re both burning the candle at both ends. A little vacation would do us both good.”

“That’s great. We’d love to have you guys. But I meant to leave him there… like Sam leaves the twins.”

“Oh, I don’t know,” she stammered, “do you guys even want to do that?”

“Sure! Why wouldn’t we?”

She smiled, considering. Dean continued, “Now that the twins are older… there’s none of the cute stuff that little kids do. Like, I hated it at the time, but now I miss how little Johnny used to pick up those little green lizards from everywhere and stuff them in his pockets. The frickin place was crawling with them. We found them for weeks after he left!” Dean laughed as he remembered the boys’ antics when they’d been between preschool and kindergarten age.

“Oh I’m sure Ben would find things to entertain you, if that’s the standard,” laughed Anna back at him.

“Yeah, these days it’s more like a game of trying to keep the boys from pissing off the staff. I thought Sunni was gonna kill them last summer. They snuck into her kitchen and swiped a bottle of rum. Then they went night swimming without permission… schnockered! The concierge found them when he brought some VIPs for a late night swim. It was a trip!”

“What was your favorite age?” asked Anna warmly.

“I think probably third grade through sixth grade. They went through this phase where they were pranking each other all the damn time… just like me and Sam used to do. It was awesome,” he grinned.

“I bet that was fun to be part of.”
“It was. There may have some collateral damage, but it was all part of the fun.”

“Collateral damage?” Anna inquired.

“Yeah. Me and Cas got caught in the crossfire sometimes. Like, there was one morning when Jimmy had covered the toilet with Cling wrap and then set the lid down. I like to think that John was the target. But who knows, right? Anyway, I was the first up to piss that morning. I pulled that seat up and pissed… in good faith that there wasn’t an invisible force field to deflect piss back at me.”

“Bet you check it now, don’t ya?” she teased.

“Every time. Even when the boys aren’t’ there,” he laughed with her.

“There was that time…” Cas’ weak voice cut between them and added, “… that time when John rubber-banded the nozzle on the sink. As soon as I turned on the faucet I got sprayed.”

Dean and Anna glanced at each other and then gaped at Cas. His head was turned towards them, and he was smiling as he contributed to their conversation. His voice was strained and almost didn’t carry over the music, but he was awake and alert and talking. Dean’s heart leapt and wept simultaneously.

He grinned ear-to-ear as he thumbed into Jess’ phone to turn down the music. Then he hobbled to his feet and leaned over the bed to kiss his man.

Cas responded immediately. His mouth was dry and sticky but Dean didn’t care. He kissed with reckless abandon until Cas was the one to pull away. They smiled at each other and Dean said, “I’ve missed you, Angel.”

Cas smiled back at him and asked for water. Anna jumped up to get it and Dean settled back in, holding his hand.

“How’s the leg?” croaked Cas.

“It’s stuck like this,” he laughed. “They say it’ll take weeks of PT for me to be able to bend it all the way.”

“I guess you won’t be on your knees for a while,” joked Cas.

“Guess that brain bleed didn’t affect your dirty mind,” he tossed back.

Anna stepped up with water and Dean backed away so she could give it to her brother. He worked to pull his head up and she told him to relax, using the bed controls to raise him up to sitting.

“That better?” she asked.

“Much,” he said, taking the water from her and gulping.

“Sip it,” she said.

“I’m not Ben. You can’t tell me what to do,” he responded jokingly. Then he put his face back in the cup and drank the rest.

“Can I have more?”

“Of course,” she smiled and bounded off to go get it.
Dean took advantage of her absence to lean in for another kiss. Dean had never felt more complete or alive than he did in this moment.

As he pulled away, he looked at Cas again. The man was still smallish, still wilted. But his eyes were bright and Dean felt more reassured with each passing moment.

Anna must’ve alerted the staff while she was getting her brother’s second glass of water, because a nurse that he didn’t know followed her into the room when she returned.

“Good morning, Mr. Milton. I’m glad you’re awake. Is there anything you need?”

“No, thank you. I was thirsty, but it looks like I’m set,” he said as he accepted a large hospital mug of ice water from Anna.

“Are you in any pain?”

“Not really,” he said, “my chest feels tight and my body is stiff and a little sore – it’s nothing that some Tylenol won’t cure.”

“Can you rate your pain for me on a scale of 1 to 10?”

“Two,” he answered her.

“Alright then. I’d like to do an assessment on you if that’s alright?”

“Sure,” agreed Cas as he sipped on his water.

Dean watched the nurse move about, taking vitals and asking him to roll from side to side as she checked over his skin and bent his knees and ankles.

“Can u push back against me?” she asked as she pressed on the pads of his feet.

“Good. Any pain?” she asked.

“No.”

“Can you pull back against me?” she prompted as she moved her hands to the tops of his feet.

“Nice. Does that hurt?”

“No.”

“Good.”

She moved up towards his head and extended her hand, “Can you grip my fingers?”

“Good,” she smiled. “Is it ok to pull up your gown a bit?”

“Sure.”

Dean was just thinking that the nurse did a wonderful job of covering Cas as she went so that he wasn’t exposed with his sister in the room. That’s when he heard distress in Cas’ voice.

“What is that?”

“It’s a g-tube,” she answered. “We’ve been feeding and medicating you through it.”
Cas looked dazed, “I don’t remember getting it. I certainly don’t remember using it.”

“You’ve been pretty out of it buddy,” Dean injected.

“Jesus,” Said Cas flatly.

The nurse inspected the tube and changed the gauze around it before lowering his gown again.

She spent a long time with Cas, and then moved over to the computer on her cart and spent quite a while typing up all her findings. As she was working on that, the breakfast Dean had ordered was delivered.

Dean watched Cas smell the food.

“Hungry?” he asked.

“A little,” said Cas as he wiggled in the bed to get comfy again. The tray of food was laid on his bedside table and the table was then pushed into his lap.

Dean watched Cas chug the orange juice and shovel in a few bites of eggs. Dean smiled. If Cas was eating… then he wouldn’t need that tube much longer.

Anna was looking at her phone when the nurse addressed the room. “I’m going to cut down the oxygen a bit and see how it goes. Feel free to call me if you need anything.” Then she looked directly at Cas, “I’ll be back in a few minutes with that Tylenol you asked for. Again, it’s nice to see you up, Mr. Milton.” With that, she turned and left, pushing the cart out with her.

Dean turned to Anna, “Did you get breakfast?”

“Yep. But you didn’t, did you?”

“Nope. I’ll have Mom grab me something when she comes,” he said as he slid his finger across the screen of Jess’ phone and sent Mary a text.

“I love this song, Dean, will you turn it up a little?” asked Cas.

“Sure, Cas.” Dean thumbed up the volume – the playlist had circled back around and was playing Bob Marley again. As Dean turned up the volume, soft steel drums and the warm lyrics of “Is This Love” filled the room. Dean found himself nodding along as he watched Cas pick at his food and push his tray away.

“Cas, man,” said Dean as he pushed the tray back in towards him, “you remember how I didn’t really feel like eating after my surgery and you made me anyway?”

Cas raised his chin and looked at Dean from under one sharply arched eyebrow.

“Payback’s a bitch ain’t it?” laughed Dean.

Cas scowled as he speared a lukewarm, sub-quality sausage with this fork and lifted it to his lips. Dean watched his man choke down the food and when he’d eaten at least half of everything, Dean let him off the hook for the rest.

Once he’d eaten, Cas became tired quickly. Dean didn’t want him to go back to sleep, irrationally worried that it would be like before and Cas wouldn’t wake again. But he held Cas’ hand anyway as his eyes fluttered and then slid shut. He stroked the man's knuckles and cherished the way his man's fingers wrapped around his.
When the nurse returned with Tylenol, Cas was out. The nurse woke him for it, and he did take the pills. While he was awake, she told him that the doctor would be in to see him shortly. He nodded and then stayed awake until the doctor appeared.

Dean stayed, lingering in the background, wanting to hear anything and everything the doctor said. Anna seemed to feel the same. He draped his arm around her shoulders as they sat on the bed/couch together, and she snuggled into him a little.

For the most part, the doctor's comments were encouraging. The labs were showing improvement and Cas’ demeanor was clearly a pleasant surprise for the doc. Dean nodded when the man turned to leave and tipped his head towards him and Anna.

Cas’ eyes were heavy, and Dean gave him a peck on the cheek. He turned the music down but left it playing. When Mary came, he hugged her warmly and thanked her for being there for him and Cas. He ate the food she’d brought him and then the three of them settled in to play cards while they waited for Cas to wake up again.

“Will Sam and Jess be coming by today?” asked Dean.

“I haven’t heard from them since last night,” she responded, “but I assume so.”

“Who are all of these from?” he asked, gesturing at the various arrangements of flowers and balloons that he’d paid no attention to before.

“Your friends, mostly,” Anna answered. “There’s one from our father… but I haven’t opened the card. I don’t know what to think.”

“Which one?” he asked as he struggled to his feet and reached for his nearest crutch.

She nodded towards a bouquet of wilting white roses. Dean approached it clumsily and then pulled the card from its holder. “You’re a better person than I am Anna… I don’t think I could have resisted the temptation. Haven’t you been dying to read this?”

“I was, at first, but it didn’t feel right to open it.”

“Feels right to me,” said Dean as he slipped a finger under the flap and ripped it open.

The message was simple, “I love you my son.”

Damn. Dean didn’t know what to make of it. Did this mean he was sorry? Was he going to try and be part of Cas’ life again?

“Ok,” said Anna trying for calmness and failing. “Curiosity is winning out. What’s it say?”

“It opens a big fat can of worms,” Dean said with venom in his voice, “It says ‘I love you’,” Dean told her as he pressed the card into her palm so she could see for herself.

Dean watched Anna carefully. She gave nothing away.

“What do you think it means?” he prodded her.

“I’m not sure,” she admitted, “but it doesn’t say he’s sorry. It doesn’t say he wants to see him. I think maybe he just wants Cas to know that he’s still loved – even if he’s not accepted?” She was silent for a moment before continuing, “He’s difficult to read.”

Dean collected the card from her and put it back into the stand. Hopefully, the sentiment would
bring Cas some peace – rather than pain.

While he was up, Dean hobbled around and looked at all the cards. There was one signed, “Hang in there!” It was from Chris, Pam and JJ. They’d just seen Pam and Chris over Christmas this year. They’d taken the couple out to dinner. They hadn’t gotten to see JJ on that occasion but had been told he was doing well.

There was a bouquet of balloons from Gabe and Robin and flowers from Cole, Kim and the boys among others. Dean smiled as he read the cards.

Gabe and Robin were doing better now. He and Cas had floated them a small loan when their business was struggling. They hadn’t wanted to take it, but the men had encouraged the couple to consider it. They reassured the couple by explaining that they almost went under too and that if hadn’t been for an influx of capital at a crucial time their resort would now belong to the bank. Robin had been more hesitant than Gabe – explaining that she was worried they’d take the money and fail anyway – finding themselves unable to even pay their friends back. Cas had told them that money would never be more important than their friendship.

In the end, they’d used the money to catch up what they were behind and to revamp their business plan with a consultant. Gabe’s cooking was never short of praise… they had just needed some guidance in how to turn a profit. Now, things were going well for them.

They joked occasionally about starting a family, but nothing had come of it yet. For now, their restaurant was their baby.

When he’d finished looking around, Dean settled in on the couch/bed, telling his mom and Anna to play on without him. He was tired and needed a nap. Anna said she was going to head out for a while and run some errands but would be back. She asked Mary if she needed anything. Mary waved her off with a smile and looked over at Dean, “Sleep well, sweetie.”

He nodded to her and pulled the tiny pillow up under his head. The couch was uncomfortable – especially with his leg in the brace, but for the first time since the crash – he slept well.

Sam and Jess woke up late – lulled into a deep and relaxing sleep with the house so quiet. When they woke, they had slow and easy sex… Sunday morning sex. Then they took their time getting around and ate a leisurely breakfast at a deli and bakery near the front of their neighborhood.

Both were feeling refreshed, and they laughed from the front of the van as they watched the twins stagger out from their friend’s house – clearly hungover and sick.

“Good morning!” crowed Sam with over-acted cheerfulness as the boys climbed in the back. He received only nods.

“Hello, boys,” said Jess, equally cheerful. “How was your party?”

“Good,” they answered in unison as they buckled in.

Sam watched Jimmy drop his head back on the bench seat. John looked positively nauseous.
“Well, boys,” Sam teased his sons, “how bout some breakfast, ah?”

No one spoke.

“C’mon,” he enthused with a grin, “no takers for some greasy sausage? Maybe a sunny side up egg? Nice and runny?”

The twins rolled their heads towards each other – exchanging a look. “No thanks,” came the answer from the back seat.

Despite his repeated attempts to cajole the boys on their way home, Sam did his best to drive carefully and slowly (and to not induce vomiting).

When they arrived home, the twins went straight to upstairs.

“You boys don’t want anything?”

“No thanks,” they replied as they trudged up the steps.

Sam and Jess grinned at each other. “It’s gonna be a quiet afternoon.”

“Yeah,” said Jess with an electric smile. “Let’s take a nap. You know… the good kind of nap. A sexy nap.”

“Don’t have to tell me twice,” said Sam as he followed her up the stairs at double speed.

At the top of the stairs, John opened the door to his room and Jimmy followed him in. Both boys stripped down, Jimmy grabbing a pair of old sweats off the floor and pulling them on while John grabbed a fresh pair of pajama pants from his top drawer.

They settled into John’s bed together.

“Some night,” said John as they settled in.

“Yep. Heard you got on Jenny… make it to third?”

“Not even a solid second,” giggled John, “but it was hot.”

“You’re not gonna dump on her are ya?”

“Fuck no,” said John honestly, “I like her.”

“Good. Me too.”

“You’re out, Jim. I think you better tell Mom and Dad when we get up. You don’t want them to hear it from someone else. Or see it on YouTube.”

“YouTube?” said Jimmy, startled and sitting bolt upright in bed.

“I saw some kids with their phones out. Stranger things have happened.”
“Damn.”

“S’okay,” reassured John. “It was fuckin awesome.”

“Yeah?”

“Yeah.”

“I didn’t know you were there to see it.”

“I’d just came in the door. It surprised me.” Chuckled John as he elbowed his brother.

“Probably surprised a lot of people,” said Jimmy as he joined his brother in laughter.

“I don’t think anybody will give ya a hard time. But if they do – I wanna know about it.” Said John firmly.

“Thanks for lookin out,” he said, giving John's leg a soft nudge with his knee under the covers.

“Yep. Now shut up so I can sleep. My head is about to split open.”

Jimmy laid quietly for a minute before smelling something rank. “Fuck, John,” he said with a sour face, “Warn a guy if you’re gonna let that fly.”

“Sorry. Got the greasy beer farts.”

“No,” laughed Jimmy, “you’ve shit your pants. I’m sure of it.”

“That was a fart,” John said firmly.

“It was a shart. Check your drawers – there’s probably racing stripes in there,” giggled Jimmy with his fingers plugging his nose, “Damn.”

Sam and Jess stood in the hall outside John's room. They weren’t eavesdropping… they couldn’t even hear the conversation. They just stood together for a moment and listened to the giggles and fits of laughter coming from behind John's door.

Sam roped his arms around Jess and pulled her in for a kiss. “I love that they’re close,” he said softly in her ear.

“They’re twins. Of course they’re close.”

“They’re a lot like Dean and I were at that age. I’d almost forgotten what it was like.”

“You want to go to the hospital instead of the bedroom?” she asked him.

“No. Mom says that Cas is doing better and that both he and Dean are sleeping. I vote we watch some TV and do dirty things to each other on the commercials.” Sam pulled his wife along by the hand as he moved to their bedroom, locking the door behind them.

They did indeed put the TV on; and they turned it up loud enough to cover their noises as they
played their sexy games.

Dean awoke with a stiff neck and back. He laid there quietly for a moment, not quite ready to get up yet. He heard soft voices and realized that it was Cas and Mary talking.

He heard Cas saying, “I don’t know what to say.”

Then he heard his mom say, “Cas, you may not be my son, but that’s how I think of you. I love you as much as either of my own boys, and I was so very worried we were going to lose you.”

Dean opted to keep his eyes shut longer, realizing they were having a moment and not wanting to interrupt it.

“I love you too, Mom,” Said Cas. Dean knew that he meant it too. Cas loved Mary like a mother and Dean loved Anna like a sister. When things grew quiet, he figured it was safe to open his eyes. He stretched and hoisted himself upright to look around.

Mary and Cas were holding hands and smiling at each other. When Dean stood, they pulled apart and she pushed back from the bed to make room for Dean as he gimped over towards them.

“Hey handsome,” he said, smiling as he approached.

“Hey hop-a-long,” teased Cas.

They both strained a bit to bring their lips together for a quick kiss and then Dean moved around the bed and into the bathroom. He brushed his teeth and splashed some water on his face. Then he settled on the toilet and propped his leg up on the tub, undoing his brace and the wrap underneath it. He cleaned his sutures as he’d been taught and then re-bandaged himself and fit his brace back on.

When he was finished he downed a couple pain pills to ease the persistent throbbing in his back and ambled back out into the room.

Anna was back. Dean announced loudly, “I’m gonna need some help with a shower tonight… unless you think any of these nurses wanna give me a sponge bath.”

“Sorry. That’s where I draw the line,” laughed Anna.

“I can help you if you’d like,” volunteered Mary. “Or you can wait a few hours and Sam will be here.”

“I think Sam is the obvious choice here, Mom,” Teased Dean as he gimped up behind her and wrapped his arms around her neck.

“Is he bringing the boys when he comes?”

“I don’t know,” she said as she reached for her phone. “I’ll check.”

The three of them played cards with Cas for almost two hours until Mary got a text that Sam, Jess and the twins had arrived and were on their way up.
Anna said her goodbyes then and headed home for the night. Mary was right behind her, giving out hugs and telling the boys that she’d see them in the morning. Dean knew both ladies were tougher than they appeared, but they had put in some long days and nights here, and he was glad that both of them would finally be getting some rest.

There was just a brief moment of quiet for Dean and Cas before there was a knock on the door. “Come in,” they said together.

Sam was the first to step around the curtain, followed by Jess, both smiling and saying hello. Jimmy came in next. He took one look at Cas and launched himself onto the bed, wrapping arms around Cas exuberantly. “I’ve missed you so much! I’m so glad you’re okay!”

Cas wrapped himself around the boy, overwhelmed by the affection and bordering on happy tears. Dean and Cas’ eyes connected over Jimmy’s head and they shared a moment of appreciation for their place in these boys lives.

John had entered more quietly and was waiting for his turn to hug Cas. When Jimmy finally extricated himself from the bed, he didn’t step aside for his brother. He stepped into his brother and hugged him aggressively. Clearly Jimmy had been more worried than he’d let on. The brothers hugged for long moment and then Jimmy stepped out of the way and walked straight to the bathroom, closing the door behind him.

John stepped up to Cas and leaned in for a hug. “You scared the shit out of us, Uncle Cas.”

“I’m sorry,” he said weakly.

“S’okay,” he said as he pulled away. “I’m just glad you’re okay.”

Sam and Jess took their turns hugging and then began telling Dean and Cas how funny it had been bringing the boys home with their first hangover. They joked about how the kids hadn’t had much of a birthday and had made up for it last night. They laughed about how long it took to wake the twins from their afternoon nap and about how they finally came downstairs and then John had taken one bite of his dinner and puked.

Both boys had been given aspirin and water on the way over and didn’t look any the worse for wear. Sam and Jess excused themselves to go out and pick up some good food for dinner. The boys settled in and told their uncles all about the party last night.

John told about his new girl, the stellar tee-pee & egging they’d delivered to a teacher who lived in the neighborhood where the party had taken place and that he’d woken up with shaving cream in his briefs. “That’s what I get for passing out before Phil,” he laughed.

Jimmy told them about coming out in front of everyone and getting applause and told them all about Ian and how strange it was that Jenny was turning into a friend now – when a day a go he’d hoped to never see her again.

“So this boy is older than you?” asked Cas.

“All that we just told you and that’s what you hone in on?” teased John.

“Yes,” answered Jimmy, “he’s sixteen. He drives, and he’s taking me out this weekend.”

“You be careful about him, if he’s older he’s living in a different world than you are. Where are you going?” prodded Cas, much like a dad would’ve.
“Dunno. Probly a movie or something. He’s gonna text me.” Jimmy smiled disarmingly at Cas and then received a wink from his uncle.

The conversation easily slid into what movies were showing that Jimmy might want to see and then the possibility that perhaps John and Jenny would tag along.

Then, when Sam and Jess returned with the food, they dug into delicious pasta and chicken from a nice place on the bay that did carryout.

Dean loved having the boys in the room. Their energy was palpable and it did wonders for Cas. He was tired when everyone left – but looked even better.

When the nurse came in, she checked on Cas. She was able to remove his oxygen tube completely and then asked him if he wanted his meds through the tube or orally. He said he preferred to just take the pills. She doled out his meds and then did a quick check on him. She said she was able to suspend his scheduled feeding because he’d eaten dinner but needed to leave the IV hooked up until the doctor ordered it disconnected.

“Are you having any pain? Can you give me a number from 1 to 10?”

“I’m at a two,” he told her.

“Do you need anything else? Some Tylenol maybe?”

“Sure,” he nodded. “And Dean needs a sponge bath.”

She laughed as she stepped out the room and returned a few minutes later with his Tylenol.

“I forgot to have Sam help me with a shower.”

“I wish I could help you,” smiled Cas.

“I wish you could too,” he smiled back.

“Would you like to crawl in with me and watch some TV?”

“Sure, Cas.”

Dean never crawled back out of Cas’ bed that night. He stayed over as close as he could to the railing, not wanting to smash Cas. But when he woke in the predawn hours, Cas was wrapped around him like an octopus. He loved it. He laid there for the better part of an hour just soaking up how it felt to have his man embrace him again. When Cas rolled over, Dean rolled too, and pressed his nose to his favorite place at the back of Cas’ neck near his hairline. He inhaled deeply and smiled.

When the lights came on outside their door and the nurses started moving around, Dean scuttled out of the bed and headed for the bathroom. When he came out, the nurse was with Cas and so was the doctor. Dean listened closely.

The lab work was looking good. Cas would be off the IV and his catheter would be removed today. His goals were to ambulate in the hallway for a minimum of 50 feet and eat three square meals. If Cas continued to eat well, they’d be able to take the tube out.

“When can I go home?” Cas asked.

“Well, let’s hit our goals for today and talk about it again tomorrow,” the doctor answered.
It ended up being a pretty busy day. Cas’ time was eaten up by menial tasks. He ate his breakfast. He got up and walked in the hallway. He got his IV and catheter taken out. He ate his lunch. He walked in the hallway again. He got his meds. He went to the bathroom and walked in the hallway again.

By the time Sam got there, having come straight from work, Cas was pretty tired. He slumped in bed and took a nap while Sam got tasked with getting Dean into the shower.

Dean did most of the work himself, but Sam had to help him put on the slip cover that went over his brace and covered his entire leg. Getting in and out was the hard part. Aside from that – Sam was basically just a “spotter.”

Having “taken one for the team,” Sam said his goodnights and left his brother and Cas to enjoy their evening. Dean crawled up with Cas again with the intention of watching TV, but they never really settled on anything to watch. A CNN update on foreign policy got them talking about Adam. They talked about his decisions and his media presence and both men thought he was doing a good job.

They knew not to expect to hear from him while he was in office, but frequently joked about how much pent up frustration he’d have by the time he returned to their resort. “We’re gonna have to put a sex dungeon in his tree house!” joked Dean.

“I can’t wait to get back to our treehouse,” hummed Cas as he hunkered down in the bed against Dean. It was a tight fit, but neither cared.

“I know. I miss it too.”

“Dean, can you move to the left? Your pulling on my tube.”

Dean adjusted himself carefully, “Better?”

“Yes Dean. Thanks for being here with me… even when it got ugly.”

“Oh Cas. We both know this is where I’ll always be. Right here with you. No matter what.”

“I know,” he said, accepting a soft kiss on the temple from Dean.

“Tomorrow it’s your turn to shower. You fuckin stink,” laughed Dean.

It was quiet for a moment and then Dean worked up the courage to broach a tender topic. “How are you feeling about your dad?”

“Are you asking because he was here?”

“I’m just asking.”

“I still love my parents, as pathetic as it sounds. I just wish they loved me more.”

“They love you. You know that right?”

“No. I don’t think they’re capable. They don’t know what love really is.”

“I won’t argue that,” said Dean firmly, “but your old man sent you flowers.”

“Which?” said Cas looking around.
“The roses.”

“There’s a card?”

“Yes. It says, ‘I love you my son’.”

“That’s… unexpected,” said Cas quietly.

“What do you think?”

“I think it’s good,” Cas said firmly, “It’s the best I could hope for from him.”

“Do you want to see him?”

“Definitely not,” Cas replied quickly. “The flowers and card are already more than I ever hoped for. Why give him a chance to ruin it?”

“Do you ever wish you hadn’t come out to them?”

“No, Dean. I don’t. I’d rather have no family at all than have a fake one. That would just be meaningless.”

“Your mom and dad may not be part of it; but you have a family Cas. One that loves you very much.”

“I know.” Cas admitted quietly as he leaned in, “I love you, Dean.”

“I love you too, Cas,” Dean said as he closed the distance and pulled his lover into a slow kiss. Dean felt a hint of heat there, just under the surface. It was like a pile of dark ashes when a fire has gone out which, when disturbed, reveals red hot embers lingering underneath.

Dean could feel the heat inside of him, glowing. Waiting. When they were ready, they’d be able to fan those flames and rekindle the fire of their all-consuming passion. But for now, he was happy to just have his friend back and found himself utterly content with Cas in his arms, heavy with deep affection as they laid together in the hazy blue light of the TV.
More and more thanks to MoniJune as she continues to do her best to keep this readable for everyone!

Cas was doing well. Well enough that the visitors had decreased significantly. The only person camped out at Cas’ bedside now was Dean. Mary still came by after lunch each day and then depending on work schedules either Anna, Sam or Jess might swing by and stay for a few hours. That was the new normal.

When the doctor had been in that morning, he’d told Cas that if all went well today, he might be able to go home tomorrow. Both men were excited about the possibility of getting to leave and had decided they’d stay at Mary’s until they got everything sorted out with the plane, the FAA and their insurance. They knew they could do the work they needed to do remotely from her house for the resort and the Farmers Direct Loan Company, which was what they were currently calling Cas’ brainchild.

The idea had evolved a lot from what it was at its inception, but the goal and result were unchanged. Farmers would get loans from the company to change over from a crop of bananas to a crop of cocoa. Those who got loans would be invested in the company and receive dividends when it was profitable. There was much to be done and with Cas in a hospital bed – nothing was happening. He was chomping at the bit to get back to work.

Dean was glad his man was feeling better, but he was firm about Cas not working until he was released from the hospital. He was afraid that if Cas had his phone – he would work. So, when replacement phones arrived at Mary’s days ago, Dean had withheld Cas’ phone from him. It was still sitting in the box on Mary’s dining room table. Dean planned to let his man open and use the phone as soon as he was home… hopefully tomorrow.

Mary came around two o’clock and brought the twins with her. The boys had brought a nerf football with them. Dean could tell by the look on Mary’s face that it was something they had slipped past her. Dean chuckled remembering how irritated his mom had been when Michael had brought a football to the hospital for Dean after his surgery (and yeah, she was probably right, the nurses had HATED that football).

Cas was thrilled with today’s game of catch. It was clearly preferred to endless games of cards. His eyes were bright and his reflexes were good as Dean and the boys formed a square with him and tossed the ball around. Only once or twice did Mary have to tell them to calm down.

At dinner time, Mary offered dinner to anyone who wanted to go with her. John jumped up and followed her out. Dean stayed with Cas and watched Jimmy choose to stay behind as well.

“You may as well go with her,” whispered Dean to Jimmy, “Cas is gonna sleep as soon as they go. I can tell.”

“Nah, I’m not hungry,” he replied as he leaned back on the couch and pulled his knees up in front of him.
Dean watched Jimmy look over at Cas, who’d been occupied by a nurse bringing his dinner tray. The man was now settling in to eat his tasteless food. Dean took a cue from Jimmy and relaxed back into the bed/couch sharing an easy silence as Cas ate his supper.

“Look at Uncle Cas,” chuckled Jimmy.

Dean glanced over and saw the man looking at his cup of green Jello salad with squinted eyes – as if he didn’t quite know what to make of it.

“He had that same look on his face when he caught me and John smokin weed in your bathroom.”

Dean smiled at the memory of his and Cas’ bumbling reaction.

“How did you know…,” asked Jimmy quietly, “…that it was love?”

“You mean Cas?” clarified Dean. “How did I know I loved Cas?”

“Yeah. I mean, everybody knows when they want somebody. I want Ian. Bad. But I know love is different. It’s more. So how do you know the difference?”

“Wow. Tough question, kid. Ask your dad when you get home,” Dean said firmly as he watched Cas finish eating and push his tray away.

Jimmy was quiet. Dean turned to his head and smiled at the boy, “I’m just kiddin.”

Jimmy grinned and waited for his answer.

“Hey, I’m no expert on love. I’ve only ever been in love once.”

“With Uncle Cas?”

“Of course. And I think I knew pretty early on that he was different. But I don’t think I really knew that I loved him until I thought I might lose him.”

Jimmy was quiet again, thinking.

“I think… I think that…,” Dean stumbled, “we… people… don’t really notice love until it’s undeniable. It just gets to a point where you can’t hide from it anymore. You can’t kid yourself about it. You just know that life without that person isn’t possible. And I think that’s when it’s real love. When you just can’t go back to life without them.”

“That’s deep, Uncle Dean,” Jimmy said as he pushed his leg out and kicked at Dean’s good leg with it. “Can you stitch that on a pillow for me?”

“It would have to be a big pillow,” he said as he watched Cas falling asleep across the room. “I’m sorry… it’s just… it’s a fuckin big question you're askin’. I’m doing a shit job of answering it, too.”

“You’re doing better than you think,” encouraged Jimmy. “I like when you just give it to me straight. Even if it’s not the most well-thought-out answer.”

“Well, all I can do is tell you how it is for me,” he explained. “There’s just something about your uncle that makes me do things that I wouldn’t do for anyone else. Like, I’ve never been much for prayin’. To me it always felt too much like beggin. God knows what we want and need, right? Why pester the guy. He’s gonna do what he’s gonna do.”

Jimmy nodded, listening intently, and Dean went on. “But for your Uncle Cas, I’ll do it. I’ll pray.
I’ll even beg. There’s just nothing I wouldn’t do for him,” Dean took a deep breath. “I’m not much for sayin’ sorry either. Never have been. But for him? Yep. And for him I listen, take his advice, do things slower and smarter. For him I’m patient, even though I don’t wanna be. Hell, for him… I even bottom.”

Jimmy blushed and giggled.

“Dammit, I’ve said too much,” he laughed. “I’ve gone from being awesome Uncle Dean to being creepy Uncle Dean.”

“It’s not creepy,” said Jimmy softly, hiding his eyes from Dean and still blushing, “it’s honest. And I love you for it.”

“You ever seen us fight, me and Cas?”

“No.”

“How ’bout your mom and dad? They may disagree about stuff and work it out, but do they fight?”

“Never.”

“That’s love,” he said firmly. “When you love someone – nothing is more important. Nothing. That means there’s nothing to fight about. Someone means more to you than anything… you gonna risk losing them over money? Whether to buy something or not? Whether to take a trip or not? How to raise your kids?”

Jimmy was silent but riveted.

“The answer is no. When you love someone, really love them, there’s not a fuckin thing to fight about. You both just talk. You work it out, figure something out. But you never get ugly with them.”

“I think I’m getting it,” said Jimmy, “I’ll know it's love because I will treat that person carefully.”

“That’s a great way to look at it. You’re pretty smart, kid. I don’t care what your dad says about you.”

Jimmy laughed kicked at him again. Then he asked, “You ever cheat on him?”

“Fuck no.”

“Ever been tempted?”

“Jesus kid, just when I thought you were listening.”

“This is a totally different question,” he persisted.

“No Jimmy. It’s not. When you really love someone – it won’t even cross your mind.”

“So if I’m about to get married and I consider cheating… I should re-think it because I might not really be in love?”

“Honestly, I’d say yes. Plus, if you’re considering cheating that early in your relationship… you really think you can be faithful for life?” Dean rubbed the back of his neck with his hand. This was getting harder by the minute, “where is this line of questions coming from anyway?”
“I don’t even know. Just thinking it all through I guess.”

“Oh, ok,” he said. “So, tell me about your guy.”

“Wanna see a picture?”

“Yeah,” said Dean sitting up a little and leaning over to look at the picture on Jimmy’s phone.

“That’s Ian. He doesn’t go to my school anymore, but when he did, he was the hottest guy on the team. And the nicest. He was the only varsity guy who was nice to the JV guys. Everybody else was shitty to us.”

Dean looked carefully at the boy in the picture. He could see why Jimmy liked him. He had the kind of eyes that radiated a kind heart. His grin was mischievous and playful.

“Did you have a thing for him back then too?” Dean asked.

“Everybody did. But he wasn’t out then. I had no idea he was gay.”

“He probably didn’t know you were either. Speaking of… are you all the way out now? Your folks know?”

“Yeah. That part was easier than I thought’

“How’d it go down?”

“Well, I told them that I had a date this weekend. I think they were waiting for me to ask them to drive me,” He laughed loudly, “so when I didn’t… Mom asked who I was going out with. I told her Ian Moretti.”

“What did she say?”

“She seemed a little surprised, so did Dad, but then Mom asked me if it was the same Ian from basketball and I said yes. After that, it was just the regular stuff. Ya know? Does he have a license? Where will you be going? Stuff like that.”

Dean smiled, thinking, that’s how it should be. Nice and simple. No drama. It is what it is.

“I never in a million years thought I’d be going on a date with Ian. I could die,” said Jimmy, tossing his head back and exhaling a heavy breath.

“Well… don’t give it up too easy. You make him work for it okay?” Jimmy cracked up laughing and the sound was so infectious that Dean couldn’t help but join him.

They were both laughing hysterically when the nurse came in. She nodded to them, checked on Cas, took the empty dinner tray and left.

“I think I’m hungry now. I kinda wish I had asked them to bring me back something.”

“They will,” Dean said with certainty.

“Play cards?” Jimmy asked him.

“Why not.”
Cas did indeed get to go home the next day. He was released at 11 a.m. Because of the hour, the drive back up from the south end of the bay took way too long. By the time they got to Mary’s house, Cas was shot. But he came alive again when Dean pressed his phone into his hands. He plugged in the charger and settled down on the couch to catch up on his emails, texts and missed calls.

Mary and Dean busied themselves with getting dinner on the table while he worked. Cas was overwhelmed by his email. It was as if he’d been gone for a year. He decided, wisely, to wait and catch up his email from a laptop later, rather than trying to do it on his phone. He moved over to the text messages and began to chuckle as he read through them. The ones from Jimmy were the best. They alternated between fun and silly and adorable.

TXT: “Saw Ian today!!!! He’s the one I told you about. The only varsity that talked to the JV guys. He works at PacSun now. He smiled at me and talked to me. I bout died!!! The good way.”

Cas had to chuckle.

TXT: “Ugh. I can hear mom and dad through the vent again. Drop a hint to them for me k? Just don’t let them think I know.”

Cas laughed even harder.

TXT: “Miss you.”

His laughter settled down and he smiled at the sentimentality.

TXT: “Hope you get better soon. We all miss you. Uncle Dean doesn’t look good. He’s worried. We all are. You really freaked us out the other day.”

Cas scratched his head, wondering what he’d done or said to freak everyone out.

TXT: “Big party tonight. Phil’s parents out of town. Derek’s cousin bought us alcohol. We’re all chipping in. Don’t tell mom n dad.”

Cas frowned, glad the situation was in the past so he didn’t have to wonder what he should do.

TXT: “It happened. I’ve been kissed!”

Cas found himself smiling from ear to ear.

TXT: “Miss you so much. I love you.”

Cas felt his chest tighten with that one.

TXT: “I know something you don’t know!”

Cas found himself chuckling again.

TXT: “Dean’s got your phone but he won’t let you have it! He thinks you’ll work. Guess he’d rather you be bored all day.”
Cas was smiling like an idiot.

**TXT:** “Ya know, this whole texting thing is better when you answer. Dean better give you a phone soon.”

“Dinners on the table,” said Dean quietly, leaning in to kiss the top of his head.

Dean could tell Cas was emotional when their eyes met.

“Everything ok?”

“Better than okay.”

“Good. Let’s eat.”

Dinner was exquisite. Cas couldn’t stop raving about Mary’s food. After days and days of flavorless, room temperature food, a home cooked meal was like heaven.

After they ate, they sat in the living room for a while. The TV was on, but no one was really paying it any attention. Cas had his nose in his laptop working. Dean was doing the same on the other end of the couch, legs stretched out and tangled with Cas’. Mary was reading in her recliner under a fuzzy blanket.

Shortly after Mary went to bed, Dean and Cas went upstairs too. When they got to Dean's room, they undressed slowly and got into bed, pulling together in the center and wrapping up in each other. It was quiet for a few minutes before Cas spoke.

“Jimmy has said that I scared you guys for a while when I was in the hospital. Did either of them say anything about it to you?”

“Mom didn’t say much,” answered Dean. “Her and Anna just told me the short version. That you’d been confused. Maybe they said agitated too… I can’t really remember. They just said you weren’t yourself because of a sodium imbalance or something. The twins both said something to me though. So did Sam.”

“What did they say?”

“You were wrecked. You kept saying I was dead.”

“I dreamt that.”

“You did?”

“Yeah. I didn’t know it was a dream at the time. It seemed so real. Then when I woke up – no one would let me see you. Again and again they kept giving me excuses why you weren’t there. I’d wake up and ask for you and they’d say you had just been there and I’d missed it. Or that you were in surgery. Or just back from surgery. Or that I’d missed you again. I felt like you were dead, and they just didn’t want to tell me until I was stronger.”

“Fuck,” said Dean, unable to even imagine how he would’ve felt in the same situation.

“Yeah. It just seemed to go on and on. It felt like months. I know now that it was only a few days. But it was awful… thinking you were gone and I had to go on without you.”

“I knew you needed me. I wanted to be there, I really did,” Dean said earnestly. “I should’ve been. Should’ve told em all to fuck-off and just come to you.”
“No, Dean. It wasn’t your fault. And besides, it’s over now anyway. I just wanted to ask so I’d know what the boys saw. I feel I should explain it to them.”

“I think Sam took care of it. But if you want to ask him or Jess about it – they’ll be able to tell you exactly what was said. Since I wasn’t there – I only know what I’ve been told. And in this family that usually means the bare minimum,” he chuckled.

Dean swept his hand over Cas’ stomach and felt the little bandages where the g-tube had been taken out. “Does this hurt?”

“No. I feel pretty good actually, as long as no one presses on my ribs.” Cas smiled, moving closer.

“I feel pretty good too. It’s good to be in a regular bed with you,” Dean replied as he slid his sore arm around Cas’ waist.

“You have to wear that brace even in bed?”

“Yes. Sorry,” said Dean, sliding his hand from Cas’ waist to his ass.

“It’s cold and hard. I’m sleeping with a cyborg,” chuckled Cas.

“I’ve still got two good legs.”

“Your dick should be bigger if you plan to count it as a leg,” teased Cas.

“It gets bigger. Why don’t you suck it and see,” he shot back.

“Do you want some music on, Dean? Cause we both know you can’t keep that mouth shut for long.”

“Yeah man. Put on something sweet though. I’m feelin all mushy for you tonight.”

“Does that mean we’re going to make love, Dean?”

“Make love? When did you turn into a girl?” he teased, “You can still fuck me,” he grinned. “Just fuck me to some girly music.”

“PLEASE hurry up with the music!” Mary called from across the hall.

Cas was stunned. Dean covered his face with both hands and died a little inside.

Across the hall, Mary was laughing into her pillow.

Cas moved towards the dock to play some music.

“Never mind Cas. Just come back to bed. I’ll never get hard again.”

“I had no idea the walls were that thin,” offered Cas, voice back to a whisper.

“I think we’ve just gotten too comfortable here. I was being kind of loud,” answered Dean, also returning his voice to a whisper.

Things got quiet for a minute and then they both snickered under the covers. Snickers led to full on giggles. Cas whispered, “Poor Mom.”

Dean snorted a laugh. “Poor us.”
The next morning, Cas awoke to the sound of Mary’s hair dryer. He got up slowly to pee, took another round of pills and then came back to bed, carefully arranging himself next to Dean.

Dean rolled over and wrapped his arm around Cas’ middle, pulling him close and kissing him good morning. As they lay there, waking up slow and easy, there was a knock on the door.

“Yeah?”

“I’m running out for groceries,” said Mary through barely contained laughter, “and I plan to be gone for at least ninety minutes!”

The men laughed together as she scampered down the stairs. A split second later they heard the garage door going up and coming back down.

“Is it safe now?” asked Cas, sliding his hand down Dean's chest to check for morning wood.

“From now on… music first. Always music first!” he laughed.

“Can I still fuck you Dean? I’ve been dreaming about it all night.”

Dean got harder just hearing it, “Yeah man,” said Dean, rolling over onto his stomach slowly and positioning his leg carefully, “do your worst.”

“Mmm,” Cas hummed as he slid on top of Dean, chest to back and dick to ass.

“Yesss…” hissed Dean as he felt Cas’ hard cock pushing against his cheeks. He couldn’t help but try to push up into that. But it didn’t work. His braced leg was useless and his arm was still too sore to bear his weight. He bent his good leg and tried again to push his ass up into Cas’ hardness with minimal results. It was frustrating. “I’m not gonna be able to do much,” he said, disappointed, “I’ll just have to lay here like a little bitch and take it.”

“Well,” teased Cas, “feel free to scream if you need to.”

“With our luck, Sam will hear it and run three blocks over here to check on us.”

Cas laughed softly as he pictured it.

They had to move slowly. Dean could barely move at all and for Cas, every move he made brought pain to his ribs. He managed to slide down the bed a bit and put his lips on the soft globe of Dean's right butt cheek.

He kissed it first and then opened his mouth greedily trying to suck a mark into it. Then, he trailed soft kisses around with an open mouth and his tongue dragging wetness through the fine, soft, downy hairs that you could only see in the right light.

When Dean moaned for him, he took the plunge and rolled his tongue down into the crack. He peeled Dean open with one hand and slid his tongue up and down the man's moist crack, bumping over his puckered hole and back again until he finally heard his man whisper a “Please.”

Not one to deny his lover anything, he immediately sank in. He pushed his tongue into Dean's entrance softly but with firm pressure, tasting the bitter grit of the hole he’d soon be fucking into. His dick got even harder as he considered how it would feel to press forward into this place of Dean’s where only he had ever been.
Dean was panting already, hands fisted in the pillows, dick trapped beneath his weight and throbbing for attention. As Cas licked him out and nibbled his edges, Dean thrust his dick down against the mattress and thought of how it must feel to be Cas, face pressed into a clenching ass. He couldn’t wait to reciprocate… his mouth watered to suck dick, lick balls, eat out his man. It was like they hadn’t fucked in a year and he was starving for it.

“Oh Cas,” he breathed, “I can’t wait…”

“Mmm,” Cas responded with his face buried.

“M’gonna,” Dean was panting now, “m’gonna do nasty things to you, Cas.”

“I can’t wait,” smiled Cas as he pulled up from Dean's wet, pink hole.

Dean rolled a little to one side, stretching to reach the bedside table drawer. He pulled out lube and tossed it over his shoulder to Cas and then relaxed into the pillows. Cas moved over, being careful not to thump Dean's brace. He put his hand under Dean's good knee and hitched it up high, making a space for himself and then slicked up his stiff cock.

He gritted his teeth against the pain in his ribs as he slid down at an unusual angle and ran his forearm under Dean's knee. Then he braced his elbow there, simultaneously holding his own weight and keeping Dean's good leg bent up high and his crack spread wide. His eyes watched the pink hole greedily and then roved up the man's back as he gritted his teeth again and got into position, right elbow still buttressed up under Dean's right knee and left elbow on the mattress to the left of Dean's back. Cas rested his chin in the middle of Dean's back as he blindly maneuvered his heavy dick to Dean's waiting entrance. It was harder than he’d thought it would be, going in blind like this with no hands. He’d find the hole and begin to push and then slide up or down instead of in. It was frustrating. His breath was coming in pants and his legs were trembling; his quad muscles were on fire already.

Finally, he found the right spot and applied the right amount of pressure at just the right angle and felt the sweet relief of hitting his target and starting to sink in. Not wanting to lose it, he pushed in very slowly. Excruciatingly slow. But once he felt the entire head engulfed in heat and sinking – he gave a solid push – shoving in and pitching forward over his lover. Dean cried out as Cas thrust down hard – fully seated in one go.

“Sorry,” Cas whispered through panted breaths, “not my best effort, I know.” He was sweating from the exertion already and hadn’t even gotten started yet.

“S’good Cas. I wanted it and you gave it to me.” Reassured Dean, who was hurting more than he let on from being being plowed like that.

Cas settled his weight partially onto Dean's rear. “This okay?” he asked hopefully.

“Yeah, it’s good man. You always feel good.”

“Dean,” he whispered as he pulled back slowly, “you’re so tight.” It was easier to move now, with Dean bearing some of the weight. Cas could feel him straining to push up as Cas pumped in and out slow. “So good, Dean… So tight for me.”

“Yeah, baby,” Dean answered through gritted teeth. “It’s for you, Cas. Take it.”

Cas bit his lip and began laying down heavier thrusts, feeling the grit and slide that comes from not quite enough lube. He knew he’d need to go ahead and be quick or Dean would be hurting soon. So he went for it. He pushed in and pulled back out, savoring the drag and letting the feeling move
through him. He didn’t try to control it or slow it down. He opened his eyes and watched his lover take his thick cock. He knew Dean was stretched tight and that his hole was probably red and stretched to it’s limits. Pity he couldn’t see it. He watched Dean, though. Watched the man’s back flex under him, listened to his breath coming faster and louder as Cas fucked him, hard and fast.

“Dean,” he panted as he felt his stomach drop, “Fuck, Dean” he gasped as he forced his eyes to stay open against the onslaught of pleasure and watch his man take the rough fucking he was dishing out.

Dean’s fists were twisted into the sheets and his knuckles were white. “Cas.”

“Close,” he husked back, beginning to worry that Dean wouldn’t even be able to get off this way. But he was really close so he kept going.

“Cas,” Dean garbled into his pillow again.

Cas could feel it coming – so close – but Dean wasn’t hanging on by much.

“Four,” he shouted as he pumped in hard, “Three…” trying to let Dean know how many more times he was going to shove into Dean's burning and abused hole.

Unexpectedly, his elbow slid forward and his weight shifted. Cas thought that was it, it was going to have to be over… but it wasn’t. He was stunned when he heard Dean scream out, “Yes!”

Apparently the change in angle had helped line up the sweet spot. “Yes!” his lover screamed again as Cas pumped again.

Feeling more confident now, he increased his speed and began to feel pleasure swirling in his belly again, building up and dropping lower into his balls. He felt them tighten and exhaled as he waited for the big rush to hit him. His body was burning with both pleasure and exertion. He looked up towards Dean's face, only able to see the back of his head, “Fuck, Dean, fuck!” he called as the feeling swept over him and he couldn’t hold his eyes open any longer.

“Yeah, Cas! Yeah!”

Cas spilled into Dean and collapsed on top of him, sweating, panting, and blown up. He laid still as the last of the waves passed over him, stomach clenching and unclenching while tingles spread outward from his core to his limbs. He smiled against the muscles on Dean's sweaty back. “Oh my god…” he said as he began to try and untangle himself from his man.

“Yeah, Cas. You get a gold star for that,” smiled Dean as he carefully maneuvered his leg out of Cas’ way and rolled over onto his back.

When they were laying side by side again, Dean reached up and began jacking himself, looking over at Cas’ naked form. He loved Cas’ body.

When Cas saw Dean’s fist moving over his shaft he rolled onto his side slowly, still being careful of his ribs, and reached out to help. He squeezed the lube, dribbling it over his man's junk, and then curled his hand around Dean’s shaft to join in.

The man groaned in pleasure as Cas jacked him off. “Dean. Look at that incredible cock,” he said proudly as he worked his hand up and down it. Dean’s hand dropped to his ball, rolling and squeezing it as Cas gripped his shaft tightly and said, “C’mon Dean, look at it. It’s magnificent.”

Dean opened his eyes and watched as Cas’ slippery hand expertly coaxed his orgasm from him and
then held his member, teasing it artfully as the waves passed over him, touching the tip lightly at all the right moments.

When it was finished, they didn’t even have the energy to pull up the covers. Both men fell fast asleep – sticky hands and all.
The sun was shining brightly when they touched down in Honduras. The sky was blue with wisps of silvery white clouds moving slowly across it. Cas had been a little nervous as Dean lined them up for the landing. He had to concede that he probably always would be from now on.

But Dean had smiled at him reassuringly and given him a wink for good measure, and when they came to a stop Cas kept up his long tradition of complimenting Dean on his smooth landing.

“Home sweet home, Cas,” he’d grinned in response. There were a number of employees gathered to greet them, and Cas felt like a celebrity as they stepped down from the new aircraft and waved to an answering throng of cheers. They walked over to the group together and shook hands, slapped shoulders, exchanged hugs with those who had turned out for their arrival. Cas was surprised to see Dominic there since he’d always felt that Dominic disliked him and Dean both (or their lifestyle – he wasn’t sure). Perhaps he’d been wrong in that assumption, for the man greeted them warmly now. Sunni and Roberto were among those waiting and so was Krizia, who waited patiently for the rest to disperse before moving to welcome the boys home.

Krizia was teary eyed and hugged them tightly, saying how worried she had been. Once they’d both hugged her tightly she told them to call her if they needed anything and made her way back to her jeep. She’d been a wonderful secretary for them over the years – far exceeding the responsibility level they’d initially planned on. She was nearly indispensable to them now, much like Sunni and Roberto were.

When they found themselves alone with the couple, they exchanged warm hugs and headed towards the jeep as they caught them up on important things that had happened in their absence. Dean noticed Roberto hovering around Sunni more than usual, and with a different energy. His stance was almost protective, and Dean didn’t miss the opportunity to ask about it while they were unloading baggage from the jeep to the dumbwaiter at their treehouse.

“Something’s going on Roberto. You’re acting different with Sunni. What am I missing?”

“Ah,” he replied with a wide smile, “Voy a ser padre!”

“A baby?” Dean asked in shock.

“Si, Dean,” he nodded as Dean pulled him into English, “We are blessed with a baby, finally!”

“I had no idea you guys were trying!” marveled Dean.

“Always, but some things take a miracle,” he smiled.

“Well, congratulations!” Dean celebrated, pulling him into a warm hug. “It couldn’t have happened to a better man!”

“Gracias,” he said as they pulled apart again. Dean turned back towards the Jeep where Sunni and
Cas were discussing something.

Dean walked over to them and put an arm around Cas, “Cas,” he said softly when the two broke their conversation for him, “I think Sunni has some news.”

He watched Sunni look back and forth between them. She smiled a very soft smile, which was always a rarity for her. Her dark eyes fixed on Dean and Cas and waited. When she felt Roberto’s arm around her waist, she looked to him adoringly and he said proudly to Cas, “We will have a child.”

Cas immediately pulled them both into a hug and gave his warm congratulations to them both.

“The Lord knows when it’s time for these things,” Sunni said firmly and with a nod of surety. “And he will protect our child. I have seen a sign of it.”

Roberto looked at his wife with nothing but pure adoration. They said their good-byes, and the boys climbed the ladder to their treehouse. Dean chuckled as he gimped up, having to climb with one leg and then bring the other up. Each step he had to stop and adjust and then take another careful step. He’d done this in physical therapy plenty but it was still difficult. He wasn’t able to just climb like he used to. He worked hard to not let it bother him.

“Come on hop-a-long,” laughed Cas as Dean finally managed to get to the top and heave himself up onto the platform of their little balcony.

“Whatever, baby,” teased Dean effectively, knowing that Cas still wasn’t fond of the endearment.

They moved into their long-vacant tree house together. It had been over a month since Cas had been released from the hospital. They’d stayed at Mary’s just like they’d planned on – letting her care for them as they recuperated. She’d been a good sport, driving them around to their various appointments and fixing their meals – even entertaining their friends who visited often.

While staying there, they’d completed the necessary steps to file the insurance claim on their sunken plane and purchase a replacement. Dean was fond of the new one, saying he liked it better than the previous one anyway. Cas didn’t notice anything different about it with the exception of the passenger seats being nicer and the designs on the side panels being blue instead of green.

The FAA investigation hadn’t really been much trouble. They’d had to give a few permissions, sign some papers, make a statement. In the end, there had been no wrongdoing on Dean’s part. In fact, Cas had come to realize that Dean’s quick thinking had been the only reason they’d lived through the crash. If he hadn’t found a way to break their free fall, they would’ve hit the water like a stone, straight down from over a thousand feet in the air. Instead, they’d hit the water at roughly a 45 degree angle, having partially recovered from the swan dive and broken the momentum considerably.

Now, here they were, back home again. Cas opened the door for Dean and he moved through it, inhaling deeply the scent of the jungle mixed perfectly with the scent of their home and furnishings. He could’ve cried for how much he’d missed this place. One look at Cas and it was clear they were thinking the same thing. Without a word, they moved to their bedroom, bags forgotten on the dumbwaiter outside and eyes only for each other.
Jimmy looked over at Ian. They were on the couch at Don’s place. Don was a friend of Ian’s, and they’d spent a lot of time there over the summer. Don’s parents were gone a lot. There was never anyone calling them to dinner or offering to make them a snack like Jimmy was used to at his house. But the advantage was obvious. No supervision.

Here, they were messy. They stacked up pizza boxes anywhere and everywhere – knowing the maid would pick up after them. They cussed like sailors on leave – there was no one to hear them or care. They drank here whenever there was someone to buy for them. And Ian’s friends had a lot more hook-ups than Jimmy’s friends did.

There was almost always at least a little alcohol here. They smoked cigarettes and weed constantly in this “rec room,” which is what Don’s folks called the four season porch just off the family room. Here was where the gaming systems were set up and the older, more lived in furniture was. The space was pretty much earmarked for the kids of the house, and Don used it with his friends as the “chill spot.”

If someone came home, it was easy to air out. Just open the windows and any trace of smoke was gone on the breeze. The maid was the only one who knew what went on here – and she clearly didn’t give a shit.

As Jimmy’s eyes roamed the contours of Ian’s face, he couldn’t help but smile. At first it had sucked to miss out on the regular summer vacation in the tropics. And it had been scary living through the fallout of the plane crash. But ultimately, because he was here for the summer and not in Honduras, he’d had the opportunity to reacquaint with Ian and become his boyfriend.

Ian had never asked him to be a boyfriend. But everyone else called them that, and clearly it didn’t bother Ian any. Jimmy returned his attention to the screen for a moment when Don and Justin hollered at a solid play on Madden. A moment later he was looking at Ian's strong profile again. The boy’s tanned skin and dark hair was sexy as hell and his full, moist lips were the stuff of lurid dreams.

“It’s ten forty-five,” said Jimmy softly.

Ian gave him a nod of understanding without looking away from the TV he loudly barked, “You suck fat ass, Donnie. Rematch tomorrow.” Then he passed off his controller to Donnie’s little brother Alex who was curled up on the carpet at their feet – certain that he’d never get a chance to play.

“We’re out,” Ian told his friends as he stood to chug down the last of his beer and dropped the empty can onto the coffee table.

“Oh, Chuckled Don, clearly picking up the unintended pun. “Yeah Moretti, you’re out.”

Jimmy stood when Ian did and followed his boyfriend to the door. Don’s house was perched on a cliff above the city. There was nothing to interrupt the damp, cool cut of the wind as it swept in from the ocean. A chill crept up their bare arms as they stepped out the front door and Ian's long hair blew over his eyes.

It was late summer but in the dark, the stiff breeze felt like ice. They trotted to Ian’s car and as Jimmy climbed in the passenger side, Ian reached between them into the back seat. He retrieved a hoodie sweatshirt and handed it to Jim before reaching back there again for another, which he pulled over his head before starting the car. He cranked up the heat and put on some music.

Jimmy always felt like the little guy around Ian's friends, but Ian didn’t seem to notice. He smiled
over at Jimmy and then leaned in for a quick kiss before backing out of the driveway.

On the way back to Jimmy’s they listened to music and talked about how soon school would be starting. Jimmy was terrified about starting prep school. John kept telling him he should be glad for Ian – the upper classmen would leave him alone and not pick on him like the other freshmen. Somehow, Jimmy found it hard to share the optimism.

As the summer began winding down, Jimmy had begun to feel a slight sense of foreboding. It was as if this would all end when school started – like waking from an awesome dream. As he watched the headlights of Jimmy's car roll across the face of his house, he checked the time. 11:02. Close enough.

They headed up the front walk and pushed through the front door.

“Is that you Jim?” called his mother from the kitchen.

“Yeah,” he responded and followed her voice to the kitchen. They’d smoked out right before leaving Donnie's, so the munchies had taken a firm hold.

“Hey Mom,” he said as he passed her and headed for the fridge. He still wasn’t used to her new haircut. All his life she’d had waves of cascading curls in a lovely honey blonde. Recently, she’d cut it drastically into a bob. He’d done a double take the first time he’d seen her like this, and even after weeks of getting used to it, it still surprised him each time he saw her.

“Hey boys, how was your night?” asked Jess.

“Good. We’re gonna play some Halo before Ian has to go home.”

“Sure,” said Jess with a smile, “You boys want something to eat?”

“Yes.” Answered Jim firmly as he pulled two Pepsis from the fridge and tossed one to Ian.

“Thanks,” said Ian as he caught it with a smirk. Jimmy turned to the cupboard and grabbed a bag of Cheetos, putting them under his arm.

“What would you like? I have some of that roast beef left over… I could make some hot sandwiches out of it?” she offered.

“Yes!” enthused Jimmy locking eyes with Ian and giving him a nod of approval regarding the sandwich. They exchanged a flicker of a smile and then Jimmy leaned in to peck his mom on the cheek before they left the kitchen and pounded up the back steps.

Jimmy’s curfew was 11, but Ian’s wasn’t until 12:30. So, each night they were together, Ian would take Jimmy home on time and then hang out for about an hour before finally saying goodnight for real.

When they passed John's door Jimmy slowed; sometimes they joined him for gaming at night. But tonight John's door was closed. And if that door was closed – there was a reason. Jenny was likely in there with him. They moved on to Jimmy’s room and both boys flopped down on the bed, kicking their shoes off.

They sat cross legged there, facing the TV, and tore into snacks while they started up a game. Soon, they were laughing as they tried to play with Cheeto-cheese covered fingers. Their game sucked because they were constantly trying to eat and play at the same time.
There was a knock at the door. “Come in,” said Jimmy as he laughed and elbowed Ian.

“Here,” smiled Jess as she put a plate on the bed in front of each of them, “something resembling an actual dinner.”

“Thanks, Mom.”

“Sure thing” she smiled as she turned to leave. She grabbed a dirty plate and cup from his dresser as she walked out.

Jimmy noticed she didn’t close the door behind her when she left. But he didn’t want to be obvious about it so they paused the game and ate their sandwiches before he got up and latched it. When he returned to the bed, he watched Ian toss his controller aside and stretch his legs out in a vee.

Jim thought nothing of crawling onto the bed and into his boyfriend's lap. They had no regard for roast beef and cheeto breath, leaning in without hesitation to kiss.

The moment their lips touched, Jim’s heart began to beat irregularly. He wrapped his arms around Ian’s neck and pulled in closer, encircling the boy with both arms and legs and felt Ian pull his legs in a little too. Wrapped up in each other and warm in their soft hoodies it didn’t take them long to start exploring.

Ian was an incredible kisser and Jimmy felt the boy’s presence all the way down to his toes. His strong arms wrapped around Jim at the waist with a surety that he’d begun to take for granted, and he loved the feeling of security. His boyfriend’s hands were firm and yet still teasing. As his own mouth opened and Ian's warm, wet tongue slipped into it, he felt a chill up his back and his pecker stiffened a bit between his legs.

They both smiled into the kiss, so Jim could only assume that Ian had felt something similar. He longed to reach out and touch him there to see. But he was a bit shy about these things and always waited for Ian to take the lead.

Tipping his head more to the right, Jimmy felt fingers pushing up under his sweatshirt, seeking skin and finding it. The brush of skin on skin sent rolling waves of shivers up his spine, and it became harder to keep his breathing normal. With Ian exploring the ticklish places on his sides, Jimmy giggled a little and moved his mouth from Ian’s – working little baby kisses along the older boy’s neck and burying his face into soft cotton as he sought deeper on the warm neck under his lips.

The tickling fingers on Jimmy’s sides eventually slid into an up-n-down stroke that further accelerated Jimmy’s breathing. He thrilled with the feeling as the fingers eventually found the line of elastic at the top of his boxers and began to trace it. He shuddered as he waited and hoped that an errant finger would dip inside that waist band and press lower.

Ian surged forward then, open mouth pressing to his neck and sucking down. Jimmy’s immediate reaction was laughter. He was particularly ticklish there, and Ian knew it. Exploited it. While Jimmy laughed and wiggled against the tickling, Ian slid his hands down to cup Jimmy’s ass – seemingly to hold him still. But who cares why? He exhaled a deep breath as he felt his cheeks squeezed and again considered working up the nerve to let his fingers wander on Ian's firm body. Ian was thick, muscular.

Jimmy would have a lot of growing and filling out to do before he’d be a match for Ian on a wrestling mat or football field. However, as he’d demonstrated several times this summer, he was faster and more skilled on the basketball court.
He left Ian in the dust when they played one on one. When they played with others, Ian always
picked Jimmy for his team first. And it had nothing to do with their relationship. Jimmy was damn
good and Ian knew it.

Now, curling into his tall, dark and handsome man, Jimmy felt pulsing desire swelling in him. The
undulating rhythm of it wasn’t noticeable until he found himself rocking with it. He hadn’t even
noticed he’d been doing it, but now that Ian had whispered, “Yeah,” in his ear – it was painfully
obvious. He let it go on though, moving with the feeling made it easier to bear. Their lips found
each other again but didn’t lock on tightly. Rather, they tapped out kisses and panted breath in time
with their rocking. This was getting really heated. Honestly, it always did.

They were hot and heavy now, and Jimmy’s breath hitched in his throat as he felt Ian's hands slide
from his ass cheeks and move around his thighs. The boy had his palms spread wide and as he
drew his hands up over the top of Jimmy’s legs, the thumbs were already sinking in between his
legs.

He felt another surge of blood to his groin and his dick began to fill steadily. He hoped Ian was
hard too. It would be embarrassing to be the only one who was this
into things.

When Ian's thumbs touched the hard line of Jimmy’s cock and traced it upwards, he lost all control.
His body stiffened and his head tipped back and he gulped in a deep breath. Ian sucked fiercely on
his neck and the moan that slid out of the little twin was sooo dirty. Jimmy heard it escape him
loudly and immediately cursed himself. If anyone were on the other side of that door – they
would’ve heard it too. He willed himself to keep quiet as Ian sucked down hard on his neck and
pulled tingles from everywhere in Jimmy’s body all at the same time.

He was overloaded with feelings and didn’t know what to enjoy more… mouth on his neck or
gentle touches to his swollen length. Jimmy may have had hands wrapped tightly around his boys
neck, but his fingers were curling and flexing with the desire to touch. His arms broke apart then
and slid down Ian's arms, following the bend at the elbow until his hands were between their
bodies where it was ten degrees warmer than the rest of the room.

As he worked to stifle his panting breath and rocking hips, he let his fingers wander over soft
sweatshirt and then lower to the rough denim. As they sought out his boyfriend’s dick, they
bumped over creases and folds in the material and soon found zipper.

Feeling more bold now, he worked his fingers to the button and got it open. Ian immediately
breathed him another, “Yeah,” right next to his ear.

Shivering with Ian's hot mouth tracing the soft lobe, Jimmy forced himself to focus on scrambling
his finger between folds of fabric to find the cold teeth of a zipper. His efforts to be smooth failed
him and Jim ended up tugging forcefully to get the zipper to move down even part of the way. He
only faintly registered the sound of his own zipper coming down too and didn’t even realize what
was happening until he felt the brush of fingertips over the head of his dick.

It was throbbing now, and had taken over his mind completely. He was desperate for touch and
waiting for the brush of fingers to ghost over him again was maddening. “Please,” he heard himself
say.

“Yes,” came the firm answer as hot fingers curled around him and pulled him out of his shorts and
into the cool air of the room. “Jimmy,” panted Ian.

“Yes,” he answered. He’d had no idea what question Ian may have wanted to ask him. But the
answer was always yes. Yes to all. He found his fingers clenched on either side of the zipper and
pulling Ian's shorts apart like someone opens a bag of chips, eagerly tearing into it while licking lips.

With his boyfriend's shorts pulled apart, revealing cotton and skin. He reached into the center slowly, searching for hot flesh amid the denim and soft underwear. He knew the moment he’d found it too. Its skin was soft and warm and as his fingers curled around the chub and Ian stiffened even more for him with the touch. He wrapped his hand around the boy’s hardening dick and pulled it out.

Neither boy could resist the urge to look down and see what was in their laps. By unspoken agreement they tore off their sweatshirts and flung them – both anxious for an uninterrupted view of the throbbing hotness in their laps.

With mouths open and eyes wide, both circled the other and squeezed. Jimmy didn’t even have a moment to try and hold back. The sight of their cocks out and so close together sent a visceral jolt to Jim that was overwhelming. Ian's hand was hot around him and as the boy gripped him and pulled upward towards the crown, he inhaled sharply and came right then and there. His eyes shut and his head dropped to Ian's strong chest. He felt himself wet Ian's hand but the hand didn’t pull away, it held him tightly as he enjoyed the moment of ecstasy. His own hand had fallen loose around the boy, but may have twitched a little as the waves of pleasure swept over him.

When he was able to think again, he wondered if he should feel shame for coming so quickly, but he didn’t. He was feeling residual waves of tingling pleasure and when he opened his eyes he saw his cock growing smaller in Ian's wet hand and Ian's cock still hard and heavy in his own.

He began moving his palm up and down on it. This was a different angle than the one he used when touching himself, but it only took him a minute to get comfortable with it. Ian was panting now and Jim used his other hand to swipe some of his own juices from Ian's hand and the jizz made the taut skin slippery, letting his hand glide easily along its length.

He picked up speed as he watched and he could feel Ian starting to really lose his shit. The breaths were coming harder now, and he was whispering Jimmy’s name over and over.

He looked up at Ian’s face and saw the boy with his eyes reduced to slits – heavily lidded as he surrendered to Jimmy’s hand and his forehead came to rest on Jimmy’s shoulder as he watched himself be brought to completion. The boy tensed when he came and then both of them were leaning on each other as they recovered.

Jimmy watched Ian lazily rub his thumb over the slit of his own cock and tracked the movement as the thumb was pushed towards his face. He didn’t think, he just opened for Ian. The boy pushed the thumb in slowly and watched Jimmy carefully as he tasted him.

It was disgusting. But he loved it. It was Ian… and he loved it.

Later, when Jimmy walked Ian down to his car, the boy kissed him sweetly and deeply. The look on his face said he wished he didn’t have to leave. Jim didn’t want him to either. He wanted to sink down in bed with him and touch and feel and press against him all night long. He thought he’d like to never get out of bed again. Just stay there with Ian forever and feel everything he’d ever thought or dreamt or spun a fantasy about.

“I’m sorry if you feel like I just got some and left,” he said quietly with his arms locked around Jimmy’s waist, “I’d stay longer if I could, you know I would.”

Jimmy nodded, head resting against the taller boy's chest. They pulled apart, and he watched the
taillights recede down the foggy street before he finally floated back into the house.

In the morning, Cas and Dean got up slowly. No one was ready to face a full day of work yet. The joy in being back home was overwhelming, and they didn’t need to voice their desire to linger in the bed - they could both feel it.

They laid comfortably tangled in soft sheets and listening to the swell of birdsong as the jungle came alive in the pre-dawn darkness and rose with the sun.

When the sunlight began to cut across the bed at an angle, Dean rolled over and began tracing the lines of Cas’ back. He picked up one leg to drape it over Cas and winced a little with the movement – loving the lingering feeling of soreness that had stayed behind as his souvenir from their rough tumble last night.

“What do you wanna do today?” he asked.

“Mmm,” sighed Cas. “Do we have to do something? I’ve got nothing planned.”

“No, we don’t have to do anything. But I’d like to take a drive later if you’ll come with me.”

“Sure, where are we going?”

“Just a trip around the grounds. The huts on the lagoon side are almost finished. I’d like to get a look at them.”

“Me too,” answered Cas as he thought about their latest project. They hadn’t ever done much with the swampy area along the lagoon between the employee compound and the Jet Ski rental hut. It was a long stretch of jungle and until recently it had pretty much only been used by Dean and Cas (and a few other avid kayakers among the staff) as a place to paddle around and observe wildlife.

It was always pleasant, even on a hot summer afternoon, to paddle along in the shade under the protective canopy of the jungle. If you had a good eye you would see the occasional monkey swing by in the branches overhead. Large water birds floated nearby and in this one place – there was still wild jungle all around. Most of the rest of the jungle on their property was now cut with hiking trails and thoroughly explored. But this one small sanctuary was still quite wild.

They hadn’t wanted to change that. So they’d essentially drawn a perimeter near the water’s edge and dredged to create a line of beach where none had been before. It hugged the perimeter of the swamp. Pilings for a series of docks had created the base for a half dozen huts to be built out over the shallow lagoon water. That was all that had been completed of the project when they’d left to go pick up the twins for summer vacation. Now Miguel had the project very close to completion, and Cas was eager to see how it was shaping up. Similar huts over water were enticements to places like Fiji and the Caymans. Now Tree Tops would have them too. They’d left a small outcropping alone and hoped it would serve as a visual barrier between the huts, which were meant to be private and peaceful, and the Jet-Ski rental hut, which usually swarmed with activity.

It was, after all, the hub on this side of the resort. There was a restaurant that hung out over the water and on its roof was the second platform of the zip line. From there – all day long – was a chorus of voices as they screamed and plunged into the water from dawn til dusk. Reggae and local
Honduran music played from speakers in the restaurant and carried out over the water. Everywhere you looked along the beach, on the deck of the restaurant and even in the water – people were carrying tropical drinks.

When Dean and Cas arrived in the late morning, the usual sight greeted them. Hungry, they went into the restaurant and sat down to have lunch first. They talked quietly as they watched the guests enjoy themselves in the sun and man-made shade of the tiki style restaurant.

Cas watched the staff and was impressed to see that no standards had fallen lax while he and Dean had been away. Sunni and Roberto did a wonderful job of managing the grounds in their absence and Krizia was excellent at keeping the office running efficiently too. But Cas didn’t plan on seeing her until tomorrow at the earliest. He wanted to enjoy at least one day with Dean before he sat down at a desk again.

When the waitress offered drinks, they chose the newest offering, curious to try it. Both were impressed and joked about how Sunni seemed to have “come over to the dark side” and joined them in the creation of drinks that only tourists could justify buying.

They ate delicious barbeque in the shade of the open air restaurant as they watched person after person slide down the zip line and into the turquoise lagoon water. Farther out, in the cordoned-off area, there were little neon sticks moving along perpendicular to the surface of the water. It was people snorkeling. There wasn’t much to see here, but folks still enjoyed moving over the grasses in the flat areas and seeing the sparse marine life that inhabited there. Mostly it was kids who snorkeled here – passing hours in the clear blue waters while the adults in their group laid under umbrellas on the beach and enjoyed the buzz of good drinks (and the vacation they only got every year or two).

As Dean watched, he smiled to himself as he remembered back to being unemployed in his late twenties… saying to Cas, “If only I could get paid to vacation. I’m good at that!”

Cas’ expression when he’d said it had been priceless. The gears had turned and the man's mouth had tensed… just the way it always did when he was about to say something brilliant. And then he had practically shouted, “That’s it! We should be running a resort!”

Now, decades later, here they were. They’d built this place with nothing but a dream that it would one day support them financially. But it had become so much more to both of them. Dean sipped his drink and enjoyed the buoyant feeling of happiness that settled into his chest. Among all the other things that this place was to them – it was home.

Dean watched Cas as the man's eyes roved over the area and when the waitress stepped up and took their dirty plates away, they scooted back from their chairs and walked around behind the restaurant. There they picked up the boardwalk that cut through the small thicket of trees separating the activity behind them from the huts that lay ahead.

When they emerged on the other side, they could hear distant noise on the breeze, but they could see nothing of the activity they’d just been part of. Here there was nothing but nature… and it was a feast for the eyes. To the left the lagoon spread out wide and enticingly blue – the trees of the opposite shore appearing tiny in the distance. To the right was thick green jungle, rich and inviting. Ahead they could see actual huts hovering over the water and as they walked the boardwalk to get there the scattered trees above them broke the glare of the hot sun and made the walk pleasant.

As they approached, they could hear hammers and the occasional burst of a saw running. There was a boat docked here that Miguel had borrowed to bring in his crew and equipment. When they got close enough to see what was going on, it was clear that Miguel's men were installing the trim
work on the outside of each hut. Everything looked just like Cas had described it in the planning stages. They spent a few minutes catching up with Miguel before starting a tour of the huts.

The interior of these rooms was in that awkward stage where they appeared finished at a glance, but closer inspection revealed the many things left to do.

“I’d like to stay in one of these Dean… just for a few days,” Cas said softly as he looked around.

“Me too,” smiled Dean as he slid up behind him and wound his arms round the man’s trim waist.

“When the kids visit next summer… this is where they should stay.”

“Sure, Cas.”

“They’ve grown up so much. Do you think they’ll even want to come next year?”

“Of course they will. Why wouldn’t they?”

“I don’t know. I guess I’m just feeling them pull away a little.”

“Not hearing much from Jimmy?”

“Not the last few weeks.”

“He has a boyfriend now. That’s gonna take up his time and attention. He doesn’t love us any less.”

Cas nodded and swallowed hard. He missed the way Jimmy used to talk to him so much. But he understood. He recalled how much he’d pulled away from his friends and family when he first met Dean. That’s what it is to fall in love… you re-orientate yourself to a new gravitational pull. It isn’t easy to keep focus on anything else in your life when you’re first falling.

He smiled thinking of the early days with Dean. The intense thrill of his smile, his voice, his mere presence in Cas’ life. The fear of abandonment – that nagging feeling that it was all just too good to be true. The complications that came with coupling – trying to weave family and friends together as their lives meshed. It had all been so confusing, terrifying and so incredibly wonderful that he was almost wistful for it now.

Dean’s breath on his neck brought his mind back to the present. He smiled as he felt strong arms slide around him and realized that as enticing as those memories of their early days may be… he’d never trade off what he had now to get them back. He loved the life he had built with Dean. He loved the confidence he had now that he hadn’t known back then - the absolute certainty that they were meant for each other and loved each other and could really, truly trust each other.

They exited the last hut, no longer able to see Miguel’s men but still hearing them, and followed the boardwalk as it hooked away from the beach and into the jungle. At the edge of the trees, the manmade beach gave way to the swampy boggy area and they followed the boardwalk up a flight of stairs and out onto a platform that was the beginning of a series of catwalks that would carry them through the most narrow section of swamp and deposit them near the road at a “bus stop.” These were everywhere along the main road that circled the resort and staff drove the loop all day long in resort jeeps. Whenever someone was standing at a “stop” they’d pull over and take them on as passengers, following the loop around and eventually depositing the guests at whatever “stop” they were headed to.

Dean and Cas settled on a bench under a palm tree and waited. When they saw a green jeep pulling
up, they ambled over to it and climbed in the back. Since the jeeps all went clockwise – always, without exception – they never had to worry about collisions. They boys settled back and enjoyed the ride as they were shuttled the long way back to the Jet-Ski rental hut where they’d left their own jeep.

“Where to now?” asked Dean as he climbed in the driver’s seat.

“Let’s go over to the point.”

Dean nodded and eased them out onto the road, falling in behind another jeep. “What’s at the point?”

“I guess I’m hoping to get in on a game of volleyball.”

“Sounds good,” grinned Dean. He loved volleyball. He kicked ass at it, was the best on his team. And watching his man flex in swim trunks, sweating under a hot sun was just a perk. “Loser cooks dinner?” he goaded, knowing he would win.

“Loser gives head. Nobody’s cooking tonight,” Cas said firmly, secretly hopeful that he’d win this time.

“We need to make some changes to the house rules,” Sam said firmly as he settled onto a barstool and cracked open a can of Coke.

“Why do you say that?” asked Jess, pausing to look at him over the breakfast bar. She was working on getting dinner together, and Sam was watching her.

“Cause. The kids both have somebody now and every time I go upstairs – doors are shut and God only knows what’s happening behind those doors.”

Jess let out a lighthearted laugh. “They’re thirteen, Sam. I can tell you what’s going on behind those doors. A bunch of kissing and awkward fondling.”

“You’re right, I know. But it doesn’t take long for fondling to escalate. I think we need to set some limits to how much privacy we’re giving the twins,” Sam said firmly, “I mean, if for no other reason than to keep them from getting spoiled. Otherwise, when they get older – how will we put a stop to it when we KNOW there’s more than a little heavy petting going on?”

“You make a good point,” she conceded as she began chopping vegetables.

“Well, then, give me some ideas.”

“Ha!” she laughed. “Who put me in charge of ideas?”

“You did… fourteen years ago when you started having all the good ones.”

They were silent for a moment, contemplating.

“I don’t think they should be able to close the door if their girlfriend or boyfriend is over,” Sam said resolutely.
“That will only encourage them to not tell us who they’re seeing. It’ll be fairly obvious with John, but Jimmy could easily hide it if he wanted to and we’d never know.”

“I guess,” said Sam, defeated. “Maybe we should just stop letting their friends upstairs?”

“How would that even work, Sam?”

“We could give them a room down here… like the den… it doesn’t have a door. We’ll set up a nice entertainment center for them. It’s closer to the kitchen for snacks anyway…”

Jess laughed heartily, “You’re obsessed with the door thing!”

“That’s because I know what I used to do behind them,” he said, not mincing words.

“Alright, how bout this…” she said as she swiped his Coke and took a drink, “Whenever they have friends over, they aren’t allowed to close the door all the way. They have to leave it open a crack.”

“That works for me. If the door has to stay cracked, they’ll be careful about not letting things go too far. They won’t want to be walked in on.”

“Well then, problem solved,” she grinned.

“Are you making a dessert tonight?”

“I hadn’t thought of it,” she said as she resumed her chopping. “Does daddy have a request?”

Sam smiled at her innuendo and walked around the breakfast bar to slide up behind her, “Call me daddy again,” he whispered in her ear.

“Daddy, would you like dessert in bed tonight?”

“Fuck yes,” he said as he ran his tongue along the ticklish spot at the base of her jaw.

“Chocolate or strawberry?”

“Your choice, princess.”

Just as he was leaning in to suck a mark into her shoulder beneath her shirt, he heard the front door slam.

“Who’s here?” he called.

“John!”

“Come here,” called Sam as he crossed the kitchen towards the fridge.

Sam grabbed another can of Coke and tossed it across the room to John as he entered. “You gonna be around for dinner tonight?”

“Yeah, Jenny’s comin over round 8. Her mom’s dropping her off here after they get done school shopping. What time are we eating?” he asked as he popped the tab on his soda.

“Half an hour,” interjected Jess, swatting the boy on his bum when he walked by.

“K Mom. See ya,” he said as he bounded off.

“Have you heard from Jimmy?” he asked her – wondering if both boys would be at dinner.
“He’s upstairs.”

“Oh. And I thought we were alone,” he chuckled.

“Not in this house,” she teased. “Set the table?”

“Sure, princess.”

A bit later when they all sat down to eat, Sam broached the subject of the bedroom doors. He watched Jim and John turn to look at each other in disbelief.

“How?” John asked point-blank.

“You really need to explain this to you?” countered Sam.

“I do. Explain it to me,” his son pushed.

“I don’t want a bunch of hanky-panky goin’ on behind closed doors around here. This is home – not a pay by the hour hotel.”

“Sam!” chastised Jess. Then she turned to her boys and said, “What your father means, and didn’t say very well, is that you boys have come to an age where you’ll want to become sexually active. We, as your parents, are naturally opposed to you being in sexual relationships before you’re ready. So, until we agree that you’re ready, this new rule is being implemented to prevent an abuse of privacy.”

Sam had to hand it to her. She’d said it well. Like a mom. He, however, had lost his shit and said it like a surly old man. Did I really say hanky-panky?

John’s body went rigid with frustration over the new rule. It didn’t just curtail his run-of-the-bases with Jenny. It cut off his ability to roll up a towel under his door, open his window and smoke out with his friends while they played video games. He spent far more hours doing that than palming Jenny. He slumped in his chair.

Jimmy’s reaction was similar. He loved his time with Ian, but the loss of privacy was really the biggest concern. He felt a stab of anger, but pushed past it and sought to negotiate.

“I feel that this may be a bit restrictive,” he said, leveling a calm look back and forth between his parents. “Can I ask you to consider an alternative?”

“What do you propose?” asked Sam with interest. He had to appreciate the way the boy’s mind worked and the steady hand with which he negotiated. He’d make an excellent lawyer.

“I propose that when two people are alone in a room the door must remain open a crack. But when there’s three or more… we can still have our privacy.”

Sam looked at Jess. He couldn’t think of a reason to object. Clearly she couldn’t either. “You’re good, kid,” Sam said with a smile. “That’s fine.”

Both boys sighed in relief and John bumped Jimmy’s knee under the table as a show of gratitude for being smooth.

They all went back to their food and it was silent for a moment before Sam added, “We’ll be changing this rule if I suspect that you boys are coupling up in a room to make out and passing off the two couples as enough people to shut your door.”
“Eeww!” said both boys in unison.

He looked across the table and saw Jess cringing at his words.

“No dessert for me tonight, huh?” he laughed.

“I made brownies,” Jess responded with a smile, knowing the boys wouldn’t understand the secret meaning in his joke.

With the start of school, things settled back into routine. The summer weather faded slowly to fall and then the icy rains of winter.

The holidays were lovely as usual, Dean and Cas staying with Mary and spending time with the family. They all went out to get Christmas trees together, setting up Mary’s first and then driving a few blocks over to set up Sam and Jess’ tree.

Shopping with the twins was the highlight of the season for Dean and Cas. It was fun to hit the mall and the shops with them, stopping to eat in new places that had opened since they’d been home and sharing secrets about what everyone was getting for gifts – and what the boys’ lives were like now that they were in prep school.

Jimmy was doing well in basketball. He was JV, but he’d been given some playing time in a few of the varsity games and was pretty pumped about it. He’d planned on going out for track in the spring but didn’t care about the sport much – only doing it because Ian planned to do it.

Jenny had dumped John a few weeks before Christmas, and he seemed bluer about it than he cared to admit. Nothing seemed effective in cheering him, except Jimmy’s occasional arm around his shoulder as they walked.

John was doing all his same sports, but football was his favorite and it was over now. When Christmas Eve rolled around, everyone gathered at Mary’s place. Sam, Jess and the twins were there. So was Jess’ sister Nat who wasn’t quite as involved with the twins as Dean and Cas were – but was clearly part of their lives too. Anna and Michael came, bringing little Ben. “Little Ben” was a big handful, but his antics were the highlight of the night. Dean couldn’t help but notice how Anna glowed when she mothered him.

When the big day had passed, Cas and Dean spent the lull between Christmas and New Year visiting old friends and catching up with everyone’s lives. It’s what they did almost every year.

All their friends were doing well, but this year had seen the death of Pam’s grandmother – her last real family. It had clearly hit her hard, she wasn’t herself.

Robin and Gabe were announcing to family that they’d be having a baby, and it was cause for much celebration. At Robin’s age – this was going to be slightly risky but they seemed certain that all would be fine. Robin proclaimed often that women her age had healthy babies all the time.

“And thankfully, I’ve never actually grown up,” added Gabe with a laugh.

It was wonderful to see their old friends, especially Cole and Kim, who seemed truly happy raising their kids. Cole was still doing reserves so he’d kept in decent shape over the years and he played the role of authoritarian parent to a T. He reminded Dean a lot of John Winchester.
Back at the resort, the change of seasons was more subtle. Rainfall totals were the only real noticeable difference. That, and an overall increase in tropical storms. Without the changing seasons, it was only the calendar that marked the passage of time.

They wanted to plan a trip to Europe for their anniversary that year, but the more they talked about it, the longer the trip became. Soon, their trip to Europe had become a proposed year off work to sail around in the yacht and knock a bunch of stuff off their bucket lists, “while they still had the bodies to enjoy it all.”

It was decided not to leave in April, because they’d end up being gone over the summer and miss the boys. They had plans for all three to visit this year. First the twins for the month of July and then Ben for the first two weeks of August.

In the end, they decided to leave in September for their big trip and to still get back to Frisco for Christmas - which would be the end of their trip. It wasn’t the year of traveling they’d tried to plan, but they were both satisfied with what they’d be seeing on the trip.

Dean, especially, was thrilled at the thought of week after week after week of uninterrupted time on their yacht – with a loose plan of what they’d be seeing but no real time constraints or schedules. It would be a new kind of adventure with Cas, and he was looking forward to it with a quiver of excitement that he hadn’t felt in a long time.

When July rolled around, Dean and Cas flew home to collect the twins. However, they’d had to make some adjustments to the usual summer trip. John was back with Jenny and wanted to bring her. Jimmy wanted to bring Ian too. Jenny’s mother would not allow her to make the trip with only Dean and Cas as chaperones since she didn’t know them, so Jess and Sam had agreed that they’d spend summer vacation at the resort with the kids. That had set Jenny’s parents’ minds at ease because they trusted Jess.

So, Dean and Cas had set up the huts on the water with no other guests. They had all six units to themselves and that ensured, they thought, that no guests would be affected by antics of the teens.

Jim and John would have the first hut to themselves. Dean and Cas would have the next one, and Jenny would have her own. Sam and Jess would be next door and on their other side would be Ian on his own. They were pretty spread out, but it was preferable to the original plan which had been for Jenny and Jimmy to bunk in with Sam and Jess while John and Ian stayed with Dean and Cas.

If they’d been using the treehouse suites, that arrangement would’ve been plenty spacious. But Cas and Jess presented a united front that they wanted to stay in the huts on the water and there was simply no way to sleep more than two in each hut. That was truly all they were built for. These were really for couples. No kids had ever stayed here.

The kids kept them laughing through the entire plane ride and by the time they’d settled into the huts… the adults needed a nap. They sent the kids down the boardwalk to get their dinner at the restaurant and enjoy the watersports while they rested.
Later, as the sun was sinking lower in the sky, the adults joined them. Sam, Dean and Cas were immediately pulled into zip lining with the youngsters while Jess settled into a chair and nursed a frozen drink. She kicked her feet up on the railing as she faced out over the water and enjoyed the show. One by one, the teen boys and the wannabe-teen boys launched themselves down the zip line and hurled into the water. Even Jenny was joining in. When the sun had set, most of the beach cleared out, but the activity in the restaurant swelled.

Jess watched as wet tourists, her husband and sons included, came padding in on bare feet. Food was ordered and as the evening progressed and the music swelled, dancing broke out. Dean nodded to her that this was normal. She wasted no time pulling Sam out there and wrapped her arms around him in a way that was far flirtier than Jess ever really got near her kids.

Clearly, she was in a vacation mindset. Jim and John didn’t notice anyway. The boys and their partners had moved to the pool table. Dean watched for a moment as John put a hand on the small of Jenny’s back and leaned in to whisper something in her ear. Blissfully unaware of being watched, he easily slid that hand lower and hitched his thumb into the back of her shorts. He toyed easily with the line of her panties which was now slightly exposed from the weight of his hand.

Jimmy was bent over the pool table with Ian behind him. The pretense of teaching Jimmy to line up the shot was fooling no one.

“Damn,” said Dean with a chuckle as he looked over at Cas, “these boys… we’re actually gonna have to watch them.”

“I know. Look at John…” marveled Cas, “… he knows what he’s doin’, doesn’t he!”

“He’s his father's son!” cajoled Sam as he slid in next to them.

“You’ve had one dance, Sasquatch, how are you sweating?”

“Dude, it’s 105 at night here,” he laughed. “My yoga lovin’ wife is outlastin’ me.”

Jess was at the bar, waiting on a drink and swiveling her hips with the music. Sam and Jess left shortly after the next round… clearly hoping to be alone for a while before the rest of them came back to the cabins.

Dean and Cas finally swooped in around ten and told the kids they were expected to be back in their own cabins by midnight and that they would be checked on.

“Aww… c’mon Uncle Dean,” wheedled John. “You guys have never felt you needed to check on us before.”

“Yes, we have,” he laughed. “Ever since you two went skinny dippin’ after hours with stolen rum we’ve been checkin’ on your pink asses.”

“One time,” laughed John.

“Sometimes once is all it takes,” teased Cas – tossing a glance at Dean (for whom that saying had been invented).

“Here,” said Dean, thrusting his drink into John’s hands, “That’s the extent of your alcohol for the evening. No stealing. Got it?”

“Thanks!” John said as he raised the glass to his lips.
“I guess you can finish that pitcher on our table too,” said Cas, looking at the rest of the bunch, “but don’t tell anyone. I’ll just deny it anyway,” he joked.

Dean and Cas walked back towards the huts alone. Once they walked through the grove of trees separating the hub from the huts, things grew quiet. Not wanting to hear anything gross from Sam and Jess’ cabin, they passed by it. They walked all the way to the end of the huts and then took off their shoes, leaving them on the boardwalk in a pile with their clothes and slid into the water naked, under the light of a partial moon. The water was calm, like glass, and the moonlight sparkled on its surface.

With this entire section of beach rented only to them, there wasn’t a soul around to catch them off guard as they played together. They swam around the shallow warm water, teasing one another and toying with each other until they were tired. Then they just floated there – watching the moon. They talked softly about things as their skin slowly puckered up like raisins.

The primary topic of conversation for the last few months had been the Farmers Direct Loan Company. So, despite the vacation vibe that surrounded them as they lazied in tropical waters, that’s what they mostly talked about.

The business had opened its doors less than sixty days ago and had been far more difficult to manage than they’d anticipated. Its problems had been overwhelming in the initial stages but it seemed to be calming a bit now. Cas had cut back his hours at the resort and begun keeping an office at Farmers Direct, which wasn’t originally how they’d planned it. But it had been effective. Cas giving things his undivided attention had been what was needed, evidently.

Dean asked Cas if he had any reservations about leaving on their big trip with the company so new. Cas shook his head, “It’s not like we’re going to Siberia,” he joked. “They’ll be able to contact us when problems come up. So will the family. It’ll all be fine.”

Dean felt reassured and leaned back again in the water, just floating there and watching the brightly lit stars above. Cas took his hand and maneuvered him around in the water, swirling him slowly. With his buzz still strong, Dean found it very pleasant to watch the stars circling above as his lover moved him easily with a gentle hand.

When his eyes wandered over and saw Cas’ bare chest, washed pale blue in the moonlight, he dropped his feet to the sandy bottom and moved to embrace him. Their chests came together then, beads of water rolling down as Dean pressed into his lover and kissed him, bodies both hard and wanting.

They emerged from the water slowly, stopping for occasional kisses as moved on silent feet down the boardwalk. They kept their clothes and shoes under their arms, smiles passing between them when their eyes met. The breeze was warm and lazy in the palm fronds overhead and the moon was just bright enough to light their way.

As they entered their hut both men dropped their armfuls of clothing near the door and moved deeper into the room. The hut was a large square, and the walls were banked with windows on all three sides that were exposed to water. The windows were open and the night air moved easily through the room, ghosting the curtains as it whispered through. In the center of the room, a large circular bed hung from the ceiling. It didn’t touch the floor anywhere – suspended from the rafters with heavy rope. If they bumped it when they walked by, it would move out of their way. Billowing gently around the bed was light mosquito netting.

In one corner of the room was a small table and two chairs. In another corner was a small dresser and honor bar with a flat screen TV anchored above it. In another corner was the bathroom.
complete with a jetted tub and rain shower.

If they moved through the French doors – there was a hammock strung up on the balcony that looked out over the lagoon. Even though the water was quite still tonight, the sound of it gently ebbing against the pilings could be heard as the two men moved towards the bed quietly.

Dean held the soft white netting aside for Cas who smiled as he crawled into the bed. It swayed under his weight and Dean followed, swinging into it as it moved and crawling up next to his lover. They lay in the middle together and for a moment they just held each other and watched the room spinning dizzily around them. As their swinging lost momentum and slowed, Dean rolled over and covered Cas with his own body, the two of them writhing together until their hips, cocks and legs settled in comfortably.

“This bed is a trip Cas.”

“You like it.”

“Yeah.”

“It’s quiet here,” whispered Cas.

“Doesn’t mean we have to be,” Dean countered as he slid his hands up Cas’ smooth chest.

“Kid’s will be back at midnight.”

“That gives us almost an hour,” he replied as his fingers worked Cas’ firm nipples.

“We won’t need that long.”

“We’ll see.” Dean said in a deep voice as he brought his tongue down on Cas’ nipple and sucked it roughly.

Cas rolled a little, shifting his weight into Dean. The man wrapped an arm around Cas’ waist, pulling him forward and arching his back in the process. The movement was sensual against Dean's body and it also started the bed moving again. They both smiled at the novelty of it. Dean’s lips traveled over the soft skin of his lover's stomach, dragging his tongue across it. When he journeyed downward, he picked up the treasure trail and followed the soft hairs south. As he got lower, he noticed the skin was more moist and he could smell Cas’ musky, manly scent hanging between his legs. Dean's heartbeat accelerated just getting a whiff of it, and he began licking down in earnest.

He pressed lower and lower until his nose was bumping against a plump cock. Dean began wetting it with his tongue as it swelled for him and smiled as he felt Cas’ hands on his body, urging him to bring his own thickening sex up into a sixty-nine position. He couldn’t hold back his groan. Cas took him into his mouth with tenderness, but it didn’t take long for his man to start getting greedy.

Dean could feel it too – that burning need to have your lover do dirty things to you. Images flashed behind his eyelids in the dark. He could see Cas bent double beneath him, ass cheeks pink from being spanked. The image changed and now it was Cas, bound by wrists and ankles to the thick ropes that supported the bed. Next he saw his own fingers pressing into Cas’ tight entrance and he could practically feel it in his groin.

“Oh Cas,” he whispered, “the things I’m gonna do to you in this room.”

Cas pulled his mouth off of Dean's wet cock and said, “promise you’ll fuck me Dean, hard and
“Oh yeah. I’m gonna tie you up too.”

“…and spank me?”

“Whip you,” Dean said firmly as he planted a firm slap to Cas’ ass cheek. The snapping noise filled their hut and no doubt carried out over the water. Good thing there was no one in any of the neighboring huts. No one anywhere near.

“Whip me?”

“Yeah Cas, I’m gonna put red lash across your perfect ass. You won’t sit for week without thinking of me.”

“Suck me, Dean. Suck my dick,” Cas said harshly as he shoved Dean's head down between his legs.

Dean’s junk flooded with blood and thickened up more from being bossed around. He obediently put his mouth over Cas and dropped down – taking as much as he could and shoving himself down onto it. His eyes were already watering from the strain of it. And he loved it. Cas’ hand was heavy on the back of his head and just to test the waters, Dean held off for a moment.

Cas wasn’t having it. He shoved Dean's head down and there was no use fighting it. Dean surrendered and let his man repeatedly gag him on heavy flesh. Cas was sucking Dean down too, and their bodies were moving together as they slurped and sucked.

Dean's nose met coarse hair again and again and his jaw ached as he held it open. The back of his throat was bruised already and Cas just kept going. He wanted to protest, but even the thought of struggling turned him on more. He reached his hand back and gripped his lover's ass cheek tightly, shoving him deeper and deeper down his throat.

Cas pulled off Dean's dick for a second to catch his breath. “So good for me Dean,” he praised before sliding right back down on Dean's thick cock with a moan of appreciation.

Dean couldn’t even nod. He slurped around his man's crown and held his ground as he swallowed. As soon as he relaxed, he was impaled again. He felt Cas snake an arm around his hips and arched his back, anticipating the finger that was surely going in. Just when he thought he was going to lose his mind, there was a loud banging at the door.

The men immediately pulled off of each other and looked towards the door. The banging came again. They could hear laughter now too.

“Curfew!” shouted one of the boys.

Dean looked at Cas. They were completely still – but the bed was circling gracefully from their previous movements. Cas shrugged and Dean scooted down to the edge of the round bed and put two feet on the floor. He steadied it with his hand before stepping away from it and wrapping himself in a sheet. He grabbed his phone from his pile of clothes on the floor.

“Curfew!” shouted several voices together.

Dean swiped his thumb over the screen and checked the time. “Bullshit. It’s 11:25, you’ve got over half an hour - now go play!” he shouted.
The banging came again. “It’s a small hut Uncle Dean. How long does it take you to get to the door?”

*That has to be John* –thought Dean.

Over on the bed Cas snickered.

“Come on guys! Open up!” and they were banging again.

Dean moved to the door and answered it wrapped in his toga. “You kids have somethin’ against us sleepin’? We’re old men. We need to rest.”

“Yeah. We heard you sleepin’,” mocked John with a shit-eating grin, “C’mon out. We’re goin’ swimming. Don’t you wanna come?”

Despite being interrupted at something pretty fun, Dean had to admit it… he wanted to go with them. He turned to the bed and saw Cas struggling to get out of it. He chuckled as he turned back to the door.

“Alright, fuckers. We’ll be out in two minutes.”

A chorus of cheers went up amongst the teens and that’s when Dean realized there were more than just the twins and their dates. They had made friends at the bar. Dean grinned as he watched them scamper off down the boardwalk. He looked back the other way – towards Sam and Jess’ hut and saw the couple staggering blearily out onto the boardwalk.

Dean stepped back inside and shut the door tightly. He took two steps to his duffel and found his swim trunks. Cas was already stepping into his. Dean watched as Cas lit a joint and took a puff. Dean took one too. They hit once more as Dean grabbed drinks from the honor bar. They were about to crush it out when there was another knock on the door.

“Dean?”

“Sam?”

“Yeah.”

“Come in.” he said, exhaling the sweet scent of weed onto his brother and sister-in-law.

“Perfect,” said Sam as he stepped up to inhale.

“Does this happen often?” questioned Jess.

“What?” asked Dean innocently, “me and Cas smokin’ a joint? Or the kids waking us up in the middle of the damn night?”

“The kids,” she laughed as Sam passed the goods to her.

“The kids do this shit all the time,” interjected Cas as Jess took a dainty hit. “We love it.”

“They catch you at a bad time?” Sam asked him as he hit once more and passed back to his wife.

“Yeah,” laughed Dean tossing them each a mini bottle of rum, “You too?”

“Yeah,” Jess laughed. “I’m so embarrassed. I think they heard us.”
“They hear you all the time,” laughed Cas – filter not working right because of the weed, “Jimmy can hear you guys through the vent in his room.”

“Are you shittin’ me?” Sam half screeched. Both he and Jess looked stunned.

Cas looked like a deer caught in headlights, now that his brain had caught up to his words.

Dean swooped in. He slapped Cas on the back and said, “Good job, Cas. You’ve just taken them from slightly embarrassed to completely mortified.” Then he addressed Sam, “Yeah man, Jimmy hears you guys. Insulate that McMansion, wouldja?”

The four of them burst out laughing. Dean took one last hit and then crushed out the roach. They popped the lids on their mini bar bottles and clinked them together, “Cheers!” they all laughed.

“We’re off to a great start!” laughed Jess as they exited the hut and headed down the boardwalk. It was easy to follow the voices of youthful laughter and squealing. When they arrived on the beach, they headed out into the water, still nursing their little bottles. A game of chicken was promptly started. It didn’t last too long before the old folks were shot out. Eventually the wild thrashing of chicken was traded for the calmer, quieter game of Marco Polo. It was quite late when the grown-ups tucked into bed.

The next morning, Dean woke up with a warm, wet mouth on his cock. He groaned and stretched. Cas didn’t miss a beat, sucking him deeper as his length grew with the attention.

“Cass,” he croaked, throat raw from Cas’ dick the night before and too much swallowed salt water, “S’good Cas, so good.” He praised.

Just then he heard splashing outside their window followed by voices. Both he and Cas were instantly quiet, realizing the windows were still open. They rolled off the bed which swung back and forth as they stepped away from it. Both men pressed their faces to the screen and looked around. The kids were snorkeling about ten yards away from their hut. Their faces were in the water, so clearly the men hadn’t been heard (again). Dean chuckled and said, “Thank fuck we didn’t have kids of our own Cas. We don’t have the ability to keep quiet for them.”

Cas laughed softly and said, “If we had kids full time, we’d probably get used to it. But we’ve never had to learn to be quiet.”

They stood there – watching Jenny and John move slowly past their window and out deeper into the lagoon. Off in the distance, Cas could spot two more sets of snorkel fins and plastic vent tubes protruding from the water. He assumed it was Jimmy and Ian. He couldn’t be sure though. It could just as easily have been Sam and Jess out there. The men exchanged quick and quiet hand jobs before grabbing their wet trunks from the floor and tugging them on. Then they stepped out onto the back deck of their hut and leapt into the water. Stealthily they swam up on John and grabbed his ankles to scare the shit out of him. As he choked on salty sea water they laughed in his face telling him paybacks are a bitch. It felt great to have the upper hand for a half-second. But both Dean and Cas knew it wouldn’t last.
The weeks of vacation passed too quickly. The boys were having the time of their lives, and so were their guests. Jenny and John were clearly very much in love and seemed to come out to the quiet section of beach each night at sunset to walk hand in hand. On some level, Dean knew that John was doing this to placate Jenny… make it a nice memory for her. Everyone knew that girls liked that kind of romantic shit.

But when he watched John with the girl, he really didn’t see the urgency to be alone together that most youngsters had. That, if nothing else, solidified in his mind that the two were sleeping together. Probably had been for quite a while. Since they were just starting their sophomore year, Dean thought them a bit young. But then again, he had been young when he’d started getting laid, too (and far less monogamous).

John and Jenny were a couple and they were clearly doing more than just sucking face and bumping uglies. They were happy together. It was easy to see. And Dean had to admit he was happy for John. He knew the odds were against the two actually settling down together when they grew up. Even if they stayed together two more years – college would tear them apart.

But for now, they were happy, and Dean was happy for them. As he walked back to his hut, he made a mental note to talk to John at some point over this trip and be sure that the two of them were being safe in their activities.

Cas was the one to talk to Jimmy. The two still had a way with each other, and when Jimmy told Cas that he and Ian weren’t fucking, Cas believed him. He’d admitted to doing most everything else but assured him that the dirtiest deed had been left undone.

Unfortunately, Jimmy had to suffer through Cas’ sex talk anyway. It wasn’t nearly as detailed or insightful as the one his parents had likely given him, but Cas felt obligated to provide the gay version of it since he doubted that Sam and Jess had thought much about the differences.

Aside from the sex talks, it was a lovely summer. At one point, the boys had taken a jeep with all the kids packed into it and driven around to the beach on the East side of the island. They wanted to give Sam and Jess a night alone so they drove out onto the deserted end of the beach near the runway and let the kids take turns driving it. That had been a fun night, laughing and teasing as they rotated drivers. They’d stayed out there taking turns for the entire evening. Near sunset they’d started doing donuts, and that’s when their nephews were cut off.

They all swam for a bit in the waning light and then as the sun slipped behind the horizon they all climbed back in the jeep and headed down to the tiki bar on the point. Dean and Cas slipped the kids a few drinks and stepped away to let them dance and have their time. The men just poked around the beach and enjoyed the evening air. They linked hands and wandered down the beach, talking of old times and future plans. When they stopped to turn around, Dean leaned in and kissed Cas. When they broke apart, neither moved. Cas was staring out at the sea as the waves rolled in, and Dean was looking over his man's shoulder at the tiki bar in the distance. The sound of reggae music carried softly on the breeze and it had Dean feeling lighthearted. He put his hand to Cas' hip and pulled him into a little dance.

They didn’t dance for long, just for the rest of that one song. But Dean smiled inside. Because it was something he would never have done years ago. But now, he was different. When he felt like dancing he danced. Critics be damned. And when he felt like holding his man's hand – he reached out and took it.

Life is too short to deny yourself these things. He knew that now. As they swayed together in the
dark on their beach, Dean pressed his lips to the scruff on the side of Cas’ face. He felt the man smile, and he did too.

The following week, the entire group also took several days together on the yacht and went over to Roatan, which was still Jess’ favorite activity. They shopped for souvenirs and ate at good local spots.

They snorkeled the reef from both sides and sailed round the island to the various points of interest and everyone had a blast. Sometimes they’d just throw inner tubes over the side and swim in the shallows. Jumping from the upper deck was a favorite pastime of the youngsters, but Dean and Cas didn’t join now. Dean afraid for his knee and Cas not interested if Dean wasn’t going.

The morning of the last day, they were all at the restaurant on the lagoon having breakfast. The kids had run off and the adults were speaking quietly about the summer, the kids, and life in general. John raced up behind his father and shook his wet head over the man to sprinkle him with cold water. “Hey! I’ve already packed, John. This is my only shirt. Settle it down!”

“C’mon, I’m here to help,” the boy announced with a smirk. “You’re over here whining about how old you are. I can hear you clear over there!” he gestured. “Wanna feel young again, old man?” John taunted his father.

“That’s what you always say right before you hurt my back somehow,” he chuckled.

“Oh relax, I’m just gonna get you wet… you and all the other old farts. C’mon” he said to the table, “We’re jumpin from the roof!”

“What?” said Dean and Cas in unison.

“The roof – the platform – we’ve jumped from it. It’s fun!” said John as he tugged on his father's arm.

“You too Uncle Cas!” shouted Jimmy as he jogged over to the table, “C’mon, Uncle Dean, get up!”

The boys roused them and tugged them along as they protested, but resistance was futile. “Come ON!” shouted the boys as they tugged the men toward the steps that led to the roof.

Jenny giggled and dropped down at the table with Jess to wait and watch. They could hear the group clambering up the steps and then the loud countdown of 3-2-1.

Jess’ jaw dropped as she sat near the balcony of the restaurant and watched the silhouettes of half a dozen men – young and old alike – leap from overhead. There was some swearing and hollering and then the inevitable series of splashes.

The girls laughed as John, Jim and Ian led Dean, Cas and Sam past them and back to the roof. They launched away from the building in a flying leap from the rooftop platform and then fell like cannonballs into the lagoon. Again.

No one yelled for help, so Jess relaxed in her chair assuming they’d all made it. She smiled at
Jenny and then a few minutes later, the rag-tag group dropped in around her at the table – all of them shaking their wet heads on the girls, who squealed in laughter.

A short time later, they were all belted into the plane and Dean was taking off. It was time to go home. The trip had been wonderful, as usual. But there was a sweet sadness to it, too. Dean was very aware that things were changing. The boys weren’t going to be boys much longer. They were growing up. They would soon be men. A few short summers were all that was left.

Dean was certain that the family would always summer here in some capacity. But soon the boys would be bringing spouses, not friends, and they would have their own children to tend to. A very joyful era was coming to a close. He tried to console himself that soon Ben would be spending his summers here… starting next week actually. But it didn’t help.

Cas’ hand slid to his thigh and when Dean looked over at his man, he saw understanding in those unchanging blue eyes. They were probably both thinking the same thing. Dean reached down and laid his hand over Cas’ and smiled at him. His eyes felt wet, but he didn’t let a tear roll out. He just kept smiling, because no matter how bittersweet it was that the twins were growing up, he still had adventures in front of him. And the love of his life to share them with.
Dean savored the crisp salty air as he leaned over the rail of the yacht. They’d been anchored here since last night. When the sun started coming up, Dean had left Cas sleeping in bed and wandered up to the back deck to have his coffee outside and see the area fully for the first time. His eyes swept the tantalizing vista before him and watched the boats, large and small, passing them by.

The temperature was perfect, the breeze gentle and the water inviting. Cliffs towered overhead, covered in lush vegetation. There were dwellings cut into the cliff face and from this vantage they appeared to be stacked on top of one another, reaching high into the bluffs, beautiful in their pastel colors. Cas had been so right. Dean was loving this trip. They’d only been in Europe for a few weeks and already he was astounded by what he’d seen.

Greece had been amazing. The beaches they’d been to had no equal that Dean had ever seen. They’d tired themselves out each day, mostly swimming and climbing. When Dean had asked Cas what they would see in Greece, the man had said simply, “beaches.”

Dean had given a nod and paid the matter no further thought. But their time there had been eye opening for Dean. He’d been enthralled as they kayaked through grottos and rock formations along the coasts of the tiny islands that seemed to go on forever. He’d loved the architecture too… the white wash of it cut against the azure backdrop, always cool and inviting in the heat.

Cas confessed he hadn’t planned on seeing much for sights on land since Dean wasn’t really into Greek mythology or history, and Cas had already seen so much. But Dean had enthusiastically gone out of their way, braving crowds and sunburn to tour numerous temples and historical icons and been fascinated with what they’d seen.

The food had been incredible and the liquor strong. The locals were a charming variety of happy, hilarious and ornery drunks that he enjoyed mixing with. And, considering the flair for drama within the culture, it was no surprise to Dean why Cas loved it here. All in all, this trip was off to a splendid start with Dean enjoying it far more than he had ever imagined.

Cas had summered in Europe as he’d grown up. So, he knew exactly what places he most wanted to visit and what Dean would enjoy while they were there. He had to respect Cas for the way he was handling Dean too. He’d given Dean very short answers to his questions about where they’d be going and what they’d be doing. Now, for Dean, the trip came down to this: Greece=beaches, France=nude beaches and pastries, Italy=scenery and food, Germany=Castles, Austria=Castles and Mountains, the Netherlands=Red Light District. He had to hand it to Cas. The man knew how to “speak Dean.”

They’d arrived in Italy now, and this was their first stop. Dean couldn’t remember the name of this little seaside town they’d come to explore, but Cas had said he’d been here as a child once and always remembered it. Dean had been leery of Italy, having assumed it to be analogous to snobbery. Cas had informed him that France would likely take the grand prize for pretentiousness. Then he’d unapologetically told Dean there were snobs everywhere – even SF – and he needed to
get over it. To this he had nodded assent and agreed to stop bitching and go to both Italy and France when it was time.

Today, Dean would be getting his first real taste of Italy (aside from his stateside jaunts to the Olive Garden). He wondered again what the name of this place was and turned back towards the cabin to wake Cas and ask him.

Dean moved quietly through the yacht and entered the room he’d shared with Cas for almost a year while they’d built their resort long ago. It was looking “lived in” these days. No longer the only yacht in their fleet but definitely the oldest, it was worn a bit and the décor was a little out of style. But to Dean it was still home. Probably because they’d lived on board for so long and made such good memories of it. Even now, given the choice between this and a newer vessel, he and Cas always seemed to choose this one.

The room was still darkened since the sun was just coming up and there were no artificial lights on. But he could see Cas’ silhouette on the bed. The man was sitting cross legged on the bed with his back to Dean. He appeared to be hunched over and looking at something intently, but as Dean stepped closer he saw Cas’ laptop closed on the bed in front of him. Cas was hunched over and… was he? Yes, he was crying.

“Cas? What is it?” he asked as he slid onto the bed behind him.

Cas didn’t speak, but he let Dean lean in and wrap arms around him.

“Cas, you’re scaring me. What’s happened?” he pressed, his mind already racing toward possible emergencies.

Cas shook his head gently and Dean could feel him trying to calm himself. “Talk to me, man,” he said firmly.

“It’s Zar,” said Cas, breaking again, “he’s, he’s gone.”

“Gone?”

“He died.”

Dean immediately tightened his hold on his lover, leaning in and resting his cheek against Cas’. “I’m so sorry, man, really. I am.”

“Thank you, Dean,” Cas answered softly through his tears.

“How’d it happen?”

“Heart attack.”

Dean didn’t speak again. He just held Cas and rocked him a little, hoping to ease the sting of it. Dean knew Cas had a soft spot for his former flame.

“They say heart attack…” volunteered Cas, “…when someone like Zar dies. But I know what that really means.”

Dean nodded. He knew too. Men like Zar died because they’d done so much cocaine that their hearts couldn’t keep up anymore. It’s not specifically an overdose, so that isn’t what goes on the death certificate. It’s a heart attack. But that’s just a symptom of the larger problem: the natural limits of the body. It can only take so much, ride high for so long. That’s why men who lived like
Balthazar did usually died in their late forties or early fifties. Their bodies just can’t go the distance because they’ve been wrung out in their youth.

There are a lucky few who live hard AND live long. But for most, the hard living catches up. Dean stayed with Cas while he mourned and let his mind wander to pass the time. He thought of how strange death can be, taking one and leaving another who lived harder and more recklessly. Or claiming someone good and honest while it left a scoundrel alive to scourge the Earth. It was strange.

As his mind wandered, Dean closed his eyes for a few moments and thanked the powers that be for Cas; that the man had quit the hard stuff at young enough age that Dean didn’t really need to worry about losing Cas this way.

When the man grew quiet, Dean stood and moved around the bed to face Cas, sliding the laptop out of the way so he could sit down and look him in the eye. The poor guy looked ragged with his puffy eyes. “Do you want to go to the funeral?”

“No,” Cas said softly, “It’s going to be difficult to get back quickly enough to make it anyway. And I don’t think he’d expect me to go. I mean, he’d be sad if I died, too, but he wouldn’t fly across the Atlantic to attend my service.”

“What can I do for you?” Dean asked him quietly.

“You’re doing it,” he answered. “Just hold me. Maybe distract me for a few days until this passes.”

“Can do,” Dean said as he embraced him and rubbed Cas’ back lovingly. “By the way, I forgot where we are again.”

Cas laughed through his weeping eyes and told Dean for the third time in about seven hours, “Positano.”

****

Sam looked over at Jess from the driver's seat. “You look beautiful.”

“Thank you,” she said as she looked around behind her towards the back of the minivan where the twins and their dates were talking amongst themselves. The van was crammed full, presents stacked in the back and each passenger carrying something on their laps. “Do you guys remember how we used to count Christmas trees as a game?” she asked them.

They barely took time out from their conversations to acknowledge her question and then resumed their boisterous discussion. She returned her attention to Sam. “Little shits,” she muttered.

Sam smiled and shot her a wink, “I’m glad you made us all come out shopping together. The chances to do things as a family are running out.”

“Like they noticed,” she laughed. “The only time they even spoke to us is when they needed money or food.”
“You got a hug,” he said in a fatherly tone.

“In exchange for a $50,” she retorted.

“You had fun,” he pressed.

“I know.”

“I may have picked you up something today,” he said mysteriously.

“Do I have to wait til Christmas to open it?”

“I’m not going to wrap it,” he said, lifting his eyebrows in a devious manner. “I’m going to put batteries in it.”

She zipped her lip and faced straight ahead, smirking. Jess remained silent, contemplating the evening’s activities, as Sam negotiated the holiday traffic.

As they were exiting the freeway, Sam interrupted her daydreams, “My brother got in today. Wanna stop by Mom’s on the way home and say hello?”

“Absolutely,” she grinned.

Sam raised his voice over the din and asked, “You boys wanna swing by Grandma’s and see your uncles? They just got here.”

The boys hollered their yeses and then returned to their own conversations. When they pulled in, everyone spilled out onto the driveway and dashed through the icy rain to the front door. Mary hugged everyone warmly and ushered them in. The house was warm and inviting, smelling of fresh baked goods. The decorations were up, with the exception of the tree, which they had plans to go and get on Saturday afternoon. The twins had Ian and Jenny with them, which was normal, and both guests had been to Mary’s enough to be comfortable there.

As they spilled into the living room, Dean and Cas leapt up to hug the boys, and Sam watched as the two boys lit up. Suddenly, the kids he couldn’t drag two words out of in the van were animated and involved and gobbling up the attention of their uncles.

Mary circulated the room, taking coats doling out treats. It didn’t take long for everyone to be comfortably seated with cups of hot cider in their hands. The frenzy of hugs had settled down and the kids had all returned to their closed-off conversations with their faces glued to their electronic devices. That’s when Sam finally got to catch up with Dean.

“So… how was the trip?” he asked, genuinely interested to know.

“Fan-freakin-tastic!” responded Dean with a wide smile, “Never thought I’d like Europe so much. But Cas knows how to show a man a good time.”

Cas smiled warmly at the praise and put his arm around Mary who had just settled down next to him on the sofa. “Ask your son what his second-favorite stop was.”

“Oh,” she played along, “Dean, what was your second favorite stop?”

“Austria.”

She nodded and asked, “Do I want to know your most favorite stop?”
“No,” Dean and Cas said in unison. Dean gave Sam the fish-eye, and Sam knew instantly that there was a story there.

“Ok, then,” grinned Mary, “tell me about Austria!”

Dean spoke for quite a while about his favorite things. He had loved Salzburg castle and talked about it in detail with Mary who seemed captivated. He went on to describe their time in Innsbruck Altstadt, a uniquely timeless village tucked against the Alpine mountain range. Dean had been immediately fascinated with the architecture, and he and Cas had spent several days there exploring.

Sam watched Dean come to life as he described for their mother the wonders of Austrian workmanship and design, the indescribable beauty of the mountains and the charming quirks of the locals. He wanted to take his hat off to Cas. Who else would’ve ever been able to dig deep enough in his brother to pull out this small but real part of Dean that was capable of marveling over foreign cultures?

Dean told Mary about Schonbrunn Palace, where they’d spent an entire day. It was a sprawl of grandeur like he’d never seen and was also home to a maze and labyrinth as well as the oldest zoo in the world.

Sam watched his mother take in the differences in Dean. His brother had been slowly changing all his life, as we all do, but this trip had clearly meant something to him. It had helped him discover something new in himself, though Sam couldn’t put his finger on what. But it was intriguing to see his brother lit up over something wholly new and unexpected to him.

When Mary excused herself to the kitchen for a moment, Sam leaned in and whispered, “Tell me the number one spot.”

“Amsterdam,” said Dean, with a twinkle in his eyes. Ok. So, some things could be counted on with his brother. Titties and good times will always win the blue ribbon if Dean is judging. He had to laugh out loud.

The holidays that year were wonderful. Sam had taken some extra time off to enjoy the festivities. He confided to Jess that he was feeling their time with the boys grow short. She could feel it too. Their child-like enthusiasm was gone. They were growing up.

Rather than mourn what was lost, Sam focused on enjoying things in the present tense. And he went out of his way to include the boys’ partners and friends so they would enjoy it more. The time flew by, and it was New Years before he even knew it.

The night before Dean and Cas left, they all got together to play games like the old days. Even Nat joined them and some of their old friends. They drank and played until the wee hours of the mourning.

The next day, Sam came by without Jess and the kids, just craving a few minutes alone with Dean before his brother would fly out again. He even helped him carry bags to the airport shuttle.

“My big-shot brother is flying commercial?” Sam goaded him.

“Fuck-yeah. Long damn flight to Vienna. Dramamine and whiskey. I’m gonna sleep the fuck through it.”

“Vienna?”
“Yeah. We wanted a little more time than we’d planned on. We’re going back to Austria for another week or two and then back to France, that’s where we left the yacht. Cas wants me to see Paris in January and then we’re gonna get back on the yacht and head for Morocco. That’s our last stop in the Mediterranean.”

“ Seriously,” said Sam, “who are you and what have you done with my brother?”

Dean clapped Sam on the shoulder and laughed. “I’m still me. I’ll take you to the titty bar if you need proof.”

“Maybe next trip,” he said as he pulled Dean into a hug. “Make it soon okay? Like, before next Christmas?”

“You got it.” Dean said as he pulled away.

Cas came up behind them and tossed one last bag into the van. Sam watched his brother hug his mother and then wrap an arm around Cas and pull him into the shuttle. The two were all smiles.

Mary came and wrapped an arm around Sam as they watched the shuttle pull out of the driveway.

“I miss them already,” she sighed.

“Me too,” he said, pulling her tighter. “Me too.”

*****

It was spring and the weather was much improved. Sam looked out the window and smiled at the sunny day outside his window. Then he looked back at the road in front of him and cursed, “Dammit Jim! Watch what you’re doing!”

“What? What did I do?”

“That was a stop sign you just flew past!” shouted Sam, flustered with the driving lesson. “Pull over. Pull the hell over! I can’t take anymore!”

“Jeez Dad, relax.”

“Relax. Sure. You’ve almost killed us twice in the last hour! Now you’re not even paying attention! You’re done for the day.”

“Can I have a turn now?” prodded John from the back.

“Fuck no,” Sam said wearily, “I need an aspirin and a stiff drink. We’re goin’ home.”

Sam could feel his pulse in his ears. He was already regretting his language and temper. Perhaps it would be best to just let Jess do the driving lessons. Clearly he wasn’t cut out for it. With each second that one of the boys spent behind the wheel, he was more certain that letting either of them drive anywhere was a death sentence.

When Jim pulled into a gas station and parked, they rearranged seats and Sam took over driving.
The boys were quiet in the back seat for a beat and he thought perhaps they felt bad for pushing him to the limit of his patience, but no. The twins just didn’t seem to care…

“Can we stop at McDonalds?”

Sam bit his tongue. _Fuck my life_ – he thought as he face palmed.

“Rough driving lesson?” Jess asked when he flopped down on the bed.

“You have no idea.”

She chuckled under her breath and rolled him over. “Ahhhh,” he sighed as she began to massage his tense neck and shoulders, “thank you sweetie.”

“You bet. Would you like me to take care of the driving lessons from now on?”

“Would you?”

“Of course,” she said as she worked his muscles loose.

When she’d finished massaging him, they locked their door and smoked a joint in the bathroom. She was perched on the counter next to the sink. “Want to go back to Disney for vacation?”

“Don’t you think the boys are a little old for that now?”

“No. How old is too old? You had fun there, right? As an adult?”

“Yeah, I guess so. Let’s ask the boys though. They might rather do something else, and we only have two years left with them at home.”

“Okay.”

“Were you thinking summer? Like after Honduras?”

“No. Too hot then. I was thinking over spring break,” she replied.

Sam nodded and then took his vibrating phone from his pocket. He winked at Jess and then answered. She only heard his half of the conversation but she could tell immediately that it was Max.

“Hey man! How are you?”

“Good. Good. I’m hiding in the bathroom of my own fucking house so I can smoke a damn joint!”

“Yeah, you know it.”

“When?”

“That’s awesome!”

“Hell yes! Text me the dates, and I’ll make sure we’re free.”

“I know. It has been. Yeah, man. Congratulations!”
Jess watched Sam’s eyes dance with laughter as Sam said, “Yeah, me too. Auf Wiedersehen, Max.”

As he pocketed his phone he told her that Max was coming to LA for a job interview and was considering stopping in SF to visit for a day or so since he’d be so close.

She nodded and offered that Max could stay with them instead of a hotel. Sam seemed to like the idea. The three of them had spent a little time together over the years but Max had only ever met the boys once in passing. Now they were coming up on sixteen years old, almost old enough to drive. Two short years and they’d be graduating. Sam liked the idea of Max joining them here at the house for a change.

He thanked Jess for being willing to host and then texted the offer to Max. She held the joint out for him and he reached out to take it. He lifted his chirping phone to read the incoming text as he inhaled deeply. And then choked as he laughed at Max’s response.

“What?” asked Jess.

He held out his phone for her to read the message, unable to speak as he laughed through a coughing fit. She took it and read the text.

It said: “Sure I’ll stay at your house. How hospitable is your hot wife? I like head with my coffee in the mornings.”

Jess handed her husband’s phone back to him and slapped him on the back in an exaggerated effort to help him breathe. “He’s worse than your brother!” she joked.

“I can’t believe we only have two years left before the boys graduate. Maybe we should have some more kids. It’s gonna be too quiet around here.”

Jess burst out laughing, “No frickin way! We’ll get a dog if you think you’ll be lonely when they leave.”

“Point taken,” he said morosely.

“Sweetie,” she said as she moved closer and wrapped her arms around his waist, “don’t be sad that the boys are growing up. Try to focus on the good things we can look forward to when they go – that’s what I do.”

“What do you mean?”

“I mean… remember that once they go off to college we won’t have to hide in the bathroom to smoke a joint,” she said pointedly. “And that we’ll be able to have sex without locking the door and blasting the TV for fear of being caught or overheard. We can have friends over and not count how many drinks we’ve had. We can even take trips that don’t necessarily line up with summer break. There’s lots of pluses to having an empty nest, Sam.”

“Alright,” he said as he leaned in to plant a peck on her cheek, “you make a good point. That all sounds… really good.” He smiled, “Thanks for the pep talk, coach.”

*****
Dean looked over and watched Cas sleeping. He’d had a dream of standing on an iceberg and watching whales spout around him. It had been strange, but he didn’t want to wake his lover just to tell him about it. So he laid in silent contemplation instead. Maybe they should take a trip somewhere cold. They’d never really done that. But the pictures Dean had seen of men climbing frozen waterfalls and kayaking between icebergs had always intrigued him.

It had been two years since their trip to Europe. That had been a wonderful trip – far better than he’d ever imagined. Then, last February, they’d finally made it to Rio for Carnival.

Now their anniversary was approaching again, and there was no reason not to take another trip. The resort was practically running itself, and it was very profitable. They’d been able to take a step back from the daily operations now, both men working a relatively short work week. Cas was still putting in some of his free time at the Farmers Direct Loan Company, but that was also doing pretty well and Cas was starting to cut back his time investment there as well.

They’d hired a supervisor to work under Sunni. It worked well because she still had control of all the bars and restaurants at the resort, but being able to delegate the more menial tasks involved kept her work weeks shorter and allowed her more time with her son.

After years and years of grueling long work days – seven days a week – the lighter work load was sweet relief. Between the lighter workload and the profits from the resort (and the dividend checks from Winchester Law) they had a pretty low-stress lifestyle now. They were able to spend more time doing things for fun and had found they were able to travel more too.

Dean decided to check into the best travel dates for Alaska and talk to Cas about perhaps taking a trip there. His mind wandered to the possibility of Iceland… or Greenland? He couldn’t remember which was famous for Vikings. But if there were similar snow and ice activities and Viking shit too? That would make for an awesome trip.

Dean felt Cas begin to stir and it pulled him from his daydreams. He moved a hand to the small of his man’s back and drew a little closer. No matter what trip they took this year, they needed to be sure that they were here for the summer. It was the twins’ senior year. They’d be here for the month of July and then they’d head back to SF to get ready for college to start in the fall.

John was planning to attend UCLA. Everyone was hoping that Jimmy would go to an Ivy League school. He’d been accepted to several, but seemed uninterested in parting from his twin. It was looking more and more likely that Jim would simply join his brother at one of the country’s most infamous party schools. It must be a twin thing, Dean thought. He’d loved his brother growing up. They’d been tight – but he hadn’t been overly attached to him. Not to the point of choosing a college based on where Sam had decided to go to school.

Dean turned on his side and next to him Cas rolled over, pushing his ass back into Dean. Dean smiled and felt his groin stir awake as soft cheeks teased over his length – nothing but the thin layers of cotton boxers between them. Cas wasn’t fully awake yet, but Dean could tell he would be soon and he leaned forward to press his lips to the back of the man’s neck.

When Cas hummed a good morning, Dean was already grinding into his backside. Cas slid a hand down between them with a sweeping motion and rucked his boxers down over his ass, presenting smooth cheeks to Dean. With an invitation like that, who could blame Dean for the ferociousness with which he took his lover?

Dean didn’t keep Cas waiting for the reach-around either. He jacked Cas with a tight and heavy
hand. It was quick and dirty. And when Cas pulsed over Dean's fist, he bit down on the pillow hard.

“It’s gonna be a good day Cas,” he said as he rolled onto his back with a smile.

*****

“John? You up?” whispered Jim as he pushed his head in the crack of his brother’s bedroom door.

“Yeah, come on in.”

Jim tip-toed into the room, shutting the door softly behind him, and fumbled in the dark towards his brother’s bed. “Fuck!” he cursed as he stumbled over a shoe. “How was it?” he asked as he crawled under the covers and pushed John over to get comfortable.

“Good. You?”

“Good,” Jim confirmed with a nod.

“Ja get laid?” John prodded.

“Yeah. You?”

“Hell yeah,” laughed John.

“Jenny talk to you at all?”

“Nope. She’s not gonna forgive me anytime soon.”

“Well, you did cheat on her,” Jim said without malice, “twice.”

“Dude, I had a shot with Meghan and I took it. Besides, things haven’t been good between me and Jen for a long time.”

“Meghan’s so fuckin hot,” admitted Jim.

“Yeah. But she’s not that good in the sack.”

“That’s surprising. She looks like she’d be fun.”

“What would you know about it?” teased John.

“Well,” Jim replied with a chuckle, “she looks confident. Like she knows what she’s doing. That’s what I like.”

“You like dick,” laughed John.

“Confident dick,” corrected Jim.

“How was Jason? Confident enough for ya?”
“It was fine. I’ve had better. Had worse,” Jim answered listlessly.

“You ok man?” said John, sitting up partially to look Jim in the face.

“Just tired I guess. I thought I’d have more fun at my senior prom. It was nothing like going to prom with Ian. I never wanted to come home… hell… I didn’t come home til the sun was up either time. Tonight? It felt like work. We went to Phil’s for the party but as soon as we hit it, I was ready to take him home. I don’t think it was very good for Jason either. He didn’t get that into it.”

“Did you tell him you loved him?”

“Nope. Didn’t need to. We’re guys… we don’t need to say that shit to get laid.”

“Maybe I’ve been pitching for the wrong team all this time,” laughed John.

It was quiet for a few minutes before John asked, “Did you love Ian?”

“Still do.”

“Do you miss him?”

“Every day,” Jim said with a sigh. “I always thought he’d be the one who’d take me to my senior prom. For some reason, I just had this faith that we’d get back together. Even after he dumped me, I still kind of thought he’d come back for this… that he’d know it was a big night and like, want to be there for me or whatever. I guess I gave him too much credit.”

“Sorry Jim. I’m sure he had a reason for not coming; maybe it would’ve been hard for him. I mean, you guys went to both of his proms together. He may have broken things off when he left for college, but he loved you. I know he did.”

Jim nodded but didn’t speak.

“I’m sorry, Jim, really,” John added.

“S’okay. Win some. Lose some.”

John moved over a bit, pushing his shoulder against his twin in a gesture of solidarity. It hurt him deeply that his brother was in pain. But there wasn’t much else he could do. It had been almost two years since Ian had gone off to school in Boston and left Jimmy in his rear view mirror.

Jim seemed fine most days. He still hung with the same crowd, played the same sports. He dated. He’d even had a few steady boyfriends. But Jim never really seemed to fall for anyone like he had with Ian. And John noticed that special occasions like prom and homecoming and holidays always seemed to bring out the sad side in his twin.

His brother and Ian had spent several years happy together, so John understood it taking some time to get over his first flame. But lately he’d begun to worry. It just seemed like his brother was never going to really get over Ian.

He had to be honest with himself about Jenny too. They’d broken up and gotten back together quite a few times over the years. But he’d never been sad about losing her like his brother was sad over Ian. Clearly he didn’t really love her. He liked her a lot, sure. He cared about her. But love her? Really and truly love her? No, he must not.
Dean and Cas hefted their bags into the plane and climbed into the cockpit. “I just got off the phone with Mom. She said it’s raining pretty heavy in SF.”

“We can always divert elsewhere if the conditions aren’t ideal for landing. It might even be fun if we have to rent a car and drive to SF. It’s been ages since we took a road trip,” Cas said with a smile, “We don’t even need to rush. Commencement isn’t until next week.”

Dean smiled thoughtfully and said, “Maybe we should make that our next vacation, huh? Get baby out of Mom’s garage and put her on the open road. Take a real road trip… like we did when we were young?”

“Careful what you say Winchester. It sounds like you’re implying that I’m an old man.”

“You ARE an old man. You’re two years older than me!” he laughed.

“Fuck you. I’m not the one with grey hair.”

“I don’t have grey hair.” Said Dean firmly as he buckled in.

“If you don’t think you have grey hair then you’re color blind,” teased Cas, “even some of your pubes are grey.”

“It’s your eyes that are failing, old man. There’s nothing wrong with the grass on my infield,” Dean laughed.

They kept up their playful banter as they cruised over the Honduran countryside heading northwest. Most of the trip was sunny, and by the time they reached San Francisco, the worst of the storms had dissipated so Dean was able to land as planned.

Mary picked them up and brought them to her house. The next few days were a flutter of activity as the Winchester family prepared for the twins’ graduation. Dean and Cas poked around town some. They got together with old friends and did a little shopping. Neither had bought a new suit in quite some time, so it was nice to get something new for the occasion.

Ben’s primary school was doing a small service for the eighth-grade graduates. It seemed tedious but Dean and Cas went since they were in town anyway and then went out to dinner with Anna, Michael, Ben and his friends afterwards. It gave Dean the opportunity to give Michael shit for being grey haired too.

Dean hadn’t really noticed that he’d begun to grey until Cas had mentioned it. Now that he’d seen it, he couldn’t stop seeing it. He contemplated dyeing his hair but couldn’t make his peace with it. It seemed almost vain (and kind of girly). He ended up deciding to embrace the grey. If he was honest, he thought it made him look kind of dignified and sophisticated.

“I’m gonna be a silver fox,” he said to Cas assuredly. But the thought of grey between his legs plagued him far more than the salt and pepper hair on his head. He ended up going to a salon in secret and having himself waxed.

“Holy fuck!” Cas exclaimed that evening when they’d curled up in bed. He’d cupped his man’s
junk and been stunned at the “smooth runway.”

“Like it, Angel?” he asked huskily as he pressed into Cas’ palm.

“Fuck yes. Why didn’t you let me go with you? I’m going to feel like a hairy ape next to you now.”

“I guess I should’ve asked you. Sorry ’bout that. I had a one track mind about it.”

“Did you do this because I told you the grass on the infield was grey?”

“Fuck yes. I haven’t slept a wink since you said it.”

Cas smiled, unable to feel bad about it while he was stroking the smooth skin between his lover’s legs. They’d started waxing back when they’d gone to the bath house in Seattle ages ago. And they’d both kept up with the maintenance of it until returning to Honduras months later. Neither man had wanted to go to their own spa and get waxed by their own employees. And since neither really minded the other being hairy – they’d stuck with just razor trims after that, just taking care of themselves in the shower.

But now, Cas had to smile as his fingers touched baby smooth skin down there and nothing else. His mouth was suddenly watering and he slid down in the bed to suck dick. He licked and hummed and lavished attention loving how little spit it took to keep his mouth sliding along Dean's shaft, his sac, his perineum. When his tongue smoothed up and down the crack he smiled and promised himself he’d go get waxed asap.

The wax job had jogged his mind back to their exploits at the bathhouse too – which only served to wind him up more. A trip there with Dean had been quite enlightening.

Prior to going, Cas had voiced concerns about gay sex in a public place. He’d been worried about the possibility of the occasional “messes” that are an inevitable byproduct of sex between men. As it turned out – this was not a problem. Dean had turned up his nose at the douching station in the men’s room. But Cas swore Dean to secrecy and made use of it – thrilled that he could live out his public sex fantasy without worrying about having an embarrassing moment ruin the fun.

A wide eyed tour of the place had also given Cas an appreciation for waxing that he’d not previously had. He and Dean had gone out the next day to have themselves waxed and though it had been a bit embarrassing and painful the first time, the incredible feeling of being smooth in their underwear had been a treat. And the blowjobs were ten times better with only baby smooth skin under their tongues.

Now, as Dean panted into the dark and came down the back of his lover's throat, Cas was rock hard. All he could see behind his eyelids was his reflection in the mirrored wall of the pool room at the bath house. Dean had taken him there – in front of at least a half dozen strangers. It was every bit as hot as he’d imagined it. He’d gotten into it too – loudly begging to be spanked.

One man who was perched on the edge of the pool a few yards away had cat-called and egged Dean on saying, “Spank him again!” and then, “Harder!”

When he did, Cas had cried out for more and felt his body flex against his cock ring.

After that, a few more men had called things out to them. Things like, “pull his hair” or “grab his cock,” only to cheer wildly when Dean carried out the requests.

Cas was about to come untouched just from the memory. That had been one of the most amazing fucks he’d ever had. They’d gone back a few more times after that – but had never really enjoyed it
quite as much as they had that first time. Once the novelty wore off, they’d never had reason to go back. But the memory of that first time was incredible.

“Dammit, Dean,” he whispered, “how am I supposed to keep quiet like this. You’re so fucking hot!” Dean smiled and put his hands on Cas, stripping his cock and bringing him off in a few easy strokes. They laid there in the dark catching their breath, and then Cas fell into a deep sleep. Dean laid awake for a bit, wondering if they’d been too loud. There hadn’t been any music playing – things had happened fast. He didn’t think they’d ever spoken above a whisper. He hoped so anyway.

Graduation day was quite an affair. The ceremony was insufferable – taking far too long. But the moment when the boys had crossed the stage and been handed their diplomas was worth it. The family had stayed for a while after the service to take pictures of the boys with all their family and friends before heading back to Sam and Jess’ house for the reception. They boys had each chosen their own cake and decorations. Refreshments were served open-house style in the dining room and a constant stream of distant relatives, friends, coworkers and acquaintances streamed through, leaving behind a heavy basket of money-laden cards for the twins to open later.

Dean and Cas had spent the afternoon circulating the lower level of the house and getting caught up with people they hadn’t seen in so long that they nearly didn’t recognize them. Many of the attendees were from the firm, and it had been a long time since Dean had heard his father’s name mentioned so many times in one day, and with such affection. Poor Jimmy seemed to be constantly on the defensive for his choice to attend UCLA instead of one of the many better schools he’d been accepted to. He joked to Dean and Cas about it though.

“I’m going to be a lawyer. When I graduate – I’ll be working for Dad. Does it really matter where my degree comes from?”

(The kid had a point.)

“Besides, with all the coin I’m saving by going to a state school, I can fund some killer spring breaks!”

“Touché,” said Dean with a nod of approval.

The house was full of guests, and the twins were soaking up the attention for most of the afternoon. But as the hour grew later, they began to beg to leave. There were big parties tonight, and they were both chomping at the bit to get out with their friends.

Technically the invitations to Jim and John’s open house had listed the event from 3 – 7. So even though the house was still full of people at 7 – Sam let the boys go then. By 8:00 the only guests left were close friends and family, most of whom were settled around the large table in the dining room playing cards, having drinks and finishing up the last of the food.

At about 10:00, Cas got a text from Jimmy asking if there was beer left in the keg that had been set up in the garage. Cas grinned as he and Dean hefted it out onto the driveway so the boys could come and sneak it away to the party they were at.

Both boys had promised not to drink and drive and to call their uncles if they ended up needing a ride somewhere. But in the end, neither boy came home that night – clearly choosing to sleep
where they fell. Sam and Jess weren’t surprised. They didn’t even yell when the little bastards staggered in late the next morning with obvious hangovers.

Jess made a big breakfast for Mary, Dean, Cas and Nat, who had all stayed through the night. Then the adults all retreated to their respective homes and slept half the day away.

That evening, they all assembled back at Sam and Jess’ place to help clean up and to watch the boys open their cards and gifts. When they finished, the twins stood up and jumped around – excited by the huge sums of money that had been bestowed on them for graduating. And when they thought it was over, they were led outside by their parents to the back yard where there was a new used car for each of them. The boys both squealed like girls at their cars, which had giant bows covering the windshields.

Dean smiled widely at Cas as they applauded and watched their nephews get a little bit spoiled. A few short days later, they flew back home to Honduras with the boys in tow. As Dean knew it would – the weeks flew by too fast. It was gut wrenching to have to return the boys to SF. The hugs were tight ones when they parted. Jimmy, always the more sensitive one, had wet eyes when they said their final good-byes.

The following summer, the boys came back again and stayed most of their summer with Dean and Cas. Sam and Jess ended up joining for a few weeks – wanting to spend some time with their kids before the twins had to go back and start their sophomore year.

Dean was stunned at the differences in the boys. College had changed them both a lot. They were still very close – it was easy to see. But each was growing up to be their own man. Jim was playing intramural basketball and had returned to calling himself Jimmy instead of Jim. John was playing intramural football and had taken up golf. That was a surprise to just about everyone. But he insisted that he was going to have to golf with clients as part of his career and felt it was a good time to start learning the skills. “I want to have to throw the games so my clients can win and be happy. Not lose to them because I suck,” he joked.

Neither boy had tied themselves down into a relationship, which Dean felt was wise. And neither would admit to having had any wild times over spring break in Cancun. But Dean saw the looks they exchanged when their uncles prodded them about it and had to snicker.

Ben came for two weeks that summer too, and he spent most of his time with Sunni’s boy. The two were inseparable.

After the summer rush of family had gone, Dean and Cas settled back into their normal routine. Cas started working on getting permissions from the many owners of land that created a line from the resort to the villages on the southern rim of the lagoon. It was his new mission to run electricity from the windmill to the villages.

The windmill powered the resort completely and then stored its surplus generated power to capacity before shutting off each day around 3 p.m. Cas wanted to hook the villages up to the windmill and run it a little longer each day. His plan was to provide free power. The cost to do this was going to be a gift to the locals. But, even with the best-laid plans, things seldom go smoothly. The endeavor ended up taking longer and costing more than anticipated.

Dean didn’t mind. He loved that Cas thought of things like this. And it felt good to be in a position financially, where going over budget no longer had to be a scary thing for them. When the last of the line had been laid and the power turned on – Cas had glowed like the sun. Dean couldn’t stop smiling at him.
“Sam?” called Jess as she stepped out of the bathroom.

“In the closet!” he answered.

“Hey, your phone is blowing up,” she said as she tossed it to him.

He glanced at it and grinned, “It’s Max.”

“Well, tell your lover-boy I said hello,” she teased as she turned to leave.

“Hey Jess?”

“Yeah?” she said as she turned back towards him.

He clicked a picture faster than she could even blink. She was certain it hadn’t been flattering. She was wearing nothing but a t-shirt, having been ready to hop in bed. She had no makeup on and was certain that she’d imitated the face of river bass as her picture had been snapped.

“What the fuck, Sam?”

“It’s for my lover-boy,” he laughed. “The perv always wants a picture of my hot wife.”

“Um… that one will probably cure the craving for him. You could at least let me make myself presentable before you do that shit,” she said as she pinched at him.

“What do you care? You want him to keep wanting you?” he teased, “If I send him some ugly pictures then maybe he’ll stop drooling over you.”

Sam looked at the image he’d just taken and then back to his laughing wife. “It didn’t work. This isn’t ugly. Let’s try again.”

She thumped him on the arm and winked as she headed back out into the bedroom. From behind her she heard the camera on his phone click again.

“You didn’t!” she said, glaring back towards him with phony irritation.

“Think I did.” He smiled, “send that one? Or send him a dick pic?”

Jess paused, pretending to think it over. “Send him one of Dean's dick,” she said with a laugh, “see if he notices the difference.”

“You are a devious woman!” he said as he launched himself at her and tackled her to the bed. She squealed as he tickled her and thrashed on the bed under him, the click of the camera going off again and again as he took pictures of her writhing beneath him.
Mary was baking for the peds on Saturday morning when she saw it on the news. Cas’ father had died. It had made a brief mention on the local news, and she paused to wonder what to do. Should she call Dean and Cas? Anna? Would they even want to know?

She decided to call Dean. She got his voicemail and left him a message to call back, then resumed her baking, not wanting to do anything without speaking to him first.

Meanwhile, thousands of miles away at Tree Tops resort in Honduras, Dean was speaking with Anna. Her sister Hester had called to give her the news. It was the first contact she’d had with her estranged sister in almost 20 years. The conversation had been stilted, but Anna had been told of the funeral arrangements and it had been explained that if she and Cas wanted to attend, the family would not snub them. They would be welcomed.

Anna had called Michael at work and he’d told her he was on his way. Unfortunately, at this time of day, he was at least an hour from being home. Anna had sat for a few minutes, just trying to get a grip on how she actually felt. There was no stab of grief – likely because she’d been living with a dull ache of pain in a small corner of her heart for most of her adult life as she lived ostracized and evicted from her family.

Now that her father was actually gone – she expected something to change. A wave of sadness or regret to wash over her… or perhaps a sharp pang of frustration that the doorway to making amends had slammed shut for both of them. But as the minutes ticked by, she felt nothing. Only a niggling feeling that she should call her brother.

Hester had said she’d do it. But Anna had said not to. She knew that Cas would much prefer to hear the news from her than from either of his estranged sisters.

When she got Dean on the phone, he was even less certain than she was about how to tell Cas. Eventually, she’d agreed to just let Dean do it. Before they said good-bye, she asked him to let her brother know that he could call her if he needed to talk. Dean had thanked her and asked how she was feeling about it all.

Dean was a good man. Her poor image of him from high school had long since faded, and the way he cared for what happened to her was nothing new. She knew he loved her as if they were family, even though they weren’t technically related. Not even by marriage - since her brother had never actually married Dean in the literal sense. But she told him honestly that she was still numb and would call back if she ended up needing to talk. Then they hung up, knowing they would likely speak again before the day was over.

Cas could tell that something was wrong the moment he opened the door to the tree house. “What?” he asked Dean when he registered the look on his lover's face.

“Cas,” he’d said as he moved to wrap his arms around the man's waist, “I’m so sorry. But I have to tell you something.”
“Dean, what is it?” he asked as he pulled back a little and looked into sad green eyes.

“It’s your father. He had a stroke last night. They admitted him to the hospital just after midnight, but he didn’t make it. I’m so sorry.”

Cas was stunned. His knees felt a little weak so he stepped over to the couch and sat down on it gracelessly. Dean followed him and settled next to him with one arm around his back and the other hand resting on Cas’ knee.

Neither of them spoke for several minutes as the reality of the situation sank in. “How do you know?” asked Cas.

“Anna called.”

Cas nodded. “How is she?” he asked, always thinking of Anna first.

“She say’s she’s numb. She’ll call if she needs you.”

Cas nodded again. Then he asked for water. Dean got up and brought him a glass and watched as Cas turned it in his hands, not drinking. Dean waited for a long and tense moment as Cas sat there– trying to decide what to feel.

Finally, Cas looked up at Dean. His eyes were sad, not angry. “Will you fly me back?”

“Of course. When would you like to leave?”

“Now,” he said firmly as he set down his water glass and got up to go pack his bag. He’d never even taken a drink.

When they were in the jeep, heading over to the hangar, Cas pulled out his phone and called Anna. Over the road noise, Dean could only hear Cas’ side of the conversation.

“Hello Anna.”

“Yes, me too.”

“I know.”

“Now. We’re leaving now. Should we come to your place?”

“I don’t know yet.”

“Ok. I love you too, Anna.”

By the time he’d hung up, Dean was parking near the hangar. He hopped out and grabbed their bags from the back seat. They’d packed light. They each had a suit tucked into one garment bag and duffel bag of clothes and toiletries. That was it.

Dean put an arm around Cas and walked him to the plane. Less than 20 minutes to prep, and they were in the air. The flight was very quiet. Dean tried to keep from looking at Cas too much, tried to give his man time to sort out his feelings. By the time they landed, his man seemed resigned.

They stowed the plane and rented a car, heading for Anna’s house. When the door opened, Anna fell into Cas’ arms and it was like a floodgate had been opened. The two just held each other and cried and cried.
Michael nodded to Dean and took the bags from him. Dean stepped around the grieving siblings and closed the door. It was a long night. But by morning, they’d decided that they’d be attending the funeral. The decision that was still up in the air as they went to bed that night was whether they’d mend fences with their mother and siblings. Based on Hester’s comments to Anna – it seemed that for now they were being offered a truce during which to mourn. But Dean and Michael were both certain that once the mourning period was over – the Miltons would be inviting Anna and Cas back into the fold.

Dean felt bile rising in the back of his throat at the thought of their family becoming a part of the happy life that he and Cas had settled into. But ultimately, the decision of what to do was up to Cas. He’d support whatever decision Cas wanted to make.

Jimmy rolled off the couch and turned off the television. He didn’t remember having fallen asleep out here, but now that he was awake, he was freezing. His neck and back were stiff and his stomach was nauseous. Last thing he remembered, the common room of their dorm had been crammed with people. Now, there just two that he could see besides himself.

A guy he didn’t know was snoring, sprawled awkwardly on a bean bag chair in the middle of the floor. Someone else was moving about in the kitchenette, unseen. As Jimmy padded to the kitchen, he looked around. The place was a mess. There were red plastic cups and empty beer bottles everywhere. The floor was littered with trash, and there were cigarette butts and tiny roaches everywhere.

Last night had been fun. They’d started out just him and John playing FIFA and then their roommate Dave had come in with some friends. They had ordered pizza and texted some girls. Not an hour later – it had been a party in their cramped space. Girls had gathered around their small table to play a drinking game, and some of the guys had gone on a beer run. Someone had turned up the music.

Jimmy remembered him, John and Dave had gotten high in the bathroom and then proceeded to try and out-drink everyone else. Jimmy’s last clear memory was of sitting on the couch and talking to a pretty girl from his Statistics class who clearly had no idea if he was Jim or John.

He’d watched from the couch as his twin had taken a pretty blonde to his room. He thought he remembered John coming back out and sitting on the couch with him for a while – but he wasn’t sure. What he WAS sure of… was that he needed coffee and ibuprofen. Now. He fumbled to the kitchenette where he came face to face with the pretty girl from the couch last night. He barely had time to recognize her when he found himself grabbed and being kissed. Deeply.

He pushed at her, trying to break the kiss. Clearly she’d mistaken him for his brother, with whom she’d likely spent the night.

“Where’s the coffee?” came his twin's voice from behind him.

At this interruption, the girl (whose name he couldn’t recall) finally allowed him to push her away. “Wrong brother,” he said in good humor as he pushed past her to the sink.

“Sorry,” she said as she moved across the kitchen towards John.
With his back to them, Jimmy filled a red solo cup with cold tap water and pulled down the pills from the cupboard by the sink. He took twice what the label indicated and then began to try and make coffee. From behind him he heard…

“I wish you could stay, Kristy, I’m gonna miss you so much, but I have a paper that I have to finish today.”

“Awww…,” she whined, “…don’t you wanna have a shower? We could get in there together…”

Jimmy rolled his eyes and began searching for something to eat that sounded like it wouldn’t make him puke.

“I wish I could, really, but I have so much to do today. Don’t you have something you need to be doing?” he asked her.

“Not really. I’d do you if you could make time,” she flirted boldly.

“You know I can’t. I have to get the grades or I’ll wind up back home in my parents’ basement. But hey, if you’re not super busy… maybe you could clean up out here a bit while I work?”

Jimmy had to put a hand over his mouth to keep from laughing out loud. John knew how to take advantage – that was for sure.

“Oh sure!” she enthused. “I can make some breakfast too!”

“Oh, that’s my girl!” he said and then Jimmy heard John give her a smack on the ass. Jim glanced at his brother out of the corner of his eye as John stepped up to the counter next to him and also took a round of pills before sagging on the counter. “Hey Kristy, could you maybe make enough for my brother too? He looks like he could use it.”

“No probs,” she said as she moved about the kitchen like the newly appointed queen bee. Jimmy felt bad for her. She had no idea that once she’d cleaned up this pig sty – John would be rid of her so fast her head would spin. He glanced at his brother who gave him a wink.

“I’m gonna get to work,” he said. “I’ll be in Jimmy’s room. You can bring the food in there when it’s done.”

With that, the two of them headed down the hall. John flopped on the bed in Jimmy’s room and said, “Lock the door wouldja?”

“What is your grand master plan here, John?”

“M’gonna sleep till she knocks. Then I’m gonna eat what she makes us. She’ll think you’ve been helping me in here.”

“And after we eat?”

“I go back to sleep. She cleans while she thinks I’m working on my paper.”

“And then?” prodded Jimmy.

“Then I show her the door, and we’re off the hook for cleanup duty.” He laughed, “Dave will come home to a clean place and think he owes us one. It’s a win-win.”

“You need to learn to use your powers for good instead of evil” chuckled Jimmy as he sank down on the bed with his twin. “Where did Dave go?”
“He left with Rhonda last night. Prolly slept at her place.”

“I totally passed out last night. Don’t remember a damn thing after you took that blonde to your room,” Jimmy said into his pillow. Then he lifted his head a bit and frowned at John, “Wait… did you fuck Kristy last night too? Did you bang two in one night?”

“Yes.”

“Damn.”

“Yes. That was some night. Fuck, I love college. I’m just learning so much!” laughed John.

“John,” Jimmy said while trying not to laugh along, “you’re my brother and I love you. But you’re turning into a real douche bag.”

Dean worked to get his tie tied as he watched Cas in the mirror. When their eyes met, they locked. Dean held the stare for a moment, waiting to see if Cas had anything to say. When Cas’ soulful eyes dropped to the toothbrush in his hand, Dean returned to trying in vain to get his tie to lay right. Cas brushed past him, reaching for a razor from his bag.

This bathroom was small compared to the one they usually shared when they stayed with Mary. It was strange to be in SF and not be at Mom’s. In fact, they’d never actually stayed at Anna’s place before. Dean had never even been upstairs in this house. Not once in all these years.

When they’d finished getting ready, they headed downstairs. Anna was dressed, but her wet hair was done into a loose bun as she moved about the kitchen making breakfast for Ben. Dean, trying to make himself useful, took over on the eggs and told her he’d take care of Ben.

She nodded to him gratefully and left him with the spatula. Dean made sure that Ben had a good breakfast and made enough extra for the adults to grab a plate if they wanted some. Cas was quiet.

The funeral was pretty much what Dean expected. A huge church, packed with mourners. Even disgraced publicly as he had been… there were still so many who showed up to honor his life. It was disturbing to Dean how a man so hollow as to exile his own child could amass such a following of people.

Dean and Cas had ridden over in the car service that Anna had arranged. She and Cas had decided they’d go to the service and say their good-byes. But they had no interest in mending fences with the family now.

Anna had said with conviction, “They wouldn’t risk crossing my father to speak to me when he was alive… not even in secret. So I have no time for them now that he’s gone.”

Cas had nodded along, but Dean could tell that Cas was less certain than Anna of what path he would take with his family.

When they arrived, Dean made sure to stay close by Cas’ side lest he need anything. He put a supportive arm around his man as they stood in line to view the body and held him firmly as he said his good-byes - silently gazing down at the empty husk of what had been his father.
Dean watched Cas’ blue eyes attentively as they moved into the naïve and into the church. Cas dipped his fingers in the holy water and made the sign of the cross as if he were a robot. His eyes were distant. Empty.

They were ushered to a seat near the front and settled into a pew. Cas remained devoid of emotion throughout the service and didn’t turn his head to watch the casket when it was carried to the front at the beginning of the service or when it was carried out at the end. His eyes were cold steel.

At the graveside, Dean stood behind Cas, side by side with Michael who was behind Anna. Ben held Anna’s hand and was very quiet. He as an exemplary example of how a good boy would act. Afterwards, in the car, Dean spoke quietly to Ben and told him how proud he was of him for being good for his mom at such an important time.

When they’d left the graveside, Anna and Cas looked at each other. Dean knew both were trying to decide if they should go to the reception. The tension was thick in the car.

“If we’re not sure,” said Anna quietly, “then we’d better go. We don’t want to look back and have regrets.”

Cas nodded agreement. The reception was stilted and quiet. Lots of people saying exactly the right things in hushed voices. They comforted the widow and surviving children. Anna and Cas nodded to their sisters and mother but didn’t speak or reach out in any way. Nor were they reached for.

Dean looked carefully at the remaining Milton family. He saw only snakes.

It took a long time for Cas to actually cry. They’d been back in their treehouse for over a week when it finally happened. The strangest thing really. They were just sitting on the porch eating dinner, watching the guests down on the beach. Cas leaned forward and set his plate on the railing, dropped his head into his hands and cried like a child.

Dean went to his knees in front of his man immediately, just holding him tightly and letting him cry until he was cried out. Then they made love quietly and slept. No further tears were shed for Charles Milton that Dean ever saw.

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When Jimmy and John came for the summer after their junior year of college, Sam and Jess came too. It varied from summer to summer who came and who didn’t. Mostly it seemed to depend on schedules – who was free to come and who had pressing things to attend to.

Mary came some summers, but missed others. Last summer she’d skipped Honduras in favor of taking a seniors cruise with her girlfriends. She’d had a wonderful time… talked about it for months afterwards. Dean loved that his mother was enjoying life, getting out there. But he’d long ago stopped wondering if she’d ever find someone. She so clearly didn’t need anyone. She was absent this summer too, on a trip to the orient with Linda Tran.

The twins were very grown up in body. Tall, like Sam, filled out and muscular. They’d brought friends with them to the resort that summer. A boisterous group of young adults that kept Dean and Cas laughing constantly. They drank like fish, cursed like sailors and left no stone unturned. They
partook in every activity and shore excursion offered and to be near them was to have a great time.

When they weren’t busy, they seemed to linger mostly near the point drinking and playing sand volleyball. They were staying in a cluster of tree houses far down the beach from Dean and Cas. That was no accident.

Dean and Cas spent most of their time with Sam and Jess. It was nice to have the four of them together. They’d put Sam and Jess in the tree house that joined to theirs by a rope bridge. They ate almost every meal together… lounged on the beach… laughed at the antics of the boys and their friends. It was a lovely summer.

When they flew back to SF, they dropped off Sam, Jess, the twins and their crew. Then they spent the night at a Hilton near the airport and left the next day with Ben in tow. Ben immediately fell back in with Sunni’s boy, who basically moved in with Dean and Cas while Ben was visiting. The two did everything together. It was adorable.

When Ben’s time had come to return home, the boys said their good-byes and headed out on a two-week Alaskan Cruise. The change of scenery was perfect. And some alone time was called for after so much entertaining.

“Hey Cas,” said Dean softly from across the dinner table, “check out our water glasses.”

Dean watched Cas look down and see the water swirling in their crystal. The sea was rough tonight. “This ain't the part of the ocean to want to sink in,” he chuckled. “You’ll freeze your dick off as you’re sinking.”

“You jump I jump, right, Jack?” joked Cas.

“You’re so stupid Rose!” he threw back.

“I’ll never let go Jack…” Cas teased.

“Wanna get out of here?” propositioned Dean.

“Shall we have an adventure below deck? Find an old model T in the cargo bay?”

“I’ll do ya one better than that Cas,” he leaned over the table and whispered, “I may have snuck some things from the toy box with us.”

“Well,” said Cas with a wince, “that explains why you left me alone with the luggage while they were x-raying our bags.”

Dean laughed out loud, “Yep. I bet every porter on the ship knows your face as the dude that brought a double ended dildo on the boat.”

“You didn’t.”

“I think I did.”

“Dean, I never thought I’d see the day.”

“It’s so old by now… smart money says it won’t even work,” he laughed.

“Let’s go find out!” enthused Cas, throwing down his napkin and leading the way out of the dining hall.
“Dude, seriously, itch your balls more!” said Jimmy with an eye roll.

“Fuck you, Jimbo.” Retorted John.

“Call me that again and you won’t have balls to itch,” Jimmy taunted.

Accepting the challenge, John lunged at his brother and took him to the carpet. Friends parted for them as they laughed and wrestled, no evident winner even after both were sweaty and tired.

“Give?” asked John as he held Jimmy down.

“Not yet, bitch”

“How bout now?” pressed John as he made a show out of farting on his brother's head.

Jimmy rolled him easily and sat on his chest. “Nobody use a lighter!” he shouted to the room. “This whole place will blow!”

Dave pulled them apart, gave each a beer and told John to lay off the Taco Bell.

“Really?” asked Jimmy as he watched John scratch his balls again.

“What?”

“Come here,” said Jimmy, tugging his brother to the bathroom. “Drop ’em,” he commanded firmly as he shut the door and locked it.

“No way. I don’t do dick,” laughed John, “or incest.”

“Not playin around John. Pull ’em down.”

John rolled his eyes and dropped trou.

“Jeez man!” said Jimmy as he leaned in to look closer, “you actually found a chick that would let you put THAT dick in her?”

“Hey!” barked John as he pulled up his pants, “It’s too fuckin much Jimmy.”

“We’re going to the clinic, John.”

“Now? There’s people here!”

“That looks nasty. It could be serious. I’m taking you to the clinic. And if you ever fuck a chick
Dean smiled shyly at Cas when he handed him the dildo.

“Are you sure Dean?”

“Yeah,” he said as he leaned in and brushed his lips along Cas’ stubbly cheek, “Just, no pictures or video,” he joked softly.

They moved to the bed. Outside the French doors of their cabin, white ice lit up under the moon against a backdrop of blue-black. Dean watched Cas move around the room, turning off the bright lights and leaving the room in a soft glow.

He found himself locked in Cas’ eyes as they stood a few feet apart and began slowly unbuttoning their shirts. Dean's insides prickled with excitement for what they were about to do. Cas had been looking sexy all day; and Dean had been preoccupied thinking of things he wanted to do him. Kayaking had been fun, but for some reason Dean had been unable to stop noticing that Cas’ eyes were the exact same color as the water around them.

Now, in the glow of lamplight, he watched tan skin reveal itself inch by inch, achingly slow as Cas divested himself of his shirt and took a step closer to Dean. Dean let his shirt fall to the floor too and then moved his hands to undo his belt. His pants soon slid to the floor and landed with a clunk – belt still in the loops. Cas had copied his movements and now Dean was watching Cas step out of the pile of pants at his feet.

The dildo was on the nightstand with the lube, but Dean was only concerned with Cas. He stood still as a statue and let Cas step up to him. He never looked away from Cas' eyes as his man leaned in, still staring deep into Dean's eyes as he took his smooth cock into his mouth.

Warmth enveloped Dean as Cas began to suck. The tingles that had gathered in his chest began working lower, following the pull of Cas' mouth. Dean felt like Cas could suck them out of him completely. It was sweet ecstasy to have Cas’ talented mouth working him over and he tipped his head back, closing his eyes and soaking up the feeling.

His hands reached and found Cas’ soft hair. He spread his hands out and let his fingers run through that dark mop, winding behind his neck and pulling the man forward. Cas hummed appreciation and swallowed tentatively as Dean bumped the back of his throat a little.

“Cas,” he whispered reverently, “oh, Cas.”

He felt his man slide rough hands slowly up his thighs. Goose flesh broke out over his bare chest in response. When the hands reached around him, clasping his butt cheeks and spreading them, he groaned and remembered what they were going to do. His dick seemed to grow a bit larger as the thought of it, and Cas teased artfully at his entrance with gentle fingers.

Dean slid his own hands around from Cas’ neck to the underside of his chin, encouraging his lover to stand. When he did, and they were chest to chest, he whispered, “I’m trusting you, Cas. Don’t
hurt me, okay?”

“I think you’ll like it Dean.”

Dean nodded and took a step forward when Cas took one back. Cas took another and Dean followed again. Soon they were bedside, Cas sinking to the mattress and pulling Dean between his legs to suck his dick into those puffy pink lips, chapped from the cold and the wind. “Yesssss,” whispered Dean as he canted his hips forward and let the full weight of his shaft sit balanced on his man's tongue.

Cas wrapped hands behind him again, pulling him tighter and encouraging Dean to fuck forward into his mouth. He barely recognized the sound of the plastic cap popping as he worked himself deeper into the back of Cas’ throat.

Then, wet fingers found his soft bud and slid in. Two of them. He groaned at the pleasure of being forced open. Cas toyed with him, not rushed at all, wiggling his fingers, rolling them, scissoring them, spreading them. All the while, letting Dean push in between his slick, wet lips.

Cas loved feeling his man's heavy cock in his mouth. He smiled around it and swallowed again, the force of it pulling at the tip and bringing Dean’s body closer to the edge. Cas leaned back, encouraging Dean to follow him down onto the bed. As he bent forward, Dean put a knee up on the bed and then followed with the other. Cas came off his dick with a pop and the cool air of the room swirled around his shiny wet shaft.

He found himself alone now, on the bed on, on all fours. Cas had scuttled out from between his legs and was now behind him, naked and probably reaching for the toy. Dean didn't look. He balanced his weight on one arm and took himself in hand with the other, pumping his dick and thinking of being filled.

Soon enough, it was happening. He felt Cas nudge him a little – a silent signal to move farther onto the bed. He complied and then waited again for what would come next. He didn’t realize how much his breathing had accelerated until he felt plastic on his rim and he stopped breathing altogether, let go of his dick and braced himself on the bed with both hands.

Cas held him there – pinned to the spot with no hands and no restraints – only Dean's desire to please him kept him frozen on all fours and waiting for what would happen next with bated breath.

Then it happened. The toy began to buzz softly. Cas teased his hole with it, working it out from tiny circles into larger ones and then back down to small ones. Dean's chest puffed with excitement as Cas slid the wand down his inner thigh and away from his crack. He wanted to beg for it back, but he didn’t have to. Cas worked it back up again, teasing him relentlessly with it.

Just when Dean was about to really start begging… Cas turned up the vibration and pressed it firmly against his entrance. He pressed his weight back against it and bit his lip. Cas worked it around some more, pulling it down the inside of his other thigh and back up again. Dean was ready to scream. Thought he’d go mad if Cas didn’t push it in soon.

Suddenly the room was still. Quiet. The vibration was gone. The pressure was gone. Dean took a deep breath and opened his eyes. The bed dipped as Cas joined him on it. He let his lover reposition him, moving his legs. He felt Cas’ legs slide up along his own. Dean found his ankles resting against the outside of Cas’ knees.

Sweet lord! They were both on all fours now… ass to ass on the king sized bed. This was really going to happen. Desiring closeness, Dean pushed his butt back a few inches and rocked his hips.
from side to side, effectively sliding his cheeks back and forth across Cas’. He couldn’t see his man's face, but he hoped it was a soft tease for him.

His dick hung heavy between his legs, and instinctively he dropped his head and looked under him between his legs. Yep. He could see Cas’ big swingin’ dick just beyond his. And he caught a glimpse of the toy as Cas pulled himself up from all fours and looked behind him at Dean's backside. Cas was lining them up, preparing to put it in. Dean took a deep breath.

He felt it again, lubed up plastic pressing at his bud of wanting flesh. “Yes,” he said softly, just in case Cas was worried about him not wanting to go through with it.

The pressure was back, gentle but increasing. He felt himself begin to stretch. It burned a little. His breathing picked up in response. Cas backed it out, put more lube on it and pressed it to him again. “Yes,” he encouraged a second time, “Yes, Cas. Do it.”

Cas pushed a bit more, circled it a little. Dean felt himself spread again, felt the wide shaft penetrate the tight-ringed entrance and then slide smoothly home. Deep.

There was no rhythm yet, just random movements that he assumed were Cas bringing himself down on plastic. A few moments later, he felt soft ass cheeks brush his own again. He was stuffed full and butt to butt with his lover. He felt the man begin to tease circles and he followed suit, rolling with Cas and feeling the dildo move in him.

It was incredible to move like this with Cas. No one was thrusting, just circling with a thickness connecting them in a way that was new and exciting. They rolled hips together, finding a rhythm. Dean had almost forgotten the sensation of vibration until Cas started it up again. It leapt to life inside him and he cried out, unable to hold back against the wave of pleasure that crashed down on him.

He’d broken the rhythm in his surprise, but soon found it again, rolling with Cas and moaning like a whore as they worked themselves progressively faster. Cas reached back and laid a hand on his flank, stilling his movements. Dean reached back and covered Cas’ hand with his own – just wanting to make a connection.

He remained still under Cas’ hand as the man began to pull away and then slide back towards him. It only took a few repetitions for Dean to catch on. And then he began to thrust with Cas, they both dropped their hands back to the bed. They were building together and needed both hands on the mattress to rock into one another with progressively more power. Soon, Dean felt a jolt of electricity shoot up his spine and thought “Fuck yes!” because that was THE SPOT!

From then on, composure was out the window. Dean grunted heavily as he fucked himself back on the toy again and again, harder and harder. At the completion of each thrust, their asses would smack together and the wide base of the toy would stretch them more. Dean could feel Cas, legs braced against his own. As his stomach grew warm and began to swirl with pleasure, he realized that he’d completely forgotten about his dick!

He dropped his head again, forcing his eyes open to look under their bodies. He saw two heavily engorged dicks swinging back and forth beneath them and thought he may come just from the obscene sight of it. He held on to his will power for as long as possible, but it wasn’t near long enough. There was no point in trying to hold back. He called out for Cas and the man answered him with a loud “Fuck ye-aass, Dean!”

They thrust against each other wantonly. Dean worked himself over so that he could balance on one hand. His intention was to wrap tightly around his dick and bring himself over the edge that
he’d been riding for too long.

But instead, for some reason unbeknownst to him, he reached for Cas instead. He laid his hand on the man’s flank – mirroring Cas’ touch from earlier. As soon as he did, he came. Hard. He felt it from his toes all the way up, coursing through him and it radiated out the tip. His arm broke from Cas and dropped back to the bed, needing all fours to keep himself from falling under the weight of his pleasure.

His cock felt like a garden hose and he shot come out onto the bed. He could have cried for how good it felt. He sobbed loudly under the pressure of it and forced his eyes to open again and see it beneath him pooled shiny on the blanket… yes… it had happened! For the first time in years and years and years he had blown hot come from his tip. He leaned forward then and felt himself come off the toy too fast. He didn’t care. He didn’t care at all – so great was his pleasure.

He flopped down on the bed – completely spent. It wasn’t until he felt gentle kisses and nibbles at his ears that he realized he’d blacked out. Cas was curled up next to him now, kissing him awake. Dean hadn’t been this blissed out in a long, long time.

“Oh Cas,” he said, wanting to weep again for how good it had been, “You know how to make a man lose his shit, don’t you?”

“Not bad for an old man, right?”

Dean opened his eyes to meet Cas’ electric blue ones. He smiled warmly and inched forward a little to be closer. They curled up that way and fell into a deep sleep. They slept so soundly that when they woke, tangled together under the covers, the sun shone through their windows from high in the sky.

“Damn,” Dean said softly as he looked at the clock on the nightstand, “Cas, we slept for like fifteen hours.”

“No wonder I’m so hungry,” chuckled Cas. “What time is it?”

“After eleven,” said Dean as he turned over within the circle of Cas’ arms. “We’re doing that again!” he said enthusiastically. “We’re never leaving home again without that little miracle.”

“Do you know how many times I almost threw that thing away?”

“Shh!” hushed Dean, “It might hear you.”

Dean could feel Cas smiling against his chest.

“I came Cas. Like really came.”

“I know, I felt it Dean.”

“Cas, I really never thought I’d feel that again. Ever. It was sooo fucking good!”

Cas hugged him tightly, head still resting on Dean's chest. “You want room service for breakfast?”

“Yeah, I don’t know if I trust my legs to work.”

They spent most of that day in bed together. They ate, watched TV, smoked out, took a nap. It was heaven in a tiny cabin in the middle of the Bering Sea.
Dean and Cas had to work hard not to be separated in the throngs of people. They followed along behind Sam and Jess who had Mary between them so as not to lose her. The arena was packed, and they all shuffled along like cattle until they found their designated entrance and finally emerged out onto the upper level where they were able to find their seats.

They all scrunched in together and pulled out their phones, ready to take pictures. Below them, on the arena floor, the rows of empty chairs laid out for the graduates looked stark and empty compared to the jam-packed stadium seating that was already overflowing with excited guests. It was hot, it was loud and Dean was in a foul mood.

“Dammit Cas, it feels like we just went to commencement a year or two ago. Can this be right? Can they really be graduating already?”

Cas shot him a look and a nod. Both of the twins would be graduating UCLA today. Jimmy would have the summer to himself and then go on to law school. But John was already hired on at the company he’d interned for. He had a few weeks to come with them to Honduras, but wouldn’t even be able to stay through the end of July. He was soon to be a working stiff here in LA.

“You would think that John would’ve at least tried to find something in San Francisco…” grumbled Dean, “… before he just jumped right into a job here in LA.”

“Maybe he likes it here, Dean,” said Cas, giving Dean a disapproving look “or maybe he didn’t want to be too far from Jimmy. It’s not our job to second guess his choices. That’s for Sam and Jess to do,” laughed Cas, “It’s our job to be proud and supportive and slip him some cash before we leave.”

“I know you’re right Cas. But doesn’t mean I have to like it,” frowned Dean.

“When did you turn into such a cranky bastard anyway?” snarked Cas, “We were only a few years older than John when we ran off to Honduras you know.”

Dean smiled as Cas finally managed to lift him from his shitty mood by reminding him of some of the fondest memories he had. His early days with Cas in Honduras. He let his hand settle warmly on Cas’ thigh and leaned forward to look down the row to wink at his mother and nod approval to his brother.

Sam was actually here to see his boys graduate college. It wasn’t lost on Dean that neither Sam’s father nor brother had been at his own graduation from Stanford, and he felt a little tug of pity in his heart for his brother.

Dean relaxed back in his seat. This weekend was all about commencement. There would be
festivities and parties for the twins so Dean knew they wouldn’t see much of the boys until it was
time to fly them back to the resort.

Just then, the crowd in the arena swelled with cheers and applause. Dean sat forward and saw that
the graduates were filing out onto the arena floor. Many were whooping and hollering. Many had
glittery decorations emblazoned on the back of their black graduation caps. Some wore only black
robes and others were highly decorated with the physical symbols of their academic achievements.
There were so many. It was impossible to pick out Jimmy and John from the sea of graduates.

Jimmy walked with John from their dorm to the arena. They wore wide grins and exchanged shouts
of excitement and raucous celebratory antics with friends that they saw as they went along.
Everywhere they turned they were giving and getting back slaps and shoulder claps. Girls were all
around them squealing and crying and making a scene.

It was a big day, that was for sure. But for John this was the culmination of his youth. He’d be out
in the world as a “working man” soon. For Jimmy, this was just a benchmark on the path to
adulthood. He still had several years of school to finish before he could shout “We made it!” to his
friends and celebrate.

He felt a little cheated, as he always did on important days, knowing that somewhere in the world
was the human embodiment of all the love Jimmy had ever really felt. And having to know that
the embodiment was walking around without Jimmy on in his mind.

As he moved closer to the arena with his twin, a vision of dark, brooding eyes swept past the inside
of his eyelids. He caught his breath for a moment as he remembered with stunning clarity the feel
of Ian's mouth on his skin.

Jimmy clenched his fists and kept walking. He returned his attention to the present and devoted
just a small corner of his mind to wondering how much longer he’d suffer under the visceral
memories of his first love. He’d heard it said that you never forget your first. But was it really this
painful for everyone? If it is - it shouldn’t be, he thought.

When they walked out onto the arena floor, John looked around at the upper levels. He had an idea
of where his family was sitting based on their tickets… but he couldn’t see them.

The ceremony was similar to high school. “Pomp and Circumstance” played. Speeches were made
and applauded. Students cheered, adults clapped. It was too long and too hot. Both twins were
sweating heavily under their robes.

As John was sitting in his uncomfortable chair, bored with the speeches, he let his mind wander
back to his time here at college. It had been fun – without a doubt. He wouldn’t have changed a
thing. He and Jimmy had lived together despite the advice of well-meaning adults who thought the
brothers should live separately. Jimmy wasn’t just his brother, though. Jimmy was his best friend.

If it weren’t for Jimmy, John would NEVER have graduated. His brother had kept on him about
his school work when he’d blown it off. He’d stayed up all night helping him cram when he hadn’t
studied like he should’ve.

His brother had even helped John with the girl problems that constantly presented themselves…
telling sweet girls the gentle lies that kept them from being too angry or broken hearted. He consoled them on John's behalf and without complaint. And when his behavior had gotten out of hand, it was Jimmy who reminded him of sane boundaries.

It was Jimmy who had forced him to the clinic when he was too scared to go himself, living in uncomfortable and itchy denial. It was Jimmy who consoled him afterwards too… filling his Valtrex prescription for him when he was too embarrassed to even go into the pharmacy. Jimmy had reminded him to take his meds and repeated like a mantra “No glove. No love.” Until it was burned in John's memory, a lesson learned the hard way. And when he’d really gotten depressed over having Herpes, it was Jimmy who had cheered him up. He’d told John to count the people he passed as he came and went from class each day.

“One in five people have this John, just like you. So count people as you walk and every time you get to five you can start over. That’s how many people have this. Don’t feel like it’s just you.”

“Thanks, Jimmy.”

“No big deal John. It’s not like you have AIDS… you can totally live with this. Just make sure you’re being careful and not passing it around. The chicks get mad enough when you ditch them. No need to leave them with a new infection to remember you by, right?”

Jimmy just had a way of being there for John like no one else. And the one time he’d actually lost his heart to a girl… Jimmy was there for him then too. It gave him new insights into the broken heart that his brother carried around. Once you’d been in love, the feeling stayed with you. John could see that now.

As the final words were spoken in the graduation ceremony, John’s mind was yanked back to the present by the cheers of the students around him. Suddenly he was giving and getting hugs and his time as a student was over. He’d be expected to be a man now.

When it was finished, the grounds outside the stadium were congested as family and friends milled about, waiting for loved ones and taking pictures. Someone had hopped up on a large planter, clearly trying to see over the thick crowd of people and find a particular person. Jimmy grinned as he watched the man scan the crowd earnestly. Then his heart stopped cold, and he gasped as breath left him.

“It can’t be.”

A strong arm slid around Jimmy’s neck from behind and he was being pivoted away from the object of his intense scrutiny. As he was spun, he came face to face with his brother.

“Here we are!” John was shouting. Jimmy felt himself being pulled away.

“No. Let me go. I need to see!” he screamed in his head. Jimmy pulled away from John, twisting back around and trying to catch another glimpse of the man who’d climbed higher to search for someone. Jimmy jumped like a pogo three times in quick succession trying to get a good look at the guy. He was so certain of who it was and he felt himself pulled in that direction – even though all logic said he must be wrong.

“Let go!” he shouted over his shoulder at his brother as he broke away.

John watched Jimmy disappear into the crowd without looking back. He shrugged and turned his attention to his mother and father who were trying to get to him. His mother was all smiles and open arms, and he felt happiness surge through him as he saw his father’s face and realized that the
man was proud of him.

He soaked up their affection and praise and gave only a passing thought to where his brother may have run off to.

Jimmy was pushing. He thrust his left shoulder out in front of him and cut through bodies with it. He could no longer see the shape of the man he was searching breathlessly for. Whoever it was that had towered over the crowd for a few moments was gone now – dropped back down into the chaos of too many bodies. But Jimmy continued to shove through, heading in what he felt was the right direction. And then it happened…

Over a sea of faces and black tasseled caps, one face became clearer than all others. One set of determined eyes locked on his. And in the space between two heartbeats, Jimmy’s world shifted into focus. Ian. Ian was here. They were so close, but with so many bodies separating them it felt like forever to cross the last ten feet. Neither looked away as they shoved around strangers until they were face to face.

Jimmy cared nothing for the last six years of abandonment, sickening sadness and the fear that he’d had his taste of love and that for the rest of his life there would be no more. He carried no ill will in his heart for the boy who had broken him. And without any thought to reason or logic, he launched himself forward and into the arms of that same boy, who swept him up as though he were the only thing that had ever mattered.

“Jimmy,” Ian whispered against his ear as he held him close.

He opened his mouth to respond to Ian, but all that would come out was a pitiful sob. He tightened his arms around the man and as his mind recovered from the shock of seeing him in such an unexpected place and the sheer joy of connecting. Belatedly, he realized that the boy who’d left him had grown into a man.

Jimmy felt his feet lift off the ground with the power of the embrace and let himself be manhandled. Let his joy be complete if only for a moment.

He had no idea why Ian was here or what they would say to each other when they finally spoke. But for this one perfect moment, he was a whole person again. Loved and loving in equal measure and blinking tears of joy that swelled from deep inside.

“Where’s your brother?” asked Jess as she whipped out her camera.

“Dunno,” shrugged John as he looked back in the direction Jimmy had shoved off in. “Guess he saw someone he wanted to say ‘hi’ to.”

“Well,” his mother said with a smile, “let’s get some pictures!”

John smiled for his mother and took turns getting his photo taken with his parents and then his grandma and both uncles. It wasn’t getting any cooler as they all baked out here in the hot sun. By the time Jimmy found them, the crowd was starting to thin.

John’s jaw dropped to the ground as he watched his brother approach, walking side by side with
Ian Moretti.

Of course by looking at Jimmy for even a moment, John could tell that punching Ian would be a mistake. He had to work hard to be civil to the source of so much pain for Jimmy. When he looked at his twin, though, he saw nothing but devotion in his brother's eyes as he stepped up and re-introduced Ian to his parents, grandmother and uncles. Everyone was very polite, but John secretly nursed fantasies about connecting his fist with Ian's nose. He knew without a doubt that the crack would be satisfying and the fallout would be worth it.

In the end, John walked behind Ian and his brother, staring coldly at their joined hands while his family walked towards parking. They were all heading out to STK for a celebratory dinner, and clearly, Ian would be joining.

As he walked, he felt a hand on his elbow.

“You’re shootin’ eye daggers,” laughed Uncle Dean. “You gonna be able to make it through lunch without takin’ him down?”

John loved that Dean knew exactly what he was thinking, “I need a drink.”

“You and me both, kid.”

“What the actual fuck?” fumed John to Dean, “I mean really… what the fuck is Jimmy thinkin’?”

“He’s not,” said Dean with an apologetic smile. “He’s in love. He’s not thinking at all.”

“I need to remind him of a few things,” John said firmly. “I need to talk to him alone.”

“Don’t.” Dean said, leaning into John a little to whisper, “You’ll regret it. If you love your brother, you’re going to have to let this happen.”

“This sucks,” muttered John, kicking a rock.

“I know,” consoled Dean, draping his arm around the young man. “I know.”

Jimmy gave his mother a pleading look when he said he was going to ride to lunch with Ian so they could catch up. She gave him a smile, though it was a tense one, and put her hand on his shoulder. “We’ll see you there,” she said quietly. Then she slipped her arm through Sam’s and gave John’s arm a tug.

Jimmy watched John leave begrudgingly, and at last they were alone. He looked at Ian now, calmer. Still, he didn’t speak. He had ten thousand questions. But the biggest one was answered without a word. He looked in Ian’s eyes and saw that the answer was yes. Yes, Jimmy, I still love you. It was all over him.

As Ian popped the door locks on his sedan, Jimmy tossed his cap and gown in the back and ran a hand through his unruly hair before sliding into the passenger seat. Not wanting to let the silence become uncomfortable he ventured to speak. And he started with something easy.

“Hot as fuck today,” he commented as he adjusted the vents to blow cool air on his face. Ian only
nodded.

“It’s good to see you,” he ventured, trying to open a dialog.

Ian looked over at him and opened his mouth to speak, then closed it again. He looked away from Jimmy then and stared vacantly out the windshield. “I don’t know where to start,” he whispered softly.

Jimmy gave a soft smile and tried for humor. “Um… how bout you start with the fact that you didn’t really want to leave me just to run off to Harvard. You were actually an undercover spy and school was just your cover story. You had to leave me to keep me safe.”

Ian grinned, remembering one more thing about Jim Winchester that had always been endearing, that sharp sense of humor. “If I’m honest, I have to just tell you that I was a spoiled, stupid bastard and let the chips fall where they may.”

Jimmy nodded, “Why are you back here, Ian?”

“I live here now.”

“In LA?”

“Yes. I’ve been here for over a year.”

Hearing that was a punch to the gut for Jimmy. A year. Ian had been in the same city with him for over a year.

“I’m working at Mattel Children’s Hospital. I’m a member of the Facilities Commodity Team.”

Another punch to the gut.

Jesus H. Christ. He’s been working within walking distance of my fucking dorm.

“I’ve seen you, ya know,” Ian said quietly. “I know where you live.”

Jimmy looked out his window. He was stunned and didn’t really know what to think. Ian hadn’t even backed out of the parking space. The two of them were just sitting here… closer than they’d been in years but still five thousand miles apart.

“Why haven’t you spoken to me before now?”

“I didn’t think you’d want to see me.”

“Well I did,” he said firmly. “I do.”

“I had hoped. I tried to work up the nerve to talk to you a few times…” he admitted without looking Jimmy in the eye, “…but as it turns out, I’m not just a selfish bastard. I’m a coward too. And I just couldn’t face you. I honestly don’t even know why I came to see you graduate. But I just had to. I thought if I could just catch a glimpse…” his voice trailed off, “…I was surprised when you recognized me. It’s been so long and we’re both different…”

“I would know you anywhere. It doesn’t matter how long it’s been. But, it’s funny. All this time, I never really thought about what you’d look like if I saw you now… all grown up.”

“Same here. I still pictured you with gangly arms and legs and baby face,” said Ian with kindness in his voice that Jimmy couldn’t ignore.
“I could tell when you looked at me though, even in the middle of a crowd, that I should come to you. Not run away again.”

Jimmy was smiling softly as he watched Ian confess, wanting to pinch himself for fear that this was just another dream.

“Dammit, Jimmy, I was such a fool,” cursed Ian, voice cracking.

“Yeah you were,” said Jimmy with tears streaking down his cheeks. “But I guess I don’t care.”

With that said, Jimmy flung himself across the seat towards Ian and grabbed tightly to him, sealing their lips together and holding on as if he were a drowning man. They kissed heavily, tears wetting cheeks and hearts breaking in both of them for all the lost kisses and wasted time.

“Your brother wants to kill me,” whispered Ian when they finally broke apart.

“That’s too limited,” Jimmy laughed as he wiped his wet face with his palms. “My entire family wants to kill you.”

“Your mom seemed okay…” Ian's voice trailed off as he watched Jimmy shake his head.

“Nope. She’d like to rip you apart.”

Ian smiled again, let out a huff of air, “I’ve missed you so damn much, Jim.”

Jimmy’s turn to smile. “Good.”

Ian did eventually exit parking and drive them to STK. As they weaved through the city, they finally began to speak. Jimmy settled back in the seat and listened while Ian told him the short version of how he’d stalked Jimmy – desperate to reacquaint and been too fearful to really make contact.

Jimmy, in response, told Ian the short version of how he’d tried to live his life and forget Ian but had been unable to really move on.

“I told myself we were just kids. That it couldn’t possibly be real love,” admitted Ian. “That’s how I convinced myself to break it off with you when I left. I told myself that I needed to focus on school and date someone my own age at my own school and that it wasn’t fair to you… if I were to try and keep us going long distance.” He paused then as he pulled up to a stop light. He looked over at Jimmy and said, “You wouldn’t believe the lies I told myself as I cried over you.”

“You cried for me?”

“So much, Jimmy. I mean, I told myself that I just needed time. It was another lie. Why was it so hard for me to believe that what we had was real? Was it just because we were so young?”

A jarring car horn from behind them brought Ian’s attention to the green light, and he re-focused himself on driving.

“Maybe. But I don’t think I ever doubted it like you seem to have,” responded Jimmy.

Ian nodded and glanced sideways at his love. He could see no malice in the young man. Only honesty.

“I’ll never doubt it again, Jimmy. Never.”

“Ok.”
Simple as that.

Ian reached for Jimmy, and Jimmy reached back. Their hands clasped across the seat and they said no more until they arrived at the restaurant.

Lunch wasn’t as tense as Jimmy had thought it might be. They’d all been seated in a booth of white leather which was shaped in a giant semi-circle. The food was delicious and his family was good at pretending to not be angry with Ian. And as they enjoyed a three-drink lunch and the joy of the occasion, everyone seemed to relax and find a way to be happy for Jimmy’s newly reunited relationship.

Dean and Cas took Jimmy and John back to Tree Tops with them. This time was a bit different though. In the past, both boys had always been vocal about wanting to stay as long as possible. This year, they only stayed two weeks.

John had to get back and get his apartment set up and get ready to start his job. Jimmy wanted to get back to LA and be with Ian. When Dean flew the boys back, he and Cas decided to stick around SF for a while. They pulled Baby out of the garage at Mary’s, and Dean spent some time working on her. She’d been sitting for a long time and needed a tune-up.

They had fun cruising through the city streets, enjoying the city and noticing the many changes that had taken place over the years they’d been gone. They spent time with friends that they normally only saw at Christmas time. They enjoyed being back in the city too – going to music festivals, car shows and even an old movie at the Castro.

As they ambled along in a shopping district one afternoon, Cas tugged Dean over to a booth on the sidewalk outside of a large chain pet store. There was huge banner advertising “Adoption Weekend,” and there was a cordoned-off section surrounded by hay bales and perimeter fencing. Inside was a free-for-all of “puppy love.” Children and adults alike were enjoying a puppy playland – sinking to knees and getting wallowed in affection by a multitude of paws and tongues.

Dean knew he was in trouble when he watched Cas climb into the puppy pit. He walked over to the edge and looked in.

Dean had always thought it was strange how Cas, as a grown man, could look adorable. And just when he thought they’d been together long enough that he must be immune by now…. his man flashed him the most adorable face he’d ever seen.

Strings tugged on corners of his heart that he didn’t even know he had, as he watched Cas give him a look that melted him in a whole new way.

Two sets of intuitive eyes stared back at him from the puppy pit. Cas, the love of his life, and an unfortunate three-legged dog who had already claimed Cas as his own.

Dean could see it all over the pup’s face. “This is my human now. I have marked him with my scent. You will clean up my poop now, because this man loves me.”

What really chaffed Dean’s hide was that the damn dog was right. Dean gave Cas a smile and stepped away from the puppy pit. He walked into the store begrudgingly and walked back out a
half-hour later with almost $300 worth of shit. Bed, collars, leash, food, toys, training videos and a complementary pet store calendar.

Dean had to chuckle as they filled out the paperwork to take home a three legged dog named Lucky. The car ride back to Mary’s was a trip. The dog had been settled into the back seat. But rather than sit there like a good dog, or even hang his head out the window like a normal dog… he perched his one front paw on the bench seat between Dean and Cas, his hind end supported from the back seat. Every time Dean looked over at Cas, his eyes met the head of one very friendly Rottweiler, grinning ear to ear and digging the ride.

When Dean looked into the rearview mirror, he saw a tail ticking back and forth like a metronome. He really fucking hated how hard it was to keep from smiling at his amiable companions.

Something had changed in Dean; he wasn’t sure what. They stayed at Mary’s for a few more weeks, but eventually they flew home to Honduras. They had steps built onto the back of the treehouse for Lucky, who seemed to love it.

Cas had been kind enough to clean the puppy puke from the plane, somehow sensing that Dean had reached his limit that day.

Life settled back into a routine, though it was changed a little with the addition of their new furry friend. They no longer sat on their front deck, or in their crow’s-nest and watched the beach at sunset. They walked the beach with their companion, throwing balls and Frisbees for him and laughing as he kept them playing to exhaustion.

They no longer had privacy in their room. When they wanted to fuck, they had to give the dog a bone and lock the door to keep him out.

When they ate dinner, they had to toss bits to Lucky or they felt like horrible humans for not sharing. Yep, life was different. But it was good. Dean was loathe to admit it, but when he rolled over in the night and his hands found warm, soft fur curled against him… he smiled. Every fucking time. When had life become so easy and satisfying? Had it always been and Dean had simply never acknowledged it before? Probably.

Over the next few years, the boys found themselves traveling to SF more and more. When they were there – they always stayed with Mary. She was starting to show her age and had begun to do less and less. She didn’t decorate the house at Christmas… she left that for Dean and Cas to do.

She didn’t bake for the peds every week anymore. She and her friends alternated weeks now, and she was only doing it on a rotating basis about every sixth week.

Dean’s vibrant mother was doing less of the fun things he’d seen her do over the years and was starting to prefer reading and television to most other activities.
Sam and Jess were traveling a lot now, enjoying the “alone time” they hadn’t had at the beginning of their marriage because they’d gotten pregnant with the twins so young. Having Dean and Cas with Mary so much had given them the ability to go where they wanted without having to worry over her while they were gone.

Ian and Jimmy had married shortly after reconciling. They were back living in SF now, Ian having changed jobs shortly after Jimmy graduated. Sam wasn’t working many hours at the firm anymore – preparing to retire soon – but he’d greatly enjoyed bringing Jimmy into the firm as he transitioned out.

John was living and working in Chicago, dragged there by a girl he seemed to be committed to. The twins hated being apart, so Dean frequently flew them back and forth to see each other in small bursts when a commercial flight wouldn’t have been worth it.

One summer came and went without anyone traveling to Honduras. After that, Dean and Cas decided they’d had enough of the tropics and were ready to move back to SF permanently.

They enlisted the help of a commercial agent and put the resort up for sale and simultaneously began looking at real estate to buy in SF. They were ready, it seemed, to retire.

When they both received the same email from Sunni requesting a meeting, they knew something was up. They took a weekend and flew back to the resort, planning to stay for a week or two in their old treehouse. They’d pack up their things at their leisure and meet with Sunni while they were there.

When they landed, they had nowhere to park the plane. It sat outside the hangar, the newer one taking up all the space inside. The new pilot they’d hired to fly it was just working on his flight plans for the week when they entered, and he spoke a little with Dean about the some of the issues he was having. Cas and Lucky played Frisbee in the grass outside while Dean assisted the man in brainstorming some of the current issues.

Then, they took a jeep home to the tree house. Dean had booked them into one of the suites, so they’d have a comfortable place to stay while they packed up their belongings. Neither man had ever been the kind to need a suite – but the suites were the only other structures that were handicap (and thus dog) accessible.

The thing that took the longest was packing up the record collection. They listened to some of their favorites as they worked and stopped several times to make love to songs that were special to them.

The meeting with Sunni was difficult. They should have known. She was a woman of few words and of all the issues that had ever come up with the resort… she’d never actually requested a meeting with them. She’d always either just called or emailed and taken whatever answer they gave her with respect for her bosses.

Now, as they sat in Cas’ office and looked at her and Roberto holding hands (which they’d hardly ever done) she explained to them that she feared what would happen when the resort was sold. Roberto nodded along as she told them that any corporation that bought the place would likely remove all the programs that had been set up to better the lives of the employees and community. Then, the focus would turn towards streamlining profits and bottom line.

Sadly, she was absolutely right. The boys said they’d discuss it between them and scheduled another meeting to reconvene with the couple later that week.

As they walked on the beach that night, Dean and Cas discussed what to do. Neither wanted to feel
obligated to come here, or to manage the place in any capacity. But both agreed that it was special to them and they didn’t want to see it changed. They agreed that they wouldn’t have been able to travel and enjoy life the way they had if not for Sunni and Roberto being so trustworthy and faithful in their running of the resort.

In the end, the clincher was Cas. He reminded Dean that their younger selves had promised each other not to betray the trust of the local people – no matter what. They agreed to never again discuss selling. They also agreed to bestow Sunni and Roberto with 20% ownership. This would make the couple very wealthy… and invested. The couple would be entrusted to set up a board of directors and operate the resort without keeping Dean and Cas involved. From now on, they’d receive profits, like they always had. But they’d not be doing any work.

They also agreed to will the place to the twins. That way, when they died, someone who loved the place almost as much as they did would have the controlling interest/ownership.

When the sun had set, Lucky followed them back to the treehouse and waited patiently while Dean studied the initials he’d carved in this three some thirty years ago. DW + CM. He pulled Cas close and kissed him, knowing they’d made right decisions here.

After the plane was packed up with their boxes, they still lingered a few more days. They visited some of their favorite places in the area. The sandbar where they’d often enjoyed “naked time” was now a very attractive reef. They spent a sunny afternoon there with the catamaran anchored nearby and Lucky showing them that a three-legged dog could swim better than either Dean or Cas.

They also took a nice long walk down the Banyan Tree trail one evening. They didn’t fuck under it like their younger selves had done. They just sat on the bench and stared at it for a while, mesmerized by the lights that accented its natural beauty. They held hands and talked of the old times, and said how incredible it was that they had built this place… and how it had grown into so much more than they’d ever dreamed of when they’d first come here. They promised to come back here every few years on their anniversaries… and to bury each other here when that time came.

They buckled in and rode the zipline down – still loving it after all these years. They rode Jet-Skis and kayaked the swamp. They lingered at the swim-up bar and sampled the latest offerings of garish tourist-trap drinks, smiling and flirting before they walked slowly to the suite and locked the dog out of their room.

Dean grinned obscenely at Cas as he slid a movie into the player. Then he watched as Cas’ jaw dropped. They enjoyed watching the porno they’d made, back when they were younger and sexier, slowly touching each other with more and more passion until they were so caught up in each other that they no longer cared what happened on the screen.

Dean pulled noises out of Cas that night that he hadn’t heard in a long time. They smiled afterwards, exchanging lazy kisses as the sun came up and birdsong swelled outside their window.

All in all, it had been a nice vacation. With affairs settled, they boarded the plane and returned to SF. They’d only been there a few days when Mary made Cas’ favorite dinner and Dean's favorite pie. She said she had something she needed to talk to them about and it was important.

Then, she sat across from them and explained that she was tired. The house was too much work. The driving too tedious. But she was brokenhearted at the thought of selling the home she and John had bought to grow old in.

They nodded along as she explained that her girlfriends were moving into an assisted living facility.
near the waterfront. She wanted to go with them. She’d have a small apartment, medical care on hand and her friends close around her. No more home maintenance, no more chores.

Then she asked the boys to take over the house; keep her from having to sell it. They took one look at each other and said they’d be honored. It was almost too perfect. They didn’t need to continue looking for a place. They had one. The same home that had been their home-away-from-home for all their adult lives.

Now, they’d be the hosts of the family Christmases, and Mary could just come as a guest and enjoy it. She hugged her boys tightly and thanked them, telling them what a blessing it had been to be their mother.

Sam and Jess, as it turned out, had known this was coming for a long time. They were thrilled with Dean and Cas being their new neighbors, and the couples spent several evenings a week playing cards with friends, just like the old days.

It took almost a year for Mary to get fully settled into her new place and for Dean and Cas to rearrange the house. But, once they had settled into the master bedroom, they overhauled the rooms that had belonged to Dean and Sam as kids. They boxed up most of the sentimental items and stored them away. Then they painted both rooms in bright colors to serve as guest rooms. They lined the walls with mementos.

When they were finished, the walls hung heavy with portraits from their travels. Shelves were laden with their own keepsakes from their youth as well as their favorite gifts from employees that had once decorated their offices at the resort.

Next to the door of the bigger room, Dean had blown up the picture of him and Sam that used to sit on his desk at work. The huge print showed a toothy, gangly version of each – Sam as a boy and Dean as a teen. Both of them were happy in the photo, arms slung around shoulders and leaning on the Impala. Clearly John Winchester had loved this picture too, having kept it on his desk even when the boys were grown. Now it stood, enlarged, and in a place of honor.

They upgraded to a huge California King bed in the master. It left plenty of room for them and for Lucky to join them as well. It took some time to unpack and organize the record collection, but once they had, they both had a sense of completion and finality. This was truly home now.

Settling back into life in San Francisco was wonderful for the boys. They loved seeing all their old friends and enjoying a life that was more cushy and comfortable than their bold and adventurous life in Honduras. And Sam was just as thrilled for Dean to be back as Dean was to be back.

For most of his adult life, Sam had felt a hole in his chest regarding Dean. After all, it was Sam's immature and selfish actions that had resulted in Dean's removal from Winchester Law. That one mistake had sent his brother on a path in life that had pulled him farther and farther from Sam as years went by. Amends had been made long ago. But Sam was never the same. He had always missed his brother fiercely. Now, they were back together again. Permanently. Living just a few streets apart as it should always have been.

Finally, thought Sam, my brother is home.

Dean and Cas took Lucky with them to the pet store often, loving that the dog was welcome in the store and they didn’t have to leave him in the car. On one relaxed Saturday afternoon as they were goofing around in the doggie toy isle, Cas drew Dean's attention to a collection of dog toys that were themed for Star Wars. They had tug toys shaped like R2-D2 and C3PO, the Millennium Falcon and many others.
The men had a good time picking out several varieties of themed toys, and as they did, Dean commented on how strange it was that one simple concept from the series had led them down the path to the treehouses for the resort and spurned so many other incredibly unique ideas for the structure and activities of their own small fairytale.

They drove home with a happy pup positioned between them, singing along to the radio and enjoying the warm late-season afternoon. As they drove into their neighborhood, Dean had a sudden urge to stop over at Sam’s.

Cas wasn’t opposed, so they went a few blocks out of their way. When they pulled in the driveway, there was an extra vehicle in the drive and Sam was in the driveway, bending over to pull something out of his own car’s back seat.

He smiled and waved at the boys as they swung in the drive and parked behind the unknown vehicle. They were greeted warmly by Sam who had obviously been drinking and smoking. They exchanged quick bro hugs and then Sam handed Dean a stack of pizza boxes that he’d been unloading from the car.

“You got company?” Dean asked as he waited for Sam to pull a pizza-chain bag out and hand it to Cas.

“Yes. My friend Max is back to visit for the weekend,” he said. Dean watched Cas tuck Lucky’s frisbee under his arm and accept the bag of two liter soda bottles from Sam.

“Max? The one from Germany?” inquired Dean.

“Yes,” answered Sam, “but not anymore. He’s in LA now… works at a studio there.”

“Well, I’m glad you get to see more of him now,” answered Dean.

Sam burst out laughing, but Dean didn’t get the joke. “What?”

Sam continued laughing as he leaned in and grabbed a liquor store bag from the backseat before closing the door and turning to walk towards the house, “No pun intended then?” he smirked.

“Um…” Dean followed with the stack of pizza boxes and said, “you’re three drinks and joint ahead of me Sam. Speak slow and use small words.”

“Never mind,” laughed Sam with blushing cheeks.

“No way, Sam. Explain yourself!” laughed Dean – wanting in on the joke.

“He’s the one Dean. Remember… I told you that I had some ‘experience’ in the ways of men?”

Dean’s jaw dropped open and he began to laugh, “You gotta be fuckin’ kidding me! The dude you boned is here? Now?” Dean made a bee-line for the door, glancing back at Cas to see if he’d heard. Judging by his level of interest in their conversation, Dean could guess that yes, he had heard.

“Be cool, Dean,” laughed Sam. “I’m not too old to be embarrassed by my big brother.”

“That makes this even more fun!” laughed Dean, obviously enjoying the strange path this conversation was taking.

Dean continued towards the kitchen with the pizzas, and Cas followed him. Sam veered off into the sunken living room where there was a bar next to the entertainment center that clearly needed
When Dean rounded the corner into the kitchen, he stopped short. Cas crashed into him from behind. Dean didn’t waste a moment’s thought for Cas. His eyes were pinned on the sight before him. He had to do a double take to be sure he was seeing it correctly.

Jess Winchester, the love of Sam’s life and mother of his children, was perched on the kitchen counter with a wine glass in her hand. Her legs were spread wide and there was a man tucked between them. He was leaning into her and his hand was on her thigh. Dean froze – uncertain how to proceed as he noticed that Jess’ hand was curling around the back of the man's neck.

From this angle, Dean couldn’t see what the man was doing to Jess, but it looked like he was either kissing her neck or whispering in her ear. Deans eyes revolted against the image and his mind immediately began processing several emotions at once. He was angry. How dare a so-called friend take advantage of Sam by making a move on his beautiful wife? He flashed with fear too. Now that he’d seen this… he couldn’t unsee it. He now had to decide if he should tell Sam and watch his brother die a little inside that his wife was unfaithful. He was embarrassed too… and flustered…

“What the hell, Dean?” protested Cas when he thumped into Dean's back because of the sudden stop.

“Dude…” said Dean, leaning to the side and letting Cas come around him. The sudden noise and voices seemed to get the attention of the traitorous assholes in the kitchen. Jess looked around the head of the man who Dean could only assume was Max. She gaped at him, obviously freaked out at having been caught in her indiscretions.

“Dean!” she fumbled as she pushed the man away and hopped down from the counter. “We weren’t expecting you! Umm…” she was dying inside – it was all over her face, “Umm… come in. You can set those here,” she said as she gestured to the island in the middle of the kitchen. “I’ll just get some plates.”

The man turned to face him and Cas. “You must be Sam's brother Dean,” he said confidently as he stepped towards him, “and this must be your partner, Cas?”

Both men just gaped at him. Dean felt the pizza boxes be lifted from his hands and vaguely registered that Jess had approached Cas and taken the bag he was carrying.

Dean recovered enough to say, “What the fuck Jess? How could you do this to my brother?”

She looked over Dean's shoulder and cringed as Sam walked in the room. Dean watched Sam step around him and walk to his wife. He wrapped an arm around her waist and looked back towards Dean. There was a beat of silence as Max stepped toward the husband and wife. Then Dean stared, unsure what to make of this, and watched his brother slide an arm around Max’s waist too. The three stood there together, a united front.

“I’m sorry you had to see this,” said Sam softly, “but you may as well know. You live so close now, there’s just no hiding these kinds of things anymore.”

“What… What kinds of things?” asked Dean, gaping like a fish.

“Jess and I have been sleeping with Max for a few years now. Since he moved here. It’s not something we tell people about… I don’t know if they’d understand it. But we’re happy like this. Max visits when his schedule allows, and we visit him in LA from time to time.”
Sam waited, his arm around both his wife and his… man?

“Take your time Dean. I know this is big.”

Dean finally found the will to close his mouth. As he always did when overwhelmed, he turned to Cas. He was glad that Cas seemed as thrown as he did. But Cas did recover faster. Dean watched Cas step around Dean, running a hand along Dean's forearm reassuringly as he went, and stepped up to Sam. He extended a hand to Max as if to shake with him.

“Nice to meet you, Max, we’ve heard a lot about you over the years.”

Dean watched as Max smiled disarmingly and took Cas’ hand warmly. “It’s nice to finally meet you Cas. Though I’m sorry it’s under these circumstances,” he winced.

Dean watched and then found the good graces to move across the room and shake hands with Max. “I’m not gonna lie… I never saw this comin’ in a million years,” he said to the threesome as he shook.

Stepping back, Dean sought out Cas’ embrace and leaned into it when he found it. He let Cas support him as his world tipped upside down and then righted itself. “I… I…” stammered Dean, “I… I’m feeling a lot of pressure to say something. But I don’t know what to say,” he said honestly.

Cas and Dean watched Sam and his lovers relax a little. “We were going to tell you guys,” said Jess softly. “I swear we were. We just hadn’t figured out how yet.”

“You can’t say anything to anyone, Dean,” Sam said firmly. “The boys wouldn’t understand it. Hell, we barely understand it. We’re certainly not ready to explain this to our kids… or try and defend it to Mom.”

Dean nodded. Little by little he was adjusting to the concept, mostly because his brother seemed so sure. He worked his dry mouth around as he pondered what to say. Cas was silent, obviously knowing that it was Dean that Sam needed to hear from. Dean let out a sigh and made a mental effort to relax his posture.

“As long as you're happy, Sam,” said Dean, finding that he meant it. With that sentiment, the stiff posture of everyone in the room broke.

“You look a little shell shocked,” said Sam, clapping Dean on the arm as he walked past him towards the cupboard. “Why don’t you stay and join us for some food?”

Dean nodded, swallowing, and looked to Cas for reassurance. He agreed to stay and leaned on Cas for support as the last of the initial shock wore off. They all had a few drinks while they ate pizza and talked things over. The discussion of Sam and Jess’ newfound sexual adventures was relatively short. It ended with laughter and Deans sarcastic comment that if Sam were bored in retirement there was a Frisbee golf league at the park on Saturdays… no need to jump straight into threesomes.

Once Dean had calmed down a bit, he’d had the urge to really look at Max. The man was probably about Sam's age. He wasn’t quite as tall as the sasquatch and had a little thicker build. His hair was blonde and his eyes were blue. Overall, Dean would give him a 10. Dude was hot.

Watching how the three moved around each other, Dean had to admit they were happy. Jess seemed to enjoy watching her husband be affectionate with his friend. The three of them touched a lot. The touches were lingering and indicative of people who were familiar with each other and very comfortable.
Lucky seemed to take a liking to Max, so how bad could he be, right?

When they left, Dean slid into the Impala and looked over at Cas, “Damn. My brother is a freak!”

“You’re brother is Rick James!” laughed Cas. “Superfreaky!”

“I can’t stop picturing it,” laughed Dean. “I need eye bleach.”

“Max is hot.”

“Oh no you don’t!” laughed Dean. “There’s no fucking way.”

“I didn’t say I wanted to join them Dean,” laughed Cas as he scratched behind Lucky’s ears. “I’m just saying he’s hot.”

“Yeah. Fuck yeah,” agreed Dean. “I guess I just always figured that Sam was the type to double up with two chicks…”

“Guess we never really know about people, huh?”

“Guess not,” chuckled Dean as they pulled into their own driveway. “To each his own,” he laughed.

Sam followed Jess to the counter as she began discarding pizza boxes and putting dishes in the sink. “That was awkward,” he chuckled, “but at least it’s done now.”

She nodded and gave him a small smile, “he’ll get used to it.”

“Those two are fucking hot,” said Max as he joined them in the cleanup, “but I would’ve expected them to be more open minded!”

All three laughed at that. Then, Max moved forward and pulled both to him with a smile, letting his hands slide down two sets of hips – one straight and one curvy. He smiled when both Sam and Jess leaned in from opposite sides and began to kiss his neck seductively.

Jess smiled too when she felt two sets of hands – her lover’s and her husband’s – slide up the back of her shirt and bumble fingers over her bra.

Sam’s smile also came out… Jess’ heavy breast resting in his palm and Max’ hardness pressing against his leg.

“C’mon,” he said as he backed up a step and pulled his wife and lover towards the bedroom, “we only have one more night before Max has to go. Let’s make the most of it.”
Dean didn’t take long to come around. If nothing else, it gave him something new to tease his brother about. And the supply of witty one-liners and innuendo were never ending. Dean and Cas still hung out with Sam and Jess as if nothing had changed. And in the future, when Max visited, they included him too.

In the last of the really good summer weather, Dean and Cas took the Impala out later that week. They spent the late morning scouring the record store and then the afternoon ambling around a car show near the water.

“You should enter Baby in one of these shows, Dean,” smiled Cas as they admired the shining antique cars.

“Why’s that?”

“Because she’s beautiful. You obviously like being here… why not display what you’ve spent your life treasuring?”

“That’d be you, Cas,” Dean said with a wink.

Cas bent his head under Dean’s compliment and continued, “I think it would be nice, you’d enjoy doing it. We’re too old to do most of the stuff we loved when we were younger. But now we can do all the things that we wanted to do then but were too busy to do.”

Dean nodded and Cas continued, “We’ve got stacks of books and movies that we were too busy to enjoy when we were young. I’ve always wanted to learn to cook. Like to really cook. You’ve always wanted to fish more, and you like working on your car and showing her off. Don’t you see? There’s still so much for us to do!”

Dean smiled and looped his arm around Cas’ waist, walking him back to the car. “You’re absolutely right Cas,” nodded Dean as he ushered the man back to the car, “Now… pick a spot to eat. Surprise me with something new.”

They ended up at a place up the coast a bit. It was a long drive, far out of the way along a winding stretch of coastal highway. The trip was half the fun. On the way back, Dean squirmed a little behind the wheel as his dinner laid heavy in his stomach.

“Feel like a walk?” he asked.

“Sure,” nodded Cas, eyes scanning the coastline as it flew by.

Dean turned off and swung into a roadside parking lot they hadn’t been to in a long time.

“Good idea,” smiled Cas, noticing where they were. They’d been here before. It was the ruins of what was once the Sutro Baths. Cas had seen pictures of it online – and back in its heyday this had been an incredible place. A marvel of architecture and a grand symbol of what San Francisco embodied back then. Dreams. Big ones.

Now, like so many of man’s greatest architectural achievements, it laid here in waste. Destroyed by nature - or time - or some combination of the two.

When they were young, Dean and Cas had sat on these crumbling foundations and looked out to sea, full of both dreams and doubts; and already loving each other completely.

The two walked along quietly, looking out on the ocean. In the late afternoon sun the water below was inky - deep blues and greys. Its heavy waves battered the rocks, churning and foaming.
Relentless. The roar of it mingled with the cries of water birds, and light mists rolled upward along the cliff face, swirling in the gusting wind.

Dean glanced at Cas, whose eyes were far away – either enjoying the scenery or lost in a memory. Perhaps both.

“Penny for your thoughts?” Dean managed, borrowing a phrase from his mother.

Cas turned the full force of his stormy eyes on Dean. That deep, vibrant blue usually meant anger or turmoil. But against the current scenery, it just looked right.

“Happiness, Dean. I’m thinking about happiness. What do you think happiness is?”

“That’s deep, Cas,” chuckled Dean as he stopped walking and studied the rolling waves and vibrant sky. Cas didn’t push him for a swift answer, so he took the time to really think it over. They stood together in contemplation as the orange sky began to streak with deep reds and purples.

“I’ve thought about that a lot in my life, Cas. And I’m still not entirely sure,” said Dean, still looking out over the ocean. “I know that I used to think about it a lot more when I was young. Not so much anymore. I remember that I used to catch myself feeling happy and then talk myself out of it.”

“How so?”

“Well, like I’d feel it, and as soon as I acknowledged it, I’d say to myself, ‘No. You can’t be happy, you’re unemployed.’ Or I’d think, ‘I will be happy once the resort is up and running.’ Or, ‘I’ll be happy when we’re financially secure.’ Ya know what that was, Cas?”

“What?”

“It was bullshit. It was me trying to use logic to decide my happiness. As if money, or success or stability has any bearing on being happy. I think I understand it a little better now. I think, I’ve been happy all along.

It was never the money. Definitely not money. It sounds cliché, but money really doesn’t make people happy. It just makes them comfortable. The more money we have, the more comfortable we are. Period.”

Cas wasn’t looking at Dean, he’d returned his attention to the roiling and breaking of the waters below. But he was nodding along.

“Cas, I’ve been happy. Every single fucking day since I met you. I think it was you. You’ve made me happy.” Having said that, Dean took a step back and scooched up onto the crumbling stone wall behind him. Cas smiled as Dean wiggled his butt around trying to get comfortable there. Dean gave his man a wink and then watched Cas scuttle up next to him. “What do you think of it all, Cas?”

“I think you’re right about the money and success and stuff. It’s good to have, but you can be happy with or without it. If you have money, success, respect or fame or whatever you’re looking for in life… then it’s just icing on the cake. I think the happiness comes from our relationships with people. Not just you either, Dean, although you’re certainly the most important. My sister, your brother, the twins, Mom, Ben… even our friends. They all make me happy.”

“But I’m the most important, huh?” Dean flashed Cas a wicked smile, his tone full of teasing.
“Oh, come on, Dean. It’s always been you. You know that.”

Dean nodded. Yeah. He knew.

“Thanks, Dean. For everything.”

“Everything?”

“Yes, Dean. Everything. For standing by me when things got shitty. Every single time. And for not letting me sell my records when we were broke,” he chuckled, leaning warmly into Dean. “For protecting me when I was weak and helping me when I needed it. For loving me, even when it wasn’t easy. My life has been infinitely better because of you. In more ways than I can even say.”

“You too, Cas. You’ve done all those things for me too. I’ve been so lucky to have you,” he paused then, searching for the right words, wanting Cas to understand how much he’d really meant to Dean all these years, “Thanks for… for letting it be me. Ya know? For letting me be… the one.”

Cas nodded, chin stiff. The silence grew long then, both men knowing that they’d said what they really needed to. Share time was over. Cas cracked a smile as he tipped his head towards Dean and said, “You’re talking like it’s over, fucker. We’re retired, not dead. There’s still good times to be had.”

“You bet,” he said as he pulled a joint from his pocket and lit it, “cause you’ve got me. And Dean Winchester aint nothin’ but a good time!”

Cas smiled fully now, looking away and back at the sun, which was slipping down behind the horizon. The sky in the west was glowing warm in amber and orange, and all this time as they’d been watching the sunset, the night had been slowly creeping up on them, darkness at their backs.

The glowing cherry from the end of Dean’s joint pulsed in Cas’ peripheral vision. Cas reached for it, and took a long drag. They passed it back and forth for a few minutes. The giant orb of sun was gone now – but the sky was still orange in the west and reflecting on the water in the distance. They stayed to watch it even after they were done smoking. Dean draped his arm around Cas’ shoulder, and Cas returned the gesture. Arms around each other’s shoulders, they watched the last of the daylight retreat over the water.

“Love you, Dean.”

“Love you too, Angel.”
Chapter End Notes

Credit for Music Used In This Installment:

Ramble On - Led Zeppelin
Heart Breaker - Led Zeppelin
Since I've Been Loving You - Led Zeppelin
No One's Gonna Love You - Band of Horses
Peaceful, Easy Feeling - The Eagles
Dreamland - Bob Marley
Baby I'm-A Want You - Bread
No Woman No Cry - Bob Marley
Take Me To Church - Hozier
I Want to Hold Your Hand - The Beatles
Is This Love - Bob Marley

End Notes

Thanks to everyone who has stuck with the story. Please consider leaving feedback, I love hearing what everyone has to say!
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!