If You Could See What I Hear
by Tisha_Wyman

Summary

22 year-old Jared is the new coach at a small college in central Texas. 26 year-old Jensen teaches sculpting in the school. They meet under unusual circumstances. Jensen is blind. Thus begins an unusual courtship.
I do not own nor do I make money from Supernatural or its actors.
How They Meet.

Donna Ackles placed the food on the breakfast table and called her family to come and eat. Alan had left an hour earlier, driving to Fort Worth for a meeting. Her oldest son, stuck his head in the dining room and held up his car keys.

“We’re meeting the new assistant coach this morning. I have to be there early. Can you drive Jensen to school?”

“If I need to do so, yes.”

“Thanks, Mom. No time for breakfast today,” Josh Ackles grabbed a biscuit and headed for the front door. He passed his sister on the way out.

MacKenzie walked into the dining room and sat at the table. She smiled at her mom and reached for the dish of scrambled eggs.

Donna looked at her watch and headed to the hall, bumping into her middle child. Jensen apologized and hurried to the table. She watched the young man sit at the table. His hands touched the table, feeling for silverware and a napkin. His hands touched a cup of coffee. Smiling, he lifted the cup and took a drink. Setting the cup down, his hands moved around the table, searching for food dishes.

Groaning in frustration, Donna brushed his hands away and began to put food on his plate. Jensen froze.

“Mom, I can do that,” he complained.

“Josh had to leave early, so I need to take you to school. I’m in a hurry today and I don’t have the time to fool around.”

Jensen’s face had its wooden look. MacKenzie gave him a sympathetic look, knowing he wouldn’t see it.

The young man quickly ate his meal and excused himself. He hurried to his room to grab his suit coat and his briefcase.

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Jared Padalecki drove his black one ton Chevy pickup truck into the donut shop parking lot. He pulled into the drive thru and ordered two dozen mixed donuts and two dozen sausage and cheese kolaches. The young man added a cup of coffee with cream and sugar. He paid with cash; winked at the young woman manning the window.

The young man pulled back into traffic and drove towards the state college. He pulled into a parking lot and parked his truck. The security guard stopped him as he headed across the parking lot.

“This spot is for professors, boy,” the man spoke in a gruff voice.

Jared grinned at the man and said, “I’m the new coach.”

“Sure you are,” the guard responded.

Jared set the boxes of food on the ground, reached into his pocket and pulled out his wallet. Rifling through the billfold, he found his pass and showed it to the guard.
The man frowned for a second then apologized to the tall man.

“Not a problem,” Jared responded. He picked up his boxes of food and headed towards the sports complex.

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Donna pulled her SUV into the handicapped parking spot in front of the arts building. Her son grabbed his briefcase and opened the door.

“Hold a minute. I’ll walk you to the door.”

“Mom, I walk this area all day long, every school day. I know my way around. I’m fine”

The woman made a guttural sound and Jensen bit his bottom lip, said good bye and headed towards the steps.

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Jared entered the large sports complex and took a left towards the offices. Josh saw him walk past and left his office.

“Jared Padalecki?”

The taller man stopped and turned towards him.

“Yeah, I’m him.”

“I’m Josh Ackles. We’ll be sharing an office. Come on in.”

Jared entered the office and walked over to the second desk the other man waved him towards. He set the food upon the desk and leaned against it, facing the other coach.

“Well, where do I start?”

Before Josh could reply, the head coach’s voice could be heard down the hall, “Ackles! Was that Padalecki? You two get your asses down here!”

Jared picked up the food and followed the other man down the hall to the head coach’s office. The sign on the door said “Morgan.”

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Jensen walked the halls of the Arts building. He kept close to the inner wall, counting doors as he walked. When he reached number five, he opened the door and entered his classroom. He passed the tables and unlocked his office on the far end of the large room. The young man placed his briefcase on his desk and hung his suit coat on the coat rack in the corner. There were no pictures on the walls. He did have his Master’s degree in Art framed and mounted and hanging on the barren wall behind his desk.

The professor didn’t need pictures. His art was sculpture. It allowed the young man to experience art…to touch and feel it. It was why he had a program on his computer that would take paperwork and turn it either into braille or would read the paper out loud. He set the graded pop quiz to the side and touched his watch and listened to the time. It was Friday, and the first week of the Fall semester was starting off well. The students seemed interested in the course. The first quiz had excellent grades.
The college had delivered the blocks of marble for the students. It should take most of the year for them to learn and create a work of art. The class was expensive. He had twelve students. It was a perfect size class and would enable him to spend time with each one.

The class would not start until ten. It gave him time to work on his project. Rolling his sleeves up, the young professor walked into the classroom and headed to a locked closet and opened it. He pulled out a rolling table and set it at the front of the room and went back for a bin of tools. He spent the next hour and fifteen minutes working on his project. At 9:45, he put his project away and went to clean up.

He finished cleaning up and left the restroom. Reaching the classroom, he could hear voices. He entered, and class began.

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Jared and Josh spent two hours with Jeff Morgan. Other coaches heard there was food in the head coach’s office and stopped by to grab food and be introduced to the new assistant defensive coach. The building was a large one and included Tennis, Baseball, and Soccer. The main sport for the college was Basketball.

After the planning meeting, the two coaches headed back towards their office where they spent the day working on defensive plays and putting together a list of videos needed of the opponent teams. They had a good photographer named D.J., who would handle this for them. Preseason games would be starting soon, and both men needed to be ready for the season. It would be D.J.’s job to attend the preseason games and film the opponents’ strategies.

At 3:00, Josh called it a day. He sighed and told his new friend that he needed to make a phone call. Taking out his cell, he called his mom and mentioned that he’d be home late. He had a date and would just leave early and spend the evening with the woman.

Jared decided to leave at 4:00. It allow him some time to go back over the ideas they’d discussed and brainstorm on what would work.

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Jensen was busy with his project when his mom called. He told her he would catch a ride home with Ellen and not to worry about him.

At 3:45, the head of the Arts Department walked into his classroom. She strolled up to the table where the young professor was working.

“You really need to enter that in the annual arts show.”

Jensen smiled, “You know I’m not good enough for that, Ellen.”

“Quit being so modest, Jensen. You could win the grand prize with this and get your name out.”

The sculptor sighed, “Yeah, Ellen. I don’t think that will ever happen.”

“You need to think about it. You get your name out and you can start bringing in enough money to move out and support yourself.”

The woman watched the man before her wince and shake it off. She knew it was a sore spot for him.

Jensen changed the subject, “What do you need, Ellen?”
“Monday is Memorial Day, so we have a three day weekend. I’m locking the building up….so, go home, hon.”

Jensen went into his office and grabbed his briefcase and jacket. He walked back out and found himself alone. Hoping he would catch his brother, he took out his white cane and headed toward the exit.

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Jared walked out of the Sports Complex and down the steps. He heard a shout and stopped to listen.

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Jensen walked across the street towards the tree filled park that hid the arts building from the remainder of the campus. He listened to the cheer leaders practicing and followed the sounds, cane out in front of him to prevent tripping or walking into something.

By the sounds, he knew was getting close, when he heard footsteps coming towards him.

“Hey, guys! Look at his.”

The professor stopped and waited. He was unsure of what was going on.

“He’s pretty. How come we haven’t seen you before?”

“I teach at the Arts building. Excuse me. I’m meeting someone.”

One of the men grabbed the professor and swung him around, shoving him into a tree and leaned against him. Jensen felt lips on his and a tongue striving to push its way into his mouth. A hand groped at his crotch. He panicked and bit the tongue while bringing his knee up into the man’s groin. He heard a shout and a groan.

Holding his cane in front of him, Jensen ran towards the noises of the Sports Complex. He heard an angry voice call out, “Grab him!” Running as fast as he could, Jensen almost made it. He ran into a large tree, the cane snapping into pieces as he struck his head on the tree.

Falling to the ground, he was stunned. He felt hands groping him and could not fight back.

Suddenly, a voice rang out, “What the hell do you think you’re doing?”

The world was spinning as Jensen heard running feet and the sound of someone dropping to the ground next to him. He could not see the concern in the hazel eyes.
Jared to the Rescue

Chapter Summary

Jensen shows an insecurity about his own abilities. Jared wants to help him. It reaches a head.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“Are you all right?”

“I…I guess so. My head hurts.”

“I saw them running away, but didn’t get a good look at them. They wore letter jackets.”

“I couldn’t see them,” came a defensive reply.

“Hey, your lack of sight doesn’t bother me, so back down a little. Let me help you.”

The young man on the ground turned red and Jared felt a twinge inside of him, and a growing urge to protect him. He shook his head to clear his mind of those thoughts and suggested calling the police.

The young professor attempted to sit up. He felt dizzy and nauseated. Jared took out his cell phone and dialed 911. He explained what had happened and his concern for the campus. He hung up and dialed campus security.

Within ten minutes there were two policemen and three security guards. The officers walked the area and could find no clues about the attackers. They did pick up the remains of Jensen’s cane.

The professor refused an ambulance saying it was just a bump on his head.

One of the security guards suggested going over to the sport complex to get Coach Ackles. Jared looked up at the guard and then down at the injured man. He could see the resemblance.

“He’s gone for the day. I’ll call him and take care of Jensen.”

It was Jensen’s turn to be surprised. He remained quiet but wondered who this man was.

Soon the two men were alone. Jared got on the telephone and called Josh. He explained what had happened and how Jensen refused treatment. Josh told him he and his girlfriend would pick Jensen up.

Jared looked at the man sitting on the ground.

“Jensen, Josh and his girlfriend are coming to take you home.”

He noticed a look of frustration on the man’s face and he started shaking his head ‘no.’ Jared stared for a minute and made a decision.
“Uh, Josh, don’t worry about it. Jensen’s hungry and we’re going to go and get a bite to eat. Just let your mom know he’s okay. I’ll have him home later in the evening.”

Jared listened to Josh, stared at Jensen, and responded, “What time will you be home and will your father be there?”

“Well, I’m not taking him back until he’s calmed down and able to face her.”

Jensen listened to the one-sided conversation. He took a deep breath upon hearing he had a reprieve.

“Eleven? Okay, I’ll have him home after that. Yes, I understand. I won’t leave him at the door to face this alone.”

‘What?’ Jensen thought.

“I don’t know why. Yeah, I know that. Yeah, drive out to the Padalecki Ranch Estate tomorrow afternoon and we can talk.”

‘Estate?’ Jensen had a feeling his life was being arranged for him. He wanted a say in it.

Jared hung up and turned to the man on the ground. He touched Jensen’s shoulder and the young man looked up at him.

‘Damn! His eyes are like shining emeralds,’ he thought.

“What’s going on?”

“Everything’s okay, Jensen. Josh won’t be home until eleven tonight. You and I are going to get a bite to eat, and maybe go to the park and listen to the free symphony concert. I’ll have you home after Josh and your Dad are there.”

Jared stared at the man on the ground and noticed the freckles. He smiled. They looked good on him. Reaching down again he took Jensen’s hand and helped pull him up.

Picking up the remains of the cane the policeman had laid on the grass, Jared commented, “It looks like you will need a new cane.”

“Damn it! Mom’s going to be pissed.”

“We’ll figure something out.”

Jensen felt around on the ground, looking for his briefcase. Jared walked towards the tree the man had run into and found the case along the side of it. Walking back to the professor, he handed the case to the man.

Jensen held the briefcase in both hands. Jared place a hand on his shoulder and led him to the parking lot and his huge truck. Jensen reached out and touched the truck as they walked next to it towards the passenger door.

“It’s big,” he murmured.

“Yeah but then, so am I,” Jared said with a grin.

He keyed the entry and opened the door. Jensen set the briefcase in the floorboard and moved his hands over the entry, looking for a hand hold to pull himself up and into the vehicle.
Jared wanted to help him; give him a boost up, but thought better of it. Josh had said that Jensen and his mom butted heads over freedoms and abilities. The taller man backed up and let the other man find his own way.

“Dinner? Where would you like to go?”

“I don’t know. I don’t get to go out to eat much. Mom says I’m embarrassing.”

“In what way?”

“I won’t wear the sunglasses. The doctor said my eyes look normal. You can’t tell I’m blind so I won’t wear them. The things I do at the table bother her.”

“It won’t bother me. I hang around athletes all day. Nothing bothers me.”

A look of confusion crossed the face of his passenger. Jensen wasn’t sure if the man was making a joke or poking fun at him.

“Hasn’t anyone ever cracked joke around you?”

“Josh used to, but mom said I wouldn’t understand jokes since I can’t see.”

Jared’s mouth dropped open in surprise but he bit his tongue and made no comment about Mrs. Ackles.

“Well, I’m a funny kind of guy. You’ll get used to me.”

“I’ll probably never see you again, but thank you.”

“For what?”

“Not treating me like I’m an invalid.”

“You’re just one of the guys as far as I’m concerned. I know your name but you don’t know mine. I’m Jared Padalecki. I’m the new assistant defensive coach. I work with your brother.”

Jensen nodded and remained quiet.

It took around twenty minutes to reach the Mexican restaurant Jared had decided on. He pulled into the cobbled parking lot and parked in the handicapped parking. Jensen opened his door and slid out of the truck. Jared walked around the truck and met him as he neared the front of the vehicle.

Jensen could tell the pavement wasn’t smooth so he reached out and barely touched the taller man’s elbow. Jared looked down and smiled. They entered through large wooden doors. The woman at the dais asked, “How many?”

“Two, in one of your smaller dining areas.”

They followed the woman across a large open area. Jensen could hear voices and smell wonderful odors. The music was soft. They were seated in a room that held three tables, and they were the only ones in it. Jensen felt for the chair, pulled it out and sat in it. He scooted the chair back towards the table.

“The room is fairly dark. The table has a large candle in the center. The table is tiled in shades of green and gold.”
Jensen listened, then slowly laid his hands on the table feeling for the silverware and napkin. He touched the tiles, smiling. A waiter arrived with two glasses of water with a lime in them. He handed both of the men a menu and asked for a drink order.

“One of your better red wines. We’ll have some queso and green sauce as well as the red.”

“I’ve never had wine,” Jensen commented after the waiter had left.

“It will be you first time.”

“Mom will kill me.”

“How old are you?”

“What? Oh, twenty-six.”

“Jensen, you were legally of drinking age at twenty-one and your mother has no legal right to tell you no.”

“As long as I live in her house, she makes those decisions.”

“Maybe it’s time you moved out.”

“I don’t have the means to do that.”

“You make a living. Use it to pay the bills and things.”

“She handles my checking account.”

“That needs to stop. It’s your money.”

“I don’t know.”

The waiter arrived with the wine and the queso and sauces. He brought out fried tortillas and some soft ones. After he poured the wine, Jared lifted his glass and gave a toast to ‘new friends.’ He told Jensen how to lift his glass and to drink after the toast.

“How’s the wine?”

“It’s very good. Thank you.”

The two men munched on the appetizers and waited for the Mexican steaks. They discussed books, music and their jobs. Jensen was a quick learner. Jared quickly taught him how to use a knife to cut a steak. He could barely see the slight redness on his dinner date’s face. Jensen was either embarrassed or ashamed he didn’t know how. At this point, Jared was cursing Mrs. Ackles in his mind.

The waiter arrived with the check. Jared place a card in the holder.

“We have time to attend the free concert. I hope you like classical music.”

“I heard some of the students say it was ‘Peer Gynt. I love Grieg. I would love to go.’”

Jared signed the tab, left a tip, and rose from the table. He pulled Jensen’s chair back. The two men left the restaurant and drove to the park to the outdoor theater.
Jared laid a blanket on the hill where they were joined by many others. The sky grew dark with the stars shining brightly. The music started to play. Jensen lay on his back and listened. Jared briefly described the stars and the darkness around them. He heard his companion sigh.

When the music finished, neither man moved. Jared waited until some of the crowd had left. They slowly walked down the hill towards the parking lot. When they got to the truck, Jensen reached out and touched Jared’s arm. The taller man looked down at him in the light of the street lamp.

“I just wanted to say thank you. I’ll never forget this.”

“There will be more, Jensen. I like you and I think you need a friend. I want to be him.”

“I’ve never had a friend.”

“You do now.”

The two men drove to the Ackles house in silence. Jared parked on the street and helped Jensen across the grass to the front door. Jensen reached out to open the door when it swung open.

“How dare you stay out all night and not let me know where you were? You did not have my permission to go anywhere with a stranger.”

The woman at the door dragged Jensen into the house and proceeded to slam the door in Jared’s face. The coach grew angry and opened the door, following them into the living room.

Mrs. Ackles was ranting and shouting at her middle son. The family stood there, not sure what to do. When Mrs. Ackles stopped to catch her breath, Jensen spoke up.

“I’m not a child, Mother. I’m packing tonight and leaving here. I’ll get a motel room for the night and find a place tomorrow.”

“You can’t even take care of yourself.”

“Whose fault is that? I’ll find a place.”

“You can live with me, Jensen. I need a roommate. Someone to keep an eye on things when I’m not around. I trust you.”

“Thank you.”

“You! Get out of my house!”

“Donna, that’s enough.” Alan Ackles looked at his son. “Go pack, Jensen. Josh, Mac, give him a hand”

Chapter End Notes

Thank you for reading. This will be a fairly long story. Enjoy and remember a writer’s food and drink is comments.
Jensen stood in shock, not comprehending that he was actually leaving his home. Josh walked up to him, and put a hand on his shoulder.

“Come on, Jensen. Let’s get you packed.”

“He won’t need furniture. I have plenty of furnished rooms. Just pack necessities for tonight and you can pack the remainder and bring it by tomorrow afternoon when you come to talk. It’s late.”

“Yeah. Good idea,” Josh answered as he led his brother out of the room.

The two brothers packed a suitcase for the younger one and Josh turned and hugged his brother.

“You need this, Jensen. More than you know. Make the most of it. Live your life. Be happy. DON’T…I mean it...don’t let anyone ridicule you or tell you can’t do something because you’re blind.”

A tear rolled down the younger man’s face.

“I won’t. Thank you, Josh.”

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The two men entered the living room. Alan walked up to his son.

“Jensen, you keep in touch with me. Let me know when we can come see you. I’ll make time to do some things with you….father/son.”

Jared, standing by the door, said, “Let’s go, Jensen. I don’t live in town and it’s getting late. You need to rest. You’ve had a rough day. We still need to get you settled.”

The young professor turned to the man who had rescued him in more ways than he thought possible.

“Okay, Jared.”

The family walked the two men to the door. Alan hugged his son and kissed his forehead.

“Keep in touch, Jensen.”

“I will, Dad.”

MacKenzie and Josh hugged him and held him tightly. Jensen stood for a minute and waited.

“Mom?”

“She’s in her room,” his father said, with an edge to his voice.

“Oh. Okay. I love you guys.”

“Let’s go, Jensen.”

Jensen turned and Jared took his suitcase and left the briefcase for the older man. The two walked across the yard with Jared’s hand on Jensen’s arm, guiding him.
The drive to Jared’s home was a quiet one. The coach let his companion reflect on what was happening. He realized that it probably hadn’t set in. Jared contemplated what he had done and what was going to be involved in helping Jensen learn to cope with life without a domineering woman who wouldn’t let him grow up and learn to be independent. All kinds of things went through his mind. The only thing he was sure of was he’d do it again. For some reason, he needed to protect this man. He didn’t know why.

The truck pulled off the main highway onto a narrow road and they drove another five miles. Jared slowed down as they drove. After ten minutes, he slowed and turned onto a gravel road.

Jensen felt each turn and the difference in the ride. It had grown quiet outside…no traffic…no street noise. They weren’t in town.

They turned onto another narrow road, but this one was paved. After a short drive, the truck slowed down even more and turned right again. They drove for a short while and came to a stop.

Jared sat quietly for a moment and sighed softly.

“We’re home, Jensen.”

“Home?”

“Yeah. Come on. Let’s get inside.”

The two men walked from the separate garage to the side door of the massive house Jensen could not see, but he felt the size. The house gave out an aura of large size and security. Jensen did not know how he knew this, but he would be safe here. He knew it.

They entered the house through the side door into a still room.

“This is where we hang our coats, leave muddy boots, and any tools we may have with us. My grandmother called it a still room. I have no idea why.”

The shorter man smiled for the first time.

“This way, Jen.”

“Jen?”

“I hope you don’t mind, but it suits you. I’d like to call you that.”

“Jen’s all right I guess.”

They entered the large kitchen.

“I’ll show you everything in the morning. You have to be tired. I bet you’re in pain.”

“My head hurts some, but it’s more a dull ache.”

Jared led him through the enormous family room to the other side of the first floor of the house. There were three rooms in the wing.
“The room on the left is the bathroom. It will mainly be yours. I have one off my room. My room is on the end and yours is right here on the right.”

Jared opened the door to a large bedroom. The room had a large bed, a soft chair to sit in and read, a desk, chest of drawers, and some book cases. He described the room and told him in was shades of brown and gold. Jensen walked the room and touched everything in it.

“The bed is large.”

“Well, you’re not a small man, Jen. How tall are you? Six foot…six one?”

“Six one.”

“You need room to stretch out and rest. Here’s the closet.”

Jensen set his large suitcase on the bed and opened it. Jared noted the clothes were still on their hangars. The young man took his clothes out of the case and touched something on the hangars.

“What’s that?”

“Braille strips. I have them sewn into my cloths and also on my hangars. It makes it easier to coordinate what I wear.”

Jared looked at the clothing his new companion had brought. Jensen didn’t have the look of a nerd but his clothes sure showed it. One of the first things that needed to be done was buy the man a new wardrobe. That and take him by the bank and get his mother off the account.

After the clothes were hung, Jared led Jensen across the hall to the bathroom. It was built on a massive scale also. It had a whirlpool tub and a large shower. He told Jensen it was his. He showed him where everything was and said he was going to get a shower and head on to bed.

Jensen took a shower and headed to his room. He put on some pajamas and walked down the hall to Jared’s room. He knocked on the door and waited.

Jared opened the door, wearing a bathrobe. He slept in the raw and it didn’t cross his mind that Jensen couldn’t see.

“Is everything okay?”

“Yes, I just wanted to tell you how grateful I am.”

“You’re welcome, Jen,” Jared whispered softly, leaning in and gently pressing a slight kiss on the man’s forehead. “Now get some sleep. We have a busy day tomorrow.”

Jensen was startled by the soft kiss. He went to his room and climbed into bed. He could still feel the kiss and felt blessed.
Jensen’s watch alarm went off at 7:00 a.m. He slowly opened his eyes and froze. He was not in his bed…his room. He climbed out the bed and walked the room, mind going 100 miles an hour. Where was he?

He smelled bacon and coffee. Suddenly, it hit him. Jared. Sitting in the reading chair, he allowed his mind to go back over yesterday. He had actually done it. He’d stood up to his mother and he had left. His father had supported it?

Jensen jumped up and hurried to where he remembered the closet was. He read the hangars and found a pair of dress jeans and button down shirt. He wished he had some knock around clothes.

Opening the bedroom door, he allowed his nose to lead him towards the kitchen. He heard pots rattling. Jensen had never been in a kitchen. His mother’s had been off limits.

Reaching the kitchen, he stood in the entrance and listened and smelled. Jared could be heard moving around. The coffee smelled heavenly.

Jared had bacon draining on paper towels and was busy cooking pancakes. He made buttermilk ones and had cane syrup. He placed the last pancake on the plate and went to pour himself a cup of coffee. He looked up and saw Jensen.

“I was trying to be quiet and let you sleep.”

“My alarm goes off at seven.”

“Would you like a cup of coffee?”

“Oh yes!”

“Come fix you one. I’ll put the food on the table.”

Jensen stood still in surprise while Jared passed him with two plates filled with food. He slowly walked into the kitchen, carefully touching items on the counters. He felt the warmth of the stove and backed away from it. A strong whiff of coffee reached him and he followed the aroma. Feeling the heat of the pot on the coffee maker, he pulled away and felt the counter. He was right. Jared had left him a big coffee mug. He reached out and felt for the handle on the coffee pot. Sticking a finger into the mug, he poured coffee into the cup. When the coffee touched the tip of his finger he knew it would be about 2/3 full and stopped. He put the pot back on the coffee maker, picked up the mug and walked towards the exit. On the opposite side of the hallway was a large entrance into another large room. A heavy rectangular wooden table with ten chairs was in the center of the room. Jensen walked around the piece of furniture, running his hand over the pieces, feeling the strength of the wood. Jared was a big man. He guessed the man needed a big house and massive furniture.

Jared, seated at the head of the table, watched his new companion explore the room. When Jensen
had walked completely around the massive table and chairs, he reached Jared. His hand ran over the man’s shoulders and Jensen stopped.

“Oh! I’m sorry.”

“It’s fine. How else can you see what’s in here.”

The tension eased and the full lips moved into a beautiful smile.

The two men ate breakfast. Jared read the newspaper. Jensen listened when the man shared an article or two with him. It was comforting.

Jared set the newspaper down and looked at the man sitting next to him. He realized he liked having someone to share the day with.

“Jen, I’d like to talk to you about something.”

Jensen stiffened and took a deep breath.

“All right.”

“First off, I want you to make your stay here permanent or for as long as you’d like. I never could find someone I felt comfortable enough with to ask them to stay. It’s strictly platonic. I’m not trying to take it further. We don’t know each other well enough for that. You need a place to feel safe and protected. You need to learn how to rely upon yourself and I can help with that. Most of all, you need a friend. I’m offering you all of this. I don’t want you to have to pay right now. We can sort out the bills and rent later, once we know your mom is off the account. I have an idea how much you make. I’m a coach there.”

“I couldn’t live off you.”

“I’m not asking you to. I want to help you get on your feet. We need to get you some clothes that are more suitable.”

“I don’t make that kind of money, Jared.”

“Consider it a gift, Jen. I inherited a lot of money and this estate from my great grandfather. I was named after him. I’m not hurting financially. I understand your pride. You need things your mom never thought of as necessary. Let me take care of it. You can pay me back when you become wealthy.”

Jensen lowered his head, not sure what to do. No one had ever tried to do something nice for him. But, he didn’t really know Jared. How could he take gifts from him?

“Jen?”

“I don’t know you very well, Jared. We just met.”

“You’re living with me, aren’t you?”

“But that’s different.”

“How?”

The blind man sat there, his mouth opening and closing. Jared knew he had no answer.
“Come on, Jen. Let’s clean this up and head to town. We’re going to your bank first.”

Jared headed into the kitchen to clean the pots, leaving the other man to bring the dishes into the kitchen and wipe down the table. Jensen was surprised Jared trusted him with the job.

Within fifteen minutes the men were finished and they headed out the side door towards the garage.
Jared asked Jensen for the name of his bank and headed there first. It was Saturday and the banks closed at noon on that day. They drove down several side streets to reach the business section of town. Jared pulled into the bank and the two men entered.

They sat down with one of the employees and Jensen handed her his checkbook.

“I wish to close this account.”

“You do know you have someone else on the account?”

“Yes, but I put her on. I’m the main account holder. I no longer live in the same residence and I am changing banks to get out from under her influence.”

“Do you wish for the balance in cash or will a certified check do?”

The employee left her desk and went into the back of the bank. The assistant manager sat down at the desk.

“Mr. Ackles, you do know your mother was put on the account because you could not handle your finances?”

Jared interrupted, “Professor Ackles teaches at the college. He’s quite capable of taking care of his finances. His mother has not done a good job. If we do not get a certified check immediately, you will be served.”

“You are?”

“I’m Jared Padalecki. You know the family name, I imagine.”

“Yes, Sir. Gena, get that check for Professor Ackles.”

“If you’ll sign right here, Sir?”

Jared leaned over and read what Jensen was signing. He moved the man’s hand to the line and Jensen signed. The bank employee brought the check to Jensen and gave it to him.

“We’re sorry to lose your business, Mr. Ackles.”

The young professor nodded and the two men left the building. Once inside the truck, Jensen handed the check to his friend.

“How much did she leave in there?”

“There’s one thousand two hundred and seventy-seven dollars and thirty-three cents.”

“I wonder what she spent it all on.”

“She was legally on your account. You’ll never be able to get it back, Jen. Don’t worry about it. It will grow in another bank. As I said, I have more than enough to take care of both our needs.”

“I want to pay my way.”
“You will once your next check hits the bank. We need to make sure your check is sent to a new account. I’m going to take you where the Padaleckis have banked for decades.”

“Thank you.”

“But what I do today is a gift to a friend. You have to accept gifts and I’m a giving person.”

“But…”

“No buts about it.”

They pulled into another bank and were greeted immediately by an employee.

“May I help you gentlemen?”

“I need to open a new account.”

“Of course, follow me.”

The two men followed the woman, Jared’s hand barely touching his arm as he guided the man.

For the next thirty minutes, Jensen opened a checking and savings account. He put Jared as his contact in case of injury or death. He was told the new credit card would be in the mail within ten days. The employee read over the information.

“Padalecki?”

Jared looked at the woman, knowing he was found out.

“Yes, I am. I signed the papers last week.”

“Yes, Sir. It is good to meet you.”

Jared shook her hand and thanked her for her time.

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The two men drove to a large mall. Jared led Jensen to several shops. The professor ended up with two pairs of dress shoes, two pairs of tennis shoes, a pair of boots, some sandals, and a pair of slippers. He received five pairs of jeans, five pairs of dress slacks, two sport coats, t-shirts, flannel shirts, dress shirts, two hoodies, pajamas, underwear, socks, and a winter coat, gloves and a hat. All the way through the shopping, Jensen tried to protest. Jared just laughed and bought.

+++++

Jared drove to the Farmer’s Market and they bought fresh produce. They bought honey, homemade jams, and asked about a good butcher.

They stopped at a major grocer and picked up what could not be purchased at the Farmer’s Market or butcher.

They loaded up the truck and headed to the butcher’s. Jared bought a half a cow butchered, a half a pig butchered, several turkeys, and chickens. They headed back to the ranch.

+++++
It took a while to hang up Jensen’s clothes and put the groceries away. Jared had Jensen’s device that made the Braille strips. He marked everything in the kitchen, both food and appliances.

“I’ll teach you how to work everything as we cook.”

Jensen walked the kitchen, reading the Braille strips. He felt welcomed and wanted. It was a rare feeling for him.

Jared made sandwiches and chips with a large glass of sweet tea. The two men sat on the patio and enjoyed their lunch.

+++++

At 3:30, Josh and MacKenzie arrived with Jensen’s things. His computer and printer were set up in his room. Jared took the books to his library and the movies and music to his media room. It took a couple of hours for the four of them to get everything set up.

Jared offered tea and everyone agreed. They sat in the large family room and talked. Josh and MacKenzie told Jensen’s story, not really thinking he would say anything.


“Yeah, and Mom doesn’t know how to handle anyone with special needs,” Josh added.

Jensen’s head jerked up, “I’m not special needs.”

“Actually, he’s right, Josh. Jen has no problems at all that can’t be handled with tact and respect. Go look in the kitchen.”

Jensen’s siblings returned from the kitchen and were quiet.

“See what I mean?”

“Yeah, Jared, I do. I also think he should not return home.”

“After meeting your mother, I think you’re right. Jensen is welcome to stay as long as he wants. He can make it permanent if he wants.”

“Good. I’ll let Dad know.”

Josh and MacKenzie hugged their brother and held on for a few minutes. They shook hands with Jared and gave him a hug. Jensen heard them leave and Jared come back into the house.

The taller man stared at his new companion and asked, “Are you all right?”

“No. I’m not. I wish I knew why she hated me so much.”

“I don’t know. Maybe she just couldn’t deal with you not being perfect. Some people are that way. But Jen, to me you are perfect. Don’t let your mom bother you. There are people who care.”

“Okay,” the older man whispered as he walked out of the room.

Jared stood and watched him leave. He shook his head but felt that the man needed to be alone to work this out.
Reactions

Jared walked down the hallway and stood outside of Jensen’s door. He wanted to go in and talk to the man. He wanted to hold him and comfort him, but he wasn’t sure Jensen wouldn’t take it the wrong way. He turned back towards the family room and walked across it towards a door on the other side. Opening the door, he entered his office.

Taking out his cell, Jared hit number one and the phone dialed. The line picked up.

“Mom?”

“Jared! How are you?? How was your first day as a coach?”

Jared talked about how he was and the new job, then he was quiet for a moment.

“What’s wrong, son?”

“I need advice.”

Jared told his mother everything he knew about Jensen and his family. He explained about the attack and went on to let her know how the man had been treated at home.

“I want to do more to help him besides giving him a sanctuary and helping him out with things he needs.”

“What kind of help, Jared?”

“I’m not sure, Mom. I wanted to go into his room, take him into my arms and just comfort him. I got to admit, I’ve never felt like this before.”

“You’ve known him how long? Less than one day?”

“You haven’t met him Mom. I just want to take care of him.”

“Is this sexual?”

Jared was quiet again.

He slowly replied, “May…be. I don’t know. Is he hot? Hell, yeah. But, Mom, he’s stunted as far as knowing about life. I don’t think he’s ever had a date with a woman, much less with a man. Well, except I took him to dinner and one of the free symphony concerts last night. His brother and I didn’t want him at home until the entire family was there. I gave him a home when he stood up to his mom for the first time in his life. The problem is his so called relationship with her. He wants normal but isn’t even sure what that is.”

“I suggest you say nothing until he’s ready to talk. Give him time.”

“Okay, I will. I think I’ll put potatoes in the oven and fire up the grill.”

“Oh, and Jared…”

“Yeah, Mom.”

“If you are serious about a relationship, this will take careful handling. He’s not going to jump into
bed with you. Become his best, most trusted friend. Let him fall in love with you, not the other way around. When you expect that is happening, slowly begin to woo him. Court him, Jared. Don’t do it unless you want permanent. I have an idea it’s how he was raised. Thanks to the Supreme Court, you can marry a man now.”

Jared’s mind was whirling. He stayed quiet but his mother, knowing him, let him think.

“Mom?”

“Yes, son?”

“If that happens, would you and dad be okay with it?”

“Jared, we love you. I have a feeling I may end up loving Jensen too.”

“He needs to know what a mom really is”

“We’re getting a week off for Thanksgiving, so expect us late the Friday before. I want to meet your young man. I have a feeling I’m going to like him. Go fix your dinner. Be there for him.”

“Thanks, Mom. I love you.”

“I love you too, baby. Bye, hon.”

Jared hung up the phone and headed to the kitchen. He took two enormous baking potatoes out of the bin and scrubbed them. He rubbed them with salt and oil and wrapped them in foil and placed them in the preheated oven.

Jared went down the hall again to see if he could hear Jensen. It was still quiet. He walked through the family room and through the patio doors. Going to a large building off to the right, he opened one of the doors and pulled out a massive grill and set it on the rock patio and went back inside the building to grab his barbecue tools, a large bag of charcoal, and starter fluid. He started a large fire burning on the grill and went back inside to the kitchen. Jared decided to grill several types of meat and freeze them. It would make for an easy supper after work for the two of them. He halved a chicken, pulled out two packages of Eckrich kielbasa, made some massive burgers, and pulled out two large rib eyes. He seasoned everything and put the meats on a large platter with a bottle of Sweet Baby Ray’s barbecue sauce.

Going back outside, Jared set the platter on one of several patio tables. He put the chicken on first. The meats were added according to cooking times. He went inside and picked up a book that had arrived in the mail. Going back onto the patio, he sat on a reclining lawn chair and read his book while checking the cooking meat every ten minutes or so.

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Jensen had curled up on the bed and fought back tears and anger. He wanted to hit someone. For the first time he had experienced being with someone who treated him normally. He wanted to strike out at those who demeaned him because he couldn’t see. He wanted to scream.

The smell of roasting potatoes wafted into his room. He sat up and sniffed. The smell of more than one meat cooking somewhere made his mouth water. He was hungry and hadn’t realized it. He wondered if the hunger may have made him feel this way. He needed someone to talk to and food wouldn’t be bad either.

Jensen eased off the bed and walked into the bathroom. He washed his face and dried himself.
“Okay. You can do this,” he whispered.

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Jared laid his book down and went back to the grill. He removed the hamburgers, the sausage, and the chicken. Closing the lid, he headed towards the patio doors and saw Jensen standing by the door in the family room. The younger man smiled and opened the door.

“Hey, Jen. You’re just in time for supper. I cooked a large number of meats to cool and freeze for meals for us. Follow me and we’ll doctor up the baked potatoes. I hope you’re hungry.”

“I could eat,” Jensen said softly.

“Good. I like everything on my potato. Let’s get them fixed up and bring out the plates and silverware. Would you like a beer?”

“I’ve never had one.”

“Well, you’re getting a lot of firsts around here. Come on.”

The two men walked into the kitchen. Jared set the platter on the counter for the meat to cool. He grabbed some hot pads and opened the oven and took out the two potatoes. Going to the refrigerator, he took out butter, sour cream, shredded Mexican blend four cheeses, a jar of real bacon, and chives. He put salt and pepper on the cabinet and taught Jensen how to fix a potato.

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The two men sat under a large umbrella, eating their dinner, and getting Jensen used to the taste of beer. They shared stories. Jensen had some crazy ones from art school. Jared told some of his college ones. It was a joy to hear the older man laugh. Jared had thought that maybe he didn’t know how.

They sat in silence, after the meal, listening to the night animals. There were two owls…a barn owl and a screech owl. The crickets were noisy.

“Some of the birds are already flying south for the winter. It’s really noisy in the spring and summer.”

“It’s nice,” came a soft whisper.

“Would you like to go in and watch a movie after we clean up?”

Silence flooded the area. Jared realized that Jensen did not understand what he was offering.

“Jared…..I….”

“Hey, it’s all right. I’ll play it loud enough to be heard over me, and I’ll describe what is going on. You can see it in your mind and with your ears.”

“You would do that for me?”

“Of course. We’re friends and this friend thinks you deserve to experience life. I’m going to give it to you…as much as I can.”

“Thank you. I appreciate it very much.”
“Good. Let’s clean this up and we’ll pick out a movie. Has there ever been one you wish you could have seen?”


“Well, not all in one night, but we can watch all of them.”

“Really?”

“Yeah, and I have the extended versions.”

“That’s…but that’s…that’s awesome!”

Jared laughed as they entered the house.
Jensen’s alarm went off. He stretched and lay back, thinking about the day before. Jared had made everything go smoothly. He had allowed him the time to be alone and work on his emotions. The conversation at dinner was intelligent. Jensen like that. The best part had been the movie. They watched “The Fellowship of the Ring,” and Jared was so good at describing things that Jensen felt like he was really seeing it. The professor smiled softly. Jared was a very nice man. He hoped they were becoming friends. He’d never had one before.

Jensen got up and headed into his bathroom. He turned on the water in the shower and adjusted the temperature. He liked the water to be hot. After bathing, he turned the water off and stepped out of the shower, grabbing a thick, soft towel. Hanging the towel upon the towel rack, he walked towards the door and the bathrobe hanging on it.

There was a knock on the door and Jared opened it saying “Jensen, would you like to go out and get….”

It grew quiet. Jensen froze. Jared was stunned. He looked at the man standing naked in front of him. He couldn’t help himself. His gaze wondered up and down that body.

Jared realized that Jensen was a beautiful man. How had he managed to not have a lover? His skin was flawless with a spattering of light, golden freckles on it. He suddenly had the urge to count them and lick each one. Jared knew he was getting hard, and a soft groan escaped his lips.

Jensen suddenly realize where he was and what he wasn’t wearing. He felt a sense of panic but couldn’t move. He heard the groan and had no idea why Jared had done that.

“Jared?”

The coach, snapping out of it, said, “Jen, I’m so sorry. I shouldn’t have opened the door.”

“I’ve been naked in front of men before, Jared. In P.E., when we had to take a shower.”

“Yeah, me too. It’s just…well…. You’re right. I am sorry.”

“It’s all right. I was just trying to reach the robe.”

Jared removed the robe from behind the door and walked over and handed to the naked man in front of him. Jensen reached for it and their hands touched. Jared felt the other man tremble.

“Thank you, Jared.”

“You’re welcome.”

Jared turned to leave when Jensen called his name.
“Yes?”

“What were you wanting to know?”

Jared turned and saw that Jensen had put on the bathrobe.

“I was going suggest we go out for breakfast this morning. Find something fun to do.”

“I’d like that.”

“Okay,” Jared whispered softly and closed the door.
Jared sat in the family room, his mind running in circles. He took a deep breath and tried to relax. He had only known the man for a little over day. This should not be happening. He thought over the conversation with his mother and sighed. He’d never believed in love at first sight. He always thought it was a joke.

Jared got up and paced the room. He allowed his mind to roam. Jensen, flat on his back, surprise on his face. So innocent. That was his family’s fault. Josh had told him Jensen was home schooled. No sex education. Damn! He thought about their dinner on Friday night and the look on the man’s face as they listened to Grieg’s Peer Gynt.

He stopped for a minute and swallowed hard. The trip to Jensen’s house had shown him how emotionally and mentally abused he was. He wanted to protect him from the world! Why? At the same time he wanted to give Jensen the freedom he’d never experienced. Could he do both? He sure as hell wanted to. Yesterday, in town and at home had been good. He was upset about the reaction Jensen had received from his siblings. Mrs. Ackles seemed to have brainwashed all of them.

Jared walked to the patio door and stiffened when he thought about Jensen’s naked body. He had shied away from it since it had happened. God above, he wanted him. No, that was wrong. It wasn’t just sexual, although there was definitely that. He loved him! How the hell had that happened? What was he going to do about it?

“Jared?”

He turned and stared at the man standing in the family room attempting to place where he was. Jensen was dressed in jeans, a green pullover and wore tennis shoes. He looked beautiful.

Sighing, Jared responded, “I’m by the patio door, Jen. You ready to go?”

“Yes, I am.”

“Well, let’s go then.”

Jared walked towards the other man and gently touched his arm and was followed towards the side door and to the garage.

As Jared started the engine of his truck he turned and stared at the man next to him. He noticed a soft smile on the pouting lips. He licked his own and realized that he had to earn those. His mother was right. The younger man began plotting out a plan on how to court and win one Jensen Ackles.
Chapter Summary

Sorry the update was so late. My mouse pad died. They had to block it and give me a mouse to plug in. I had tried plugging one in before the mouse pad was blocked and it wasn't allowing it. Anyway, it's working now. I'm back.

Jared drove into town and pulled into the Denny’s parking lot. He stopped the truck and was quiet for a moment. Jensen noticed the stillness and turned his head toward the driver.

“Is everything all right?”

“Yeah. I’m sorry. I was just looking at you.”

“Why? Did I not dress right?”

“No, actually, you are perfect for the day.”

“Then what is it?”

“I was trying to figure out how you can be twenty-six years old and not be in a relationship.”

It was Jensen’s turn to be quiet. Jared saw him turn pale. As if that were even possible, he thought.

“Are you all right, Jen?”

“I...uhh...I have never met anyone I wanted to see.”

“Didn’t get out much?”

“My mother...”

“Okay. I get it. She’s a very stupid woman, Jen.”

“She has a Master’s in accounting.”

“Book learning doesn’t make one smart.”

“Why did you say that to me?”

“I don’t know. You’re a beautiful man and I just figured there’d been women or men in your life before now.”

The professor blushed a bright red. Jared wondered how far the blush went and castigated himself for the thought. He was grateful that Jensen had not caught the slip of the tongue he’d just done. Jensen did not realize that Jared had added ‘before now.’

“Let’s go get some breakfast.”

Jared exited the truck and walked over to the other side and met Jensen and the two men entered the
Denny’s. They sat in a booth near the rear of the restaurant. Both men ordered coffee and a Spanish omelet. Jared asked for extra biscuits. He watched the other man carefully run his hands over the table, making note where everything was placed. Jensen picked up the cup of coffee and took a sip. Jared’s hazel eyes followed every move, noting how full the man’s lips were as they touched the cup.

The breakfast was delicious. Both men were hungry and made inroads into the omelet and biscuits. Jared ate his hash browns with the omelet. Jensen had ordered grits and had added a lot of butter, salt, and pepper.

When the meal was over, Jared left a nice tip for the good service and the two men walked towards the register. Jared heard someone call his name and stopped to turn and look. Jensen bumped into him and apologized. Both men waited as two young women walked up to them.

“Hi, Coach Padalecki. I didn’t get a chance to introduce myself to you on Friday. My name is Dani. I’m the head cheerleader. This is Gen.”

Jared shook hands and introduced Jensen. The two young women stared at his companion.

“You’re a professor in the art department?” Dani asked, credulously.

“Yes, I am. I teach sculpting. You don’t need eyesight to sculpt. You have to be able to use your other senses.”

“Oh,” Gen answered.

“Coach,” Dani said, “Will you be working late with the players starting next week?”

“Yeah, most likely. Why?”

“I thought I’d buy you dinner and introduce you to the other cheerleaders and show you the town.”

Jared stared, wide eyed. Jensen stiffened. The girls noticed it. They looked at both of the men and wondered if they were together-together.

“I appreciate that but I keep a strict no fraternization rule for myself. I do not date students.”

Jensen relaxed and listened. He could sense irritation in the girl’s voice as she replied, “I wouldn’t tell on you. Neither would Gen.”

“I would know. Excuse me. I need to pay for our breakfast and we have some plans for the day, so we need to be leaving.”

“Plans?”

“Exactly.”

Jared put his hand on Jensen’s back and directed him towards the register. Neither man mentioned the two girls again.

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Jared drove to the museum district. He pulled into a parking lot and both men got out of the truck.

“Where are we?”
“This is the children’s museum. Everything is hands on. You can touch and explore the world here.”

“Really?” Jensen’s voice held a note of awe in it.

“You’ve never been here?”

“No. I was home schooled.”

“You were never around children when you were growing up?”

“Just at church. I wasn’t usually included in the games. I guess they thought that since I couldn’t see, I couldn’t play.”

The two men entered the building. Jared went to buy tickets. He asked about how the museum worked and explained Jensen. They were most welcome to explore to their heart’s content.

The next three hours were almost overwhelming for the blind man. Jared watched him touch things with a look of awe. There was a room filled with animals that had been mounted. Part of the pelt of each was mounted on a block and could be touched. Jensen mentioned how he wished he could touch each animal so he could see what it looked like. Jared grinned and told him they were leaving.

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Thirty minutes later, Jared pulled into the park. He parked his truck and the two men entered the zoo. Jared talked with one of employees and the two men were allowed to enter the closed petting zoo. They had an hour until the zoo closed.

A zoo keeper led them through the petting zoo. They stopped in front of the first display that had animals out. The zoo keeper entered and brought an animal to the fence. Jared watched as the camel stuck its head over the fence and sniffed Jensen. He saw the surprise on the man’s face as he backed up.

“No, don’t back up, Jen. It’s a camel. Touch it.”

A timid hand went up and slowly caressed the head and neck of the massive animal. A soft smile appeared on the freckled face and the green eyes glowed. The camel snorted and suddenly its tongue came out and went up the shorter man’s face.

Jensen heard Jared roar with laughter as he jumped out of the animal’s way.

“It’s not funny,” Jensen yelled.

“Hell, yes, it’s funny. You can never say you haven’t been kissed.”

Jensen turned red and walked away. Jared followed him. The zoo keeper caught up with them and led them to a nursery. Jensen was allowed to hold a baby monkey and he felt wiry little fingers grab his thumb and a mouth try to suck on it. The zoo keeper pulled the animal off him.

“His teeth are coming in and you don’t need to have stitches.”

The two men entered a farm yard. There were lambs, baby goats and a small donkey. Jensen smiled as he touched and played with the babies.

When they left the petting zoo, Jared check his watch.

“We have enough time for one more exhibit.” They walked towards the aviary. Inside was a jungle with extension bridges crossing water ways. There was a small waterfall. Birds of brilliant plumage
flew over their heads. Jensen listened to the sounds and smiled again. Jared described the birds whose calls they were hearing. They spent thirty minutes in the aviary and then headed towards the zoo exit.

When they reached the truck, Jared suggested a great hamburger place called ‘Five Guys.’ They enjoyed massive grilled burgers and a huge order of French fries.

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They arrived back home around 7:30. Jared unlocked the side door and both men entered the house. Jensen turned towards the taller man and thanked him for all they had done. Jared stared at him and softly spoke, “I would like to do something like this every weekend. I like doing things with you. Would you like to make this a regular weekly date?”

“Date?”

“We’re two new friends, getting to know each other. So, yeah, I’d call it a date.”

For the third time that day Jensen blushed.

“Yeah, I would like that.”

“Great! How about some ice cream and I will pick a book and I’ll read to you. Is there any particular author you would like me to choose from?”

“Anne McCaffrey. I have wanted to read her dragon books, but I haven’t been able to find them in braille yet.”

“I have them all. Chocolate, mint chocolate chip, or strawberry?”

“Mint chocolate chip.”

+++++

Jensen took another shower and headed off to his bedroom. He laid down and thought over the day and realize he really liked being with Jared. He’d never liked being with anyone. Jared was the nicest man he’d ever met and he wanted to know him better. Turning over onto his side, he slowly went to sleep.

Jared kept his bedside light on as he thought over the day. He had almost blown it. Date? Jensen seemed to accept the concept as he gave it. His heart beat faster as he remembered the man’s facial expressions as he experienced new things. Jared realized he wanted to help Jensen experience the world. He turned out the light and made sure his alarm was on. He was soon asleep.
Jensen’s alarm went off at 7:00 a.m. as usual. He stretched, sniffed, and smelled bacon. Smiling, he got out of bed and went to his closet and took out dress jeans, a light green dress shirt, and suit coat. He placed them on his bed, and found a pair of brown loafers. Walking over to the chest of drawers, he found a t-shirt and some socks.

He walked across the hall brushed his hair and teeth. He washed his face and dried off. Hurrying back to his room he dressed, made his bed, and found his briefcase. Grabbing his suit coat, he left the room and headed towards the kitchen.

Setting his briefcase below the coat rack, Jensen hung his suit coat and turned towards the kitchen.

“Good morning, Jared,” He spoke softly as he walked towards the coffee maker. He listened and could tell the machine had finished. One of his hands moved over the counter until he found two coffee cups. He filled both and added Jared’s sweetener to his. Jensen liked his black. Walking over to Jared, he held out the man’s coffee cup.

“Good morning, Jensen. Thanks for the coffee,” Jared replied, taking the offered cup. Jared took a sip, pleased that Jensen remembered how to fix his. He looked at the older man and assessed him. Jensen looked nice. He frowned at the massive bruise on the man’s forehead, but knew it would disappear. It could have been much worse if he had not shown up at the time.

“You’re welcome, Jared. Is there anything I can do?”

“You can take the bacon platter and the bowl of biscuits to the table. I’m pouring the gravy into a bowl and I’ll be right behind you. There’s orange juice on the table.”

Jensen searched and found the two dishes and took one at a time to the breakfast room where they ate all their meals at home. He passed Jared, going back for the biscuits.

The two men went right into their daily routine. Jensen was quiet as Jared read the paper. They ate in silence unless Jared found an article or editorial he thought Jensen would be interested in.

After breakfast, they cleaned the kitchen, putting the dishes into the dishwasher. Jensen grabbed his suit coat and briefcase and the two men headed towards the truck.

“Would you like to go somewhere for lunch? I have nothing going on from 12 to 2.”

Jensen smiled softly. “I have a class at 10 and another at 2. I usually work with the sculptors who come in during their free time.”

“You didn’t bring a lunch? Neither did I. Maybe I can go get something and bring it by and we could eat in your office?”

The smaller man blushed slightly. “That would be nice.”

Jared grinned and they rode to town in companionable silence. Jared turned into the campus and drove over to the Art Building. He pulled into the handicap parking and got out.

Jensen was already out of the truck and was walking towards the sidewalk when Jared caught up with him. Jensen heard him and stopped.
“I thought I would walk in with you to see where you teach and where your office is.”

Jensen was quiet for a moment.

“I walk this area without a cane daily, Jared, but thank you.”

“No, you mistake me. I just didn’t want to waste time looking for you during lunch. I know you’re quite capable of handling this place. You work here.”

Jared watched several expressions go across Jensen’s face. They were so fleeting he couldn’t read them. The older man sighed and then smiled.

“Thank you,” he whispered.

The two walked together towards the sidewalk. Jensen’s shoe scraped the edge of it and he raised his foot and placed it on the sidewalk. Jared watched every move the man made and made a decision. He would have to make some calls and find out what would be involved.

They walked up the steps of the massive building. The halls were cooler than most of the buildings on campus. He wondered why.

“Hey, Jen?”

“Yeah, Jared?”

“Why is it so cold in here?”

“The building is kept at a perfect temperature for the art.”

“Oh. Okay.”

The two men took a left at the first hallway that crossed the one they were on. He watched Jensen go to one side and keep his hand slightly out, touching the wall. He realized the man was counting doors. When the professor stopped at a door and opened it, he followed him into a large room filled with large tables surrounded by stools. There was a desk and chair at one end of the room with another stool and a lectern beside it. Jensen flipped two switches on the wall. Jared noticed a door on either end of the room. He followed his companion to the left and into a small room with a desk, two chairs, and walls that were barren except for a framed diploma.

He walked over to a bookcase and looked at the art books. Most were in braille but some were for use by his students.

Jensen placed his briefcase on the desk and turned.

“Well, this is it,” his said softly.

“Your classroom is huge. You have that many students?”

“We have a massive art program here. Very comprehensive.”

“I can see that. Well, I’d better head over to the Sports Complex. Morgan holds meetings off and on all day in preparation. I’ll be here until late in the evening. Can you wait or can you find a ride home?”

“And who are you? Where’s home now, Jensen?”
Jensen turned red, “Hi, Ellen?”

“Well?”

Jared held out his hand, “Hi, I’m Jared Padalecki. I’m the new basketball coach and I’m Jensen’s new roommate.”

“Roommate?” Ellen looked at Jensen. “You finally did it?”

Jensen was still red in the face. “Jared, I’ll see you at lunch.”

“It was nice to meet you, Ellen.”

“Likewise.”

Jared left the room and Jensen faced his mentor.

“Again, well?”

Jensen told Ellen about the attack, Jared’s rescue and what happened that night.

“Okay, what did you two do all weekend?”

Ellen sat down as Jensen talked about what happened over the weekend. She realized that Jared Padalecki had definitely taken an interest in the young man sitting across from her. No one took the time, money, or trouble to do what he was doing for Jensen.

“Do you like him?”

“He’s very nice, Ellen. I think I do. He’s been very kind to me. I’m grateful.”

“Well, you need to make sure what you end up feeling for the man is more than gratitude. Don’t lead him on.”

“I don’t understand.”

“Jensen, you are such an innocent and he knows that. I can tell by what you’ve told me. I think he may be looking for something more permanent with you.”

“I don’t think so. I mean… I was naked in the bathroom and he walked in on me. Nothing happened.”

“What!”

“Nothing happened.”

“Oh yes it did.”

“What?”

“He didn’t touch you, Jensen. Most men would have. He’s wanting something better.”

“We’ve known each other for three days.”

“How long does it feel that you’ve known him?”

The room grew quiet.
“Jensen?”

“Forever,” came a soft whisper.

Ellen smiled

“He doesn’t need to know we talked about this. Just let him follow whatever plan he has. Just be yourself, Jensen. Accept him for who he is. See where it goes and what you feel.”

“I don’t know how to love someone. How would I know?”

“You’ll know.”

Jensen sat back in his chair and sighed.

“Remember, Jensen, I’m here for you. Anything untoward, any strange emotion, and reaction you have and don’t understand, come talk to me. And don’t act stiff or scared. Just be you.”

“All right. Thank you.”
Monday Lunch

Chapter Notes

This is a shorter chapter dealing with Jared and Jensen's lunch.

Jensen was working with one of three students who had come in during his free time to work on their projects. He heard the door open and touched his watch and listened to the time. It was 12:35. Jared walked into the classroom, carrying two large bags and a cardboard carrier with two drinks. He grinned at the professor and walked towards the office door. The three students stared at the tall man and then looked at Jensen.

“Hey, Prof, is that your brother? I know he’s a coach here.”

Jensen turned slightly pink and answered, “No, he’s just a friend.”

Another student asked, “Boyfriend?”

“Roommate,” Jensen responded, embarrassed.

“Ooohhh,” replied the third. “Cute.”

All three stared expectantly at their professor. It was so quiet you could hear a pin drop. Jensen was bright red by this point.

“Yeah. I, uh, guess he is.”

He turned to go to his office with three pairs of eyes watching him.

“Don’t do anything I wouldn’t do, Prof,” one of the girls teased.

Jensen stopped at the door when he heard the comment and swallowed. He opened the door and entered.

“Hey, Jen. I brought Chinese,” Jared stated as his roommate entered the office. He noted Jensen’s high coloring. The man was red.

“That sounds good, Jared,” Jensen replied and went around his desk.

Jared had pulled a chair up to the desk. He had brought two orders of Szechuan chicken, fried rice, and four spring rolls. There were two glasses of iced tea.

As they ate, both men discussed their morning; keeping it impersonal. Jared wiped his mouth and looked at the other man.

“I made some calls this morning. I talked to Morgan and to Ellen and we have Friday and Monday off so we can drive to Dallas.”

“What!”

“Don’t get upset, Jen. It’s important.”
“What’s important?”

“It’s a surprise. You’ll find out Saturday morning.”

“Jared, this is my job. I can’t afford to just take off.”

“It’s for a good cause, Jen.”

“What cause?”

Jared was quiet for a minute, then answered softly, “You.”

Jensen was quiet, unsure how to respond or what to do. He picked up his phone and dialed Ellen. When she picked up her phone, the department head spoke before he could say anything.

“Don’t start, Jensen. It’s for your own good. That’s all I’m going to say. Don’t ruin Jared’s surprise. It really is for your own good. Don’t come by this campus until Tuesday.”

“Yes, ma’am,” Jensen said softly.

Jared grinned, knowing he had the man and that Jensen had no choice.

“Oh, and Jensen, Ellen will be driving you home this week. Once the games start, I’d like for you to come to the games. I’ll have someone pick you up and drive you back up here for them. It will be someone who will describe what’s happening.”

Jensen was still quiet. He finally took a deep breath and thanked the coach. He really wanted to go to the games. Two of his students played and had invited him more than once.

At 1:45 Jared picked up the trash from lunch. He looked at his companion, and it was a shame the man couldn’t see his face. There was such a sweet look on it as he stared at the other man.

“I’ll see you tonight, and I’ll bring home supper. We can put something in the crock pot tomorrow morning and we can pack sack lunches tonight. I’ll be here a little after 12 tomorrow to share our meal,” the coach spoke softly as he watched a tinge of pink on the other man’s face. Again, he wondered if his whole body blushed. He grinned thinking it was on his to do list.

“Is there anything you want done while I’m home alone?”

“Not that I can think of. We had a busy weekend. Why don’t you read or something.”

“Okay.”

Jensen followed the other man out of his office. The three students were putting up their projects and stopped to watch the taller man walk across the room.

“Hey, guys,” Jared said as he left the room.

Jensen stood at his office door, listening to the footsteps of the other man. He sighed softly and walked into the classroom.

“It’s almost class time, guys. You need to clean up and head on to your next course.”

Within five minutes, the three students were gone. Jensen leaned against his desk and thought over the conversation he had just had with his roommate. He took a deep breath and got out his typed notes. His printer was a special one and printed in braille. He listened to the students entering the
room and sat down on the stool, pulling the lectern towards him.
Friday

Chapter Notes

Jensen makes a new friend.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Jared woke early in the morning and figured leaving early would be good a thing. He walked down the hall, in his boxers, towards Jensen’s room. Knocking on the door, he waited for the man to open it or at least ask him to come in. Nothing happened. He knocked again and waited. Still nothing happened. Jared opened the door and turned on the light. Jensen was on his stomach, sprawled across his bed with his blanket and top sheet entangled around his body. His head was buried under his pillow.

Jared walked over to the bed and looked down at the man and smiled. He lifted the pillow off his head and leaned down and blew softly into his ear. Jared had to jump back quickly and barely missed getting boxed upside his head. Jensen came up swinging. Grabbing both wrists and holding them in one hand, Jared pulled the man into his arms and held him tight while whispering into his ear.

“It’s okay, Jen,” he said softly. “It’s just me.”

“Jared? What in the world?”

“Just playing with you. I thought we’d get an early start.”

Jensen was breathing heavy and could feel his heart beating rapidly. He felt strange being in Jared’s arms. He wasn’t sure what was happening but felt the need to back away.

“I’m fine. You can let me go.”

The coach released the man in his arms and backed off. He felt a loss when he released the man.

“Why don’t we take our showers, get dressed and packed, and hit the road. We can catch breakfast somewhere on the way. This way we can beat the rush hour traffic.”

“Okay.” Jensen walked over to his closet and picked out clothes to wear.

“Jared, do I need any dress clothes?”

“No, jeans are fine.”

The two men took about thirty minutes to shower, dress, and pack. Soon they were on the road.

+++++

They reached the outskirts of Dallas about 1:00 in the afternoon. Traffic had been bad in places and they made several stops for rest breaks, gas fill ups and drinks.

An hour later, they pulled into a nice hotel and Jared paid for their room for the weekend.
“Leave your suitcase in the car,” Jared told his companion. “You’re going to school this weekend.”

“School? I’ve been to school, Jared. I’m twenty-six years old. What kind of school could I possibly need?”

“You’ll see.”

The two men stopped off at their room and Jared left his suitcase. They left and drove to the outskirts of town and pulled into a small parking lot with a fairly nice sized building with a large fenced-in yard in the back.

Jared grabbed Jensen’s suitcase and led the man into the building.

+++++

In another part of the building two men were talking. One had a beautiful golden retriever on a leash.

“It’s not working for him, Jack. The dog won’t bond with anyone. We need to find him a forever home. He’s not going to work.”

“Okay, take him to the kennels and we’ll find him one”

The other man dragged the dog towards the main hallway.

Jared and Jensen were in a large room with very little furniture in it. A man had entered and was talking to the two men.

“A dog?” Jensen asked, surprise in his voice.

“Yeah, Jen. Seeing service dog. He’ll be one of your best friends. They’ll train you with him this weekend. I’ll pick you up on Sunday night.”

“But, mom said a dog was worthless.”

The man interrupted, “The right dog is worthwhile.”

“I don’t know what to do with a dog. I don’t know if this is a good idea.”

At that moment there was a commotion at the door.

+++++

The dog who was being taken to the kennels stopped and sniffed the air near the door where Jensen was arguing over the need of a dog. With a large yelp, the dog jumped at the door and started scratching it, barking and whining.

“What the hell?” The man who was talking to the Jared and Jensen went and opened the door. The golden retriever pulled free from his handler and ran to Jensen. The dog jumped him and Jensen fell backwards. Jared and the company representative stood in surprise as the dog straddled Jensen and licked his face while making whining noises.

The trainer came in and stared. He walked over to get the dog and Jared stopped him.

“Leave them alone. The dog’s trying to bond.”

“He has made no attempt with anyone. We’re looking for a family to take him as a pet.”
“That’s because Jensen wasn’t here yet.”

Jensen finally rolled over and had the dog on its back, rubbing its stomach. The animal was making happy noises. Jared grinned as he watched them. Jack walked into the room and stared.

“Angus is bonding?”

“Yeah, Jack. He found his human. He was waiting for him.”

Jensen sat cross legged on the floor with the golden laying across his lap. He was crying.

“His name is Angus?”

“Yes, Sir. His puppy family named him that.”

Jensen caressed the dog and whispered softly to him, “Do you mind if I call you Gus?” The dog wagged its tail and kissed him.

Jensen looked up, smiling through his tears. “I want this one.”

“He’s a misfit, Sir.”

“So am I.”

+++++

Jared spent the weekend swimming at the pool, reading, and watching movies on the television in his room. He thought over Friday and Jensen with the biggest smile on his face while tears ran down it. Jensen was adamant that the misfit dog was his. Jared smiled. The dog would fit into their household admirably and be there for Jen when he had to be away with the team. Jensen would no longer need to find a new cane.

+++++

Jared arrived at the school at 7:00 Sunday evening. The manager of the school met him at the door.

“Are they ready to go?”

“I believe Mr. Ackles is packed. They are in his room. He kept breaking the rules, Mr. Padlecki. He let the dog sleep on the bed.”

Jared grinned, “He did say he and the dog were both misfits. I have no problem with dogs on the furniture.”

“Really?”

“Yes, really. Where is the room? I’ll go get them.”

The manager took Jared down a hallway and knocked on the third door on the right.

“Come in.”

Jared came in and found a small room with a bed and a bath off the side. Jensen and Gus were curled up on the bed.

“Mr. Ackles,” the manager said from behind Jared. “I told you about dogs on the furniture.”
“I told you that Jared paid for this room and the dog. You don’t have a bed for him. He’s sleeping with me.”

“He’s right,” Jared told the manager. “Jen, do you have the paperwork and proof of his training? Does he have his vest?”

“Yeah, Jar, he does.”

“Let’s go.”

+++++

Monday afternoon found the two men and Gus at the house. Jensen took Gus for a walk around the property. He carried baggies in the side pocket of Gus’ vest. The two returned to the house and Jared showed the dog where his water and food bowls were.

The two men had toys for the dog and took him out into the back to play fetch. Gus loved the game. Jared grilled hamburgers and served them with cold beer. The two men enjoyed their food while Gus chewed on a toy.

+++++

It was 11:00 and Jared was walking the house, checking the locks on doors and making sure the alarm was on. He opened Jensen’s door and looked in. Jensen was on his side with an arm draped around a golden dog. The dog was snuggling. Smiling, Jared turned and headed towards his bedroom.

Jared laid on his bed and sighed. He’d given Jensen his heart with Gus, but Jensen didn’t know it yet. Jensen did not know how to love. The best way was to give him something to love that would love him back. Gus was the start. Besides, Gus was needed badly. Two birds killed with one stone.

Jared basked in the smiles on Jensen’s face all day. He felt good. Turning off the light, he lay on his side and fell asleep.

Chapter End Notes

Jared has made a lot of plans on how to court Jensen. Gus was a major one. I love what Jared is so carefully doing. Jensen doesn't even realize it.
Chapter Notes

I mentioned that Donna would be back a couple of times...three to be exact. I also said that some things would occur which would help Jensen become independent. To me, this one one of them.

The two men had a busy week. Jensen took Gus with him to school. Numerous times, between classes, Jensen and Gus explored the campus. He actually stayed during practice on two evenings. Two other nights he stayed at the Art complex and worked on his project. Friday afternoon, he finished the last touches and polished the marble.

Ellen entered the classroom and walked over to the table. Jensen had a soft smile on his face. She stood quietly beside the young sculptor and gaze upon the project.

“Jensen, I am entering this in the annual art contest. This is too good not to.”

There was a look of panic on the man’s face. “Ellen, I’m not good enough for that.”

“If you weren’t good enough for the contest, I would not have hired you to teach the sculpting classes. I will do it on Monday. The awards ceremony is on Friday, the 30th of the month.”

“But…”

“Don’t thank me. You represent this campus and an award winning sculptor teaching our students would be a plus over other schools.”

“Yes, Ma’am.”

+++++

Jared drove to town to pick up doughnuts and a brisket. He planned to barbecue. The two men were still tired from a week of long hours. Jensen sat in the family room and curled up on the large cushioned sofa with Gus. He was reading “Hiawatha” in braille.

The doorbell rang, and the man and his dog went to answer the door. Donna Ackles and a man were waiting on the patio.

“Hello,” Jensen said when he opened the door

“Jensen,” Donna replied.

The smile left the younger man’s face and he stood at the door.

“Have you lost your manners since you moved out or are you going to let us in?”

“Us? Who’s with you?”

“Carl Mercer, Jensen. You remember me from church I’m sure. We’ve been missing you.”
“I haven’t started looking for my own church yet. Will you come in?”

The two visitors sat in the recliners in the family room and looked at the young man. Donna’s eyes took in the room and she finally noticed Gus.

“Ah…a dog. I guess your friend has a love for them.”

“My friend is named Jared and Gus is my dog.”

“You dog? Well, you can’t keep him. I wont allow a dog in the house. They are flea bitten and mangy.”

“I’m not coming home, Mother.”

“After you hear what Carl has to say, you will.”

At this moment, Jared came in by the side door and stood still listening to the conversation.

“You have nothing either of you can say that will make me change my mind.”.

“I had Carl investigate Jared.”

“You had no right to do that. Maybe I should have my attorney investigate you. You robbed me of quite a bit of money. You need to send my attorney a certified bank check for the entire amount and I won’t press charges.”.

“How dare you? I’m your mother. I’m entitled to that money.”

“I paid room and board. You weren’t entitled to any of it. Did you honestly think I wouldn’t find out.”

“You should not be speaking to me like that. This Jared is a bad influence on you.”

“I don’t care what you think about Jared. He’s the first friend I’ve ever had and he’s helped me in more ways than you ever have.”

“You don’t need to live with a gay, Jensen. It will ruin your reputation.”

At this point, Jared’s eyebrows raised. He walked into the family room. It grew quiet.

“First off, I’m bi, not gay. Second, you had no right to investigate me. My attorney will take care of this. I have the best money can buy.”

Mercer stood up. “Mr. Padalecki, Jensen has never been away from home. He needs the guidance and the steady home life. Someone of your caliber would not be able to give him that.”

Jensen stood up and shouted at both of them, “I am twenty-six years old and I have a very good paying job. I don’t need my Mother to run my life. I can choose where I live, who I live with, and what kind of life I expose myself to. Jared and I are just friends but if I wanted to have a relationship with him, I would. I would not care that it was gay. Now, I pay part of the bills here, so this is my house too. Get…the…Hell…out!”

“Jensen!”

“Now. Don’t ever come back unless I ask you to.”
The two people left the room in a hurry. Jared heard the door slam and grinned. He walked over to the trembling man and pulled him into his arms and held him close. His lips touched Jensen’s forehead in a very none romantic kiss. The older man took it as it was given…comfort.

“Why don’t we have coffee and doughnuts and then prepare the barbecue?”

“That sounds good.”

“Jen?”

“Yes?”

“Thank you.”

“You’re my dearest friend, Jared. You’re the best thing to ever happen to me.”

“I feel the same about you.”

Gus tried to stick his cold nose between the two men. They pulled apart and both knelt down to pet the dog.
Jensen’s life is changing continuously at this point. New things keep happening to him. Some of it due to Jared, but others just because of who he is.

Jared had called around on Saturday and found a church that did not frown on same sex relationships. Not that he and Jensen were in one but he was hopeful for the future. The two of them left the house at 8:30, dressed in suits, Jensen carrying a Bible. Jared didn’t have one.

They stopped at Denny’s for breakfast and arrived at the church ten minutes before the service. The building was beautiful both inside and out. Jensen was fascinated by the music. There was an old pipe organ and the sound was magnificent.

After the service, the pastor spoke with the two men and mentioned programs the church had, gave them some literature and asked for a good time to come visit. They were invited back.

After leaving church the two men and Gus drove to the aquarium. Jensen kept questioning on how he would be able to experience it. Jared just smiled and told him to wait and see.

They parked the truck, got out, removed their jackets and ties, and Jensen rolled his sleeves up and undid about four buttons on his shirt. Jared smiled in approval.

They entered the aquarium and Jared kept Jensen behind the others in each room. He had him place his hands on the glass, and lean his head close so he could hear through the glass. Jared described the scenery in the water and everything that had life within each tank. After several hours, the two men left the aquarium. Jensen was quiet.

“Are you all right.”

“Oh, yeah. I was overwhelmed. I never, in my wildest imagination, thought that I would be able to see aquatic life with my senses. Thank you so much.”

“You’re welcome. Why don’t we get an early dinner and we can pick up a couple of pints of Bluebell and let you experience another movie at the house?”

Jensen grinned. “Almond Chocolate Marshmallow?”

Jared’s laughter rang through the parking lot as they headed over to the grass to walk Gus.

“Of course, Jen. If they have it. Where would you like to eat?”

“Some place that cooks good fish.”

They drove to the lake and went to the catfish restaurant that had been built on the shore. The weather was nice enough to allow them to sit on the veranda. They ordered fried catfish, French fries, coleslaw, corn on the cob, and green pickled tomatoes. Jensen asked for extra hush puppies. While they ate, Jared described the area around the restaurant, the birds and squirrels in the trees.
After a wonderful meal, they headed towards the house, stopping once for some Bluebell. Knowing Jensen’s love of music, Jared picked out "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers." Both men enjoyed the music and the story line. Jensen was highly appreciative of his companion’s ability to describe what was being seen.

+++++

Monday morning, Jensen walked into his classroom, followed by Ellen.

“Jensen, the museum is sending someone by today to pick up your piece.”

“You actually did it?”

“Of course I did.”

The young man sat down on a stool by the table he was near. He put his head in his hands.

“What’s wrong, Jensen? I thought you would be happy about it?”

“I’m scared.”

Ellen’s voice softened and she spoke quietly, “There’s no need to be afraid, Jensen. You’re a great artist. They are going to be in awe of your piece.”

“That’s just it. No one is going to take it seriously once they know I can’t see.”

“Are you kidding! It will impress them immensely that you did that by touch, sound, and taste. It is too late to change it now. Enjoy the ride, Jensen. We’ll know at the end of the week if it’s been selected for the competition.”

+++++

Jared arrived at 12:30 apologizing for being late. They were going to be having a two day basketball challenge with five other colleges. It would be on Friday evening and all day Saturday. He and Josh were arranging to have referees and score keepers. Concessions had been taken care of.

Jensen smiled softly as they ate and listened to Jared talk about the coming weekend.

“Josh said that your dad would be glad to pick you up and sit with you and explain what’s happening.”

Jared watched the other man jerk when he mentioned the offer.

“He did?”

“Just your dad.”

Jensen sighed. “I’d like that.”

“Good. He’ll stop by here on Friday and pick you up and drive over to the Sports Complex. We’ll drive home together when it’s over. You can ride with me on Saturday also.”

“Okay. That sounds great!”

Jared grinned. “All right then. I’ve been doing all the talking. How’s your day?”
Before Jensen could answer, someone called out in the classroom, “Mr. Ackles!”

Jared followed Jensen out of the office.

“I’m Jensen Ackles.”

“I’m with the museum; here to pick up your piece.”

“Oh, yeah. Over here.” Jensen walked across the room to the other door. He opened it and pulled out a cart with a covered piece of art on it. The two men took the cart outside to a van with the museum’s logo on the side. Jared followed behind.

As Jared and Jensen went back inside the building, Jensen spoke softly, “I guess you want to know what that was all about?”

“Well, yeah. They just took your work?”

“Ellen entered it in the art competition this year.”

“That’s fantastic!”

“I guess so.”

“Well it is, Jen. If Ellen thought it was good enough that means you’re really good and you deserve the chance to prove it.”

Jensen remained quiet.

“Jen, you don’t live with someone who doesn’t believe in you. I do. You created something worthwhile. You can win this.”

“Really?”

It was Jared’s turn to be quiet. He looked at the man next to him.

“Yes, Jen. Really.”

A large smile appeared on the sculptor’s face. “Thank you, Jared.”

They went inside to finish their lunch.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you for reading this chapter. Yes, Jensen is still a little insecure but he’s gaining every day.

Please remember that comments are life to writers.
Friday

Friday was usually Jensen’s busiest day of the week. He had a student pass out the test and went to his desk and read a new book on Roman statuary he had found on a braille site. He was excited to be able to read it.

After the tests were turned in he had his students bring out their projects. He took time, moving his hands carefully over each piece, giving compliments and suggestions. He did this until ten minutes to time for the class to be over.

“Over all, you are doing good work on your projects. Next year you will be in my advanced class which is four semesters long. The last semester you will have two weeks to finish the project you choose and you will enter it in the area art contest. I have found out that it can be a proving ground for you. Have a good weekend. If you are attending the basketball event tonight and tomorrow, stop and say hi to me. I’ll be there.”

+++++

Jensen worked with four students on a regular basis. All four of them were in the classroom when Jared arrived.

“Hey, Jen, I’m not going to be able to eat lunch with you today.”

The professor turned towards the man’s voice. “Oh? Why not?”

“The coaching staff, cheerleader coach, and the band director are having a meal catered today. First I heard of it.”

“Will the cheerleaders be there?”

“Not at the banquet, but afterwards, yes. The band will be too. They want us to hear the new music and see the new routines.”

Jensen turned red. Jared tried to understand why.

“I’m sorry, Jen.”

“No, don’t say that. You can’t help it.”

Ellen walked into the classroom as both men were talking.

“Jensen?”

“Yes, Ellen?”

“Jen, I’ll go ahead and go. See you tonight.”

“Don’t leave, Jared,” Ellen interrupted the conversation.

“Okay,” Jared was confused.

“Jensen, the museum sent a letter. Your piece has been accepted and entered into the arts contest.”

“What?”
“That’s awesome, Jen!” Jared rushed over and gave his companion a hug and a slight peck on the cheek without thinking.

“Jar?” Jensen turned a dark red. There were some whistles and applause from his students.

“Way to go, Coach.”

“You missed the lips!”

“That’s enough,” Ellen said loudly. Jared stood there in surprise over what he had done. Jensen was still a brilliant shade of red.

“Jensen, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to do that. Honest.”

The sculptor turned white and murmured, “Oh. It’s all right. Just enthusiasm. Right?”

“Yeah. That has to be it.”

“Go eat and watch your cheerleaders.”

Jared hurried out but Ellen looked at the students and told them to put their projects away and to keep their mouths shut.

Jensen turned and hurried into his office, with the department head right behind him.

“That was the closest thing to affection I’ve seen from him. You looked upset when he found an excuse for what happened. Were you hoping for more?”

“More? I….I don’t know what I want. He touched his lips to my forehead when he held me and calmed me down after I kicked my mother and her friend out of the house on Saturday.”

“Sit down and eat. It sounds like he’s wanting to show more affection. If you want that affection, let him. Encourage him when he does, Jensen. What was the comment about the cheerleaders?”

“One of them wants him and I think she doesn’t look at me as competition.”

“Fight for him if you want him. I’ll help where I can. You know that.”

“Yes, ma’am.”

+++++

At 5:35, Alan Ackles entered Jensen’s classroom and walked over to his office and knocked. He heard a voice and entered.

“Hello, Son.”

“Dad!”

“I thought we could go grab a burger and chat a bit and then go to the game.”

“That sounds great.”

The two men went to the Five Guys Burger and each had a cheeseburger and split large fries. Alan updated Jensen on what was happening at home. Jensen filled him in on his new home life.

“Jensen, I know what happened on Saturday. Your mother was livid. Would you give me your side
of the story?”

Jensen was quiet. He took a drink of his iced tea, and inhaled deeply.

“You’ve never asked me that before.”

“I’ve never had a reason to think about it before. Your mother should never have gone over there without me and without you knowing in advance. I need to know your side.”

Jensen spoke softly and told his father about the entire conversation. Alan had his head lowered but would look up at his son’s face and knew Jensen wasn’t lying and that Donna was.

“I’ll take care of it, Son.”

“Thank you, Sir.”

They finished eating their meal and the conversation turned to basketball. Jared had surprised Alan with the stories of Jensen experiencing new things in life. He was excited over the opportunity to share a sport with his youngest son.

+++++

Alan’s car pulled into the Sports Arena parking lot and found a handicap parking spot open. The two men and Gus headed towards the arena. They found seats on the home side and Alan looked for Josh and Jared. The team was not on the court yet so neither man was in sight.

The next hour was intense. Both teams were good. Alan kept up a running commentary and Jensen was soon caught up in the excitement.

The two men went to get drinks and use the restroom. Jensen came back out of the restroom and headed the direction he had come. Gus stopped him.

“What is it, Gus?” He leaned down and ran his hand over the golden. He heard some voices close to him and his head turned towards them.

“Hey Professor. I’m surprised to see you hear since you can’t see me.”

The voice was familiar and it took a moment to place it. He frowned.

“Danneel,” his voice was stern.

“Yeah,” the cheerleader responded.

“You should be out on the floor with the other cheerleaders.”

“I’m the head cheerleader and I’m taking a break.”

“Well I’m heading over to concessions.”

“Just avoid the coaches. One of them is hands off to you. Got it?”

“That would be a little difficult since I live with him.”

“It won’t be long before he’ll ask you to leave. He’s mine, Prof.”

“Only my students call me Prof. You aren’t one of mine. It’s Professor Ackles to you. If I hear of
you chasing after any of the Coaching or Teaching staff, I'll have you ousted. You know the no fraternization rules.”

“We’ll see, Prof.”

“Is there a problem here?”

“No, Dad. Danneel was just leaving.”

The cheerleader walked towards the gym floor.

“You all right?”

“She’s chasing after Jared and thinks I’m competition.”

“Are you?”

“I don’t know Dad. I don’t understand what’s happening to me. I know I want to cut her tongue out and drag her by her hair from wherever he is.”

Alan smiled. “Well, it is very possible you are jealous.”

“Jealous! Me?”

“Yes Son. Jealous. Do me a favor and take it slow. I think he may have feelings for you. That would explain everything. He seems to be taking things slow. Don’t push it too fast. Let him do whatever he is doing.”

“Why?”

“Because he has a lot more experience about these things than you do. You were sheltered too much.”

“All right.”

“Let’s go watch the rest of the game.”

The two men went back to the bleachers and watched their team win. They walked over to the coaches’ hallway, looking for their two coaches. They stopped when Alan saw and Jensen heard Danneel hitting on Jared. The woman had him against the wall, rubbing herself into him. She reached up to kiss the coach, when he pushed her away.

“You’d rather be f’ing that professor than someone who looks like me?”

“Let me explain something to you. I am not interested in a child.”

“You have to be right out of college. I’m not that much younger than you.”

“You’re young enough.”

“Ackles is way older than you.”

Jensen turned white. His Dad put an arm around his shoulders.

“No, he’s not. Just four years. That’s maturity.”

“Maturity? He’s an f’ing virgin.”
Jensen tried to turn to leave. His Dad stopped him.

“At least I know who’s been in him. You? Give me a break. I like innocence. He’s adorable, talented, intelligent, and he’s absolutely beautiful. You can’t compete.”

Danneel screamed at the tall man and ran past the two Ackles and Jared spotted them and knew his companion had heard him. He walked over to the two men and stood there.

“Jen?”

“Thank you.”

“For what?”

“For defending me. No one has done that for me.”

“I like you a lot, Jensen. I want the right to defend you.”

“I would like that.”

“Why don’t you two head on home and I’ll go look for Josh.”

“Thanks Dad.”

Jared put his hand in the middle of Jensen’s back and guided him toward the doors.
On the way home Friday night, both men were quiet. Jensen was going over what Jared had said. He was surprised that the man had told him he liked him. Everyone was saying Jared was moving slow. Jensen didn’t know if liking him and wanting to protect him was slow or not. The professor was confused. The most difficult thing to understand was his own response. Why was he happy that Jared wanted to protect him? He shook his head slightly, grateful that the driver could not see his movement.

Jared kept his eyes on the road. It was late and he was tired and figured that Jensen had to be too. He went back over what Danneel had said to him and it made him angry. It was upsetting that Jensen had heard it. At least he didn’t see it, but his father did. His mind went back over the day. He kept halfway skipping over the kiss on Jensen’s cheek and the students’ comments. He ran straight into the wall of his confession to Jensen. He sighed, unhappy with himself. He did not want to scare Jensen off.

The quiet continued as they pulled into the long drive and Jared finally parked the truck in the large garage. The two men got out and Jensen took Gus for a walk on the property. Jared watched him for a minute, noting the man went past the old oval barn. His great grandfather had it built to look like a silo. Jared sucked his bottom lip between his teeth and a plan entered his mind. Walking into the house, he went to the bar in the game room and poured himself a scotch. He took out his cellphone, hit search for a name and hit the call button.

“Hey, Matt.”

“Jared? Do you know how late it is?”

“Yeah. I’m sorry. I just had something pop into my head and I have a question for you.”

“I’m still awake, so shoot.”

“Are you doing any construction right now?”

“I’m between jobs. Why?”

“Would you be interested in taking on a major renovation?”

“What do you have in mind?”

“You remember that old silo/barn my great granddad built?”

“The one we used to play in?”

“Yeah.”

“What do you want done to it?”
“Make it into an artist’s studio for a sculptor.”

“When do you want me to come out and walk it with you?”

“Sunday, after church. Say, around three.”

“I’ll see you then.”

Jared hit end call as Jensen and Gus entered the house. The sculptor took the leash and vest off the dog, and the two walked into the family room. Jared entered the room behind him. He handed the other man a drink. Jensen sniffed the drink and his head jerked back.

“That smells strong.”

“It’s scotch.”

“I’ve never tasted it before.”

“Take a sip. It’s a smooth scotch.”

The sculptor took a small sip and held his breath. The liquor burned on the way down. He coughed a little and took another sip.

“What do you think?”

“I think I’ll take this slow. I’m not used to it.”

Jared grinned.

Jensen walked over to the where the taller man stood. Jared looked into the man’s green eyes. Both were quiet.

“Jared?”

“Yeah, Jen?”

“May I ask you something?”

Jared froze thinking, ‘Here it comes.’ He held his breath for a moment.

“What is it, Jen?”

“Could I see your face?”

The coach was surprised. Jensen not knowing what he looked like had never occurred to him.

“Of course you can, Jen. How do you want to do this?”

Jensen put his drink down. Slowly his hands reached up to Jared’s face. The fingers gently caressed and moved over every inch of the face in front of him. Jared felt the fingers feeling the shape of his nose, moving over his high forehead, down his cheeks to his chin. Finally, Jensen’s fingers touched the man’s lips.

Jared felt a loss when the shorter man moved back. The silence could have been sliced with a knife.

Jensen was shaking. His companion wanted to grab those fingers and kiss each one.
“Jared?”

“Yes,” Jared whispered.

The professor’s voice sounded rough as he answered “I understand why Danneel is chasing after you.”

Jared thought he heard resignation in the man’s voice.

“You do?”

“You’re beautiful,” came a whispery response.

Jared stood in shock.

“I think I’d better go to bed. This scotch is messing with me. Good night, Jared.”

“Good night, Jen.”

Jared picked up Jensen’s glass and headed to the kitchen. He made their lunches and walked to his room.
Saturday and Very Early Sunday

Chapter Notes

These characters seem to be telling their own story. Stuff is happening that was not in my plans. Point: Danneel was not supposed to show up again until Halloween and she's getting more vindictive. I'll be adding two more to the tags.

Jensen and Jared stopped at Denny’s for their usual Saturday morning breakfast date. Both men were beginning to think of it in those terms. At home, Jared read the paper; sometimes reading an article to the other. Jensen remained quiet, giving his companion the peace he seemed to crave in the mornings. But at Denny’s Jared was very talkative. Jensen had discovered how well read and knowledgeable the man was. He enjoyed these times.

Alan and Josh walked into the restaurant. Seeing them, Jared stood up and waved them over. Saturdays meant a line of people waiting for seats.

The four men enjoyed their breakfast. It had been a long time since the Ackles men could have a meal together, sans the Ackles women. Jared picked up on this and followed their lead in the conversation.

After the meal, the four drove to the college. Alan, Jensen, and Gus found seats in the bleachers. Alan went to get two cups of coffee. They had an hour to wait, but people were arriving early to find good seats. Ellen and her family arrived. She introduced her husband, William, and her daughter, Jo, to Jensen. Alan was introduced to the Harvelles. Ellen told her family about Jensen’s being accepted for the art’s competition. Alan looked surprised.

“How good is he?”

“Dad, no one at home believed I was any good and wasted my time majoring in art.”

Alan looked at Ellen, “How good is he?”

The woman looked at the two men. “He should have been encouraged more. I’m lucky to have him teaching in my department. He’s highly talented.”

“I’m sorry about this Jensen, but how can he be? He’s blind.”

Ellen looked at the younger man, “Tell him how you can see, Jensen.”

The older man looked at his son, expectantly. Jensen had turned white.

“Go ahead, Son.”

“I can tell what things look like by smelling and hearing them; but mostly, by touch. I saw what Jared looked like last night.”

“He knows what I look like,” Ellen interjected.

“Touch?”
“Yes, Dad,” Jensen answered softly.

“You never asked anyone in the family how they looked.”

“I’ve seen Josh and Mac.”

“But not your Mother or me?”

“Would you ask Mom to let you run your hands and fingers all over her face?”

“No. I guess I wouldn’t. Would you like to see me?”

“Really?” Jensen’s voice choked.

“Yes. It’s past time you knew what your father looked like.”

Jensen slowly reached out and touched his father’s face. He ran his hands over it, almost a caress. His fingers traced the lines around the eyes. As in Jared, he felt the shape of the nose and ended up at the lips. He backed off and was quiet, tears going down his face.

“Are you okay?”

“Josh and Mac don’t look much like you.”

“They take after your mother’s side of the family. You do too.”

“Oh,” came the soft reply.

Alan changed the subject back to Jensen’s art and the two families talked for the remainder of the waiting time.

+++++

The games went on for hours. Twice Jared came into the bleachers to check on everyone. They bought lunch and snacks at the concession stand due to the large number of people in the complex. No one wanted to lose their seats.

At eleven in the evening the final game was over. Their team was the winner. Alan told everyone that it made for a promising year.

Alan and Jensen left the Harvelles and headed toward the coaches’ offices. Alan noticed Danneel and her friend standing in the hall.

“I believe you are in the wrong hallway.”

She stared at both men, giving Jensen a slow look over.

“I think I understand what he sees in you. He really wants a virgin. Wow! Who would have believed it.”

“I think you need to go,” Alan interrupted.

“How would you know what I am?”

Danneel turned back to look at Jensen.

“You’re pretty enough to be someone’s slut by now, but Jared is the first person you’ve ever been
seen with.”

Danneel turned to Alan, “You’re family really protected him. He’s like Sleeping Beauty waiting to be awakened with a kiss.”

“I’m reporting you on Monday,” Jensen said sternly.

“No, you won’t. You don’t have the cojones.”

“I do,” said Jared and Josh in unison.

Danneel hurried away. The four men watched the two women turn into the main corridor and disappear.

“How long does this need to go on?” Alan asked.

“I’ll take care of it, Dad,” Jensen answered.

“We all three will,” Jared responded.

The four men went back to Denny’s. It was after midnight and nothing else was open. As they left the restaurant, Alan invited them to church.

“We’ve found a church, Dad. Thank you though.”

+++++

It was two in the morning when the two men reached home. Jared watched Jensen take Gus for a long walk. He looked at his watch. It was only five hours until Jensen’s alarm would go off. Jensen would still want to take a shower.

When Jensen and Gus entered the house, Jared was waiting. He could see the look of exhaustion and more on the man’s face.

“Can we talk?”

The shorter man was kneeling down, playing with Gus. He looked up at his companion.

“Okay.”

“It’s almost 2:30 in the morning. I think we should stay home tomorrow. I have someone coming around three to look over one of the barns for a renovation. I’ll make a big pot of soup and we can have it with cornbread with enough leftovers to feed us for a week.”

Jensen was still and the other man could tell he was thinking.

“All right, he answered.

Jared was surprised that the man didn’t ask about the renovation or which barn?

“Let’s head on to bed. Showers in the morning. You look exhausted.”

“Do I?”

“Why do you ask that?”

“It’s not the type of comment I usually get about my looks.”
“Oh? I can imagine what they are.”

“Really? What?”

“That you should have been a girl. That you’re too beautiful to be a man. Let me tell you something. You may be those things to some, but you are every inch a man in my book.”

Jensen turned a shade of scarlet. He bit his bottom lip, eyes closed.

“Jared?”

“Yes?”

“I…er…I …um,” He quickly rose to his feet. “I’m going to go to bed.”

Jared watched the man he loved hurry out of the room, followed by a large golden dog. He grinned. Jensen’s response, or lack there of, was adorable.
Jared awoke at ten in the morning. He went to take his shower. He let the scruff stay for the day. They weren’t going anywhere. Putting on a pair of shorts, t-shirt, and tennis shoes, he headed towards the kitchen. The smell of coffee surprised him. He saw his cup sitting on the counter and poured a cup and added sugar.

He went through the house and saw Jensen in swim trunks and t-shirt sitting at one of the tables. He grinned and walked outside. Gus was swimming in the pool, a floatable toy in his mouth.

“Good morning, Jen. How long have you been up?”

“My Sunday alarm went off at 8:30. Gus needed to go out. We took care of that and cleaned up after him. Neither of us has eaten yet, but the coffee maker has the braille strips for the water. I made coffee.”

“I smelled it coming down the hall. It’s perfect by the way.”

“Thank you. Do you mind if we just veg today? I’m tired of going. I would just love to stay home.

“Sounds good. I’ll go make breakfast. Have you had time to shower or was Gus real demanding today?”

“Not yet. He really needed to expend some energy. I’ll bathe him with the hose attached to the bath house and dry him off. Then I’ll feed him and get my shower.”

“Let me take care of that. You go get a shower and put on some clothes.”

Jensen grinned and headed towards the house. Jared took care fo Gus who had tried to follow the man.

Drying his hair, Jensen walked across the hall towards his room. He stopped, listening to his roommate talking to the dog. Jared was telling him about the stranger who was coming and that Gus needed to be on his best behavior.

Jensen went to his dresser and found a pair of clean boxers and a pair of shorts. He found a knock around t-shirt and put on a pair of tennis shoes. He could smell sausage and picked up his coffee cup off his desk and walked towards the kitchen.

“Hey Jen,” Jared commented as the man went to the coffee maker to get another cup of coffee.

“Do you need the table set?”

“Yeah. Thanks.”

“You’re welcome,” Jensen responded as he took down two plates from the cabinet and got forks and knives from the drawer. He opened another drawer and took two cloth napkins out. He carried them to the breakfast nook and set them at their usual spots. The man went outside and walked to the mailbox. Next to the box was a large open tube. Inside was the local paper. He grabbed the paper and the mail and headed towards the house.

Jensen place the paper at Jared’s spot and walked into the man’s office and set the mail on his desk. He walked back into the kitchen and found two poured glasses of grape juice and took them to the
table.

“Hey, Jen! The food is ready.”

The two men took the biscuits, sausage gravy, and bacon to the table and sat down to eat.

Jared read the article on the basketball tournament from the sports page. Jensen commented on the how exciting the games had been.

They cleaned up after breakfast. The two men took time to sweep and dust the house. Laundry was done.

At two in the afternoon, Jared set up the barbecue and the outdoor deep fryer. He barbecued large hamburgers and cooked a large amount of fries. The two men went inside and Jared cut tomatoes and onions while Jensen took out condiments. They took everything, including a pitcher of ice tea outside.

The doorbell rang and Jensen, who was inside grabbing napkins, answered the door, saying “Hello.”

“Well, hello, and who are you?”

Jensen frowned, “Who are you?”

“I’m Jared’s friend, Matt.”

Jensen held out his hand, “I’m Jensen. You must be who Jared was expecting. Come on in. You’re just in time. Lunch is ready.”

“Thanks,” Matt said, following Jensen to the patio. He watched the man as they walked and wondered what Jared had gotten himself into.

Jared greeted his friend and explained to Jensen that the two of them used to hang out together when he spent his summers here with his grandparents.

The three men sat own to eat and Jensen remained quiet. He did not know this man and it seemed the two had not seen each other in a while. After they cleaned up, Jensen excused himself and took Gus for a long walk.

Matt looked at his friend, “Okay. I give up. Who is he?”

Jared sighed and told him how they had met and what had been happening.

“Jar, you’re the kind of guy who takes in stray dogs. But he’s not a stray dog and he has problems.”

“No, he doesn’t. He’s never been allowed to live. I’m going to do all I can to see to it he has a normal life and gets to experience it.”

“Are you in love with him?”

Jared sighed again, “Yes,”

“Ah! Damn it, Jar! Why?”

“Let’s walk the barn and I’ll tell you.”

The two men waked the barn and Jared told him what he needed done and how it had to be perfect.
As they walked back to the house, Jared discussed all that had been happening more in depth. Matt stopped and stared.

“You got yourself an innocent? Jared, you were always a player, man. Do you even know how to do this? Are you serious about him?”

“I want to marry him. One day I will.”

“Damn! All right. I’ll go along with it then. You sure have to take it slow, though. He was home schooled? Did he go to college?”

“He has a Masters in Art.”

“Wow! I bet he hasn’t had any sex education at all. You be careful with him.”

“I am.”

“Well, I can get this started tomorrow. I’ll call my crew and put in the first order when I get home.”

The two men started walking again and found Jensen and Gus playing fetch. Matt said goodbye to Jensen and Jared saw him to the door. He walked into the family room and found Jensen and Gus curled upon the sofa.

“Would you like to watch a movie?”

“That sounds good. What shall we watch?”

“How about the first Hobbit movie?”

“Tolkien? I’d love it.

“I have the extended versions.”

+++++

At 9:30, Jared made some grilled cheese and ham sandwiches. The two men ate and chatted about the day.

“Jensen?” Jared asked as they walked together, walking Gus.

“Yes, Jared?”

“May I see you?”

Jensen stopped. “You mean like I see?”

“I’ll close my eyes and it is dark out.”

Jared opened the gate to the back yard an unleashed Gus. He looked at Jensen and could see the confusion and wasn’t sure if Jensen wanted to let him do that. He remembered early in the morning when he had said those things to the man.

“I just want to see what you see; how you see.”

“Alright,” Jensen spoke softly.
Jared closed his eyes and lifted his hands to the other man’s face. He went slowly, caressing with his fingers as he felt every portion. He left nothing untouched. Jensen had laugh lines and he smoothed them out with a gentle movement. He could feel the man was trembling and it encouraged him. He also did like Jensen; he save the lips for last. Jensen had the most beautiful, pouting lips. He softly caressed them and then let his thumb go over them over and over. He heard a very soft moan escape the other man.

Jared placed his hands on either side of Jensen’s face. He slowly moved closer and let his lips softly touch the man’s. Jensen stiffened but did not pull away. Jared’s tongue slowly moved across the lips and moistened them.

“J..Jare..”

“Sshhh.”

Jared pulled Jensen’s bottom lip into his mouth and softly let his teeth nibble it. Jensen suddenly fell into him, collapsing.
Jared pulled him closer.

“I’m not going to hurt you, Jen. I just want to know you in every way. I’m declaring that I am very serious about us. I’ll take it slow, but I do want to teach the feelings, the emotions, and the closeness that can be had. I’m stopping right here, right now, because you don’t need to over experience anything at one time. I will be your teacher if you’ll let me.”

“Oh, god!”

“Jen?”

“Please don’t stop there.”

Jared pulled the man back into his arms, whispering softly, “Kissing is as far as we go.”

“Yes.

He pressed his mouth against Jensen’s and allowed his tongue to put pressure on the man’s lips and thrilled when those lips opened slightly. He pushed in and slowly explored the sweetness of Jensen’s mouth. It was almost ecstasy when Jensen’s tongue moved slowly and began to tangle with his.

After the kiss, Jared held the trembling man in his arms for a long time.

“What happens to us now?” Jensen whispered.

“We go very slow, Jen. If there is one thing I know, it’s that you are very untrained in the things that can happen between two people who have reached the point we are at. I am not going to go very fast at all. I want you to enjoy what happens and I really want you to want it.

“Like I did just now?”

“Yes.”

"Will we do that again?" Jensen's voice was breathless.

"Often.

As they walked back to house, Jensen calling Gus, Jared held the man’s hand for the first time.
“Jared, why do you even want this with me?”

“I don’t think you are ready to hear that.”

“If you can touch me and kiss me like that and say the things you’ve been saying to me, I have a right to know.”

“All right. I know you most likely don’t feel the same, or maybe you do and just don’t know it, but,” Jared sighed deeply, “I love you.”
Jensen's Response

Chapter Notes

This is a short chapter but an important one.

Jared stood still and watched the other man’s face. Jensen wore a look of surprise. He watched him swallow hard and run his hand over his lips and swallow again.

“Love?” Jensen’s voice had a tremor in it.

“I love you.”

“How? Jared, how can you love me? You don’t even know me.”

“You’re shy. You want to experience life. You want to see things as best you can. You are hurt deeply from your past. You are striving to understand the feelings you are experiencing. You have a strong desire to have someone close to you who you can share things with. Someone who will take an interest in what you do, what you think, and who you really are. You want someone who will care for you as you are and not see you as damaged. Am I close?”

Jensen could not respond. He nodded and stood there. He wasn’t sure what to do. Jared stepped closer to the man. He reached out his hand and touched Jensen’s face and watched him closely.

“Do you have any feelings for me?”

“I feel something, Jared. I’m just not sure what it is.”

“Jen, I’ve been courting you.”

“What?”

“I want to win your heart and take things further. Slowly, but definitely further. Will you allow me to continue?”

Jensen turned away and walked across the room. He leaned his head against the wall and Jared watched him shake violently. Twenty minutes passed and the older man suddenly stopped shaking. He stood straight. Jared’s eyebrows raised. Jensen turned and walked back to him.

“Jare?”

“Yeah, Jen?”

“I know you can’t promise this, but will you not hurt me?”

“Your mother hurt you?”

“Yeah. In lots of ways. I’m scared of caring for anyone.”

“If I get upset, I don’t usually say anything. I go for a walk. Then we can talk it over when I get
back. But, no…no, Jensen. I won’t hurt you.”

Jensen took a deep breath and sighed. Jared watched the man’s thought processes through the expressions on his face.

“I would like to try. I don’t know what I’m feeling for sure, Jared. Will you give me time?”

“All the time you need. I’m not going anywhere.”

“All right. The answer to your question is yes. I really think it is what I want.”

Jared reached out and pulled the man into his arms and kissed him. Jensen’s arms went around his neck pulling the taller man closer into him. They stood in each other’s arms for a long time before Jared broke away.

“We need to get some sleep. School tomorrow. Josh and I will pick you up to go to the Dean’s office and deal with Danneel.”

“All right.”

Jared took Jensen’s hand in his and they headed towards the hall. Stopping at the older man’s door, Jared leaned in and gently brushed his lips over the pouting ones.

“Good night, Jen,” he said.

“Good night,” came a whispered reply
Monday

Jensen’s alarm went off at its usual time. He put on some shorts and a tee shirt and took Gus out for a walk. As they took their normal path, Jensen’s mind played back the events of the night before. For the first time, he felt truly at home. Surprisingly, he felt comfortable with Jared’s courtship. For a second the thought, ‘my mom will kill me,’ went through his mind and he shrugged it off.

Entering the house, he smelled coffee and knew Jared was up. He unleashed Gus and headed towards his shower.

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Jared had put a tin of cinnamon rolls in the oven and had a pot of Oatmeal on the stove. He was drinking coffee when he noticed Gus poke his head into the kitchen.

“Hey, Gus. You hungry.” The golden’s tail wagged. Jared set his cup down and went into the pantry and brought out the dog’s dish with food in it. Setting it in the mudroom, he walked back into the kitchen to stir the cereal. He was on his second cup when he saw Jensen walk pass, carrying his suit coat and briefcase. He poured two glasses of apple juice and a cup of coffee. Jensen had hung his coat and entered the kitchen.

“Good morning, Jen.”

“Good morning. It’s a beautiful day outside.”

“I know. I jogged at 6:30. Coffee?”

“Yes, please.”

Jensen walked over to the coffee maker and turned towards Jared’s voice. He lifted his face towards the other man’s and kissed him softly on the lips. Jared was surprised but took it in stride as a good thing. He watched Jensen pick up the cup of coffee and take a sip.

“I’ll get the table set, Jare. What do we need today?”

“The juice is poured. Just cereal bowls and small plates. The brown sugar, maple syrup, raisins and cinnamon are next to the juice.”

Jensen took another drink of his coffee and set it down. He set the table and helped carry in the breakfast. Jared read an article on a new restaurant that served Indian food. The food critic gave a good rating.

“Would you like to go tonight?”

“Yes. I’ve never had Indian food. I’d like to try it.”

The two men cleaned up and Jensen grabbed his briefcase and suit coat as they headed out the door, with Gus on a leash. They drove in quiet to the college. Jared pulled into the handicapped parking at the Art’s building. He leaned over and kissed Jensen.

“Have a good day. Josh and I will be by at eleven to pick you up.”

“Okay, Jared. You have a good day, too.”
Jensen and Gus walked outside the Art’s building and down the stairs to the sidewalk. He crossed the street, walked Gus, and cleaned up after him. They went back across the street towards the sidewalk when a horn honked.

“Jensen!”

Gus steered the man towards the big truck. Josh got out of the front seat and went into the back with the dog. Jensen sat up front. They drove to the Administration Building.

The three men walked into the Dean’s office. The secretary motioned them on in. Jared led the way. Dean Beaver was a brilliant man. There were rumors that his house was one massive library. He was also a fair man.

“Come in, gentlemen. Have a seat”

The three men found seats and waited on the Dean to speak first.

“All right. What is going on?”

Jared did the talking. He spoke first about the attack on Jensen and their friendship. He then went into the problems over Danneel Harris.

Jim was quiet for a while. He offered the men some coffee but was politely refused. He walked the room and finally sat back down.

“Gentlemen. First off, we have no rules against faculty fraternization. You two have my blessing on however it works out,” the Dean said. He stopped and sighed deeply. “I find the rest to be a very sticky situation. Miss Harris’ father is on the Board of Regents and donates to the College regularly. At the same time, the young woman cannot be allowed to harass anyone. I am going to give her a reprimand and a warning. That should handle the problem.”

Jared thanked the man. Jensen had turned white. Josh was furious. The three men walked out of the Admin building.

“Let’s go get some lunch, guys,” Jared stated. They drove to Golden Corral and the three men had a marvelous lunch.

As they drove back to the college, Jensen asked, “Are we going to have problem with Mr. Harris?”

“I don’t think so. My grandfather build the Sports Complex and I continue in his philanthropic giving. I have more money than Harris.”

Josh’s mouth dropped. “Then why are you coaching?”

“Because I enjoy it.”

“Damn!”

The two coaches dropped Jensen off at the Art’s building and headed back to work.
Jared picked Jensen up at the Arts building at 5:00. Everyone they worked with, or were related to, knew about the art contest held each year by the Fine Arts Museum. When they arrived at the house, Jensen took Gus for his afternoon walk. Jared went inside and poured two glasses of iced tea and made two subs. He cooked some French fries and set everything on the table.

Jensen entered through the side door and went to the kitchen to get Gus’ afternoon meal.

“Jen?”

“Yeah, Jared?”

“I’ve got a meal for us. I know we decided on eating out at Bud Hill’s steak house, and we will, but we need something to tie us over.”

Jensen entered the breakfast nook and leaned over to gently kiss Jared. The man reached out and put his arm around the professor’s neck, pulling him closer and into a deeper kiss. Jared loved how Jensen’s mouth opened to him without any sign of fear or disinterest. He released his hold and watched Jensen pull his chair out and sit down.

“Thank you, Jared. I…I..,” Jensen blushed adorably as he stuttered over what he was trying to say.

“It’s all right.”

“Yes, it is. I don’t feel as if it was wrong. I like it.”

“Good. I’ll make sure there’s a lot of it.”

After the meal, the cleanup was done and both men headed towards their rooms and a shower. An hour later, Jensen walked into the family room. Jared looked up and set the book he was reading on the end table.

“Are you ready?”

“Yes.”

Jensen went to the side door and reached for Gus’ leash. Leaning down, he clipped the leash to the dog’s collar. Both men headed to the truck.

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The Museum of Fine Arts was located near the Theater and several other museums. Jared pulled into the parking lot and a man who was helping with the parking leaned in and told them they would need to use the parking garage. He looked into the back seat and saw Gus with his vest.

“I’m sorry, Sir. Handicapped parking is over to the side. There are still vacancies there.”

“Thank you,” Jared said, giving the man a smile.

He parked the truck and watched Jensen climb out and open the rear door for his companion to exit.
He thought that Jensen would outshine many of the people at the Awards Ceremony. The man should wear a tux regularly. He carried it off so well.

The two men walked close together towards the museum. Upon entering the complex, they were stopped by a guard who asked to see the ticket. Jensen held out two invitations.

“I’m sorry, Sir. I did not realize you were one of the competitors,” the guard said. He motioned to one of the men behind him. The gentleman walked over and looked at the invitations and smiled.

“Will you come this way, Mr. Ackles,” the man said as he turned towards hallway that led to the theater. The three men went down the hallway that led to offices and an elevator that went underground. They took the elevator and entered another hallway. The next elevator led to the theater entrance.

When they entered the theater, the man who led them introduced them to another man. He was shorter than both Jensen and Jared. He was a handsome man, Jared thought, with those piercing blue eyes and wavy black hair.

“How do you do? I’m Misha Collins, the Fine Arts Museum Curator. Mr. Ackles, you have garnered a lot of notice due to your disability. I am anxious to see how you do tonight.”

“Really? Jensen blushed again and felt uncomfortable at the interest.

“Yes,” Misha said. He turned towards Jared and asked his name, his voice showed interest in the large man. Jared introduced himself and shook the curator’s hand.

“He’s my boyfriend,” Jensen said, possessively.

Jared grinned, surprised but highly entertained. Misha looked at the other man and turned back to the taller one.

“It would seem you are both taken. What a shame.” He motioned to an usher and told the man where the two were seated.

Jensen had turned white, confused at his own reaction to the man. Jared was grinning, wondering how long it would take for his love to realize he had been both jealous and possessive. Most definitely not a sign of disinterest at all. He was highly encouraged.

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They were led down to the front of the theater and seated on the front row. Jared seemed surprised, and asked the usher.

“All those who are competing are placed near the front. We put you on the front row to accommodate the dog.”

“Thank you,” Jensen replied.

The theater filled quickly. A man sat down next to Jensen and smiled at him.

“What field are you competing in?” he asked.

Jensen replied, “Sculpture. You?”
“Metal art. I weld.”

“I hope we get to see the admissions,” Jensen responded.

“You can see the art?”

“He sees by touch,” Jared explained.

They talked for the next twenty minutes until the Curator took the stage.

“Did he hit on you?”

Jared grinned, “Yes. He hit on me. Jensen made sure he understood I wasn’t available.” He watched Jensen blush again.

“Me too,” Chad replied. “We’re going to meet for lunch tomorrow.”

“Ladies and Gentlemen,” Misha said. “Welcome to the Twenty-fifth Fine Arts Competition. The rules governing the competition state that the winning piece for each category will be awarded five thousand dollars. The overall winner will be awarded ten thousand dollars more. After the ceremony, you will be led to the grand ballroom for a gathering to visit. There will be champagne and hors d’oeuvres while visiting and conversing with the artists. You may take this time to walk over to the museum and see the pieces that will be up for bidding in the auction.”

The ceremony went smoothly. Each winner was called to the stage to get his/her trophy and check. An acceptance speech was expected. Chad had won for his metal work piece. The two men congratulated him.

Jared felt his companion go tense when the Sculpting category was announced. There were ten pieces in the group. Jensen held his breath when Misha gave the name of the winner.

“And the winner is” the curator announced. “Jensen Ackles for his piece entitled, ‘Can You See What I Hear.’ Mr. Ackles, if you would please come forward and receive your award.”

Jensen sat there for a moment, not completely understanding that he had actually won the award. Jared stood, and leaned down and took the man by his arm and led him to the stairs. He climbed the stairs with Jensen and Gus and stood at the end of the stage and watched the two walk towards Misha.

The people had been applauding, but when they saw Gus, the volume grew louder. Gus led his companion towards the curator and stopped a foot away from him.

Misha reached out and took Jensen’s hand to congratulate him, handing him both a crystal trophy and an envelope with the check for five thousand dollars. He led the man towards the microphone.

Jensen stood there, listening to the loud noise, and waited for it to die down. It slowly quieted and he leaned in towards the microphone and spoke shyly.

“Thank you, so very much. I never really thought that I was good enough to enter this competition. The head of my department at the college forced the issue and had me entered. Ellen, if you’re out there, thank you. Thank you again for the great honor you have given to me.”

The applause was loud again as Jensen shook Misha’s hand one more time and he and Gus left the stage.
Jared led both down the stairs and back to their seat. It grew quiet as everyone waited to see who had won the Art of the Year award. The head of the museums’ board of directors walked out on the stage with a large crystal trophy and a ribbon tied envelope.

Misha listed the winners and then announced, “The winner of this year’s Art of the Year award is Jensen Ackles.”

The room erupted. Jensen sat there in shock. Chad slapped him on the back.

“Way to go, Jensen!”

“Thank you, Chad,” Jensen said softly, barely heard over the noise.

Jared stood up again and helped his companion go up the stairs. Jensen and Gus walked towards the center stage. Misha handed him the large trophy and the envelope. The artist turned toward the microphone.

“I…I don’t know what to say,” he spoke quietly. “This was my first major piece and I never in my life thought it would be worth anyone seeing it. I appreciate this so very much. Thank you.”

Jensen left the stage to a standing ovation. Watching the audience, Jared wished Jensen could see it. As the man he loved walked towards him, He reached out to take his arm and led him down the stairs.

Misha announced that the grand ballroom was open. He pointed to the double doors on the right.

“Let’s sit here and wait until the crowd dies down,” Jared suggested. Chad stayed with them.

Chapter End Notes

To be continued.
Jared led Jensen towards the underground elevators. Chad followed. The men thought they would give the crowds ample time to get food and drink. They decided to look at the art that had been in the competition. They went to the Art museum and its large display room. The room was usually used for special exhibits.

They started at the paintings. Jared took time to describe each one to his companion, while Chad took the time to watch the strange relationship with great curiosity.

They walked into the physical art area. Chad took down the barrier surrounding his piece. There was a blue ribbon in it. The two men led Jensen and Gus towards the massive piece. It wasn’t long before Jensen was on the platform, climbing around on the piece, reaching out and feeling every part of it.

He got down, and they walked out of the enclosed area, and Chad replaced the barrier. Jensen had a look of awe on his face.

“It’s magnificent, Chad. I don’t understand how my piece won over yours.”

“Well, let me see yours and I’ll tell you.”

The three men walked towards the sculpture exhibit. There were some magnificent pieces. At the end of the room was a large table with a brown velvet cloth draping over the top. On the table was a piece about three feet tall and five long. Jared and Chad looked at the piece in awe. There was a young boy on his knees in the grass. The boy had no eyes. His hand was reaching up towards a butterfly that had just landed on it. On his shoulder, a bird was reaching towards his ear, beak open in song. Surrounding the boy were a rabbit, dog, and a fawn. His other hand was touching the rabbit’s face as if trying to experience how it looked through his fingers’ touch.

“Wow!” Chad exclaimed. “You had no competition, Jensen. I can’t believe you did this.”

“My god, Jen. What are you doing teaching? This is magnificent!”

Jensen stood, listening.

“It’s really good?”

“Jen, your mother is a fool. You should have had training before you went off to college. You have the abilities of a master.”

Jensen turned red. “Let’s go get something to drink and snack on.”

“I’m going to really wine and dine you tonight, Jen. This is going to end up on the auction block tonight. It’s going to bring in some money. I can tell you that.”

“I can’t see it bringing in much, Jare. It’s my first piece.”

“It sure as hell won’t be your last.”

Jensen laughed softly as they left the room and said, “I sure hope not.”

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Friday Part II
The three men entered the large room of the theater that was used for entertaining. Several people looked up as the men went to hors d’oeuvres table. Jared described the food and Jensen put what sounded good on his plate. They took a glass of champagne from a waiter and walked over to the fountain at the side of the room.

Several art critics stopped by to talk to Jensen, asking how he was able to create life so accurately with no vision. The questions were not done in an insulting way and Jensen smiled and explained how he saw things.

“There is a fawn, rabbit, bird, and a butterfly that would not be tamed enough to see.”

“I spent a week with my uncle in east Texas. He has a federal and state license to raise deer for venison. He does it with game birds also. The animals are tame enough to touch. My aunt has a butterfly collection and a parakeet. I learned what I needed to learn. Oh, they raise rabbits also.”

“It took a lot of touching and a fine memory to do the piece so accurately. I found it almost eerie to see a flat piece of marble where the eyes should have been.”

“I couldn’t think of a better way to make those who can see understand blindness.”

“You did an exceptional job. I intend to bid on it tonight.”

“Thank you.

Twenty minutes later, things calmed down. Art enthusiasts who had taken the time to view the piece, had come and gone. Jared was thinking about taking Jensen back to the theater when someone called his companion’s name.

Jensen stiffened. Jared looked up and saw the Ackles family approaching. All of the Ackles family were there.

“Jensen, congratulations on the wins,” Donna said enthusiastically.

“Thank you, Mother,” Jensen replied softly, knowing his mother as he did. She was sure to have gone all over the room, letting people know that he was “her” son.

Jared caught on quickly and asked the family if they had seen the piece. Alan, Josh, and MacKenzie had done so while Donna was walking the room visiting. He turned and noticed the middle Ackles child was upset.

“Alan,” Jared said softly. “Thank you for all of you being here. I think Jensen is tired so we are going to go sit down and wait on the auction.

Donna didn’t seem happy over the situation but nodded and walked up to her younger son and kissed him on the lips, lipstick smearing over his face. She said goodbye and walked away, looking for anyone she may have missed.

The remaining people in their group watched her leave. Jensen’s hands were in fists. Jared went and wet his handkerchief and washed the lipstick from Jensen’s face. The remainder of his family hugged him and told him how proud they were of him. None of the three made any effort to find Donna. They walked to the theater auditorium and found their seats.

“I’m sorry that happened, Jen.”

“It’s not your fault. I’m not going to be able to avoid her.”
The auction had been going on for about an hour and a half. Chad had sold his piece for seven thousand dollars. The art enthusiasts were generous. It was almost over when they announced Jensen’s piece. The bidding started off at two thousand. Several people were bidding. As the price went higher, some dropped out. Soon it was between two men; the one who had talked in depth to Jensen and one they had not met.

The auctioneer said, “Do we have another bid?” The man Jensen had talked with shook his head. The auctioneer counted down from three and said, “Sold for twenty-five thousand dollars to the representative of the Fine Arts Museum.”

“What?” Jensen almost squeaked.

“It would seem your piece is going to a part of the museum’s exhibits, Jen.”

“But the price! It’s ridiculous! It’s not worth that.”

“Beauty as well as worth is in the eye of the beholder, Jen. At that price, you’ve been recognized as a new master of the art.”

“I don’t believe it.”

“When they give you the check to take to the bank, you will.”

The auctioneer asked the artists to go to the room at the left side of the auditorium. The three men and Gus headed that way. A gentleman met them and asked Jensen and Jared to follow him. They said goodbye to Chad and went with the man towards an office. Misha Collins was seated behind a desk and smiled as they entered.

“Mr. Ackles, congratulations. I have some paperwork for you to fill out. Yours was the only piece the museum purchased tonight. We wanted to make sure the piece was budgeted for.”

“What kind of paperwork?”

“Transfer of ownership. We will be starting the history of the piece. I can fill it in as you give me the answers. When was the piece completed?”

“About two or three weeks ago.”

“Where did you find the marble?”

“I order my marble online from a mining operation in Spain. I eliminated the middle man that way.”

Misha asked several other questions and then had Jared read the paper and the sales agreement. After Jared had gone through them, Jensen signed where Misha showed him.

“Mr. Ackles. Please do not stop sculpting. I am so glad we were able to get your first piece. Thank you.”

“Thank you, Mr. Collins.” Jensen sounded stunned.

The two men and Gus left the theater and walked down the steps towards the sidewalk. They strolled past the museum to the handicapped parking area. As they got inside the truck, Jared asked the man sitting beside him, “You hungry?”
“I guess so.”

“Good. We’re going to order Chateaubriand to night.”

“What is that?”

“A wonderful cut of meat for a wonderfully talented man.”

Jared couldn’t see but he was sure that Jensen was red.
The following week was the second one Jensen had dealt with that was filled with noise. Jared refused to tell him what he was doing to the barn. Jensen got up on Saturday morning. The noise outside was almost overwhelming. He thought he would never get used to it. He took a shower and headed to the kitchen to put coffee on.

Gus nosed him and the young professor grinned down at him.

“Just a minute, Gus. I’ll take you out and then you can eat.” Bending down, the man put a leash on the dog and they both went for a long walk. When they returned, Jared was up and drinking a cup of coffee. He watched the two come near the house and thought they made a beautiful pair. He put Gus’ food dish down and replenished his water.

Jensen walked into the house and unclipped the leash. Jared handed him a cup of coffee and said, “He’s already fed, Jen.”

“Thank you,” the sculptor replied. He was quiet for a moment.

“Jared?”

“Yeah, Jen?”

“Can we get away from the noise for a while?”

“Yeah, I like to decorate early for the holidays.”

“Holidays?”

“Yeah, Jen. There’s a major holiday for each of the next three months.”

“For October?”

“Halloween.”

“Mother never let us celebrate it.”

Jared looked as shocked as he felt. He finally shook it off and decided that they would start a new tradition for Jensen. The two of them would go all out for every holiday of the year.

“Grab a jacket. It’s chilly out there. You should have been wearing one during your walk”

“Where are we going?”

“Breakfast and shopping.”

“For what?”

Jared grinned. You’re going to have to wait.

The two men were gone for about six hours. They stopped at a neighbor’s where Jared purchased six bales of hay to be delivered to their front yard. Stopping at Denny’s, the two men ordered large breakfasts. One of the area churches was holding a pumpkin patch. Jared bought ten of them.
“Jared, I appreciate the effort but a decorated yard is not something I can see.”

“Sure you can. I’ll let you climb all over everything.”

“They drove to Lowes where Jared went wild in the outdoor Halloween decorations. He let Jensen touch everything. Soon an employee checked on them. Seeing Gus, he smiled.

“Are you finding everything all right?”

“I’m looking for old movie monster stuff. Some of this is great, but I need a coffin.”

“I’m not supposed to do this, but you are buying quite a bit. My dad makes Halloween stuff. He’s a wood worker. Just tell him Kevin sent you,” the young man said, handing Jared a business card.

Jared read the name on the card, ‘Woods’ Woods. He grinned and thanked the young man.

“Here, let me help you.”

After the truck was loaded, the two men drove to Hobby Lobby. Jensen was fascinated with everything. Jared made another large purchase and the two men drove to the wood shop where Jared finally found the items he was looking for.

After leaving the wood shop, Jared drove to a mom and pop hamburger place. They each had a large burger with toppings each wanted. Both had spicy Nacho cheese on it.

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The next day and a half was spent decorating the house and property. When they were done, Jensen slowly walked both the house and the property. Jared stayed right beside him, explaining things.

“This is going to scare the crap out of people!”

“And they’ll enjoy every minute of it.”

There was a knock at the front door, Jared opened it to Matt.

“I wanted you to know it’s finished. Here are the keys for the new door.”

“Come on in. I’ll write you a check.”

“Hi, Jensen. How have you been doing?”

“I’m trying to understand why people want to be afraid.”

Matt laughed, “It’s an adrenaline rush.”

“If you say so.”

Jared came back into the room and the two men walked outside to see the barn. The interior had lights mounted on the walls; one every ten feet of the circumference. There were two mounted tables and a large platform for statues. One side had a desk and chair. There was an elevated dog bed for Gus. A sink with hot and cold water, a refrigerator and a microwave were also part of the furnishings.

“This is perfect. Matt, you’re awesome.”
“You’re really serious about this one. No one goes to the trouble of doing something like this unless they’re serious.”

“Yeah, I am. It’s coming along slowly.”

“Take good care of him.”

“I will.”

They walked to the front of the house and Jared waved goodbye and went inside to get Jensen. The two men walked towards the barn on a new sidewalk.

“You put in a sidewalk?”

“It would make it easier in bad weather.”

He let Jensen enter the building first. The man stood in the center of the room. It felt huge to him.

“Check everything out. Let me know what you think. If something needs to be changed, tell me.”

“What have you done?”

“You’ll see.”

Jensen spent over an hour slowly moving and touching. The further he went, the paler he got. Finally, he climbed the stairs to the platform. He turned towards the door where Jared was still standing.

“This is a studio?”

“I thought you might like to have more than an hour or so a day. Especially with basketball practice going full time.”

Jensen went to his knees on the platform, sobs wrenched from his body. He was shaking and tears poured from is eyes. Jared ran to him. He pulled the man into his arms and rubbed the small of his back, peppering his face with gentle kisses. Jared was worried.

“What’s wrong, Jenny?”

“I wasn’t even allowed to talk about my job or my art at home.”

“When will your next shipment of marble be in?”

“Wednesday.”

“Have them deliver it here.”

The sculptor’s arms went around Jared’s neck and Jensen kissed him, opening his mouth to him. Jared inhaled deeply and returned the kiss.

“What’s wrong, Jared?” Jensen whispered into the other man's mouth; their lips still touching.

“You’re welcome, Jenny. Let’s heat up that leftover soup and I’ll make some cornbread and we’ll eat supper and then I’ll read another chapter of the “Lou Gehrig Story.”
“Okay.”

The two men and Gus headed to house.”
This is a short chapter...more of an interlude. It is an important one. lol

For the next two weeks, Jensen spent every free minute working on his new sculpture. He had chosen a light green marble and put it on a table on the platform for the piece.

When Jared got home in the evening, the two would enjoy dinner together and read or listen to music in the media room.

The Saturday of the second week, Ellen drove to their house. She rang the doorbell. Jared answered the door and welcomed her inside.

“Jensen said that if I was in the area that I should stop by and see his new studio. Is he around?”

“He lives there, I think,” Jared teased.

“On your days off?”

“I had some work to do for Monday and told him go out there and keep busy. Come on. I’ll take you out there.”

The two walked towards the huge round barn. About twenty feet away, they started hearing music.

“That’s loud, Jared.”

“Yeah, it is.”

Jared knocked on the door, but the music was blaring so loud Jensen couldn’t hear it. The coach opened the door, stepped inside, and froze.

Jensen had an Elvis Presley Live CD in the stereo and was blaring it as loud as he could get it. He was working part of the time on a block of marble. Most of the time, he was dancing with Gus running in circles around him.

Jared watched him sway to the music and then move in a very sensual way. When he began to move his hips in an erotic fashion, Ellen got a grin on her face. She looked up at the man next to her and thought, ‘He’s gonna come all over himself just from watching the boy.’

Suddenly, Jared walked over and turned the music down. Jensen stopped immediately and turned bright red.

“Jared?”

“Yeah, Jen.”

“Uh…I wasn’t expecting anyone.”

“I figured as much,” Ellen commented.
“Ellen!”

At that point, the woman broke out in laughter.

“I’ll leave you two to visit and head back to my work,” Jared stated.

Ellen walked around the studio. She was impressed by what Jared had designed for her friend. Jensen stood and listened to her movements. He quietly waited on her to give her approval.

“This is nice, Jensen. He’s good to you.”

“Yes, he is. I wish…”

“What, hon.”

I just wish I could give him something in return.”

“Why don’t you dance for him?”

“What!”

“Dance, Jensen. You have some moves, boy. With a little help, you could really put on a show.”

“You’re joking.”

“No, I imagine he’s in the house right now, jerking off. You were quite hot.”

Jensen turned a brilliant shade of red.

“I’m going to stick around every afternoon, teach you the moves to an Elvis song and you can perform it. Lip sync…the whole she bang.”

Jensen stood there in shock, “Exactly when am I supposed to do this?”

“At the Halloween party.”

“What?”

“You heard me.”

“Ellen, the Dean, the Board of Regents, their spouses, fellow teachers, and our students will be there. I’ll never live it down.”

“I wouldn’t say that. I think you’ll be something they will never forget.”

“That’s what I’m afraid of.”

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The next two weeks, Jensen worked hard on the dance. They final took it outside on the patio. Ellen wanted to make sure he had it down so he would not fall into the pool.

On the Friday, before Halloween, they stopped at the costume shop. The man had two Elvis one pieces that were in Jensen’s size. He tried on the pale blue and then the shimmery gold with Ellen making him move around in them.

She turned to the clerk and said, “We’ll take the gold.”
Jensen swallowed hard. He was shy and had no idea how he was going to get through this.

Ellen dropped him off at his house and he and Gus took the suit to the studio and he hung it on a hook on the wall.
The Halloween Party

Jensen was up early Saturday morning, the thirty-first of October. It was Halloween and he was a nervous wreck. He put Gus’ leash on him and the two went for a long walk. He listened to the wind through the trees and a few birds were singing.

On their way back to the house, Jensen heard Gus give a light yip and start to whine. He touched the dog and could feel him wiggling. He stood up and waited. Jared jogged towards the two and stopped.

“There you are. I was looking for you.”

“I just felt the need for a long walk this morning. Are we going into town as usual?”

“Breakfast, check on the caterer, and pick up our costumes,” Jared replied, looking at the man in front of him. Jensen’s cheeks were windblown and his hair mussed up. He looked good. The most important thing to Jared was the man looked happy.

“I guess we need to give the house a once over. Dust and sweep everywhere.”

“It would be a good idea. We usually do that on Saturday, anyway.”

“Are you ready to go?”

“Yeah, Jen. You?”

“I need to feed Gus, but yes.”

+++++

Early afternoon found the truck pulling into the garage. Jensen immediately took Gus for a walk and the two were gone for about fifteen minutes. Jared brought in a bag of batteries and the two Texas Ranger costumes into the house. Jensen and Gus entered by the side door and Gus went running through the house, checking everything. Jared watched the professor head towards his room to change.

Both men were wearing shorts, tee shirts, and tennis shoes. They went through the house, dusting, sweeping, and mopping floors. Jared did laundry. At 3:25, they sat down on the patio and had a sandwich and tea.

“Will this be your first party?”

“Besides church parties, yes.”

“Make sure you eat plenty of food and try not to drink too many alcoholic beverages. Hangovers can be a bitch.”

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At 6:30, Jared placed batteries into the blinking light fixtures he’d bought to place in the jack ‘o lanterns. He turned on the porch and side lights. The outdoor speakers were on the patio and horror noises were coming out of them. The caterer had arrived and the bartender. Tables were set up for both. Gus wore a pumpkin costume. Jensen and Jared looked like old west Texas Rangers.
At 7:00, the guests began to arrive. Jared met them at the door and Jensen showed them around the house and the patio. Soon they had a crowd at the estate.

For a while, Jared kept an eye on Jensen, but the man seemed to be doing fine. His brother and sister had arrived and he was talking with them. William and Ellen Harvelle and their daughter, Jo, had come. Jo and MacKenzie hit it off and went looking for guys to dance with.

The Harris family arrived with Dean Beaver. Jared had not wanted to invite Danneel Harris, but her father was on the Board of Regents and he had not wished to slight the man. He watched the young woman make her way into the crowd as he shook hands with her father and mother.

The deejay who was handling the music kept everything upbeat. Soon the adults were dancing as well as the students.

Jensen walked around and people would include him in their conversations. He was having a nice time except for the nerves he was feeling.

At 8:45, Ellen found him and touched his shoulder. He turned, a questioning look on his face.

“It’s time.”

“Do I have to?”

“Jensen!”

“Really?”

“Come on.”

Jensen sighed and led Ellen out of the patio, through the back gate, and towards his studio. As they entered, Ellen handed him a pair of boxer briefs.

“What are these for?”

“Well, you can’t wear boxers beneath that body suit.”

“But with these I can’t hide anything.”

“That’s the idea.”

Jensen groaned, took the underwear and went into the studio.

“Remember, come back on the patio from the driveway gate. Walk through the crowd. The deejay will be playing Elvis’ theme song. Take your place and I’ll tell the deejay when to start the song.

“Okay.”

“Don’t forget to put that black scarf around your neck.”

“Oh, man.”

Jensen heard Ellen’s laughter as she walked away. He hung his ranger outfit on a hanger and placed the hat, boots, and gun on his desk. He traded out underwear, and put on the gold one piece. Sitting down, he put on the black shoes and wrapped the black scarf around his neck. The jumpsuit
felt almost cloying as it clung to every inch of his body. He had it zipped part of the way down his chest.

Walking towards the garage, only one thought went through his mind, ‘What the hell am I doing?’

+++++

Ellen walked up to the deejay and handed him two CDs and quietly explained what was going to happen. He grinned and placed the first CD into his player.

Jared had just walked outside with Dean Beaver and his wife. He looked around for Jensen but couldn’t spot him anywhere. He saw Ellen dragging Gus by the collar towards him.

“Ellen, what are you doing?”

“He can’t be allowed to trip up Jensen,” the woman answered as she put the dog in the house.

At that moment, the deejay spoke into his mic and said, “Ladies and Gentlemen. For your entertainment pleasure, the one and only…..Jensen Ackles!”

For one second a pin could have been heard dropping. Suddenly the intro music began to play and Jensen entered the patio.

“What the f….?”

“Enjoy it, Jared. I’m sure the ladies will,” Ellen teased.

Jensen reached the staging area set up for dancing and the music changed to the intro of “Burning Love.” He moved around the stage, lip syncing the song. Within seconds, women were surrounding the area. The young professor moved with an easy grace to the music his hips began to sway as he sang. When the song reached its pinnacle he was almost literally moving his hips as if he were humping someone. Each time the word, ‘hunk came out of the PA, Jensen’s hips pushed forward. The women were going wild. Jared was watching professors, students, and society women all trying to grab Jensen.

He wanted to pull the man off the stage but he was mesmerized by those gyrating and almost pulverizing movements. He was hot. God, what had Jensen done?

When the music was over, Jensen bowed and struggled to find a way back to the house, but the women were having none of it. Hands were reaching out, touching him, and he felt a sense of panic. It took Jared a small amount of time to reach the man he loved. He put his hand on Jensen’s back and eased him through the crowd. It took a while for the crowd to calm down. Jared finally managed to get Jensen inside the house, but knew they would probably be followed. He dragged Jensen into his office, shut the door behind them, and spun the man around.

“I promised myself I wouldn’t do this until I knew you were ready, but what you just did…” Jared grabbed Jensen into his arms and ravaged his mouth. Jensen froze, not sure what to do. He was drowning in the kiss and Jared was not coming up for air. Suddenly, something snapped inside of the man. He opened his mouth wider, allowing Jared more room and his tongue began to fight back. He took Jared by surprise, and the two men dueled for quite a while before Jared finally regained control.

He looked at the smaller man, “You….I….Jensen. Don’t ever do that in public again. Please. Keep that just for me.”
Jensen smiled, “I think I can do that.

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The party was beginning to wind down. Jensen walked out onto the front porch and sat down on a glider. The crowd was getting to be more than he could handle. He had suddenly become overwhelmingly popular with the women and wasn’t sure how to handle it. Someone sat on the glider next to him.

“How, Jensen.”

“Danneel?”

“Yes. You surprised me tonight.”

Jensen began to get up but the young woman grabbed his arm and pulled him down. She climbed into his lap and began to kiss him. He pushed her off and got up. He heard cloth rip.

Danneel screamed, “Help! Rape!”

Several of the older adults were in the house and heard the scream. Dean Beaver, Danneel’s father, and Jared ran outside. Jensen was standing as far away from the woman as he could get. She had a ripped blouse; her lipstick was smeared and all over Jensen’s lips.

“He tried to rape me!”

“I only pushed her off of me!”

“My daughter has been getting the blame for harassment and all the time it was you?”

“Jared, I didn’t do anything.”

“He didn’t touch her, Coach.”

One of the basketball players came out of the shadows with Genevieve Cortese. Danneel looked shocked.

Dean Beaver looked at the boy. “What were you two doing out here?”

“We’ve been dating. Gen has been upset over Danneel’s actions and told me she was going to ruin Professor Ackles’ name. We thought he might need a witness.”

Dean Beaver looked at the young woman and then her father. “Her scholarship is pulled, and she’s no longer welcome at our college. I’m sorry.”

Mr. Harris turned to Jensen, “I am so sorry for what my daughter has put you through. I will be sending her to a Catholic school at a convent. She will no longer be bothering anyone.”

“Dad, you can’t do that!”

“We’ll go home now, and we’ll get your things tomorrow. Again, gentlemen, you have my regrets and apologies. Come, Danneel.”

Soon everyone went inside except Jensen and Jared. Jared pulled his companion onto the glider next to him and held him close.
“It’s over, Jen. She’s won’t be back.”

Jensen laid his head against Jared’s chest and trembled. The man's large arms went around him and eased the tremors. They sat there for a while.

“We need to say good bye to our guests and you need a good night’s sleep.”

+++++

It was after midnight when all the guests were gone. The caterers and the bartender were cleaning up. The deejay accepted his check and was gone.

At one in the morning, Jared walked Jensen to his room and opened the door and led Jensen in. He undressed the man and helped him get into bed. Pulling the covers over him, he gently kissed his forehead and said goodnight.
Jensen woke during the night, crying out. Nightmares riddled his sleep. He tried to calm down and remain quiet so as not to bother Jared. Gus nuzzled him and gently licked his face.

“It’s all right, boy,” he whispered softly. “Just a bad dream.”

Jensen cuddled the dog closer and drifted off to sleep. The house grew quiet until another dream hit. The older man tossed and turned, whimpering softly. The dog tried to comfort him but Jensen was caught up in the nightmare and did not feel the dog’s presence. He began to cry out again, finally awakening with a loud scream of “NO!”

Suddenly his door opened and he heard Jared’s voice, “Jensen? Are you all right?”

He was quiet for a moment, then spoke softly, “I don’t know.”

The bed moved and Jared laid down beside him, pulling him into his arms. Jensen leaned into him and Jared could feel the man trembling. Gus moved to the foot of the bed and lay near the men’s feet.

“Bad dream?”

“I remembered something. There were flashes of memory. It scared me. I’m sorry.”

“Do you want to talk about it?”

“I just didn’t remember. I blocked it out.”

“Blocked what out, Jen?”

“One of my mother’s friends used to baby sit me when Mom wanted to go out. She used to touch me. Tried to make me do things.”

Jared held the man closer. “How old were you, Jen?”

“Little. Real little. I’m not even sure what she was trying to do.”

“How long did this go on?”

“Not long. Josh came home from school and caught her. I remember a loud argument between Mom and Dad. The lady didn’t come over any more. Why didn’t I remember that?”

“Lots of times we block things that traumatize us as children. It’s a mechanism our minds use to protect us from the horror.”

“Why now?”

“I imagine the thing with Danneel brought it back. I’m so sorry, Jen.”

“Am I gonna start having nightmares about this?”

“I hope not. It’s possible that talking about it helped you deal with it and the dreams won’t come back. Do you want me to stay with you tonight?”

“Please.”
Jared crawled under the covers and reached for Jensen and held him close. He laid on is back and the older man curled up against him and laid his head on his chest and Jared listened to his breathing as calmness settled in and his companion finally dozed back off. Anger raged within the coach as he thought about how young the man must’ve been. Was Donna Ackles that blind? There had to have been signs. Bad memories always return at some point. He was glad he was here for the man.

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Jared reached for his alarm and turned it off. He felt the other man move.

“Do you want to get up? We can go get breakfast. Do something special if you’d like?”

“Breakfast would be nice, but can we just stay home today?”

“I’ll make a breakfast casserole and we’ll have some biscuits with it. Why don’t you sleep a little longer.”

“I’ll get up. I didn’t shower last night. Too tired. Gus needs a walk.”

“All right. I’m going to shower and start some coffee. Get breakfast ready.”

Jensen heard him move and laid there, thinking about how it felt so natural for him to be there. It confused him. Finally, the kiss the night before sprung to mind. He remembered feeling things he’d never felt before. The thought that anyone could feel such things was almost alien to him. There were longings he didn’t know how to fill. He only knew he wanted more.

+++++

Jensen and Gus took a long walk and entered the house by the side door. Unleashing the dog, Jensen went to get him some food. The house smelled wonderful. Jared was not in the kitchen, but the coffee was on. He could smell the casserole in the oven. He fed Gus and refilled his water bowl. Heading towards the front door, he went out to the road and check yesterday’s mail and grabbed the Sunday paper.

Entering the house, Jensen set the paper at Jared’s place at the table and carried the mail to the man’s office. Jared was at his desk talking on his cell. He paused and greeted Jensen.

“Pour yourself a cup of coffee. It should be ready. I’ll be there in a second.”

Jensen smiled and left the room. He sat the table, drinking his coffee when Jared entered and placed a platter of biscuits and a casserole on the table. He left the room and returned with a cup of coffee.

The two followed their normal routine. Jared read the paper as he ate. He checked sales and put aside coupon sections. There were several interesting articles he read out loud. They discussed them while they ate.

After cleaning up, Jared suggested playing board games. Jensen had never played. The coach brought several into the family room where they sat on the floor and used the large coffee table. They played Parcheesi and Monopoly.

+++++

Later in the day, Jared set up the grill and fryer and they went outside and cooked hamburgers and fries. They enjoyed the coolness of the weather. Jared talked about how the team was doing. He
asked Jensen about his latest sculpture. Jensen turned red.

“All right, Jen. What’s going on?”

“I needed to ask you something and wasn’t sure how.”

“What do you need?”

“Would you let me touch you?”

“What?”

“You’re in the sculpture. I need to know how you’re built.”

It grew quiet and Jared considered having Jensen’s hands roaming his body and whether or not he could handle that without getting aroused. The desire to be touched by those hands overruled the caution.

“Where do you want me?”

He noticed relief on Jensen’s face and a tautness in his body eased.

“If you would just sit cross legged on the ground, it would be perfect.”

Jared did as the man asked. He could feel Jensen’s closeness and the soft touch of his hands and he slowly moved them over his body. The movement went on for over thirty minutes. Jensen went over his legs, his feet, his torso, and the touch up and down his back was almost maddening. The man went over his head, feeling how his ears were beneath the long hair.

When it was finally over, Jared looked at the man who was on his haunches in front of him. Jensen looked as if he was undecided about something. The coach remained quiet, letting the other think.

Jensen leaned in slowly and whispered, “I want…”

Jared’s voice was hoarse when he asked him, “What do you want, Jen?”

“I don’t know. I just want,” the older man whispered as he leaned in and brushed his lips against the other’s. Jared reached up and caressed Jensen’s face and slowly pulled him into his lap and deepened the kiss.

Jared finally put a halt to the kissing and murmured that they should get up. Jensen moaned as if he didn’t want to stop. All the taller could think of was not taking it too fast or bringing on another nightmare.

They walked into the house and watched the second Tolkien movie.
Jared put a lot of hours working with the team. He was getting home around 9 at night. Jensen tried staying at the sports complex, but it was just too tiring for him. He started riding home with Ellen or one of the other professors.

Friday night found the sculptor in his studio working on the body of Jared. He lost track of time. Gus slept on his pallet by the desk. A local radio station was playing country music.

Jensen ran his hands over the work, feeling for any roughness. He wiped it down with a polishing cloth. Placing his hands flat on his lower back, he attempted to stretch. He’d been spending a lot of long hours on the project. He smiled in contentment. It was finished.

Jensen was tired. He turned off the radio and walked towards the exit, calling for Gus to come. The two walked the sidewalk to the side of the garage and entered the house through the side door. Jensen unleashed the dog and turned on some lights so Jared would be able to see when he got home. He touched his watch and the time was 8:45. The sculptor went to his room and undressed, placing the work clothes in the laundry bin. Grabbing a pair of boxers and a tee shirt, the man crossed the hall to his bathroom.

+++++

Jared walked through the side door and set the takeout on the table in the breakfast nook. He could hear the shower going in the bathroom as he walked down the hall. He had a free weekend with no tournaments and was glad.

Jensen dried off and put on his boxers and teeshirt. He placed his feet into a pair of flipflops and entered the hallway. Walking into the family room, he sat on the couch. He enjoyed curling up on it. Gus sprawled in front of the fireplace.

Jared entered the family room and leaned over the couch and blew on the older man’s neck. He watched him shiver.

“Welcome home,” came a soft whisper.

“Thank you, Jen. I brought home two Caesar salads, two orders of shrimp scampi, fries, those incredible biscuits from Red Lobster and there’s a gallon of sweet tea in the fridge.”

“That sounds good, Jare.”

The two men headed towards the kitchen where Jensen grabbed glasses, plates, silverware, and napkins. Jared took the tea out of the refrigerator and they headed to the other room.

The meal was leisurely. Both men were tired. Conversation turned to how their days went. Jared informed his companion he did not have to work on the weekend. He got a smile for his effort.
The shorter of the two took a sip of his tea and a deep breath. “It’s finished.”

Jared looked up, “You’re piece?”

Jensen nodded and answered, “Yes. You’ll be the first to see it.”

“I’m honored.”

“I want to invite Ellen over to see it. I may call Misha Collins and see if he might be interested in making a bid on it.”

“You’re going to sell it,” the coach commented.

“Shouldn’t I?”

“Yeah, I guess.”

“You’d rather I didn’t because we’re in it?”

“Well, yeah. I’d like to buy this one. What are you planning to ask for it?”

Jensen blushed. “Well, after the bidding, I thought, maybe five thousand would be a good price. It’s not an award winner but I think it’s pretty good.”

“I’ll pay that. I want to own the first piece you ever did of the two of us.”

“Where would you put it?”

“There is a beautiful glass table in the private dining room. I know you bought some kind of green marble. The room is in dark walnut, glass, and the color is shades of green. I want to take the walnut candelabra off the glass table and put the statue on it.”

“You don’t have to buy it. We both live here. It’s a gift.”

“No, Jen. You worked hard on that.”

“Yeah, I did, but this gives me a chance to give back. Collins can see the next piece I do.”

The coach grinned. The two men cleaned up. They walked into the family room. Jared sat on the couch and told Jensen to lay back with his head in his lap. He watched the older man turn red, but noted that he had no problem doing as the coach asked him. They sat quietly, the taller man softly running his fingers through the smaller one’s hair.

They sat there for well over an hour, when Jared finally suggested that they head on to bed. As they walked down the hall, Jensen grabbed the younger man’s arm. Jared stopped and looked over at him.

“What is it, Jen?”

“I don’t want to be alone tonight.”

Jared took Jensen’s hand and softly said, “Come.”
Jensen woke and felt trapped. He panicked for a moment, not sure where he was. He couldn’t move. He was on his right side and felt held down. He tried to move and couldn’t.

“You all right?”

All the tension went out of the man when he heard Jared’s voice. Memories of the night before and his request came back. He smiled softly.

“I am now. I forgot where I was.”

Jared had a leg over the older man’s legs and an arm around his waist. Jensen was pulled up close. Jared leaned in and nuzzled the other’s neck and heard a sigh that pleased him deeply.

The younger man whispered softly, “Why don’t we take Gus for his morning walk and then go get breakfast. We need to grocery shop. We’ll only shop for a week. Mom let me know that she used some of her vacation time and they will be here for two weeks. She really wants to meet you.”

“Two weeks? Why does she want to meet me?”

“I told her how I feel about you. It’s all right. She’s not like your mom. You’re going to love her and she will love you. Let’s go take care of stuff.”

The two men took a long walk with Gus and planned the day. Jensen wanted to give the sculpture to Jared but not if they were leaving the house. Jared did most of the talking and the professor listened quietly and mulled over in his mind how they had come this far. Jared loved him and now he was going to meet his family. Was he ready for this?

“Penny for your thoughts, Jen.”

“I was thinking about us.”

“Oh?”

“How did we reach this point, Jared? I don’t even understand what I'm feeling and I’m meeting your family?”

“You’ll understand your feelings eventually, Jen? Don’t worry about it. Some thing or something that is said will open it up for you. Just let yourself enjoy it. Don’t be afraid of whatever happens. If you decide you do not love me, it’s all right. I am not going to kick you out. We are friends first and always will be. You never know. If you don’t love me now, it doesn’t mean your feelings might not change one day.”
Tears started slipping down Jensen’s face. Jared grabbed his arm and pulled the man and his dog to a stop. He touched Jensen’s face and wiped the tears away with his thumbs. There was a look of awe on the man’s face and he started trembling. Jared pulled him into his arms and held him. He leaned in and softly kissed him.

It was never meant to be more than comfort, but Jensen parted his lips and his tongue softly touched Jared’s mouth. Jared groaned and deepened the kiss.

When the younger man finally pulled away, reluctantly, the older one stumbled and almost fell. Jared had not realized just how much Jensen had been leaning into him. Grabbing the man’s arm to keep him from falling, Jared realized that there was definitely no doubt Jensen was sexually attracted to him. It was more than half the battle, but Jared wanted all or nothing. He would not make love to Jensen until Jensen loved him.

The two men walked back to the house and fed Gus. Each went to his own room to change for the day.

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After breakfast, the two men went to the farmer’s market and the butcher’s. Jared stocked up on the items they would need or maybe just wanted to try. When they were done they pulled into the HEB. The store had a sale going on hams. When a ham was purchased, the store gave away a free turkey twelve pounds or under. Jared knew they’d need a much larger bird for the entire family, but twelve pounds would be fine for the two of them. He picked a large spiral honey coated ham and a twelve pound bird.

The two men headed home. After Jared pulled into the garage, they hauled the bags of food and supplies into the house. They were in the middle of putting food away when the doorbell rang.

“Jen, I’m in the middle of preparing these vegetables for the freezer. Will you get the door?”

+++++

Jensen opened the door and said, “Hello?”

The man at the door stared at the professor.

“Who are you? Is Jared here?”

“Yes, he is. Who are you?”

“I asked first.”

“Yes, but I live here and I asked you.”

“I’m Steve.” The man tried to push his way past Jensen and called out Jared’s name. Jensen froze and held the door, not letting the strange man in the house. Jared walked up and stood there staring.

“Steve?”

“Hey, Jare”

“Let him in, Jen. He’s an old acquaintance of mine.”

“Jen? What kind of name is that? Oh, I got it. ‘Boy Named Sue.’ Your folks named you Jennifer.” Jared frowned, “His name is Jensen.”
“Well, he’s rude as hell, Jare.”

Jensen turned red, but did not say a word. Jared watched him for a minute and turned to his visitor.

“What do you need, Steve? We're in the midst of putting up groceries.”

“I’ve been doing some heavy thinking, Jared. I realize I made some mistakes. I would love to start over. Would you go out with me tonight?”

Jensen felt a sense of panic. He wanted to cry out and say ‘NO’ but confusion over it was stopping him. He’d have to give a reason. Why was he feeling this?

“Go out?”

“On a date,” Steve reached in and grabbed Jared’s shirt and kissed him.

Jensen could not see but he could tell what was happening. Anger and pain flooded him and headed towards the kitchen to put up groceries.

Jared pushed him away and wiped his mouth, “You don’t have the right to do that.”

“Why? We loved each other.”

“What I felt for you was an infatuation. I never knew what love was until now.”

“You love Jensen? He’s a blind man, Jared. You can do better than that.”

“I have done better. He is better. He is everything to me.”

“Go out with me once and prove to me that I’m not the one.”

Jensen heard the question and knew he had to stop it. He could not let Jared go out with this man. He loved him. Jensen froze. He loved him? The realization hit him hard. He rushed back into the hallway.

Jared had been quiet, staring at his former boyfriend. Before he could speak, Jensen returned.

“Jared?”

“This is a private conversation,” Steve interrupted.

“What is it, Jen?”

“Don’t leave with him.”

Steve stood there and laughed, “How pathetic.”

Jensen turned red and anger returned and he faced the other man, “Shut the hell up! He’s no longer yours! He’s mine!”

Jared had a look of shock on his face and his old boyfriend saw it and responded, “Well, if he is, he didn’t know it. He looks shocked.”

Jensen walked towards his companion but Steve remained in the way. Jared shoved him back to make room for the other man. Jensen moved into Jared’s personal space and reached up to touch his face. The taller man closed his eyes and felt the gentle caress.
Jensen whispered so low that only the man he was touching could hear, “I love you, Jared. I don’t
know when it happened or why I didn’t recognize it, but I love you so damned much. Please don’t
go. Don’t leave me.”

Jared looked down at him and could see the love there. He broke down, tears running down his face.
Turning to Steve, he motioned him towards the door.

“Go away. Never come back. I have what I want, I’m happy and I am most definitely satisfied.”

Steve looked at them with disgust and walked out, slamming the door behind him.

It was Jensen’s turn to wipe away the tears. Jared did not kiss him. He pulled the man into a bear hug
and held him tight.

He whispered, “Mine.”

Chapter End Notes

I hope you are enjoying this as much as I am in telling it. I wish I could post this every
day, but I am a writer who is haunted by her characters. I write when they tell me what
happens next. The story is better for that.

Please let me know how you like it. Comments are my reward. Thank you so much for
reading.
The Remainder of the Day

Jared kept Jensen held tight to his chest for what seemed like forever. Finally, he sighed and eased up on his hold on the man. He nuzzled into his neck and softly nibbled on it. Jensen stiffened.

“Jare?”

“Did I hurt you?”

“No. Why did you do that?”

“Lovers do that to each other.”

Jensen was quiet; his mind working swiftly over the information. He struggled a little and stepped back a small step.

“Jared, are we lovers?”

“Do you love me?”

“Yes.”

“Well, you know I love you. That makes us lovers.”

“I don’t know a lot about relationships, but I’ve heard men talk. I thought being lovers meant you were having sex.”

“Not in my thoughts.

“So, we’re not going to have sex?”

“Are you wanting to?”

“Hell, Jare, I just figured out I love you. I don’t know what the hell I want.”

“Would you let me lead in this? I think I’m more experienced than you are.”

“I figured that one out. Your experience just left the house.”

“You’re jealous?”

Jensen turned blood red. He bowed his head and was quiet again. Finally, he raised his head and spoke softly, “Yeah, I am jealous. He had no right to do what he did.”

Jared grinned, pleased with the response, “Good. I want you to feel possessive over me. I am over you.”

“So what happens now?”

“We finish putting away the groceries and relax this afternoon.”

“I want to bring my sculpture in.”

“We’ll do that too.”
The two men walked back into the kitchen and finished putting up the food they had purchased. When he had done all he could, Jensen headed to his studio and covered the sculpture with a large cloth and wheeled it to the side door.

Pushing it into the hallway, he listened for Jared and could hear sounds coming from the formal dining room. Pushing the cart towards the area, he left it standing and walked into the large room.

“Jared?”

“I’ve got the table cleared, Jen.”

“Good,” the sculptor left the room and returned with the cloth covered cart. He stood still for a moment while the taller man walked over to him.

“May I see it?”

Jensen nodded and slowly removed the cloth. Jared inhaled quickly and held his breath. On the cart was a light green marble statue. There was a large willow tree at one end. Beneath the tree were two men, a dog, and a picnic basket. The larger man sat cross legged and was holding a dog bone and the dog was leaning in towards his hand. The shorter man had eyes like the one in Jensen’s first sculpture. One hand was touching the arm of the other man. It was not as large as his first work but highly detailed.

“Jensen,” Jared spoke in a soft voice, filled with awe.

“Is it all right?”

“This will be an heirloom in our home.”

“Really?”

Jared pulled the other man into his arms and kissed him softly. Together they lifted the statue and arranged it on the table.

“It’s perfect, Jen.”

The next few hours were spent watching the third Hobbit movie. They fixed sandwiches for supper. As they headed down hall, Jared leaned in and kissed Jensen good night. Jensen went into his room and gathered his night clothes and went to take a shower.

The professor lay on his bed and tossed and turned for several hours. He reached towards his phone and pressed the time. It was 1:35 a.m. Finally, he pulled back the blankets and left his room.

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Jared was asleep when the knock on his door woke him up.

“Come in.”

Jensen entered the room, followed by Gus.

“What’s the matter, Jen?”

“I can’t sleep.”
“Come on up.”

Jensen crawled over the foot of the massive bed and laid next to the younger man. Jared felt the man push up close to him.

“Are you all right?”

“Could I touch you again, Jare?”

The coach inhaled quickly and softly exhaled.

“Okay. I’m not dressed, Jen.”

“God, I hope you’re not.”

Jared chuckled and removed the blankets. He lay on his back and let the other man slowly run his fingers over his body. It felt different this time. Jensen wanted to explore the man he loved, and in his innocence, he was striving to learn his man.

When Jensen’s hand reached his groin, Jared held his breath. The older man slowly ran his fingers over younger one’s penis. Jared had to bite his lip to keep from making a noise. Jensen held it in his hand and slowly squeezed down on it. This time Jared moaned.

The older man stopped, “Did I hurt you?”

“No,” Jared groaned out.

“What are you feeling to cause you to make those noises?”

“Would you like me to show you?”

Jensen hesitated for a moment and then whispered, “Please?”

Jared rolled him over and slowly removed his tshirt and boxers. He could feel the other man’s heart rate go up and he was breathing fast.

“Calm down, Jen. I’m not gonna hurt you.”

Jared started at Jensen’s face and slowly caressed him and kissed him all over it. His tongue worked on the man’s ears and he nibbled the lobes. Jensen could feel Jared’s fingers caressing his neck, his lips and tongue softly working the flesh. He gasped in pleasure.

The next hour, Jared kissed, licked, nibbled, and caressed arms, hands, legs, feet, and his chest and stomach. He loved how Jensen responded. His body lifted off the bed, wanting to be closer.

He stopped for a moment, reaching over to turn on the light so he could see what Jensen looked like. His memory of the one time in the bathroom was embedded in his mind. He wanted so much more.

Jensen was tense. Jared knew he was waiting, unprepared for what might happen. Jensen was erect. Smiling, Jared noted the freckles that went everywhere. He leaned down and slowly breathed his hot breath down the man’s penis and swiftly sucked back up, leaving a cold breathe of air up the sensitive side. The only part of the man touching the bed were his shoulders and his feet.

“Jared!”

“I’m going to take care of both of us right now, Love.”
“How?”

“How?”

You’ll see.”

He leaned over to his bedside table and found a bottle of lube. He slowly rubbed it over his cock and then massaged Jensen’s with it. He whispered softly into his lover’s ear, “Roll onto your side and face me.”

Reaching down, Jared pulled their two members together and held them in his hands as he moved his up and down Jensen’s, putting friction between them. The older man cried out in surprise and put his hands on the younger one’s shoulders. He was shaking.

Jared moved faster and faster, applying more pressure with his hands. He felt Jensen gasp and stiffen and suddenly he was covered with the man’s cum. Within two minutes, he followed suit.

Jared climbed out of bed and came back with a warm, wet washcloth and a towel. He cleaned them both and dried them. Pulling Jensen close to him, he spooned him and whispered in his ear, “I love you.”

Jensen sighed and was soon fast asleep.
Jared rose early and dressed quietly. He looked down at the man asleep in his bed and felt deep gratitude for all he been given. His mind went back to the day before. He thought of the statue and then their loving the night before. He had experienced nothing like it in his entire life. He left the room, grabbed his phone, and went for a jog. As he ran, he called several businesses he knew that would be opening to prepare for the day. They knew his number and would usually pick up for him. He had the day sorted out by the time he came back to the house.

When he entered through the side door he could smell coffee. He stopped at the kitchen and noticed that his cup was laid out on the counter. He fixed a cup and walked through the house. He saw Jensen and Gus through the patio window. The man was wearing sweatpants and a college hoodie. He watched him throw a ball for the dog. Gus would stand still, his head turning, and eyes following the arc of the ball. He would suddenly run to where the ball was coming down and jump into the air and catch it.

Opening the patio door, he stepped outside and sniffed the fall air. He walked over to one of the tables and sat down and watched the two play. Jensen kept the game going for another ten minutes and called the dog to him. He gave him a treat and the two headed towards Jared.

“Good morning, Jared.”

“Good morning, Jen. How long have you known I was here?”

“Since you walked out the door. Gus needed to run and he hasn’t had any major play time in a while.” Jensen reached down and ruffled the thick golden hair on the dog.

Jared watched the two together and couldn’t think of anything more beautiful. His mind suddenly brought up the picture of Jensen lying on his bed, naked; his pale skin spattered with all those lovely freckles. He bit his lip. He had plans for the day and he had to go slow.

The coach looked at the older man and asked him, “Would you like to go some place we haven’t been to yet?”

“That would be fun, Jare. What are you thinking about?”

“Fulfilling a dream I had yesterday.”

“How do I need to dress?”

“You look just fine. I need to grab a couple of things and we’ll head out.”

+++++

Jared bought them breakfast sandwiches and a cup of coffee at a local restaurant. They stopped at a couple of places. Jared left Jensen and Gus in the truck. The older man’s curiosity was running rampant at this point. Jared drove back past his property and took a side road that ran parallel with his land. He opened a gate over a cattle guard and drove through, stopped the truck, closed the gate, and they drove on.

“I have some sheep here. One of my hands is a herder and he moves them from pasture to pasture before the land reaches the place where it would need to be reseeded. He keeps them away from the cattle.”
“You have sheep and cattle?”

“It’s a working ranch, Jen.”

“We’re going to be out among your animals?”

“No, they’re in another pasture this week. We’ll go past the orchards, go past the pond, and head towards the creek.”

Jensen remained quiet, wondering what he was getting into. The truck bounced over the pastureland as Jared pulled off the dirt road and went across land.

They finally came to a stop and Jared got out and grabbed stuff from the back of the truck.

“Can I help?”

“No, I got it.”

They walked for a while in silence. Jensen listened to the sounds around him. The breeze was chilly, but he was warm enough in his hoodie.

“We’re here. Let me set up.”

The older man and dog stood still. Jared was quiet. Jensen could not hear what he was doing. The younger man suddenly reached for his hand and he jumped, startled.

“I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to scare you. Let me lead you over.”

They walked down a slight incline and Jensen could suddenly hear water as it flowed over rocks. His face lit up with delight.

“Here’s the blanket. Why don’t you sit down.”

Jensen sat on a soft blanket and the dog laid down near him. He felt his companion sit down next him, their bodies barely touching.

“Where are we?”

“I have a small wooded area of weeping willows near the creek. I wanted to bring your statue to life. We have a picnic basket and there is some food for Gus. I tried to make it as authentic as I could.”

Jensen’s eyes widened and the younger man saw tears in them. He reached out and touched the older man’s face and leaned in and gently kissed him.

“No tears now. I want to see a smile on your face and enjoy the day with you.”

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The day had been wonderful. They enjoyed a marvelous barbecue and Jared fed Gus. Jensen kept reaching out and touching him as if he had to prove to himself that it was real.

Jared had brought a book to read to them, but Jensen laid his head in the man’s lap and dozed off. The coach read while running his finger through the light brown hair. He was contented for the first time in his life.

When the sun started to go down, the two men packed up and headed home.
Jared fixed some leftovers for supper and they watched some television; Jared doing his usual descriptions. Both men were tired and decided on an early night.

Jensen stopped in the hallway, not sure where he should go.

“Are you coming, Jen?”

Relief flooded the older man’s face.

“Yes.”

When they had both crawled into bed, Jared pulled his lover into his arms and told him to turn over. He cradled him from behind.

“We are not having any form of sexual contact tonight, Jen. Our relationship is based on love, compassion, intelligence, and knowing each other. I want us to have a total relationship. It’s not a sex thing. I enjoyed last night and I think you did too, and there’s so much more I want to teach you. But, we are going slow with that. I want to know how you think, what you feel, and how you react to everything. I want all of you… intimately. I want us to be of one mind even when we disagree.”

Jensen laid with his back against Jared’s chest and took a deep breath, “I would like that too.”

Jared pulled him close and the two men went to sleep.
Ellen dropped Jensen at the house. He and Gus went in through the side door. He spent the next two
hours cleaning the house. Jared had no idea what time he would be home or the time his family
would arrive. The thought of meeting them without their son made him queasy. Jensen wanted to go
out to the studio and work but he would not know when they arrived. Jared had left a large, trimmed
brisket cooking in the oven on low and told him not to worry about it. Nothing else would be
needed. The older man needed to be doing to keep his mind off things. He went to the refrigerator
and got all of the makings for a large salad. His companion had taught him how to use the knives.
He’d made a salad before so he could do it again.

The professor finally went to his room and began to grade papers. He scanned each paper into his
computer and it read it to him. He took his time with them, making comments on each one.

+++++

At 7:30, Jensen heard a knock at the side door. He hurried past the kitchen to the still room and
opened the door.

“Hello?”

A woman’s voice responded, “Jensen?”

“Mrs. Padalecki?”

He was suddenly grabbed into an enormous hug and a kiss was planted on his cheek. He had a look
of surprise on his face.

“You are as beautiful as Jared told me you were. I’m Sherri. Gerry, Jeff and Megan are unloading
the van.”

“Won’t you come in?”

Jensen walked into the family room, followed by Jared’s mom. She looked around, liking how the
place had been redone.

“Can I get you a cup of coffee or some iced tea?”

“Not right now, Baby. I want to look at you.”

“Why?”

“Jared talks to me. I want to get to know you and see if I agree with him.”

“About what?”

Sherri smiled, “Nothing important, but my son loves you and I want to be able to do that also.”
Jensen blushed and rose to his feet when he heard voices.

“We’re in here!”

The sounds became louder and the professor heard three people enter the room.

“Jensen, this is Jared’s father, Gerry.”

The younger man walked over and shook the older one’s hand, “It’s good to meet you, Sir.”

Gerry Padalecki looked at his wife and nodded. Manners were rare in today’s younger generation.

Someone else reached for Jensen’s hand, “Hi, I’m Jeff and this is my sister, Megan.”

“Hi,” Jensen spoke softly, out of his depth.

Sherri recognized the problem. The young man was shy and possibly scared.

“Why don’t you three take the luggage upstairs. Jensen, why don’t you and I make that coffee.”

She watched the young man relax a little. Giving him something to do helped.

The two walked into the kitchen and Sherri stopped when she noticed all the braille strips everywhere. Smiling, she looked at the young man in front of her.

“It’s your kitchen. I don’t want to intrude.

“This is your son’s home. It’s not an intrusion.”

“Yes, but you live here. It’s your home too.”

Jared’s mom watched the man he loves make the coffee. He got out five cups, the cream and sugar, and five saucers.

“There should be a tray in the pantry we can carry them on. Sherri found the tray and the two placed the cups and saucers, cream and sugar, and a carafe Jensen put the coffee in on the tray.

“Would you mind if I carried it?”

“No, Ma’am.”

+++++

Jensen spent the next hour undergoing questioning as the Padaleckis took the time to learn about the man their son would most likely marry and bring into the family. It was not intense. One of them would tell a story about Jared and then ask Jensen something about himself. The side door opened and Jensen was on his feet immediately. Sherri grinned and watched him hurry to meet her son.

Jared pulled him into his arms and kissed him.

“Are you all right?”

“I am now.”

The coach grinned, “They playing 40 questions?”
“Jare, they’re really very nice. The just want to know who their son is living with.”

“It’s more than that, Jen. They are looking at you as a potential son-in-law.”

“Now wait a minute. I just fell in love with you. We haven’t gotten that far.”

“No, but I can assure you my mom is thinking it. Let’s go face them together and then serve dinner.”

+++++

The remainder of the evening went by with very few problems. Jared’s brisket was cooked in Italian dressing, with onions, potatoes, and carrots. Jensen brought out the salad.

The conversation turned to meal planning. Sherri offered to do the cooking as both men worked.

“Is there anything you boys would like?”

“Do you cook meatloaf?”

Jared looked in surprise at Jensen.

“Yes, I do. Are you wanting one?”

“My mom doesn’t do that kind of cooking. A friend at the college brought meatloaf sandwiches for lunch and shared one with me. I would really like to taste one that is hot and with side dishes. It was so good.”

Jensen could not see the slight sign of tears in Sherri Padalecki’s eyes, but her son did. She reached out and patted the professor’s cheek.

“I’ll make one tomorrow. We need to get up early to do the shopping.”

“I imagine all of you are tired. Why don’t we call it a night and we can eat breakfast at Denny’s. It’s our normal Saturday morning breakfast date.”

As everyone headed towards their rooms, Sherri stopped Jensen and softly kissed his cheek, “Sweet dreams, honey.”

Jared smiled as he watched his mom walk away, leaving a very confused Jensen.
I apologize for such a long wait. My pain levels have been skyrocketing lately. It brought back the depression and anxiety. I just wasn't able to write. My daughter, LadyLaran, is now my beta. I will be doing the same for her works.

This is another short chapter or interlude. I felt this needed to happen before anything else occurred.

Thank you for reading. Please leave kudos if you haven’t and comments are so highly appreciated.

Jensen had automatically followed Jared to his bedroom on Friday night. The coach had smiled and spooned the man for the remainder of the night.

+++++

Jensen woke when Jared’s alarm went off. Jared went jogging, and the older man and Gus took their morning walk. When he reached the side door, he unleashed the dog and walked into the kitchen to feed and water his companion. After putting on a pot of coffee, the sculptor went out front to grab the newspaper. After setting the paper at Jared’s seat, the man walked into the kitchen, stopped, and listened. Someone was fixing a cup of coffee. He waited.

“Good morning, Jensen. How do you take your coffee,” Sherri asked.

“Black. Thank you, Mrs. Padalecki?”

“That won’t do, Jensen. You have to call us by our first names.”

“Yes, ma’am. I’m sorry,” the younger man replied.

“Don’t be. Let’s take our coffee and go sit on the patio. It’s a little chilly but not bad.”

The two of them and Gus went outside. They were quiet for a while as Sherri watched the young man. She found his shyness delightful. He was different then her son’s former relationships. He was quiet, and his innocence was attractive on him. She could tell he was still an innocent but wondered how far Jared had gone. It had been almost a full three months.

Jensen broke the silence. “My mother doesn’t like Jared. She told me he was bisexual.”

Sherri thought over the comment, and wondered where this was going. “How did you react to that?”

“I kicked her out,” came a soft response.

“I imagine that was difficult for you. She is your mother.”

“She gave birth to me, but she always made me feel that she had to give up so much because of me….that I was a burden.”
“Jensen, you do know you are no burden to my son? He loves you so very much.”

“He told me that.”

Sherri watched the sculptor’s hands shake as he picked up his coffee.

“Do you love him?”

Sherri Padalecki saw something very few people had been blessed to see. Jensen’s face lit up, and a slight smile crossed his features with his eyes crinkling at the corners.

“Yes, Ma’am. I do.”

“Now that is good news, Jensen. Have you told him?”

“Last week, when Steve Amell came to visit.”

“I hope he didn’t stay long.”

“He didn’t, Mom,” Jared whispered from behind the two. The shorter of the two men jumped up and went into the taller’s arms. Sherri watched her son as he gently moved his hands in a circular motion around the older man’s back.

“Why don’t we get our showers and do our shopping? Two week’s worth of groceries will take a while.”
The Padalecki Family Shopping Trip

After everyone was dressed, Jared turned off the coffeemaker and the family took two vehicles to town. He informed Jensen that as much as they were buying, it would be needed.

Breakfast was an experience for Jensen. Everyone talked at once. From what he could tell, all three Padalecki men ate massive amounts of food. He almost grimaced at the thought. He sat between Jared and Sherri and listened. Once the food was brought, the conversation slowed down to normal. Sherri heard a soft sigh escape his lips and smiled. The topic had been basketball.

Jared’s mom watched her son’s boyfriend with enjoyment. He might not be able to use his eyes, but he had his own way of seeing things. She found it fascinating and let him be his quiet self.

As they finished the meal, Jared explained how he and Jensen shopped. The family agreed that it made sense.

+++++

Jared pulled out of the Denny’s parking lot and headed towards the outskirts of town and the local farmer’s market. They picked out an empty table and dispersed, each with a list and a suggestion from Sherri to add whatever else looked good.

“Jared, why don’t Jensen and I look for the items on my list and you head off with Jeff?” she asked.

“That’s fine with me, Mom, if it’s all right with Jen?”

The young professor was silent for a moment, a sense of panic running through him. He never went to these places without Jared and wasn’t sure how he felt about doing this with the woman standing next to him.

Being Jensen, he was honest. “I can’t even see so why you want to shop with me?”

“Jen,” Jared spoke softly.

“It’s all right, Jared. Jensen is insecure, and I understand what he is feeling. Jensen,” Sherri, spoke his name, placing her hand and on his arm. “You are a part of this family due to your relationship with my son, and I want, no….I need to know who you are. As for you not seeing? I think you probably see better than any of us.”

Jared looked at the love of his life and watched him turn from being very pale to a bright red. He leaned in and gently kissed him. Jensen reached out and hugged him. The artist took a deep breath and turned to the coach’s mom.

“I would like that.”

“Wonderful!”

The next hour was spent by the family going through every inch of the market. The table slowly filled with items on the lists and a large number of other things.

Jensen and Sherri slowly walked through the market. Jared’s mom explained what everything was. Jensen learned how the plants were grown and the men and women that raised them tended them. She discussed soil treatment, pruning, when to plant and how to know something was ripe. She
wasn’t sure the man was even listening at first until he suddenly asked a question. Smiling, the woman answered.

The two added four dozen yard eggs, three large jars of local honey, several types of fall squash, and they stopped at the smell of fresh bread. Sherri led Jensen to a large booth. The two women who ran the stall sold fresh bread. There had to be at least fifteen kinds. They picked up about five loaves of each kind. Bread could be frozen.

After an hour, the family gathered at their table with a market employee and everything was priced and a total given to Jared who paid with his bank card. It took about ten minutes to load everything into the back of the van.

+++++

The meat market was next. It was a large one and the family divided into the same teams with carts this time. The meat market had a number of employees and three butchers. They were even licensed to sell wild game.

Jared and Jeff picked up the items on their list and walked over to the wild game department. The brothers added bison, elk, venison, goose, duck, and quail.

The family checked out, and the meat was added to the van. Jared drove towards the super HEB.

+++++

The store was massive. Jensen and Sherri decided to walk the aisles as they picked up the items on their list. HEB had coffee beans for different coffees that were blended to represent different areas of Texas. They bought two of each blend and ground the beans. They also picked up two large cans of Jared’s staple blend. Several large cans of different flavored hot chocolate and a number of different tea blends were added. Sherri added two gallons of apple cider.

Going to the canned goods area, they added tomato products and canned vegetables that could not be purchased at the Farmers market. Jensen and Gus pushed a buggy right behind Sherri. She went slowly so he could tell how she was guiding hers.

The family met at the registers. An employee was standing there guiding customers to the registers that had the fewest people in line. They had six full buggies. One of the staff members called up three baggers. Jared tipped the employee who found them a register, the cashier, and the baggers. The family helped the baggers take out the food. It was placed in the back of Jared’s truck.

+++++

They pulled into Kentucky Fried Chicken, and Jared ordered three family meals. They headed out of town towards home. It took over an hour for the food to be put up. Much of the meat had to be divided, packaged, and put into the deep freeze. The fresh vegetables were prepared for the freezer.

After everything was put away, they went into the breakfast room with a large pitcher of iced tea and the chicken.

+++++

The family spent the afternoon playing board games. Sherri sat in one of the recliners, crocheting. Jensen stretched out on the couch and ran his fingers through his boyfriend’s hair as the three Padalecki siblings played Monopoly. Gerald read a book he had brought with him.

At four, Sherri rose and went to the kitchen. She scrubbed and diced potatoes and put them into a pot
of water and took out two large bags of frozen peas and set them on the counter top. Getting out a large 13”x9” glass dish, she mixed up the meatloaf and placed it into the large pan and into the oven.

Walking back into the family room, she took up her crochet and listened to her children bicker over property. Every so often she checked on her food. Sherri added the glaze to the meatloaf and drained the potatoes. Adding a stick of butter, salt, pepper, and milk to the vegetable, she got out the mixer and whipped the potatoes. Sherri added sour cream, real bacon bits, a Mexican 4 cheese blend that was shredded, and fresh chives. Placing the potatoes in a large bowl, she put the peas on to cook and made a white sauce for them.

Jensen entered the kitchen, sniffing appreciatively. He stood there for a moment, then asked, “Is there something I can do? Set the table or something?”

“Yes, Sweetie,” Sherri replied, telling him what was needed. The artist moved around the kitchen getting napkins, silverware, plates, glasses, iced tea, salt, and pepper.

Sherri took the rolls out of the other oven, looked over at the young man and saw him reaching into the refrigerator for the butter. Soon the creamed peas, mashed potatoes, meat loaf, and rolls were on the table and Jensen went and called the family.

+++++

The conversation flowed around the table, but Jensen remained his usual quiet self. He listened, smiled when appropriate, and savored every bite of the meal he had requested.

Jared looked surprised when his boyfriend asked for a third helping of the meat. Sherri grinned, pleased that he liked it.

“Jen?”

The artist blushed but only murmured that he’d never eaten anything this good. The family seemed pleased.

+++++

After dinner, the three siblings cleaned up. Jensen joined Jared’s parents in the family room and answered more questions. He was beginning to understand that the Padaleckis weren’t being rude. They really wanted to know him.

“Jensen, Jared told us you won an award for your first piece of art? May we see it?” the older man asked.

“The museum purchased it,” the professor replied.

“Really?” Sherri was surprised. “I had no idea you were that good. I wish we could see your work.”

Jensen rose and headed towards the formal dining room, saying, “We have one I recently finished. I gave it to Jared.” The two Padaleckis rose and followed the younger man.

When they entered the dining room and stood in front of the piece of art, silence fell on the three in the room.

“Oh,” Sherri exclaimed. “Jensen, why are you not doing this full time? Why teach school? This is magnificent!”
Gerald walked out of the room and called his children. Jensen had to stand there and listen to the family exclaim over his piece of art. His face was so red it worried Jared for a moment.

“I like teaching,” he finally answered the question the older woman had asked him. “It’s what I’ve always wanted to do. I don’t think I’m that good.”

Sherri walked over to the young man and pulled him into a hug, and she did not let go. “Jensen, whoever raised you to believe you are incapable of magical things should be shot. This is art, son. Art. Don’t let anyone tell you that you are not blessed with an incredible talent. Teach if you want to but never stop showing the world what you see.”

Jared heard the man he loved sob, and Jensen cried on the shoulder of the coach’s mother.
This chapter is shorter as it is an interlude. Again, I want to thank LadyLaran, who is also doing a fabulous Hobbit/Supernatural crossover, for being my beta. She started a couple of chapters back and I love the difference she's made. Thank you, daughter mine.

The family remained quiet as Sherri held the young man in her arms, making soothing sounds and running one hand up and down his back. She looked over at her son and could see tears in his eyes. Jared wanted to hold his love but knew that, right now, his mother was the one Jensen needed.

Slowly, the sculptor calmed down and his tears became fewer. He was still shaking under the force of his emotions. Sherri leaned her head down towards the one on her shoulder and kissed his fevered brow.

“It’s all right,” she whispered. Jensen released an almost stuttering sigh and moved to take a step back from Jared’s mom. His face was splotched, nose running, and he looked pitiful.

“Why don’t we get some ice cream,” Sherri suggested, taking the young man’s hand and leading him towards the kitchen. “What would everyone like? Jensen and I will dish it up.”

Jared led the family back into the main room, and they grabbed another game to play.

Sherri dragged the professor into the kitchen. She got a clean hand towel and moistened it with cool water. Grabbing a paper towel, she handed it to the young man.

“Here. Blow your nose,” she spoke softly.

Jensen took the paper towel, cleared his nose and wiped his face. Jared’s mom took the damp towel and washed the young man’s face. He had a look of awe when she pulled away. Smiling, she kissed his cheek.

“There you go; you look more presentable. Are you all right?”

“Yes, ma’am. I’m so sorry,” Jensen’s voice broke when he answered.

“You don’t have to be. Jensen, you have had a rough go of it. You have every reason to cry and the right to do so when you need it. Now, let’s get this ice cream served.”

While they ate their ice cream, they discussed the next week. Sherri asked about their schedules. Jared informed the family that the team had a two day tournament on Monday and Tuesday, telling them he would be gone for those days. He looked at Jensen and wished he could have told him earlier.

“Jensen, what time do you want us to pick you up on those days?”

The professor was quiet for a few moments and then murmured that 3:30 would be good. He leaned down and began to run his hand over the coffee table, looking for empty ice cream dishes. Sherri helped him and let him take them into the kitchen, following behind him.
“Will this be your first time to have Jared away?”

“Yes, ma’am,” Jensen answered in a soft voice.

Sherri watched him as he rinsed out the bowls and set them in the other sink before walking over to the dishwasher to empty it. “The first time is always the most difficult,” she murmured. “It’s never easy, but the first is the hardest. I’m glad we’ll be here.”

Jensen put the dishes away and went back to the sink to get the ice cream bowls. He stopped and stood quietly. Finally, the woman heard him speak in almost a whisper, “I finally got used to having him around. I’ve never had anyone before.”

“Jensen, he’ll still be around. He is a coach, and he has to travel with the team. If it was a weekend, he’d probably take you with him. You work, too, hon. At least you won’t be alone this time.”

The sculptor resumed loading the dishes into the dishwasher and closed it. He turned towards her and replied, “Why don’t we return to the others?”

Smiling, Sherri followed him out of the kitchen.

+++++

The Padalecki kids played their game for several hours. Jensen finally yawned and said he was tired and heading to bed. Jared stood and gave him a kiss, wishing him good night. The remainder of the family did the same.

At one in the morning, Jared headed to his room. He stopped at Jensen’s door, opening it and looking in to check on the man. The bed was still made. He raised his eyebrows and looked towards his room. Walking down the hall, he opened his door and headed over towards the bed and the table lamp beside it. Turning it on, he turned towards his bed to see Gus lying at the foot. Jensen was asleep, curled into a ball with Jared’s pillow in his arms. The coach grinned and went into the bathroom to get ready for bed.

Twenty minutes later, the young man entered the bedroom, clad in a pair of light sweatpants and pulled the covers back. He turned off the light and climbed into bed. Rolling onto his right side, he carefully pulled his pillow out of Jensen’s arms and laid down, gently pulling the older man close and snuggled him. The sleeping man’s arm went around Jared and pulled him closer. Smiling softly, the coach went to sleep with the love his life carefully protected in his embrace.
I want thank my daughter, LadyLaran, for the time she takes to beta my stories. We beta each others and cover each others weaknesses. She is writing a Hobbit/Supernatural crossover that is really good. It's called Hunting Erebor. It's very unique.

Sherry drove Jensen to the college Monday morning. Gus sat in the middle seat, belted in with a special dog harness for vehicles. She pulled up to the Arts Building and turned to the young man next to her.

“You have your lunch?

“It’s in my briefcase. Thank you for making it for me.”

“You’re welcome, hon. If you need me, call my cell. If we go out, I’ll still get your call.”

“Yes, Ma’am.”

Jensen and Gus exited the van and headed towards the Arts Building. Going towards his classroom, his mind wandered back to the night before. He’d slept alone; he knew it shouldn’t matter. Sometimes he slept in his own room, but this time was different. Jared had left for the bus trip last night. Shrugging it off, he entered his classroom. Turning on the lights, he walked over to his office and set his briefcase on his desk. Getting the graded papers from a folder in the case, he sat down at his desk. Someone knocked on his door and he looked up and said, “Come in.”

Ellen walked in with two cups of coffee. She set one on his desk and sat in the chair across from him.

“How did the weekend go,” she asked softly.

“Jared’s family is very nice. I like them.”

Ellen smiled, knowing there was something bothering him. “But?”

“Jared left last night for a two day tournament. I’m not used to him not being there.”

“Jensen, he’s a basketball coach. You’ll have to learn to handle it.”

“I know. Sherri said the same thing.”

“Well, it’s only two days.”

“But it’s three nights,” the professor replied back.

Smiling, Ellen had a good idea of just how far things were going. Her sculptor was most likely still a virgin, but he was definitely not sleeping alone.
“Get something with his scent on it and sleep with it. It will help; I guarantee it.”

“Thanks, Ellen.”

The department head went back to her office. Finishing his coffee, the sculptor picked up the graded papers and walked into his classroom to find it only half full. When he commented on it, one of his students mentioned that everyone was sick.

After class was over, Jensen walked back to his office and called the school clinic to verify his student’s claim. They confirmed the report that a lot of the student population was out due to a serious strain of the flu, and he was asked if he’d had a flu shot. He was quiet, knowing he had not done so. Because of his silence, the nurse asked him to come by during lunch.

At 11:30, the professor walked over to medical and got the shot. He was told it was most likely too late as half his class was out with it, but the inoculation should keep him from catching it again.

“How bad is it?”

“It’s virulent. The hospital has fifteen cases so far. If you start feeling bad, go home. Any side effects from the shot would not occur for at least twenty-four hours so if you feel bad today, it’s not the shot.”

“Yes, Ma’am.”

Walking back to the Arts building, he hoped he did not catch the bug and that the vaccine would have time to do its work.

Jensen handed out the papers to his afternoon class, noting that a third of the class was absent. As he worked with his students on their projects, he felt dizzy. The sculptor sat on the stool at the front to help with the dizziness and noticed his head had started hurting.

‘God, no,’ he thought as he got back up to help a student. An hour into the class, his body started aching and felt nauseated.

“Prof? You don’t look so good,” one of the girls mentioned. “You’re flushed.”

“Someone go get Ms. Harvelle, please,” Jensen whispered as he hurried to the restroom where he became violently sick. One of his students walked in and leaned out the door to call out to the woman waiting in the hallway. “He’s the only one in here, Ma’am.”

“Thank you,” Ellen’s voice was heard through the door.

A few minutes later a cool paper towel wiped his face. Ellen took him back to his office, reached for his cell phone on the desk and dialed Sherri’s number. She told her about the flu outbreak and asked her to come get Jensen.

+++++

Jensen barely remembered arms taking hold of his and people helping him get out of the building.

“Gus!”

“I’ve got him,” Megan responded, reassuring him.

Sherri and Jeff helped the young man lie in the middle seat with the dog on the floor next to him.
Jared’s sister got in the back, looking worried. While Jeff drove, Sherrie kept turning to make sure Jensen was all right.

The van pulled up next to the garage. Jensen was weak, with a burning fever. Jeff reached in and pulled him into his arms, carrying the sick man into the house and the professor’s bedroom. Sherri pulled the covers down, and she and her son began to undress him and put some pajamas on him.

Going into Jared’s office, she looked into his rolodex and was relieved to find Doctor Turner’s name and number. She dialed and asked his nurse if the man still practiced house calls. When the answer was affirmative, she told the woman who she was and explained Jensen’s health issue. The nurse put her on hold and returned in a few minutes, informing Jared’s mom that the doctor could be there around 4:30

The next two hours were difficult. Jensen could hold nothing down so they couldn’t give him medication to bring his temperature down. They tried bathing his body with a cool damp cloth, but the fever kept climbing.

When Doctor Turner arrived, Jensen was delirious. He kept whimpering and crying for Jared. He was in pain. The doctor took his vitals before opening his cell phone and dialing a number.

“Meg? I need you at the Padalecki Ranch. Stat.” Turner listened. “Plan on staying so pack a bag. This one has very bad case of the new flu bug. Yes, as soon you can get here.”

Turning to Sherri, Turner took control of the room. “Keep the lights dim. His head is pounding right now, and bright light will only intensify the pain. Let’s strip him down and into a lukewarm tub.”

Jeff and Turner stripped the young man down and carefully moved him to the bathroom where Sherri had drawn a bath in the whirlpool tub. When they placed the sculptor into the lukewarm water, he cried out.

“No! No! It’s cold!

“I know, son, but we have to get your fever down,” the physician said softly as he continued to push the young man back into the water. Every few minutes, he put the ear thermometer into his patient’s left ear. Slowly, the temperature lowered.

“All right, let’s get him out of this water.”

Jeff kept Jensen on his feet while Turner briskly dried his body. Jared’s brother pulled the professor back into his arms, and the two men headed to Jensen’s room.

“Has he had diarrhea,” the doctor asked as the dressed the young man.

“No, he hasn’t,” Jared’s mom answered softly.

“Good. I’m going to give him a suppository for the vomiting. I’m going to put him on an I.V. to keep fluids in his system so he doesn’t dehydrate. He should be in the hospital, but it’s almost full right now. We’ll be able to prevent another infection from occurring. Meg Masters is my home nurse. She’ll take care of whatever is needed. I’ll check in on him in the mornings, during lunch, and in the evenings

Sherrie nodded, taking a sheet of paper the doctor handed to her with instructions on it.

“Where’s Jared?”
“He’s at a basketball tournament.”

“Jensen is asleep right now, but his system doesn’t seem to handle fever very well. His was 102.8, and he was delirious. It will go up again until we get a handle on this. If it goes up again, we need to keep him calm and get the fever down quickly.

“Is he Jared’s lover?”

“I wouldn’t go that far yet, Dr. Turner. In love? Yes. Lovers? Not yet.”

“Well he’s calling for Jared when the fever goes up and aggravates the pain. You may need to get Jared to come home early.”

“He rode the bus with the students. His truck is at the school.”

Jared’s brother interrupted, "His truck is in the garage."

Turner looked at Jeff. “Would you go get him?”

“Yes, I will,” Jeff responded, giving his mother a kiss and leaving the room.

Sherri followed her son to the back door, and seeing her youngest son's key chain on the rack, said, “Jeff? Jared left his keys. Take his truck.”

The older Padalecki boy grabbed the keys and was gone.

Chapter End Notes

Flu vaccines take at least 24 hours before any reaction would occur from one. Jensen was already sick before the vaccine was given to him.
Meg Masters arrived at 5:30 with her medical kit, overnight bag, and a cot with bedding. She was introduced to the Padalecki family and hurried to Jensen’s room to set up and speak to Dr. Turner.

“Meg! Good, you made it,” Turner exclaimed. “This young man needs to be in the hospital. I called before I left the clinic and was told they are maxed out with young patients. I have him set up as best as I can especially given the circumstances. The clinic at the college called when they found out he went home. Seems he had a good portion of his classes out with this blasted flu and stopped by to get the vaccine. Too little too late.”

Meg had walked over and studied the young man lying in the bed. She brushed his hair back from his eyes.

“He’s a professor?” Seeing the doctor’s nodded, she added, “They’re hiring young one’s now.”

“You know his boyfriend,” Turner commented as he prepared to leave. He gave the nurse the chart he had done. “When he gets feverish, and he will, follow the orders on the chart. He’s sensitive to fevers; he gets delirious a little over 102. He’ll cry out when he hurts, and he wants his boyfriend. The older Padalecki left town to go get him.”

“Jared?”

Turner smiled for a second and nodded towards the surprised nurse.

“Well, where is he?”

“Basketball tournament. He left last night and isn’t due back until Wednesday. I want to keep Jensen calm so I sent Jeff after him.”

“Talk about hiring young,” Meg murmured, focused on the patient’s age and youthful appearance.

“He’s your age, Meg,” the doctor teased.

“True. You leaving now?”

“I’ll be back in the morning. Anything urgent comes up, you have my cell number.”

The nurse watched the man leave and set about taking the young man’s vitals. His temperature was 100.5. She checked when his medications had been given, setting her alarm for the time to renew the dosages.

Sherri came into the room to check on Jensen. Meg was sitting in a chair near the young man. Gus whimpered at the door.

“He’s a beautiful dog,” Meg commented.

“He’s Jensen’s service dog,” Sherri answered. “He might help keep him calm until Jared gets here.”

The nurse looked at the sleeping man. “What’s wrong with him?”

“He’s blind. To be honest, I think he sees more than any of us,” Jared’s mother whispered.

“What’s his name?”
“His name is Angus, but they call him Gus.”

Meg leaned over in her chair and spoke to the dog. “Come here, Gus. Come see your daddy.”

The dog crept into the room and went to the bed, sniffing at his friend. Gus whimpered and jumped onto the bed, crawling up next to Jensen. He licked his master’s hand and laid his head on the man’s leg. Jensen stirred but did not waken. He murmured, “Gus,” in his sleep.

Both women smiled. Sherri sat in the recliner, and the two of them kept vigil.

++++

Jeff pulled onto the campus in Dallas. He found the sports complex and looked for a parking spot. It was packed, which made finding a parking space difficult. A security guard walked over and knocked on his window.

“You got a handicapped sticker. There’s parking over there.”

“I’m driving my brother’s truck; his boyfriend is blind. I’ll park there because it’s urgent I find him. We have a family emergency, and I need to get my brother quickly.”

“He one of the players?”

“Coach,” Jeff answered.

“Park where I told you.”

“Thanks.” Jeff parked the truck and walked towards the complex.

Entering the building, he saw young men in the team’s uniform walking towards a hallway. He hurried to catch up with them.

“Hey, guys!”

“Sir,” one of the men asked.

“Do you know where Coach Padalecki is?”

“In the coaches’ break room. No one is allowed back there.”

“I’m his brother. Professor Ackles is real sick right now, and the doc says Jared needs to come home.”

One of the team members stepped up. “The Prof is a nice guy. I’ll take you there.”

“Thank you.”

The two walked through the complex and reached the double doors to a large room. As they entered, a coach stopped them.

“This is coaches only. You two can’t be here.”

“I’m looking for my brother, Jared Padalecki.”

Josh Ackles looked up and hurried over.

“You’re looking for Jared?”
“Yeah, I’m his brother, Jeff.”

“I’m Jensen’s brother, Josh.”

“I need to talk to both of you then.”

“Let me find him,” Josh replied.

Jensen’s brother went in search of the other coach. Five minutes later, both men appeared followed by their head coach.

The two Jeffs were introduced to one another.

“Is there some place quiet where we can talk?”

“Yeah,” Morgan answered, leading the three men and the player out of the room. He sent the boy back to his team, and the four men walked to an office. The head coach opened the door and turned on the lights.

“Jared, Jensen has a very virulent case of the flu,” Jeff said.

“He can’t handle fevers,” Josh interrupted.

“Doctor Turner agrees with that. The hospital’s full so we’re having to treat him at home.”

“Turner is taking care of him,” Jared repeated.

“Yeah, and some nurse he called in.”

“His old home nurse retired so she’s new. Why are you here, Jeff,” the coach asked.

“Every time the fever goes up, Jensen loses it. He cries out in pain and is yelling for you. The doctor thinks you being there will calm him down and maybe he’ll recover faster.”

Jared and Jeff looked at each other. The head coach jerked his head towards the door. “Get the hell out of here, boy. Just let Josh and me know how he does.”

Jared and Jeff headed towards the door when the younger man stopped and turned. “Josh, only your dad knows?”

The older Ackles nodded and said, “Go on. He needs you.”

+++++

At 1:25 in the morning, Jensen’s fever rose. Gus whined, and Meg stood up and went to check on her charge. He felt warm so the nurse got the ear thermometer and noted the temp was at 102.2. She started to bathe his torso and pulse points with a cool damp cloth. The woman finally managed to get an adult liquid Tylenol down the young man’s throat.

Jensen was hurting. He didn’t recognize where he was, and the woman next to him was an unknown person to him. He had trouble moving his left arm and tried to pull out the I.V. Someone held him down.

The young man began to cry out in pain, flailing one arm.

“Jared!”
“Ssshhh. Jeff has gone to get him. I promise you,” Sherri’s voice spoke softly to him. She’d left the door ajar and slept in the living room where she could hear everything.

“Jared,” Jensen whimpered. “Please.”

“He’s coming. Baby. He’ll be here soon.”

The temperature kept rising and the pain from the fever, the nausea, and the muscle cramps rose with it.

“Jared,” Jensen screamed.

Suddenly, both women were moved aside and the coach knelt by the bed.

He kissed the ailing man on his forehead and gently brushed his hair back. “I’m here, Babe,” he whispered.

“Jare?”

“Yeah. I’m not leaving you. I promise.”

The professor grabbed his boyfriend’s hand and held it in a death grip. Jared looked up at the nurse, and recognition lit his eyes. “Hi, Meg.”

“Hey, yourself. You finally find the right one?”

“Yeah. This one’s a keeper.”

“That’s good. I need two strong men to help me undress him and help me keep him in a tub of lukewarm water. Turner made a note that he fights it.”

“I’ll get in with him and hold him.”

“Sounds good.”

Jared and Jeff undressed Jensen while Sherri ran the water. The coach stripped to his boxers and picked up his love. Meg guided the i.v. stand as they headed into the bathroom. The coach handed his boyfriend over to his brother and stepped into the water.

“Damn! Are you sure this is lukewarm?”

The nurse tested the water and grinned. “I’m afraid so.”

“No wonder he fights it. He has a fever, and the water will feel almost frigid.”

“I hate it, but we have to get that temp down.”

Jared nodded and sat down, mumbling at the coolness. Jeff leaned down, passing Jensen to him. The coach took the sick man into his arms and, between the two of them, they set him in the tub between the younger Padalecki’s legs. Jensen leaned against the man’s chest.

The professor cried out, but his love held him in his arms and ran his hands over the sick man’s body, calming him.

+++++
Sherri sprayed the bed with a disinfectant spray before putting new sheets and blankets on it. Jared carried the older man in his arms and laid him on the bed. Meg tended to his medications after dressing him. Gus climbed to the foot of the bed as the coach lay on the opposite side and held the sick man in his arms. Jeff, Sherri, and Meg watched.

“I think you two can get some rest,” Meg whispered. “I’m going to. Jared will wake us if we’re needed.”

The two Padaleckis left the bedroom, and the nurse lay on her cot. Everyone slept.
Helping Jensen Fight Back

The fever started rising in the early morning hours. Jared felt the restlessness in the man beside him, and Gus was whining. The younger man laid a hand on the professor’s forehead and swore softly. Scooting down the bed, he inched his way off the bed and walked over to Meg.

The nurse was alert instantly. Jared kneeled down and whispered, “He feels hotter than before, but he’s not reacting to it yet.”

Nodding, Meg got out of bed and turned on a light. She checked the older man’s temperature. Reaching for her cell phone, she speed dialed a number.

“Rufus, his temperature is over 103. I think this may be the turning point.” Meg was quiet, listening to the doctor. “All right, we’ll be looking for you.”

“Turning point,” Sherri asked as she stuck her head through the door.

“Come on in, Mom,” Jared spoke before the nurse could reply.

The woman entered the room and looked down at the flushed face of the young man who was tossing on the bed. He was whimpering softly.

“Usually with this type of flu, it will reach a peak point and the illness will start to wane. The important thing is to help him make it through the course of this peak. It can be very hard on him. He hasn’t had the cough or diarrhea that some are prone to. The suppositories have kept the vomiting down, but the infection has spread enough to raise the temperature higher. At this point, it will either start to break up because the medicines have had enough time to make an impact or he can be hit with a secondary infection.”

“Secondary,” Jared’s voice held a tremor.

“Pneumonia is the usual one. He’s getting antibiotics with the hope of preventing this.”

“Oh god,” Jared called the dog, and the two left the room.

Meg’s jaw dropped, and her eyes were wide. Sherri reached out and patted the nurse’s shoulder.

“He has his own way of dealing with concerns, Meg,” she said quietly. “He’ll take the dog for a walk and a jog, come back, feed and water the dog, and he’ll make coffee. I’ll go fix breakfast for everyone. I’m assuming this will be a long day.”

The younger woman nodded and watched Jared’s mother leave the room, following her son.

+++++

Rufus Turner arrived 45 minutes later and hurried to the room to check on his patient. He told his nurse to go eat as he did his physical of the young man. Sighing, he removed his glasses and rubbed his eyes. He looked in his medical bag and removed the new medications. The more powerful antibiotic was placed in the i.v. bag and a stronger pain and fever reducer was added. The doctor sat in the chair by the bed and called his office. He left a message with the answering service telling them to notify his partner he would not be in. He knew his patients would be tended to.
Sherri entered, bringing the man a bowl of hot cereal with brown sugar and cream, some cinnamon rolls, and a cup of coffee on a tray. She sat in another chair, keeping the man company.

Jared and Gus entered the room thirty minutes later and walked over to his love and gently ran his hand down the man’s arm. The other two could tell he was shaking.

“It’s going to be a long day, Jared. Go read a book, watch a movie….just do something. We’ll take shifts until this fever breaks completely. He’s going to be worse today. We need to take shifts. Two hours on, then two hours off. Sherri and I have the first watch.”

“I’m not leaving him. You gave him baths to bring it down; why not now?”

“It lowered the temperature, but it didn’t stop it. I know what I’m doing. If he starts hurting real bad and crying out in delirium we’ll lower it but not until. He doesn’t need any more shocks at this point.”

Sherri rose to her feet and told Jared she was going to call and talk to Donna Ackles about Thanksgiving. Her son was not happy at the idea of putting Jensen through more stress, and Donna meant stress.

“They are just as used to being together on the holidays as we are so we’ll combine families. I can’t see her not wanting to have her son at Thanksgiving.”

Jared shook his head as his mother left the room.

“Problems in that department?” Turner asked.

“She’s an emotionally and mentally abusive parent. I don’t know that this is a good idea.”

+++++

Sherri called the Ackles’ number and asked for Donna. When the woman came to the phone, Jared’s mom introduced herself.

It was quiet on the other end. Finally, the woman spoke. “What do you want?”

“I thought you might come over on Friday, and we could discuss a combined family Thanksgiving dinner.”

“Your son has insulted me more than I can tell you about, and he’s leading my son astray. Why would I want him in my home?”

Sherri bit her tongue as she tried to curb her anger. “I believe this could bring healing between the families. We have plenty of room here to do it.”

“What time on Friday?”

“11:30? I’ll have a nice soup and salad lunch for us.”

Donna was quiet again, and Jared’s mom waited. “Fine, but I won’t promise anything.”

“That’s fair enough,” Sherri responded and Donna hung up.

+++++

The remainder of the day was a rough one. The suppositories stopped working, and Jensen was
vomiting bile from his stomach. They kept two large bowls in the room for him to be sick in. Meg kept running across the hall to empty one of the bowls while the other remained for the young man’s use. She kept several washcloths in a bowl of warm water to bath his face after he was finished being sick.

The only thing that kept the man calm and able to fight the pain and nausea was Jared. The coach had a stool beside the bed which put his upper body even with Jensen. He laid his head on the mattress with both hands touching and gently stroking the man lying there.

Someone was in the room with the two men the entire time. The family and the two practitioners took one hour shifts, tending to Jensen, and helping Jared.

+++++

At one in the morning, Megan came into the room with a cup of chicken broth for Jared. Her brother looked exhausted. Dr. Turner rose and headed towards the kitchen to get a cup of coffee.

“How is he,” the young woman asked.

The coach looked at her as he took a sip of the broth and shook his head.

“The fever’s still high?”

“Yeah,” the young man answered as his sister sat in the chair to take her turn in the room.

Ten minutes later, a soft raspy voice whispered. “That smells good.”

“J Jensen!”

“Jared, I’m so thirsty.”

“Meggy, go get Turner!”

The doctor and nurse ran into the room after she had relayed the message. Meg took his temperature, “It’s 98.04,” she exclaimed. “He’s sweating. His clothes are soaked.”

“The fever has finally broke. Let’s take care of him.”

Sherri commented that the room needed to be disinfected to prevent further infection.

“I’m going to give him a bath. Can the i.v. be removed?”

“When was the last time he vomited?”

“About 10:30,” Meg replied.

“Remove it. Sherri, do you have any more of that broth?”

“Yes. Do you want some?”

Jared interrupted, “Jensen does.

“We’re going to put him in my room so this one can be cleaned. We’re all tired, and we could use a good night’s sleep. I’m going to get him some clean boxers and a tee shirt, and then we’re going to bathe with the whirlpool running and ease his tired muscles. If you would bring some cool ginger ale and the broth to my room, Mom?”
Sherri smiled as the doctor nodded in agreement with her son’s plans.

By 2:30 in the morning the entire family was asleep; an exhausted Jensen was curled in Jared’s arms.
Slow Recovery

Chapter Notes

This is a shorter chapter as I needed to do this before Donna shows up.

Jared forgot to turn his alarm off and the shock of the noise after such little sleep jerked the coach awake from a deep sleep. The noise was bothersome, but it was Jensen's surprised cry that had startled the man. Reaching over to his bedside table, the younger man turned off the alarm and reached over to comfort the confused man next to him.

"Hey, Jen. Sshhh. It's okay. Your skin is cool. Do you feel nauseated?"

"No," the hoarse voice replied.

"How about the rest of you? Are you hurting anywhere?"

Jensen leaned into the larger man and tried to curl up in his arms instead of answering. Jared grinned and pulled him in tighter.

"I'm going to take that as a no," he whispered as he felt the steady, slow breathing of the shorter man drifting back into a restful sleep. Sighing softly, the coach closed his eyes, letting exhaustion pull him back into sleep.

+++++

At 10:00 in the morning the smell of coffee wafted in the air. Jensen's nose sniffed and his green eyes slowly opened. He tried to focus on where he was. There was no one in the room with him. Room? Jared's. He smiled. Moving carefully, the professor tried to get out of bed. His entire body trembled from weakness.

The scratching at the lower part of the door alerted him to his dog on the other side. "Jared," he asked in a raspy voice. Gus whined. "Gus? Jared?" The dog whimpered and was gone. Jensen lay back against the pillows and sighed.

Ten minutes later a knock was heard and the door opened. Sherry entered, carrying a tray. She smiled when she saw that the young man was awake.

"I hope you're hungry. I fixed what Dr. Turner recommended for today."

"Coffee," came a hopeful question.

"No, I'm sorry, but that's a good sign. I have herbal tea, some apple juice, and oatmeal."

Sherry set the tray on the dresser and helped Jensen walk towards the bathroom and left him there. She waited until he was finished and helped him back into bed. The young man leaned against the plumped up pillows, and Jared's mom placed the tray on his lap.

Jensen ate as much as he could but did not finish the meal. Sherry removed the tray and gave the professor his medicine.
"Why don't you take a nap and, if you feel up to it, we'll fix you up on the couch so you can be with the family today."

"That would be nice," came the soft reply.

+++++

Jared came in to check on the recovering man around 1:00. He leaned over onto the bed and nuzzled the sleeping professor, softly nibbling the sensitive neck. A slight moan emanated from the man, and the coach smiled and nibbled a little harder.

"Jar? I won't be able to explain a bite mark at this point in time," came the hoarse response.

Jared laughed, knowing his love was getting better. He walked over to the chair and removed the sweatpants and tee-shirt laying there. He nuzzled the drowsy man another time and ducked a light swat aimed at his head.

"Let's get you dressed, and I'll help you walk into the living room. How's that sound?"

A groan was heard, but Jensen turned over and attempted to sit up.

"Let me help you," his love offered softly. The older man reached up, and Jared helped him sit on the side of the bed. The two walked to the bathroom where Jared helped the man get a spit bath. They walked back to the bed, the shorter man wheezing slightly.

After getting the professor dressed, the coach leaned down and picked him up. He felt the other man stiffen but held on tight.

"You could barely catch your breath from exhaustion. I have no problem holding you in my arms, Jen."

+++++

The late afternoon went by smoothly. Dr. Turner stopped by and told them that the invalid was recovering smoothly. Jensen was told to take it slow.

The family played games while the older man listened as he lay on the couch.

They had soup and sandwiches later for supper. Jensen had the soup and a few saltines. As they ate dinner, Sherry mentioned Donna and MacKenzie's visit for the next day.

Jared watched the panic appear in his love's eyes and leaned in to pull him close.

"It's okay, Jen. You will be in your room or mine, and you won't see them. It's for Thanksgiving."

"She won't go for that, Jar. I don't even know why she has agreed to this. I don't want to see her..." the older man said in panic. "I'm not well enough to deal with her again. Please, Jar."

"Of course not. I'll tell her he's not well enough to receive visitors," Sherry said softly but firmly.

+++++

Jensen started to doze off, so Jared stood up to take him back to the bedroom. The coach looked at his mom, "I will be going back to work tomorrow. I've missed enough already."

"Of course, honey," the woman answered, interrupted by a terrified Jensen.
"No....no....no!!! You can't leave me here with her!"

"She's not going to be near you, Jen. It will be all right," Jared answered as soothingly as he could.

"You know how she is, Jar. Please!"

"I've got to go, Hon. You have family here to protect you. I promise."

Jared took the older man into his arms, looked at his mom and nodded. He carried Jensen into his own bedroom. He climbed into the man's bed with him, and the two dozed off after the professor had managed to calm down.
Jensen was feeling a little better the next morning. He sat at his desk and went through his emails. His transcription program was reading one from Ellen when the doorbell rang, and the young man froze.

+++++

Sherri opened the door to see two women standing on the large porch. She opened the door wide and invited the ladies inside. Donna and MacKenzie were taken into the large family room and offered the recliners. Donna sat on the couch, but her daughter gladly accepted one of the more comfortable seats.

Megan brought in soup bowls and salad plates along with cups of hot tea. Donna left her food on the coffee table and looked at Jared's mother.

"Why are we being invited to Thanksgiving?"

"Mom!" Jensen's sister exclaimed. "Dad said play nice."

Mrs. Ackles glared daggers at her daughter, who picked up a salad and attempted to ignore her parent. Donna turned back to Sherri.

"Well?"

"Why don't we eat first, Donna? Then we can talk."

"I did not give you leave to call me Donna; I am Ms. Ackles."

Jared's mom frowned but said nothing.

"Can you answer my question? If not, I'll call Jensen."

"He's not feeling well enough to take calls," Megan said without thinking.

"Jensen is sick? Why wasn't I informed?"

"Jared did not think it was a good idea."

"That 'man' is not his family. I am. What room is he in?"

"I'm not going to let you see him, Donna. The doctor said no stress; he is still not well enough to avoid a relapse."
"Well, you have no say so over that decision," Jensen's mother stated as she rose to her feet and headed towards the hallway.
Sherri followed her and yelled to Jensen to lock his door. Donna reached her son's bedroom before he could get up and move to the doorway.

Opening the door, the woman stepped inside. She stood there facing her son.

"You don't look sick to me. I should have known it was for attention."

"He had a high fever, vomiting, and was delirious. Dr. Turner had a full time nurse here."

"Here? Turner? That is pure incompetence."

"Mother," a raspy voice interrupted her tirade.

"I raised you better than to speak when others are talking."

Jensen moved slowly towards his mother's voice. Gus jumped off the chair and ran to his master.

"Keep that mutt away from me."

"This is my room; Gus is my dog. I pay half the bills here so this is my home. You were invited here to plan a family gathering for which you are no longer invited. Get the hell out of my house!"

"Jensen," Donna shouted.

"You heard me! I'll have Mom call the police and have them escort you off the property. I'll get my lawyer, and we'll have a peace bond put on you. If you don't want to be embarrassed, get out now!"

Mrs. Ackles turned, calling her daughter, and the two of them left the house.

Jensen stood in shock. Sherri saw how bad he was trembling, and she put her arms around him, turning him towards his bed. They made three steps when his legs gave way, and he collapsed.

"Megan! Call Jared, your father, and Dr. Turner! Now!"

Jared's mother sat on the floor, holding the young man in her arms. He started sobbing and began to shake violently. The older woman ran a hand through the mussed up hair and kissed his forehead.

"Sshhh...it's all right, son," she whispered. After all, he had called her 'Mom.' He was now her son; she kept him in her arms, cudding him.

+++++

Cars seemed to be coming from everywhere. Jared ran into the side door and yelled the professor's name. Behind him came Jeff, Gerry, and the doctor.

The coach fell to his knees beside his love, pulling him out of his mother's arms and into his lap. Dr. Turner knelt down and took the young man's vitals.

"I recommend complete quiet for the remainder of today and through the weekend. Let him have what he wants to eat. Let's see if we can't put a little color back on his face and calm him down."

"I want to know what happened," Jared demanded firmly.

Sherri gave a minute by minute replay of the entire confrontation, and Jensen shuddered.
Jared kissed the top of his head and murmured, "I'm so sorry, Jen. You were right; Mom and I should have respected your wishes. Donna Ackles will never be in this house again."

The sculptor was lifted to his feet, and the coach helped him get into bed, giving him the light sedative the doctor left for him. Everyone left the room as the younger man stripped to his boxers and climbed into bed, calling the dog. Gus jumped up on the foot of the bed and laid his head on Jensen's ankles. The three of them fell asleep.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you so much for reading this story. Remember that kudos are fantastic but comments are food for my soul.
Jensen seems to have finally reached his limit. It sure has taken time for him to fight back. I'm proud of him.

Sherri made a huge pot of homemade beef soup and two large pans of cornbread. The family was heading into the kitchen nook when the doorbell rang. Jensen, who was eating his first meal with the family since he had been ill, was passing the door when bell rang. He opened it and heard his father’s voice, and he froze.

"Jensen?"

"Dad?"

Jared returned to see who had arrived and put his arm around the older man.

"Mr. Ackles, Josh, MacKenzie? Come in."

"I'm sorry to bother all of you, but we had a lot to do today and needed to come here and speak with all of you."

Sherri entered the hallway. "Have you had supper?"

"We haven't had the time to even think about food today."

"Come join us," Jared offered. Jensen turned and walked towards the kitchen area.

+++++

The kitchen nook, like all of the house, was large. It was a tight fit, but everyone sat around the table. After the bowls were filled and the cornbread buttered, the room grew silent. Everyone stared at the sculptor, watching his trembling hand as he attempted to eat his soup.

"Jensen?"

The hand froze midair.

"Son?"

The younger Ackles son lowered his head and tried to keep from crying.

"Your mother is no longer living with us."

"Wh..what?"

"I filed for divorce on Friday afternoon after Josh called me. Donna and I had an argument as soon as I got home, and I told her to leave. She has gone to your grandmother's house. She came by today with some friends from church who are no longer speaking to us, and she took what she wanted. We made a list and our neighbor, who is a notary, signed and stamped it after our signatures. The form
states that she can no longer enter the house without our permission. It was my grandfather's house so she can't lay any claim to it."

"Divorce? Why now?"

"Because there have been too many witnessed confrontations. I'm sorry, son. I should have been more alert to what was happening and left her years ago," his father answered.

"Josh? How did you know?"

"Jared told me there was a problem with Mom. I gave her time to get home and called Mac, who told me what Mom did. I called Dad immediately."

"What happens now?"

"I offered Donna a settlement, and she has promised not to ask for more nor will she contest it. We just want to be a part of your life," Alan answered softly.

Jensen rose from the table and walked out of the room. Jared jumped up and followed him. He found him standing outside on porch, shivering in the cold night air. The coach discovered that the other man was crying.
Wrapping his arms around the sculptor, Jared held him close, not saying a word. It wasn't long before Sherri walked outside.

"Your father wants to know if they should leave."

Jensen turned and headed for the door, followed by the other two. Everyone looked up as he entered the kitchen nook. His face was blotchy and his eyes red.

He stood still, fists at his side. "You were never there for me, none of you. So now that I finally get to have you as my family and it overwhelms me, you ask if you should leave? You won't even fight to keep me?"

For the first time in his children's lives, Alan Ackles was heard to swear, "Damn it, Jensen. That is not what I was trying to do!"

"Then what in the hell are you trying to do!"

Silence filled the room as Alan got up and walked over to his son. He grabbed him, squeezing tight. He cried as he held the young man, and soon both were shedding tears.

Sherri and Jared were both concerned about Jensen; the doctor having said to keep him calm.

The coach walked over and placed his hand on his companion's shoulder. "I think the air has been cleared a little tonight. It's going to take some time to make things right, but Jensen doesn't need all of this right now. We can't afford a relapse, so why don't we all just realize that mistakes were made in the past. This is now the present, and we will face the future as a family. Let's all start over. I want to see you three over here as much as you can do so. You have to get to know who Jen is, and I think you'll love him."

Soon, everyone was back at the table, enjoying the meal. Jensen was quiet, as usual, listening to the conversations.

The women cleaned the dishes and kitchen and once they were done, everyone sat together in the family room and talked. Jared sat on the floor with Jensen on a pallet beside him, and the sculptor
soon fell asleep with his head on the coach's lap. At 10:30, the Ackles left and Jared walked the sleepy man towards his bedroom. The two climbed into bed with Gus at their feet.

"Did I chase them away, Jar?"

"No, but you did put a burr under their saddle. The Ackles are going to fight to win your forgiveness. You don't need to worry or be hurt any longer, Jen. They love you and want to know the man you've become."

"I haven't gotten there yet."

"No, not all the way, but far enough for them to be proud of who you are."

The older man cuddled in the taller one's arms and sighed as he drifted off to sleep.
The college would close for Thanksgiving after a half day on Wednesday. Jensen felt able to return to work before the holiday began. He listened to Jared's arguments, smiled softly, and met him for breakfast, that morning.

"Jen?"

"I'm all right. Gus and I have been for a long walk. I feel a little weak, but I can sit. If I find that I can't do it, I'll call Mom."

+++++

Jared let the professor off at the art building and reminded him to stay indoors. Jensen smiled at him, leaned into the cab and said, "I love you, too."

The coach did not pull out of the parking lot until the older man was inside the building. Grabbing his phone, he dialed Ellen Harvelle.

"Hello?"

"Jensen just entered the building."

"Serious? All right, I'll keep an eye on him to make sure he doesn't overdo himself. Take care, Jared."

"You too."

+++++

Jensen's two classes ran smoothly, and his students were glad to have him back. He went over their assignments and checked what was done on their projects. They spent the rest of the class discussing where to find materials and how to set up a studio.

The professor had lunch alone as Jared had a very busy day. At 3:30, he was outside waiting for Sherri. He and Gus climbed into her van, and the sculptor sighed.

"Take a lot out of you," the older woman asked.

"Yes, ma'am. I didn't realize just how weak I really am."

"Well, a crate arrived today and it was from overseas. I assumed it was probably marble so I had them take it to your studio."

"It took longer this time. I didn't order right away since I wasn't sure what I was going to do next. I got a call from the man who had bid on my piece at the art museum contest. He requested that I do a
piece for him of his daughter."

"Have you met her?"

"He brought her by my classroom one afternoon. She's five-years old. He wants a bust of her about mid-chest up. I had to spend some time looking at her. I asked her coloring."

"What color is the marble?"

"It's an off-white with pink and gray striations in it."

"That should be beautiful," she replied.

"I'll change into something warmer and work on my setup for it today."

"Are you sure?"

"Yeah, he wants it for his wife for Christmas so I have a lot of work to do."

+++++

Jared walked in through the side door as he always did. It was almost 6:30 and dark outside. He stopped and sniffed the air. It seemed Mom had made a pot roast. Smiling, he noted that the table was set. Walking into the family room, he greeted everyone and looked around.

"Where's Jen?"

"In his studio, hon. He got a piece of marble in today."

"Too soon," the coach exclaimed as he headed outside again.

Gerry looked at his wife. "Jensen gonna give in?"

"I don't think so. You know how much basketball is Jared's passion?"

"It's why he's coaching when he's a millionaire."

"This is Jensen's passion."

Gerry stared in silence for a moment and spoke softly. "That studio may be a warzone in a few minutes."

"Well, I'm hoping our son has matured enough in his relationship to not give ultimatums. Jensen lives and breathes his art. I could tell when I brought out some coffee a while ago. He was running his hands over the marble."

"Why did he do that?"

"He told me he was seeing the little girl in the stone...feeling her."

Her husband gave her a confused expression.

"Don't ask me, Gerry. I'm not a blind sculptor. I have no idea how he decides what happens with a piece. In a strange way, it made sense."

+++++
Jared could hear music blasting from the studio. He never understood the sculptor's need for such a loud sound. It was almost as if he bathed himself in it as he worked...as if the music flowed through him and helped him work his magic.

He opened the door, and Gus moved from his bed to greet him. Kneeling down, the younger man ran his fingers over the golden's thickened coat. Looking up, he watched Jensen slowly chipping excess marble off the block that was situated on the table on the dais he had in the center of the room.

Walking over to the counter on the far end of the room, he lowered the volume on the player. The older man's hands faltered, and he stopped.

"Jared?"

"Hi, hon. What are you creating?"

"I have a commission for a bust for Christmas."

"Why didn't you tell me?"

"So much happened, I never got around to it. I'm sorry."

"How much are they paying?"

"Five thousand," the artist replied.

"Really?"

"Yeah. It's the guy who lost the bid on my piece to the museum. He wants one of his daughter for his wife."

"At least it's warm in here. Grab your coat; dinner is about ready. Leave the heat on if you plan to do this every day. It will take too long to reheat this place on a daily basis."

Jensen got his coat, put the leash on Gus, and joined Jared at the door. The coach leaned down and kissed the smaller man.

"I missed you," Jensen whispered.

"I missed you too, hon." Jared put his hand in the middle of the older man's back, and the three of them walked to the house.

+++++

The family enjoyed the meal, and the women cleaned up after. Jensen headed to his room to scan papers into his reader program on the computer. He spent the remainder of the evening grading the tests.

Jared said good night to his family and headed down the hall. He went to his room and grabbed some sweats and a tee-shirt. Walking back down the hall, he entered the older man's bedroom and set his clothes on the bed.

Leaning over the man's shoulder, he nuzzled into Jensen's neck and bit lightly. The older man's breath hitched.

"I thought we could share a nice, hot whirlpool bath together. See what happens."
"Really?"

"Yeah. I'll go and get it ready. Everyone's upstairs."

+++++

Jared was leaning against one of the sides of the tub, his legs stretched out, ready to welcome his companion. It had been a long while since they had spent time in an intimate way. He knew that Jensen was nowhere near ready for intercourse. In fact, he had decided to keep the man a virgin for their wedding night. He was planning a special night for each part of their relationship. Tonight was just to be intimate and to relax together.

The door opened and Jensen entered the room. He was wearing his boxers and nothing else. The younger man smiled.

"Come on over, and I'll help you get situated."

Jared took the soap and rubbed it over the older man's body and slowly massaged as he bathed him. The coach grew excited when the sculptor took the soap and began to bathe him. He leaned his head back and watched the man through the slits of his eyes.

When the bathing was done, Jared pulled Jensen into his lap, reached down and softly touched the muscle between the man's legs. A soft gasp escaped the professor's lips. The younger man began to work the penis; his hands feeling it engorge as he put his other arm around the older man's waste, holding him still.

Jensen felt his balls tighten, and his breath came faster. Soft moans escaped his lips. Jared knew the man was close and leaned into his neck and bit him slightly, drawing a small amount of blood. He heard Jensen cry out, and cum erupted from him.

The coach held the man until he calmed down. He leaned in and licked where he bit the sculptor.

"Let's go to bed."

"No," moaned the older man. "What about you?"

"I'm fine."

"No, I was doing some research and I want to try something."

"Research?"

Jensen grabbed for a towel and began to dry off. He left Jared in the bathroom and walked across the hall to his room.

When the younger man entered the room, he saw the blankets pulled down and Jensen was on his knees at the foot of the bed. He was naked.

"Jen?"

"Lay down, Jar."

The coach laid on the bed, and the professor spread his legs and leaned in towards his crotch. Jared almost came up off the bed when the older man's tongue licked from the bottom to the top of the nerve bundle on his cock.

"Oh my god!"
Jensen took time to lick his balls, his cock and probe the slit on his penis with his tongue. Suddenly, his mouth took the entire shaft and swallowed it down. Jared came up off the bed a second time. He tried to talk the older man out of his course of action, but the words wouldn't come. He was too busy moaning. It took a little while to get the rhythm right but there was no doubt about it...Jensen was a natural.

When his balls tightened and he felt himself reaching the peak, Jared tried to warn the sculptor. The man began to pull a slight suction as he worked and swallowed. Suddenly, Jared cried out and cum flooded the older man's mouth. He felt him swallow as his mouth was filled. Jensen lapped up any cum that was missed and licked his love clean.

Leaning down, the professor pulled up the blankets and cuddled close to his lover. They both went to sleep.
Jared informed the family Tuesday night that he had an errand to run after school let out early the next day. Sherri said she would come get Jensen. The coach could tell that his professor was curious, but he had no intention of telling him.

Everyone went to bed early since there would be a lot of preparation for Thursday and Thanksgiving dinner. The Ackles were coming, and the formal dining room needed to be prepared.

+++++

Jensen had brought a huge thermos of homemade hot chocolate and pumpkin spice cookies for his morning class. They visited and discussed holiday plans. Everyone enjoyed the time. Their professor wished them a happy holiday and four day weekend. He would see them on Monday.

He and Gus walked outside as he had dismissed the class early. They walked along the park on the other side of the road. The sculptor cleaned up after his dog and put it in a trash container.

He heard a horn and someone call his name. Gus led him towards the van where Jeff and Gerry were waiting for him. The talk on the way home turned to Jensen’s new project.

"When you have the time, would you show us how you see what you sculpt? Sherri told me you were running your hands over the block of marble and seeing the little girl in it. We would really like to understand how you see."

"I will show you this evening after everyone has settled down for the day. The marble is different in a way. I will try to explain that also."

"Did anyone figure out where Jared was going today? I thought all the shopping was over," Jeff asked.

None of the three had any idea at all what the coach was up to. They would just have to wait.

+++++

Jared entered the store and walked up to a gentleman behind the glass counter. The man looked up at him and then at the worn jeans, faded tee shirt and basketball jacket he wore.

"May I help you?"

"I would like to look at men's wedding bands and a matching band with an emerald and diamonds on it."

"May I recommend the jeweler on Austin Street? They have discount rings."

"I'd like to speak to the manager," Jared's voice went from friendly to incredibly harsh.
One of the ladies in the back went for the manager. Jared stared at him, reached into his back pocket, and pulled out his driver's license and platinum Master Card from his wallet.

"Your salesman doesn't think I can afford to be here. Do these get me entrance?"

The manager looked at the license and card, and his eyes grew large.

"Padalecki? As in the Padaleckis who own half the property north of town and that massive house? The ones who built the athletic complex at the college?"

"That's me. I told your man what I want. You can use this college senior ring to size two of them. Here's mine to be sized for the other plain band. I want Jensen and Jared with a heart between them engraved inside the two bands."

"Do you have a limit?"

"Price is no object."

"All three are men's rings?"

"Is that a problem?"

"No, Sir. I'll handle your order myself."

It took an hour for the rings to be sized and polished. They were placed in a green and gold velvet box. Jared gave the man his card, and it went through without a hitch.

As he turned to go, the coach looked at the sullen faced salesman. "You know, you can never judge a book by its cover, man. You lost the commission on an 8500 dollar sale. Grow up." Jared took the bag and headed to his truck and home.

+++++

The baking and preparation for the dinner the next day lasted until 5:30 in the evening. The Padalecki boys drove into town and bought take out from the Mexican restaurant Jared had first taken Jensen to. They all enjoyed the meal, and the clean up was easy. Jensen had come in from his studio in time for the meal.

They were all relaxing in the living room when Gerry reminded the sculptor of his request.

"I would really like to know what each of you looks like. I'm going to sit down here on the floor, and those of you who can will take turns sitting in front of me. Gerry, I'll come to you when I'm finished with them."

Sherry sat on the floor in front of the young man, and he told her to just relax. He slowly reached up with his hands and touched her face near her forehead. His sensitive fingers caressed over her skin. He felt her hair, how it was worn, he moved over to her ears and down to her neck. His hands went back to her face and felt the shape of her eyes. He moved to see how far from the edges her face the eyes were. He moved down to her cheeks and felt where the bone met the eye socket. He touched her nose and slowly felt every inch of it. Gently, he moved over her lips and caressed over them and felt the shape of them. Finally, he touched her chin and cupped it in his hand feeling how firm it was.

"Jared has some of your features but not a lot of them. Who does he take after?"

"His grandfather," Sherri whispered.
Jensen did the same thing for the other family members and then sat on the couch next to the man he loved.

"You wanted to know why I touch the marble? I have already touched the little girl like I did to each of you. When I got the marble, I took the time to clean it and polish it. I have her in my mind, and I need to see her in the stone. So, I move my hands over it, feeling her in it. I know where to cut when I start the work on it."

The room was quiet as Jared's family took in all that had happened and was said to them.

"That is the most incredible experience I've ever had," Megan replied.

"I understand the magic of it now," Sherri whispered.

The sculptor remained quiet. He'd bared his soul and felt accepted.

+++++

It was cold enough for a fire that evening. Jensen sat on the floor in front of it. Jared looked at his family. He stood up and walked towards the fireplace and his love. Turning, he faced his family and spoke softly.

"I made a decision yesterday. Monday night was very special to me. I made some important choices, and I carried through on one of them today. In this room are all the people I love. One of them is the most important person in my life."

Jared knelt down in front of the sculptor, "Jensen, I want more of you every day. I want to give you all of me, but it's not enough if I can't have all of you."

The coach reached into his pocket and pulled out the green and gold velvet box. Sherri's eyes widened, and she motioned for her family to be quiet.

"Jared? What are you saying," the older man asked.

"Will you marry me?"

The green eyes reflected the glow of the firelight as the tears flooded them. He sniffed and tried to wipe his the tears away.

"Jen?"

"Yes, Jared. I want that very much."

The coach leaned in and kissed the other man, taking his left hand so he could place a ring on the ring finger.

"It's a masculine engagement ring. It is platinum with an emerald in the center and some smaller diamonds on either side. I have matching platinum bands to go with it with our names engraved on either side of a heart inside the ring."

Jensen touched the ring and sobbed quietly. He threw himself into the Jared's arms and the coach held him. The family was excited and everyone was talking. The two men on the floor remained quiet and were caught up in each other.
Thanksgiving

The family rose early and drove into town to eat breakfast at Denny's, which was open for the holiday. The conversation kept coming back to the engagement.

"Jensen and I will have to make plans. We really haven't discussed it yet."

"I figured that's what you did last night," Megan replied.

Jensen turned bright red, and Sherri changed the subject immediately.

Jared smiled, put an arm around his fiancé and entered into the new conversation.

It took Jensen a few minutes to regain his composure. He knew everyone had a good idea why the wedding wasn't discussed last night because his blushing had made it plain. He remained quiet which wasn't unusual for him.

+++++

Once they reached the house, he entered the kitchen and asked what he could do.

Sherri hugged him and gave a kiss on his cheek, "Why don't you go and enjoy yourself in your studio. I imagine the guys are going to watch the Texas/A&M game."

Grinning, Jensen went to change and grabbed his old jacket. Within a few minutes, he and Gus were gone.

+++++

The Ackles arrived early and MacKenzie joined the Padalecki women in the kitchen. Josh and Alan went into the movie room and joined the men watching the game.

"Where's Jensen?"

"Out in his studio," Jared responded. "He's not into football. It's a lot more difficult to describe to him than basketball. He knows to root for Texas because that's my alma mater."

Alan laughed, "Well, being this close to Texas versus the more southern A&M makes it understandable for all of us."

+++++

At 2:00, Jensen came back into the house and removed his jacket.

"Is the game still on?"

"I'm not sure. Why don't you go join them? Even if you don't understand it, you can listen to them get angry if A&M wins."

Jensen laughed, "I got my bachelor's of art at Texas. I went to an art conservatory for my master's. I actually thought one time about going back and getting my doctorate, but I just didn't want the turmoil at home."

"I'm sorry you were stopped by that. You are an incredible artist, Jensen."
The young man blushed and softly said, "Thank you."

"Now go join the guys."

Jensen smiled and left the room.

+++++

He entered the media room during the final quarter of the game. He stood in the back, trying to pinpoint where Jared was. He finally heard him and moved slowly towards his chair. Jared looked up and saw him.

"Come on down the row, Jen," he said softly.

The professor reached the younger man's chair and was suddenly grabbed and hauled into the man's lap. He made himself comfortable and laid his head against Jared's chest. He could feel his fiancé's excitement by the beating of his heart.

The game was soon over, and A&M won. The men headed into the family room and lounged on the furniture or the floor to talk. Jensen scooted down on the floor so he could drink his cup of coffee. It was at that moment that the light in the room caused the stones on his ring to flash and sparkle.

"Jensen," Alan asked.

"Yeah, Dad?"

"May I see your ring?"

The sculptor blushed and rose to his feet, holding his hand out to his father. Alan took his hand into his own and studied the ring. The room was quiet as the man's grip on the artist's hand tightened. Jensen's father looked up and stared at the basketball coach.

"The green matches his eyes."

"Yes, Sir. That's why I asked for an emerald."

"The smaller stones are diamonds?"

"Yes, Sir," Jared replied remaining as solemn as Alan.

"White gold?"

"Platinum."

Alan nodded and stared down at the ring and then into his son's eyes. Jensen remained quiet, waiting to see what would happen.

"Have you set a date?"

"I asked him last night."

"That's why you weren't told yet," Jensen replied quickly.

"I want to walk him down that aisle. Find a church that will allow that. My children get married in the church."
"We have one, Sir. You'll have plenty of notice.

Alan nodded and pulled his son into his arms. He cried as he held his youngest boy, and Josh stared.

"You're getting married," he asked.

"Yeah," Jared replied.

"Mac! Get in here! Jensen's getting married!"

It took a while for the excitement to die down, and soon the meal was ready. Jared opened the door to the formal dining room, and the meal was wheeled in on a large serving cart.

Alan looked around the room at the green decorations and his eyes fell upon Jensen's sculpture. He walked over and stood in front of it.

Sherri stopped behind him. "That was Jensen's gift to Jared for the house. He wanted something of himself here."

"It's beautiful," Alan said in awe.

Josh and Mac joined them. They remained quiet in respect of their brother's work.

"Let's go eat," Sherri finally said.

+++++

Later that evening, after everything had been put away and the Ackles had gone home, Jared dragged Jensen to his room and the two of them cuddled on the bed and talked.

"Do you think we could do a wedding in about four weeks?"

"That's not long, Jar. What are you thinking?"

"Christmas Eve. I can afford it. We can call the pastor and see if the he and the church are available. Money is no object, and I can make it happen."

"Okay. I think it would be awesome."

"That's not a word I hear you say every day."

"I just want what you want. I want to be one with you."

"I'll make it happen."
The family ate breakfast at Denny's on Sunday morning and went to church. After the service, Jared asked the pastor for a good time to come and talk with him. He was told that the minister could see him on Tuesday at 3:30.

They stopped for lunch at Olive Garden. The family said goodbye in the parking lot, and the Padaleckis headed home to San Antonio. Jared took Jensen home, and the two men relaxed in the family room with Jared sitting on the couch with Jensen's head in his lap. They began to make wedding plans.

"Since we both work and mom is so far away, why don't we make an appointment with a wedding planner, tell her what we want, and go from there?"

"That sounds fine to me."

"Jen?"

"Yeah, Jar?"

"After the vows, will you sing," he asked his lover.

"What?"

"I've heard you. You've got a beautiful voice, Jen. I'd like you to sing 'Love Changes Everything.'"

"I'm going to have to think about that. I've never sung in public."

"Think about it, please."

"All right."

+++++

Monday morning, Jensen's ring was quickly discovered by the students he taught. It was soon all over the school that the 'Prof' was engaged to the hot basketball coach.

Ellen caught wind of it and walked into Jensen's office at lunch time. "When were you planning on telling me?"

"Ellen? I uh..the only people who knew were our parents. The students found out when they saw the ring. I was going to tell you today."

"Let me see that damn ring. The kids think it's worth a fortune."

"I didn't ask Jared what it cost. It didn't seem appropriate."
Ellen took his left hand and stared at the ring that reposed there. "Wow!"

"Is that good," the young man asked.

"Damn it, boy! It's beautiful. He matched your eyes with the emerald."

"That's what he told Mom," Jensen answered.

"Your mother knows?"

"No. I'm calling Sherri 'Mom. Dad filed for divorce a week ago Friday."

"And you were going to tell me this when," she demanded.

"It's been crazy, Ellen. I was sick before the break. Mom came and raised hell. The whole family was in an uproar. I'm sorry I didn't tell you."

"It's okay, Jensen," the woman replied. "I want an invite to the wedding."

"If things go right, it will be Christmas Eve."

"I like that. Do you need help with any of it?"

"We're going to get a wedding planner."

"That's a good idea," Ellen told him.

Jared walked into the office, "Hey, Ellen!"

"I like your taste in men, Jared."

"Thank you. What brought this on?"

Before the woman could say anything, Jensen lifted his hand. Eying the ring, Jared grinned.

"Yeah, Ellen, I know how to pick them."

"Well, enjoy your lunch. I have a luncheon date with Bill."

"Have fun," Jensen replied.

The two men ate their meal in companionable silence, both tired from the week.

Jensen finally commented, "Let's pick up a soup and salad take out and go home, soak in the whirlpool, and just go to bed early. No television. No books. Just cuddle and maybe talk. Fall asleep that way."

Jared swallowed the food he was chewing, "That sounds fabulous, Jen. I'm tired too."

The professor smiled and continued to eat, grateful for all he'd been given.
Semester's End

The next few weeks were busy ones for Jared and Jensen. The wedding date had been set for December 24th at 1:00 in the afternoon. Jared had rented a beach house on the Boliver Peninsula from December 26th until January 3rd. He told the realtor what he wanted done and said he'd pay extra for it. He'd made arrangements for groceries to be delivered after they arrived.

The Padaleckis and the Ackles were coming on the 23rd to celebrate Christmas. Jared would spend the 24th with Josh. The Padaleckis were returning to San Antonio after the wedding, leaving Jensen and Jared alone in the house for their wedding night and Christmas.

They had had tuxedo fittings, and Josh and Jeff had done the same. Ellen was the matron of honor, MacKenzie was the maid of honor, and Meghan was the bridesmaid. Jensen had laughed when a bridesmaid was suggested. Their gowns were deep burgundy in color.

The two were satisfied that everything was done. The church was already decorated so they only needed the fellowship hall to be cared for and the rehearsal dinner. They hired a wedding planner and a baker.

+++++

Jensen was sitting in his office Wednesday morning and was going over some research on the computer. Ellen knocked on his door and entered.

"You're really going to do this?"

"Do what?"

"I got your notice."

"It's a two year sabbatical, Ellen. You have someone capable of filling in. I want to do this; I need to do this."

"What does Jared think?"

"I'm telling him this afternoon."

"It's a big step, boy. Shouldn't you have talked to him about it?"

"I think he already knows. I left the acceptance letter on the table. He had to have read it. He's waiting for me to say something."

"None of the classes are doing much after exams. He's not doing anything. Call him and have him come over or I will," she threatened.

"Yes, Ma'am," the professor said with a smile.

He called his fiancé and waited for the man to appear.

+++++

Jared parked in the handicapped parking space, figuring he'd hang around the building and bother Jensen until they had to go home. He walked into the building and saw Ellen standing outside Jensen's classroom.
"Ellen?"

The woman turned and said, "Can you wait right here for a moment?"

"All right," the coach replied.

The head of the department entered the classroom and motioned to one of the students who was helping finish the decorations to stand at the entrance. Ellen walked over to Jensen's door and knocked.

"Come on in, Jared!"

Opening the door, Ellen leaned in and said, "You're needed. Your classes are early."

"Classes," Jensen asked, rising to his feet and heading towards the door.

Ellen waved at the student to let Jared in, and both men entered the classroom at the same time.

"SURPRISE!!"

The room was covered in crepe paper and balloons. A large cake was on one of the tables and wrapped packages on another. The basketball team and coaches, along with the art department professors, had joined Jensen's students from his two classes. The large room was packed.

"What's going on?"

"Bridal shower, Prof," one of the students exclaimed.

The engaged couple were made to sit at the front of the class. Speeches and jokes were made at the couple's expense. Two of Jensen's students started bringing presents to the two of them. Jensen let Jared open them.

A large envelope from the coaching staff held season tickets for Mavericks. The art department had purchased a copy of Michelangelo’s David. They received his and his matching shirts, books, CD's, and movies from the team and students. After the gifts were opened, the two gave a warm thanks to everyone.

The cake, punch, and coffee were served shortly after the gifts had been opened.

At noon, Ellen told everyone to go home and have a wonderful holiday. Tests were done, and there was no reason to just hang around until Friday. She leaned over and kissed Jensen and hugged Jared, "I'll see you boys at the rehearsal dinner."

The coaching staff helped load Jared's truck, and Josh said he'd help unload it.

+++++

Josh gave his brother a hug and leaned in close to his ear, "I'll see you at the rehearsal and dinner."

"Love you, Josh," Jensen whispered back.

"I love you too, little bro."

"What?"

Josh laughed, slapped Jared on the back and headed out the door.
They sat on the floor by the roaring fire with a glass of wine. Jared leaned in and kissed the man he was going to marry in a little over a week.

"Jared, we need to talk," Jensen spoke softly.

"I was hoping you were going to tell me," Jared responded.

"I applied to UT Austin for the doctorate program in their arts department. I was accepted. It will only be two days a week for classes, but I have to do a major project on site so it will require five days a week."

"I know. I have bought a large SUV and hired a driver and body guard for you. His name is Clif Kosterman, and he came highly recommended. I'm giving him the apartment at the rear of the storage building. He's already moved in but has gone home to visit family for the holidays."

"You're not angry?"

"Should I be?"

"I...I...Jared?"

"You've always been quiet and secretive about things until you know what you're going to do. I hope one day you'll talk things over first, but I'm not mad about who and what you are."

Jensen set his wine on the hearth and Jared immediately set his down, knowing Jensen all too well. The professor threw himself into the coach's arms, and they fell backwards next to the tree.

After a heavy makeout session, Jared whispered into Jensen's ear, "Next week, I'm taking you under the tree."

Jensen shivered, "We won't knock it over?"

"It would be a hell of a way to take it down," the coach murmured as he held his future husband.

"Maybe we should remove the breakables this week," the sculptor commented.

Jared laughed and pulled him tighter. They cuddled until bedtime.
December 23

Chapter Notes

I decided to turn the final two chapters into three instead. It works better that way.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Jensen and Jared were up early. A cold front had come through, and there was frost on the ground. They both bundled up and took Gus for a long walk. Jared took the time to describe how the plant life looked with the whiteness of the frost on everything.

"When you open your mouth to talk or exhale out your nose, a smoky fog appears. Your body is hotter than the air," the coach commented.

Jensen listened to his fiancé's chatter. Jared loved to talk, and the professor enjoyed listening. It was a perfect match.

They returned to the house, slipped out of their coats and accessories. Jensen fed and watered Gus while his partner made breakfast.

Entering the kitchen, the older man asked, "What do we need on the table today?"

"I'm making biscuits and sausage gravy with hashbrowns. Plates and the usual."

Jared watched his love move around the room, going through cabinets with a confidence he did not have four months earlier. The coach smiled and poured orange juice in the small glasses.

They sat at breakfast, Jared read his paper and Jensen listened to the articles the man thought would interest him.

As they cleaned the kitchen and prepared for the day, the sculptor asked him, "What did you decide for the rehearsal dinner tonight?"

"There's an elderly black woman whose son is a pro barbecue. He travels all over the country competing and wins quite often. She's making a huge potato salad, fresh cooked greens, baked beans, and a relish tray. He's cooking a brisket, five chickens, and about ten pounds of deer sausage. We'll have ice tea and coffee with it."

"What time are your parents going to be here?"

"They will meet us at the church, and they will bring you home after the dinner."

"That's the one thing I don't like, Jar."

"It's one night, Jen. Come on, let's go take the fragile ornaments off the tree."

"What," Jensen exclaimed as he heard Jared's laughter reverberating off the walls.

Hurrying to follow the man, he bumped into him when the coach bent over to open some boxes. Jared turned and grabbed the professor, keeping him from falling.
"We're seriously going to make love under the tree?"

"The fireplace will be burning. It will be warm enough."

"Jared! Think of the mess."

The younger man laughed, "I am removing the breakables as you suggested."

The older man blushed a brilliant red.

Jared put his arms around the slightly embarrassed man and leaned in and whispered in his ears, "I want to kiss and touch your entire naked body and see the different colors of the lights reflecting off your skin."

Jensen whimpered softly and the coach smiled, thinking it would be the best Christmas ever.

+++++

The two men arrived at the church at 5:45 p.m., a little early. Jared wanted to make sure everything was as it should be. He had five gift certificates in his wallet for the bridal party. They were all valued at $200.00 apiece and were for Amazon.com. He would let them choose their gift.

Instead of live music, CD's were chosen. The bridal party would walk the aisle to Pachabel's Canon in D. Jensen would sing after the pastor's speech but before the vows. They had decided on “Longer Than” instead of “Love Changes Everything.” They would walk the aisle together to that song.

Jensen sat about four rows from the front as the people slowly arrived. The wedding planner was in the fellowship hall helping the cooks set things up for serving. Jared walked through and spoke with everyone. The woman who had prepared most of the meal let him know she had also made a homemade banana pudding. Grinning, the coach hugged her.

+++++

The Padaleckis and Ackles arrived at the same time as the pastor and soundman. Jared had two small cards with cash in them for the two men.

Jensen received hugs and kisses from everyone. Ellen and her family had arrived, and the pastor called the rehearsal to order.

The sculptor listened to everything that was said, trying to keep the beat of the music in his mind, going over the walk he was told he would have to do. Jared had drafted the cook's grandson, who was a first year forward on the college basketball team, to pretend to be his fiancé. It was customary for the bride to sit the practice out as tradition held that it was bad luck.

+++++

An hour later, the large group with extended family, entered the fellowship hall. Jared gave the gift cards to the bridal party, $500 to the pastor and $250 to the soundman.

When the meal was finally through, the coach walked his fiancé to the van and pulled him into his arms, kissing him gently. He whispered into Jensen's ear, "Tomorrow you will finally be mine. I will love you until the day I die."

"Not too soon, Jar. I couldn't bear life without you," the sculptor whispered back.

"Maybe God will be good to us, and we'll go home together."
"Let's don't talk this way. Not tonight."

Jared kissed him again and hugged his parents. He and Jeff joined Josh, and they climbed into the coach's truck and headed out to party.

Chapter End Notes

I looked up the songs on You Tube. You can go to these links and hear the songs.

Pachabel's Canon in D
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JvNQLJ1_HQ0

This is Longer Than by original performer/songwriter. It was actually sung at my wedding by my daughter. They will use an accompaniment tape that will suit Jensen's range.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A2vTg7fPdVw

Love Changes Everything. My daughter left the church to this particular version by the known cellist, Julian Lloyd Webber, whose brother wrote the musical.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CYEnCqczIFs&list=PLgCqeKr8tBEamp5CzHrijjUkMlfQDojFl&index=11
The smell of coffee roused Jensen from a deep sleep. He yawned and stretched. Gus wiggled up the bed to his partner and licked his face.

"Good morning, Gus." Jensen petted the golden retriever, who turned over for a belly rub.

The sculptor got out of bed and headed across the hall to get ready for the day. He returned to his room, getting dressed in a pair of jeans and a red pullover sweater. He donned some boots and the two left his room, heading for the kitchen.

Walking towards the still room, He grabbed his coat, and other outer garments. After placing Gus' leash to the collar around the dog's neck, the two headed out for their morning walk.

+++++

Twenty minutes passed before the two reentered the house. He hung up his outer garments and unleashed Gus. Entering the kitchen, Jensen took note that the room was too quiet for anyone to be in there. He fed and watered his partner and poured himself a cup of coffee.

He entered the family room and was greeted by Jared's mom.

"Morning, hon. Did you sleep well," Sherri asked.

"Morning, Mom. Yes, I did. I tossed for a while," the young man responded.


"We'll see him in a few hours, sweetie. Are you hungry," the woman asked.

"Yes, Ma'am."

"You just relax. This is your day." Sherri headed into the kitchen to make pancakes, sausage, and
The family gathered together and ate the meal. The guys suggested a movie, and Jeff agreed to be Jensen's eyes.

At 11:30, Sherri suggested that the professor lay down and try to take a nap. "You have a long day ahead of you, and some rest will help see you through it."

+++++

Jensen slept for an hour, when a knock on his door woke him. Sherri stuck her head through the door and told him there was a bath ready for him.

Jensen got out of bed, and Sherri called Gus and had Jeff take him for a long walk.

The sculptor soaked for a while and then dried off and dried his hair. He brushed his teeth and shaved.

He went to his room and took his tux out of the closet. He put on a pair of white silk boxers and a white tee shirt. It was an afternoon wedding so the tux wasn't formal. His was white and so were his socks and shoes. The shirt was a dark red and the tie was white to match the tux. He had a long tie, and Sherri did his cufflinks for him. The tie tack and the cufflinks were red rubies.

"Jensen, you look so incredibly handsome."

The young man was nervous and blushed as he said, "Thank you."

+++++

They arrived at the church a few minutes before the time of the ceremony. A woman was standing at the door and led Jensen to a room off the vestibule.

As he entered, his sister, Jared's sister, and Ellen all three hugged him and told him how wonderful he looked. There was a knock on the door, and a florist entered. She handed the three women bouquets of flowers and pinned a red boutonniere on his lapel.

Jensen stopped her, "What does the groom look like?"

The woman smiled, "You'll see when you walk down the aisle."

Ellen replied with hint of sarcasm, "He will if there's a miracle in the next few minutes." She pointed at Gus sitting next to his partner.

The woman looked at the dog and flushed. "I am so sorry. He is wearing black with a red shirt and black tie. His shoes are black."

"Thank you," Jensen said softly.

A knock was heard at the door. Megan opened it and let Alan Ackles into the room.

"Jared and the two boys are up front, and they are fixing to start the music. Are you ready?"

"Yes, Sir," Jensen whispered.

Alan hugged his son, and the group walked into the vestibule.
Pachelbel's Canon began to play. Megan walked out into the aisle and started down it. MacKenzie followed after a few minutes. Last, Ellen started down. Alan waited on the wedding planner to give them an okay. She nodded, and he nudged his son.

Jared had turned to watch the procession. When Jensen entered the room his heart almost skipped a beat. He was beyond handsome. He was beautiful.

When they reached the front of the church, the pastor asked, "Who gives this man to be married?"

Alan answered, "His brother, sister, and I do."

Alan sat down next to the Padalecki's. The women stood to the left of Jensen and the men to the right of Jared.

The pastor spoke of the lifetime commitment the vows brought to the marriage. He spoke Ruth and Boaz. He stepped back, and Jensen realized it was time to sing. He was handed the microphone, and the music played. Jensen faced Jared and began sing these words:

Longer than there've been fishes in the ocean
Higher than any bird ever flew
Longer than there've been stars up in the heavens
I've been in love with you

Stronger than any mountain cathedral
Truer than any tree ever grew
Deeper than any forest primeval
I am in love with you

I'll bring fire in the winters
You'll send showers in the springs
We'll fly through the falls and summers with love on our wings

Through the years as the fire starts to mellow
 Burning lines in the book of our lives
Though the binding cracks
And the pages start to yellow
I'll be in love with you
I'll be in love with you
I am in love with you

When the song was over, Jared was crying. The singer had no idea he'd brought tears to the eyes of the man he loved.

The two men used these vows to each other: "I take you to be my partner for life. I promise above all else to live in truth with you and to communicate fully and fearlessly. I give you my hand and my heart as a sanctuary of warmth and peace and pledge my love, devotion, faith and honor as I join my life to yours."

The ring ceremony was simple. The pastor then said that by the powers invested in him by the state of Texas, he pronounced them, 'Husband and Husband.' He told Jared he could kiss Jensen.

Jared put his hands on either side of Jensen's face and leaned in to kiss him.
The pastor had them turn and introduced them to the guests as Jared and Jensen Ackles-Padalecki.

The music to “Love Changes Everything” began to play and the two men walked down the aisle.

+++++

Everyone met in fellowship hall for the reception. There were two cakes: A large three tier red velvet cake with white frosting and a large single layer chocolate cake.

People were enjoying the food and drink. The boys cut the cake and drank the champagne. They visited for a while and Jared finally leaned over and said, "Let's go."

The shorter man looked up at him and smiled sweetly.

Jared's truck was decorated with sayings and drawings; there were streamers tied to the trailer hitch. People threw bird seed because it was edible and rice would harm the birds who would later try to eat it. They got inside the truck with Gus and waved goodbye.

As they drove home, Jared described the truck and they both drove in a comfortable silence.

After parking the truck in the garage, Jared and Jensen walked to the back door. The groom unlocked it and took Gus' leash off and let him loose in the house. He turned and gently kissed the man next to him and suddenly swept him into his arms and carried him into the house.

"Jared!"

The coach was laughing as he set his professor down. He kissed the older man again and took his hand. The two walked down the hall to the master bedroom.

+++++

The younger man turned down the bedcovers and lit some scented candles. Turning, he walked over to his husband and slowly began to undress him. After he had the man undressed, he picked him up again and laid him on his bed.

Staring down at the naked man lying there, Jared's heartrate went up and he had to take some deep breaths. Jensen was finally his by right, and he could have all of him. He began to undress so he could join his husband.

Jensen heard his love moving around the room. He could smell the scent of the burning candles. It was sandalwood. Suddenly some music began to play.

"Is that Bolero?"

He felt a dip in the bed and heard the coach answer, "Yes."

The pouting lips broke into a grin, "Don't men who are trying to seduce their dates play that?"

"Now how would you know that?"

"I listen to my students more then they know."

The younger man leaned close and kissed Jensen, silencing any further conversation. The professor opened his mouth, allowing deeper entry.

The two spent a long while just kissing. Jared finally started kissing, licking and gently biting down
to Jensen's chin and up towards his ear. He slowly moved down the professor's neck and to where his neck meets his shoulder. There a loud gasp, and the older man came up off the bed.

Jared pushed Jensen down and started using his hands; slowly moving down the man's body. He stopped at a nipple and began to slowly rub it between two fingers, getting a moan from deep within the sculptor's throat.

Jensen moved so he could return the touching, and Jared pushed him back. "Not now. Later. You've never experienced this, so right now it's your time."

The younger man gently caressed his lover's stomach, leaning over to lick the inside of his navel and slowly downwards. Jensen held his breath, afraid to move.

The older man had his eyes closed, striving to relax but every touch, kiss, bite, and lick built up a tension in his body he had never tried to deal with before. As Jared's hand went between his crotch and his leg, he began to shake uncontrollably.

"Jar...please."

"Are you all right, Jen," the coach asked softly.

"I don't..."

"You don't what, my love," the deep raspy whisper asked. The sound sent a shiver up Jensen's spine.

"I can't do this," the smaller man whimpered.

"Yes, you can, baby," Jared said as he gently bit down on the tender skin between leg and crotch.

"Guh!"

"That's it, Jen."

The tongue reached his taint, and a keening sound erupted from Jensen. He tried to push his hips into Jared's face for more, and the coach gently pushed him back down.

"Oh my!" Jared reached down and was gently rolling his balls in his hands, fondling them.

"Please, Jared!!"

"Please what, baby? What do you need?"

"I don't know! I'm on fire, and my gut's in knots. I need...please...help me!"

Jensen screamed when the tongue went up the nerve bundle on his cock. Jared pushed into the slit, and the professor was barely touching the bed. His body arched off it. Suddenly, the younger man deep throated his lover and rejoiced at the strangled sound that came from his throat.

Jared took Jensen's legs and lifted his lower body off the bed and placed the legs over his shoulders. He slowly begin to lick around the pink pucker, listening to the whisper of inane nothings that emanated from the other man. He inched his tongue inside Jensen and the nothings turned into a low howl-like sound. He slowly moved his tongue in and out of the hole, loving the sounds the professor made.

Jared had no idea that Jensen would be such a vocal lover. It increased the coach's arousal and need
a hundred fold. The sculptor was a quivering mass, and the younger man knew it was time. He lowered the older man back down to the bed and reached for the lube. He rubbed it in his hands to warm it.

"Jensen? I want you to put your legs around my hips and don't let go. I'll grab them in a bit."

The trembling man slowly lifted his legs and placed them around the larger man's waist. Jared poured some of the lube on the small pucker and ran his thumb over it, slowly slipping the tip through the muscle. He felt the other man stiffen.

Carefully rubbing his hand over Jensen's belly, he whispered, "It's all right. It will burn some, but I'll have you loose enough. You need to relax."

The coach rubbed his index finger around the pucker, playing with it. He felt the older man relax into the touch and slowly slid the finger inside of him, watching his face. Jensen winced slightly and took several long breaths and relaxed again. Jared moved the finger in and out of the man's hole and wiggled it around, pushing at the walls. He added another finger and heard a gasp. Jensen winced again but did not stiffen. The fingers scissored and suddenly hit the older man's prostate bringing out a strange sound from the swollen lips.

"Are you all right, Jen?"

"D..d..do that again," came the squeaking voice.

"Ah, we found the sweet spot. Fantastic!" Jared kept hitting the prostate and watched Jensen's cock leak precum. Soon he had four fingers moving inside the man.

Looking down at Jensen's face, he saw that he had bitten his lip and his hair was wet with sweat. His entire body was covered with it. Jared grinned, knowing that Jensen was ready. He removed the fingers, hearing a whispered, "No."

Lining his cock up with the slightly swollen pucker, the coach slowly pushed through the outer muscle rim. He watched the older man's face as his eyes opened wide in surprise and his mouth formed a perfect 'O.' He bottomed out and stood still, allowing the professor to get used to the girth and length of his cock.

"Damn," Jensen moaned.

"What's wrong?"

"Move!"

Grinning, Jared began a slow pull out and push in. He kept the pace, not wanting to hurt the man.

"Jared!"

The coach stopped. Suddenly, Jensen used his legs to push himself back down on the cock and it wasn't slow.

"Ahh," Jared choked out and began to pick up his speed and rhythm, while the sculptor met every thrust with his hips.

Jared felt his balls begin to draw tight and reached down to grab Jensen's cock and stroke it. He aimed for the man's prostate with every thrust and by this time, Jensen was screaming his name over and over. Suddenly, the older man stiffened and cum started to shoot out of his cock in spurts and his
ass squeezed down on Jared causing him to orgasm as well.

The larger man fell to the side of his lover and reached for the damp cloth and towel he had placed on the bedside table. He gently cleaned the exhausted man next to him and dried him. After taking care of himself, he blew out the candles and hit the off button on the music.

Pulling the smaller man into his arms, he cuddled him and the two soon slept.

Chapter End Notes

This was probably one of the most difficult chapters I have ever written. If you enjoyed it, please comment and let me know. I actually ended up going to YouTube and playing Bolero.

For those of you who have never heard Ravel's Bolero. Keith Partridge, David Cassidy, of the Partridge family used it for romance. Bo Derek filmed an erotic movie called Bolero. It is definitely perfect for Jensen and Jared. Here is the You Tube url for it. https://youtube/dZDiaRZy0Ak
The two men stayed in bed most of Christmas Eve. They wandered, naked through the house while fixing sandwiches and coffee, letting Gus out in the backyard.

In their bedroom, Jared slowly began to teach the other man about making love. He allowed Jensen free reign while he laid back and allowed the man to explore him.

Around three in the morning of Christmas day, they finally slept.

+++++

The two awakened around ten that morning. Jared took Gus for a jog while Jensen made coffee and turned on the lights on the tree. He opened the door to the movie room and hit the Christmas playlist number.

Jared returned and made cinnamon rolls for breakfast. They took their food into the family room and exchanged gifts. Jared had found the entire series of the Dragonriders of Pern in Braille. He had scoured the Internet, making calls, until he found them. Jensen had purchased a small block of marble and had sculpted a statue of Jared, wearing the team's traveling clothes and holding a basketball between his right arm and his hip. It was a pale red and about a foot tall.

"It's for your office," he said quietly. Jared leaned in to thank him with a kiss and it deepened, when the sculptor opened his mouth in invitation. They were sitting on the floor in front of the fire place with the tree nearby.

Jared had his hands under Jensen's shirt and was slowly touching every inch of his torso. Jensen was moaning, hands roaming the taller man's body in return.

It took a while. Jared had gotten up and brought a quilt into the room. They were both naked by this time and the older man was licking and sucking all over Jared's body, from his neck down to his pleasure peak. The younger man closed his eyes and let the inexperienced man plunder his body.

Jensen began to lap at the large penis that was already engorged and leaking precum. The coach saw a wicked grin cross the other man's face as he suddenly took him into his mouth.

"Jensen!"

The professor finally had to lay on the other man's legs to hold him still as he gently squeezed the tightened balls in his right hand. Jared was making strange sounds.
Suddenly, the coach turned over and dumped the older man onto the floor. He pulled Jensen to his hands and knees and began to run his fingers down his spine to his crack and caress the pink pucker. He ran his tongue down the man, following his fingers. Lubing his fingers, he began to work his husband's hole open.

"Lower your head to the floor, Jen," the taller man rasped out with passion in his voice.

He slowly entered Jensen and found he could go deeper in this position. He had never felt this turned on. He rode Jensen hard, hitting his sweet spot over and over. Jensen made grunting sounds and moaned.

Jared noticed the professor's balls tightening, and he pulled out.

"Damn it, Jar!"

Grabbing the sculptor around the waist, Jared lifted him and turned him over onto his back halfway under the tree.

Lifting the older man's legs around his hips, the coach gripped his hips and squeezed tightly, holding him in position.

They were no longer on the quilt and every thrust Jared made into Jensen's ass shoved him a little further under the tree. At this point, the professor had no inkling where he was. His mind was on the sensations erupting through his body.

Jared wanted him to come untouched and worked the prostate hard, aiming for it with every stroke of his cock into the man's channel.

Suddenly, Jensen froze. The intensity of the feelings inside of him caused him to scream out and his body lifted off the ground, hitting the underside of the tree. There was a loud crash, and the two men were smothered by the ten foot fir.

It was quiet for a moment. Jared attempted to lift the tree, calling out Jensen's name.

"Are you all right, Jen?"

He heard a hiss and then some swearing.

"Jen?"

"Damn it, Jar! Move!"

In shock, Jared realized he was still inside of the man, with the tree on top of them. He slowly began to move and heard a groan.

"Faster! Harder!"

Thinking 'what the hell' he began to ram into his husband, hitting the prostate. He could feel the tree moving up and down as he worked harder to bring Jensen off.

Jared was struggling not to laugh. The situation was ludicrous, but Jensen was only thinking of coming. He felt him stiffen and cry out his name and the cum shot up into the tree, dripping from the fir's branches.

Pulling out, the coach leaned back onto the floor and laughed hysterically.
"This is will be a honeymoon to remember," he joked as he pushed the tree up and off them.

He crawled over and checked his husband for injuries, doubting the man would have even noticed them. Finally, he stood and reached down to take Jensen's hand and pull him up.

"Let's go back to bed, Jen."

"But what about the tree?"

"We're leaving in the morning to catch a flight to Houston. I would rather be making love to you instead of cleaning up the mess."

"But, Jared," Jensen began.

Interrupting him, Jared took his hand and led him towards the hall and their bedroom. "It will be here when we get back."

"Oh! Now I see."

"You've always been able to see more than any of us, Jen. Come and see me."

"I like that idea," the sculptor answered as they closed the door to the bedroom behind them.

THE END

Chapter End Notes

If you enjoyed this story, you might like the new one I am working on called "The Baron's Prize."

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!