The Hexhamshire Inheritance

by Cerdic519

Summary

This can be read as a stand-alone, but will ultimately make more sense if you have read the Prologue first.

Dean Winchester, one of the richest alphas in England, is single and content to be single. However, an untimely rainstorm and a meeting in a lonely barn with an irresistible blue-eyed
Notes

Alphas owned their mates, female or omega, at this time in history, and could control everything about their lives – but there was one instance when the tables could be turned. This was the 0.01% genetic fluke called True Mates, also Trueloves or One True Partners, which rendered the desired omega irresistible to their matched alpha. The normally always in-control alpha would, every time he met his omega, want the encounter to only end up one way (i.e. horizontal and with minimal personal space involved). The alpha would also have a mark of some sort on their skin, which their True Mate would be able to detect. And there was something else, which people in Polite Society Did Not Talk About.... Ever. Unfortunately for a certain alpha, he was about to find out what that 'something else' was the 'hard' way.....
October 1800

It is a further truth universally acknowledged that a single alpha in possession of a good fortune must be in urgent want of a mate. By some hitherto undetected phenomenon, this fact appears immediately at the forefront of the minds of all parents of suitable (and not so suitable) females and omegas once a rich alpha enters their particular district, though modern science has yet to establish precisely how this occurs. And Dean Winchester did indeed have tentative plans to marry, settle down and raise a family eventually. Particularly as his next birthday, barely three months away, was going to be his thirtieth—the one that came after twenty-nine.

Dean was still young (yes he was!), single, handsome, and one of the richest men in a country increasingly tired of the stalemated war with Revolutionary France. His main home was Pemberley, a large house in the county of Derbyshire nearly two hundred miles from London, but his estate encompassed a whole range of concerns stretching from Cornwall in the West Country all the way up to Kirkcudbrightshire in southern Scotland. Dean had run things since inheriting it from the 12th Earl, on his twenty-first birthday some eight years back, and was considered by those who knew such matters to have done an exceptionally good job of it. He could look at his life as it was now with satisfaction, knowing things were set fair for him.

Ah.

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Travelling any distance in England at the end of the eighteenth century, it could be fairly remarked, was not for the faint-hearted. The turnpike trust roads were of variable quality, and no-one journeyed who did not absolutely have to. Stagecoach travel, though now thankfully free of the scourge of highwaymen, was particularly dreadful, and Dean considered himself lucky to be able to afford a quality carriage, though on good days he preferred to ride his horse, Impala, and send his luggage on ahead in his carriage. His neighbours thought him a little eccentric in that he allowed his servants to travel inside said vehicle, but Dean saw no reason to expose them to the vagaries of the English climate, provided of course that they kept it clean.

(His uncle Earl Henry had commented disparagingly about this to him one time, and his American wife Countess Missouri had, most unfortunately for her husband, overheard. She had given him the sort of Look which would have made Medusa jealous. He was probably still apologizing!).

From Pemberley to his current destination, the village of Longbourn in Hertfordshire, was a distance of approximately one hundred and fifty miles, so Dean was glad he would be journeying down in the early autumn, and be moving onto his house in London a month later, before winter truly set in. The only downside was that he would not be seeing Pemberley for many a month; the great house was having a whole set of interior repairs down to it over the cold months, and Dean would not see it again until well into the spring.

He would be staying in Hertfordshire with his favourite cousin, Samuel Bingley. The beta had recently rented a large house called Netherfield Park, on the edge of the village of Longbourn which lay astride the main road to the capital (it had been a slight disappointment to Dean, who had hoped his cousin might settle in Derbyshire). The alpha knew also that one of the principal families in the area, the Bennets, had at one time been linked with the Fitzwilliam-Winchesters, although unhappily that had been over Mark Fitzwilliam's scandalous divorce from Caroline Bennet back in the early forties, which had led most surprisingly to the twelfth earl disinheriting his third son over his
behaviour. The Bennets of Longbourn could not have been that important, as Dean had until recently not heard of them.

The Bennet Scandal had not been the only one to rock the ancient earldom in the past century; Sammy's own advent had been marred by one almost as bad. The boy's alpha father Hereward had married a French lady much to his family's horror, Sammy being the sole result of that union. Unfortunately Hereward Bingley was, like too many in his family, of the sort that think only alpha sons are worth having; he had gone out drinking to drown his sorrows, and had instead managed to drown himself on the way home. That would have been bad enough, but scandal had followed tragedy. His widow Maria somehow contrived to become engaged to a young merchant's son called Paul Masters during the mourning period, to the shock of just about everyone, and whilst that period was still ongoing she had their first child after a rushed marriage. Margaret was followed two years later by Lilith, and only the death of her second husband effected a partial reconciliation with her first husband's family, helped by Dean's fearsome Aunt Missouri. Mrs. Maria Masters' death in the year of the French Revolution had led to Sammy, Margaret and Lilith passing into the joint care of Dean and his aunt, Dean taking full responsibility once he himself came of age about three years later.

Three years back, Lilith, then just twenty, had sought to marry a Mr. Gordon Walker, a minor landowner from somewhere in the North of England. Dean disliked her for her selfishness and frankly wanted to kick her prospective husband, but when he found that the latter would be moving to the Far North of Scotland when he inherited an estate there some years from now, he agreed. Absence would definitely make the heart grow fonder. The other sister, Margaret, was if anything even worse! She had a liking for black and red clothes, and from the start made it very clear that she regarded Dean as a potential future husband (frankly he would have rather let himself be possessed by a real demon!). Avoiding her unwanted attentions during his visits to Sammy always tried the alpha's patience to the limit, and it was the one thing he did not look forward to in the coming weeks. Not forgetting Sammy himself, who was always imagining himself in love when the target of his affection was, sadly, far more interested in his five thousand a year.

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For some reason Dean was thinking of his late mother as he rode along in the weak autumn sunshine. It had been a bitter blow to lose her to some unknown disease a year before her husband, for she had been a softening influence in Dean's upbringing. He recalled her defending of the strange birthmark on his left shoulder, which looked almost like a hand-print, against his father's complaints that it befouled Dean's young body. His mother had been convinced that it meant her son had a True Mate out there somewhere, and whilst is was true that those alphas lucky enough to have such a potential mate always had a mark, it did not (unfortunately) follow that having a mark guaranteed a True Mate. Aunt Missouri had been the only other person to see it, and she had told him that it would play an important part in his life one day, though she would not say how.

Dean noted the milepost marking the border between Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire and soon after rode through the village of Yarland St. Mark's, noticing as he did that the grey clouds which had been gathering for some time were looking increasingly ominous. He was just passing a second milepost, which informed him he still had two miles of road before he would reach Longbourn village, when there was a rumble of distant thunder, and almost immediately the first heavy raindrops began to slam into the ground around him. He swore, and looked around for somewhere to shelter.

There were three buildings in sight; a country house that lay at least a couple of miles across the valley, a large barn up the end of a narrow track, and a cottage some distance down the road. The cottage was nearest, but the hole in the roof suggested that it was long abandoned, and would not provide much shelter from the coming deluge, so Dean spurred Impala up the track to the barn. His horse whinnied at the sudden effort, but Dean got her up to the great door before dismounting, and
led her inside. It was cool, but mercifully dry, and he smiled as the rain beat fruitlessly on the roof above him.

Despite the relatively short distance he had had to travel, he was still drenched by the suddenness of the downpour, and his clothes clung to his body. Shivering, he decided to get himself out of them and let them dry off a little before resuming his journey once the rain had subsided. He felt a little silly standing in a cold barn in only his underpants, but he used his handkerchief to dry his skin and draped his clothes over a convenient wire stretching across the interior. As he was hanging up his shirt, his eye caught the mark on his shoulder, and for some reason it felt warm.....

The next moment, the barn door flew open, and a bedraggled figure stood there, outlined against the dark sky. The alpha groaned. Just his luck that someone else would find shelter in the one place that a nearly-naked Dean Winchester was sheltering.

And that was the precise moment when the scent hit him. Omega! Mate!

Dean had never had an omega before. Of course there had been many women, especially in the 'wild period' after his father had died and left a young Dean in charge of one of the great estates of England, but omegas were rare, and Dean had never thought to mate with one. But this man..... even at this distance, the scent emanating from him filled Dean's nostrils and made his cock push at his confining underwear. The omega grinned lazily.

"Someone is pleased to see me!" he growled, as he advanced on Dean, and ye Gods, that voice was low.

This was wrong, Dean thought with what little remained of his brain. Hell, this man was not even that attractive! He was shorter than the alpha, though not by much, and his hair looked a wreck. Yet those eyes – those impossibly blue eyes that were boring into Dean as if they meant business – the alpha could get lost in those. And the way he was looking at Dean; it was almost as if he was a starving dog and the alpha was a juicy steak!

The omega came right up to him and actually smirked, then began to back away to a nearby pile of hay. Dean followed, his legs seemingly moving without bothering to consult his brain. The omega stripped himself out of his wet clothes far more efficiently than Dean had done with his own, then lay back and presented his hole. Moving on sheer instinct, Dean got his cock out from his underpants and positioned it at the man's entrance, then pushed easily inside. Ye Gods, it felt so good!

Somewhere inside what little remained of Dean's brain, he remembered that there was something about having sex with omegas that was different from women – now what was it? Then as the blood seemed to drain away from his brain so fast that it left him momentarily light-headed, he recalled. Oh yes. Knotting. He was knotting an omega. That meant..... oh no!

Too late, he realized that his knot was swelling more than it had ever done in his life, and in a far narrower channel. He tried to pull out, but the impossibly flexible omega had wrapped his legs firmly around him, and Dean was held in place as both of them moaned towards their climaxes. The alpha had never uttered such high-pitched sounds before, he was sure, but his shri..... manly yells and the omega's growls filled the barn, until Dean came with a roar, arching his back as tears filled his eyes. Hot damn!

He supposed judging from the mess on the omega's chest that the other man must have come too, though the alpha had been too out of it to see it happen. Pity. Then the man looked up at him with a smile. That was the first indication that, ever so slightly possibly, Dean Winchester might be in trouble.
The second indication was when the omega used his muscles to squeeze Dean's sensitive knot, making the alpha actually scream as a second orgasm was literally dragged out of him.

“My name is Castiel Bennet”, the omega growled. “And you are?”

Words. Speech. Oh yes, Dean could do that. Probably.

“Dean...... Winchester”, he gasped. “I was... just passing.”

The omega raised an eyebrow.

“The Earl of Hexhamshire's nephew?” he asked.

Dean nodded warily. The next moment he had tears in his eyes, as Castiel wrung a third orgasm out of his body. The man was trying to kill him! He would have thrust forward in retaliation, but he wasn't quite sure his dick was still attached. Or which way was up, for that matter.

“What a catch!” the omega said happily.

Dean would have said something back, but he was too busy trying to survive a fourth orgasm, and to avoid crying at the pain in his dick. That story about it dropping off through over-use was just an old wives' tale.... wasn't it?

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That was the other good thing about the third type, Dean remembered as they started to dress themselves once his knot had finally gone down, and he could pull out (there may have been the odd high-pitched squeal in there somewhere). Omegas could not get pregnant unless they were in heat. He had never felt any attraction to one before, though he had always been in his wits enough to remember the consequences of sex with one.

Until now, apparently. But oh, it had been so good!

“You have a birthmark”, Castiel observed.

Dean looked down, where the mark seemed more vivid that usual.

“How did you...?” he began

Castiel Bennet, apparently, had some God-given ability to move quickly when needed, because before Dean could react he was in front of the alpha, and had slipped his hand inside the open shirt and over the mark. Dean would have objected, but his body was suddenly flooded with emotion, and he almost sank down onto the floor. This was.... it was hard to describe, but with the omega's hand there, it felt like for the first time in his life, Dean Winchester was complete.

His cock sent a jab of pain upwards, reminding him that the cause of his current feeling was also responsible for Dean probably being unable to sit down any time soon. Or ride, damnation! He would have to walk Impala the last few miles.

And it was cold in the barn. That was the only reason Dean wrapped his arms around the smaller man, and they stood there for some time just holding each other, the omega's hand on his mark, covering it perfectly.

Outside, the rain had stopped some time ago.

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Dean stared at him in horror.

“You can’t be serious, Sammy!” he groused. “It is bad enough that you’re permanently on the look-out for Mrs. or Monseigneur Samuel Bingley, but to expose me to the local hicks? I will not do it!”

“It is for charity, Dean”, Sam said, far too cheerfully. “You already support those soldiers who are injured in this damned war with the Frogs.”

“No! Absolutely no way am I going to some infernal ball!”

Sam stared pleadingly at his friend. Dean winced.

“No, Sammy! Do not try those puppy-dog eyes on me! I. Am. Not. Going!”

“Please, Dean!”

Dean huffed indignantly.

“Please?”

He scowled at his young cousin.

“I hate you!” he snapped, though he was smiling as he said it. “You so owe me for this!”

Dean stomped off, sure that the ball would be a disaster of the first magnitude. In which belief he was not far wrong.
Recipes And Rumpy-Pumpy

Chapter Summary

After his dramatic first meeting with Dean Winchester in a local barn, Castiel Bennett has to brave an evening meal with his parents. And there is a second meeting with Dean which ends...... well, pretty much as expected, really!

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

October 1800

When it came down to it and despite his sound business sense, Castiel James Bennet was a romantic at heart. Now thirty-four years of age, he had long dreamt that somewhere out there, the perfect alpha or beta was just waiting for the right moment to charge into his life and sweep him off his feet. And indeed, the perfect alpha just had.

All right, he had been off his feet and an alpha who was apparently powerless to resist him had been all too willing to take him. And whilst Castiel had envisaged his first time involving candlelight and soft music, he was prepared to admit that being knotted by a horny alpha who could not stop himself was... well, quite 'fulfilling' in its own way. Especially the hour after the knot had bound them together, during which Castiel had made him come or attempt to come some twelve times, leaving the alpha begging for mercy at the end of things and crying onto the omega's chest. Apparently that article his mother has passed onto him about alpha cocks being more sensitive during knotting was quite true, even if he didn't want to think why a woman with six sons had such a thing.

And now he was thinking about it! Ugh!

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Castiel was the eldest of the Bennet omegas, and he had little time for most of his siblings. Only Samandriel, the second eldest, was worth a candle in his opinion, his brother working at the library in Meryton during the week, the grocer's on Saturdays and also doing the occasional delivery for the bakery. Of the remainder, Gabriel worked in the village sweet-shop but seemed to spend most of his time playing jokes, Michael and Raphael (both priests) were always preaching at each other and anyone unlucky enough to get too near, and Balthazar was basically a lazy slut. Castiel however was a dutiful son, and put in regular appearances at the family home, which lay on the other side of the village from his little cottage. Only Balthazar still lived at home now, despite his being twenty-eight.

Unfortunately, Castiel knew that his dreaded Aunt Rowena had called round earlier in the week. She had called in at the bakery too, but Charlie, God bless her, had had the good sense to lie and say he had gone out whilst he had hid under the table in the back; he still owed her for that. His aunt's visit could only mean one thing.

It did. Castiel had barely got his coat off before his mother was all over him about his cousin, Rowena's son Mr. Crowley Collins. The beta had been awarded the living of Medlington parish in Kent, and she had high hopes that he might come to Hertfordshire for a visit. It was Mr. Collins who would one day inherit the Longbourn estate, which was the inheritance of Castiel's mother but
entailed in default of a non-omega heir, and which in turn was the reason that Mrs. Bennet hoped the beta would marry one of her sons one day and keep it in the family.

“He is doing so well!” his mother gushed as Castiel crossed to the dinner-table, silently praying that she had not cooked (burnt) the evening meal. “So clever for one so young.”

Less than two years short of forty, Castiel thought sourly. The man was a beta, and although an intellectual, prone to talk too much. His appearance was also not much to write home about, though he was tolerable enough.....

“Castiel?”

The omega tensed. Did she know? He had bathed at his apartment before coming over, but he could still detect the alpha scent of Dean on him if he tried. It had taken some effort on his part not to scent the alpha, but there would be plenty of time for that sort of thing later.

“Netherfield Park is let at last!”

She announced it as if it were a personal triumph. Castiel's father, writing at the desk, sighed heavily, put down his pen and raised a quizzical eyebrow at her, clearly expecting more. She did not disappoint.

“To a Mr. Samuel Bingley, who has chosen to grace our fair county with his noble presence”, she beamed. “And he not only has five thousand a year, but he is good friends with his cousin, the owner of the greatest estate in the Midlands, Lord Winchester! It is so wonderful!”

“In what way, dearest heart?” Castiel's father asked dryly.

His wife cast a look at their eldest son which made the omega very uncomfortable. Honestly, his mother was like something out of those romantic novels she was always reading, forever trying to marry off her sons even when they were all grown men! With the possible exception of Balthazar. And Gabriel. And Michael and Raphael.

“Why, for our sons!” his mother gushed. “They are both single, handsome men, and so very rich! It would be wonderful if one or both of them married into our family.”

“I am sure such an eventuality would be most agreeable”, Castiel's father said dryly. “And since Mr. Samuel Bingley is to settle in the neighbourhood, then calling on him in the fullness of time would indeed be the polite thing to do.....”

His wife looked at him aghast.

“No no!” she insisted. “You must go there this very day, otherwise that dreadful Colonel Lucas will be in first, pushing his own sons forward. Even that awful Uriel! Please, Chuckie darling?”

Castiel winced. For once, it was not over his mother's food.

“Perhaps it is just as well that I called on him this morning, then”, his father said calmly.

Castiel had the rare pleasure of seeing his mother stunned into silence. Though not, of course, for very long.

“Why did you not tell me?” she demanded. “What is he like? Did you mention we have six sons? All omegas and single? Is his friend....?”
“I am sure that the local gossips have informed them both of our familial situation”, Castiel's father said wearily.

“But beloved.....”

“I believe dinner should be ready shortly?”

His wife looked unhappy, but took the hint and left. Castiel sighed in relief.

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Castiel worked in his mother's bakery in Longbourn, although he did most (all) of the work to keep it going. It was Monday, which would normally have meant a light baking day, but the new owner of Netherfield Park – yes, Castiel had known, and for the preservation of his ear-drums had opted not to tell his mother – had ordered a lot of extra bread and cakes, and, a little unusually, pies. Someone up at the big house certainly loved their pie. Castiel wondered if it was the alpha whom he had had tied to him recently. He smiled at the memory.

Despite the shop itself being quiet, Castiel was busy getting ahead with the house order, which would be called for after five o'clock. He made it with an hour to spare, and added in an extra pie from the counter display; it never hurt to keep in with the big house. He was making a replacement for it when closing time came, and he flipped the sign over before turning to go back to his work.

The new pie had been made ready for the oven, and Castiel had just finished counting the takings when he saw a shadow at the door. He immediately recognized it as Dean, the alpha from the day before. He allowed himself a smirk before going over and letting the man in, locking the door behind him.

Dean shuffled his feet nervously.

“Um, breakfast this morning”, he muttered, not looking the omega in the eye. “I had a slice of pie that came from this place. It... tasted just like the one my mother used to make, and I know that was a family recipe.”

“What was your mother?” Castiel asked gently. The alpha looked ready to bolt.

“Mary Winchester, son of Samuel Campbell M.P.”, Dean said. “He was the twelfth earl's second son.”

“Ahh”, Castiel smiled. “And Samuel Campbell was married to a Miss Deanna Bingley, if I recall?”

“Yes”, Dean said warily. “So?”

“My own grandmother, Caroline Bennet, gave me the recipe”, Castiel explained. “She was the first wife of Mark Fitzwilliam, Mr. Campbell's younger brother; I am sure you recall the divorce scandal they were embroiled in. Your grandmother was particularly supportive of mine during that horrible business, and they remained in contact until Granny Caro died, only a few years ago. I would presume that they traded recipes at one stage, and that your grandmother in her turn passed it onto your mother.”

“So there is another connection between us”, Dean smiled.

Castiel stepped forward, and all but pinned the alpha against the nearest table. The ragged breath that resulted was most satisfactory.
“There soon will be!” the omega growled, noting how Dean's forest-green eyes widened in anticipation. Or was it terror?

“Uh......

“I am going into the office, Dean”, Castiel smirked. Care to.... come?”

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Lord, but Dean Winchester was beautiful during sex, Castiel thought idly as the alpha tried to thrust his cock even deeper into the omega. And it was he, humble little Castiel Bennet, who had reduced one of the richest alphas in England to a quivering wreck, a man who could barely stand up and was making the most beautiful noises as he seemed to be trying to reach Mecca.

Castiel clenched his walls around the alpha's knot, earning himself another glorious if incomprehensible moan from the man above him. Dean looked close to tears, and if the omega had been at all merciful, he would have been concerned for him. But Dean was his alpha, and Castiel was a traditional omega who felt that everyone in society should Know Their Place.

It was going to take a lot of effort to make sure that Dean learnt his. Castiel squeezed out another yelp from his alpha, who followed it up with a piteous whimper that made the omega feel quite proud of himself.

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After a meal and another long bath at home, Castiel called in on his omega friend Inias Lucas, who lived at Lucas Lodge. The Lucases were the richest family in the area, their house lying in the fork between the main road north out of Longbourn and the by-road to the town of Meryton. The family consisted of the unpleasant and bombastic Colonel Zachariah (forcibly retired because the army had decided he was too bad to even be let loose on the French, Castiel's mother had quipped cattily if accurately), the colonel's dotty wife Amelia, their twin omega sons Inias and Ion, both a few years younger than Castiel, and their beta brother Uriel, whom Castiel frankly loathed.

“So tell me everything you know about the poor little rich man gracing Hertfordshire with his presence”, Inias smiled.

“You make me sound like the town gossip”, Castiel grumbled.

His friend looked at him pointedly. The older omega sighed.

“I do wonder why he has come to Hertfordshire”, Castiel said. “I know that he was looking for a house of his own, and he has rented rather than bought the place, but I do not see what attracts him here. He is a long way from both London and his friend in Derbyshire.”

“That would be Mr. Dean Winchester?” Inias asked. “Mary, one of the maids, saw him in town.”

Castiel nodded.

“Mother of course is beside herself”, he said with a sigh. “Two handsome, rich alphas coming into the neighbourhood at the same time. Jackpot!”

“So, Mr. Ten Thousand?” Inias observed. “Nearly thirty years of age, and he has still kept one step ahead of all the mamas wanting him to take their daughter or omega as his own. I spoke with Mrs. Pensnett in the village, and she said that he comes over as a hard man.”
Castiel allowed himself a secret smile.

“I am sure he is very hard‖, he agreed. “But then, when you have ten thousand a year, it probably
does not really matter what people think of you!”

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The following Sunday, Mrs. Bennet flounced into the living room at Longbourn, pulling off her
sodden hat. Castiel had brought some cakes round for a charity event that she was hosting later that
day, and greeted his mother.

“The weather is so unseasonal for this time of year!” she grumbled. “And other drivers are so rude
when I am trying to manoeuvre the carriage around town!”

Castiel swallowed. He had experienced his mother driving only once, and had then been very careful
never to get into a vehicle driven by her ever again. He still had the occasional nightmare.

“I had a visitor whilst you were out‖, Mr. Bennet remarked.

Castiel looked sharply at his father. That tone was far too laid back.

“Not Colonel Lucas, I hope‖, Mrs. Bennet said acidly. “Those cigars of his leave such an unpleasant
odor, and it takes days to clear.”

“No. Mr. Samuel Bingley called.”

Mrs. Bennet froze for a moment, then uttered a cry.

“And we missed him! Heavens above!”

“This time, yes”, Mr. Bennet smiled.

His wife looked sharply at him.

“This time?”

“He is attending the charity ball at Lucas Lodge‖, Mr. Bennet said. “I am sure we shall see him
there.”

“‖But this is too wonderful!” Mrs. Bennet exclaimed. “We must go shopping for some better clothes
for Balthazar at once. And get the other boys round, too. And.....”

“I believe dinner is nearly ready‖” Mr. Bennet said pointedly.

“But Chuckie-wuckie....”

(Castiel narrowly stifled a sudden urge to vomit.)

“It is only a dance, dearest”, his father said firmly.

Mrs. Bennet pouted.

“I am sure that all the Lucases will have new suits”, she muttered mutinously.

“And Mr. Bingley will be bringing the rich friend you mentioned the other day‖, Mr. Bennet said.

His wife froze on her way out of the room.
“Lord Winchester?” she said tremulously.

“Yes”, her husband agreed. “He is staying with him at Netherfield.”

“That is perfect!” she beamed. “I am sure he will find one of our sons to his liking. They are both family already.”

Yes, Castiel thought, turning away to hide his smile. Keep it in the family!

Chapter End Notes

1) A living (or benefice) was basically the right for a vicar to extract taxes (tithes) from his flock to support him. Estates of any importance usually had one or more livings attached, which would usually provide a decent income, certainly more than that provided by the moneys to be inherited by the Bennet omegas in this story. The only downside, as will be seen in this story, was that if the vicar's patron died, then their replacement might elect to bring in someone else (technically this was unlawful, but in reality it happened).

2) It is incredibly difficult to calculate monetary values over time, as there are many different ways of measuring modern equivalents (e.g. purchasing power, inflation-adjusted, relative worth against GDP). Taking a middle estimate, Dean's 'ten thousand' would equate to a modern annual income of at least £12 million (about $20 million). Sam would have half that, and each of the six Bennet omegas would be looking at about £50,000 ($80,000). This latter may sound impressive, but at the time it ranked the Bennets at the lower end of the social pile, and not good catches at all. Mrs. Bennet's excitement is reflected in the fact that Sam's income would be over a hundred times as much as that of one of her sons (and of course Dean's two hundred times as much). The original story can also be misleading in stating that Mr. Bingley had five thousand and each of the Bennets a thousand; in fact Mr. Bingley's income was five thousand (i.e. his capital was probably around a hundred thousand) whilst the Bennets had a thousand each as capital, yielding them an income of about fifty pounds a year at the time.
Bennets And Back-rooms

Chapter Summary

Dean expects to be bored at the horror that is a local ball, and he is. He expects to find the local people tedious, and he does. He expects the food and drink to be poor, and it is.
What he does not expect is to end up once more inside a scruffy little omega baker. It is hardly 'suitable' for an earl's nephew.

October 1800

The only good thing about having to go to this infernal ball, Dean grumbled to himself as their carriage rumbled along, was that at least the road was tolerable. Lucas Lodge, he realized when he first saw it, was the country house he had seen across the valley when he had arrived in the area, and had chosen instead to head for the barn for safety.

His dick twitched, as if reminding him of the consequences of that particular decision. Dean glared at it. Not now!

The Lodge's designer had clearly put function before form, the alpha thought wryly as Sam's carriage drew up in front of a bland, grey building. The great and the good of the area were clearly here, judging from the number of carriages drawn up outside, and there was an audible reaction when the five newcomers arrived, before the general chatter started up again.

Fresh meat, Dean thought bitterly.

Sam, of course, put himself out to please, and soon had his dance card filled for the evening. Dean had four duty dances, one each with Sam's sisters (horrendous, both), plus obligatory ones with the official hostess Lady Amelia Lucas (dotty, and smelt of dogs) and her elder omega son Inias (dowdy though well-spoken), but that was all. He would not condescend to lower himself and step out with any of this country riff-raff, as he told Lilith when they met on the balcony for some air. Of course Sammy, the big girl, soon noticed this, and tried to persuade him otherwise.

"My next dance is with one of the Bennets", he said cheerfully. "They are the one of the principal families in the area; that was one reason I chose the place. Six sons, and all omegas. I called on Mr. Bennet only the other day."

Dean tensed at the name. Surely not....?

"What is the future Laird of Netherfield's name?" he asked, sipping some indifferent beer and hoping his reaction had gone unnoticed. Sam swatted at him.

"Samandriel. That's him over there."

The alpha suppressed a sigh of relief, and followed Sam's eye-line to where a blond omega was dancing with a heavy-set young beta male. Samandriel Bennet (what an awful name, Dean thought to himself!) was blond, slender of build and not much to look at, in all honesty. The only thing in his favour was that he was clearly a good dancer, as he was skillfully avoiding his partner's less than
graceful steps. He must be the youngest, Dean assumed, as he looked at least ten years younger than Castiel, if not fifteen.

He moved to accommodate the sudden bulge in his trousers at the thought of that blue-eyed sex maniac. Damn omega, affecting him even when he was not around!

“He’ll make you look even taller!” he scoffed to his friend. At over six foot his former charge was well above average height, whilst Samandriel Bennet was not only short but also slight of build.

“I do not care!” Sam said as the music indicated the current round was coming to a close. “I am going to talk to him now. At least one of us should be dancing!”

Dean sighed as his friend moved elegantly across the floor to introduce himself to the omega. The shorter man looked at him almost reverently, and Dean could just imagine he was thinking, ‘kaching!’ Not if this alpha had anything to do with it! Sammy might be well of age, but Dean was still his protector, whether he liked it or not.

Meg sidled over to him again, and Dean braced himself. The woman was like a rash, and about as welcome. Fortunately it seemed that, for once, she was more interested in dissecting her new neighbours than pursuing him.

“The Bennets”, she sniffed. “Honestly, for my poor brother to have to consort with such people! And six sons, every one an omega. That is so unlucky!”

“Why?” Dean asked, privately thinking that she was being rather old-fashioned, but not wanting to start an argument, as it would only prolong the conversation.

“Well, I mean, omegas!” she all but sneered. “And the youngest of them is twenty-eight, yet they’re all still unmarried. One wonders why?”

Dean bit back a comment about a certain twenty-five-year-old person not a million miles away from here who would throw themselves at any man that would have her. Instead, he looked pensively across to where Samandriel Bennet and Sam were now dancing. The blond omega looked happy, and dancing with someone worth so much more than he was, well he might.

“Are the rest of the family here?” he asked, trying to distract himself from his own thoughts.

“All except Mr. Bennet himself; he ‘doesn’t do evenings out’, I was told. A good thing I got Lady Lucas to point them all out to me; I would never have thought they were related otherwise. Mrs. Bennet is that silly-looking woman in green over by the dresser. Honestly, that dress! The woman she is talking to – at - is Mrs. Turner, her sister, and the man standing behind them is Mr. Turner.”

Dean looked. Both the Turners were in their fifties, and Mrs. Turner apparently was managing to talk back at her sister without any need to draw breath. Her husband, a rather handsome tall black alpha, looked much as Dean felt, namely a wish to be anywhere but here. Reluctant as he was to yet again agree with Meg, he had to admit that Mrs. Bennet did indeed look – and sound – frightful, even at this (safe) distance.

“The two youngest ones over there are Raphael, the dark-haired one, and Balthazar, the blond”, Meg went on. “I caught Balthazar Bennet making eyes at my brother earlier, would you believe it? Flirting like that with his social superiors; he should know better!”

Dean bit back another remark about motes and beams. It took an effort, though.

“The one reading a book in the corner is the fourth son, Michael. He and Raphael are both priests,
but in different churches. I bet their Sunday lunches are fun, fun, fun! My brother is dancing with the second-eldest; I know, I did not believe it either, but he is almost thirty-three years of age! The one at the food table is the third eldest, Gabriel; not liked in the village because he keeps playing jokes on everyone. And where’s the eldest? Oh yes, that’s him, sitting on the bench. He and Samuel’s partner are supposed to be amongst the most attractive people in the area, but I do not see it myself. Castiel, I think his name is.”

Even the name was enough before Dean looked across to see a familiar figure. It was indeed the omega from the barn. The man who had left the alpha barely able to walk the last time they had met. And the time before that. His eyes watered at the memories, not helped when Castiel somehow detected his gaze and smiled knowingly at him. Dean’s trousers suddenly felt inexplicably tighter.

“I need another drink!” he muttered.

Meg was probably offended that he did not offer to fetch her one as well, but Dean was too busy trying to avoid a pair of sparkling blue eyes that, quite clearly, were quite enjoying his discomfiture.

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Two hours later, and Dean had his question as to why all six Bennet omegas were un-mated at least partly answered. The family were, he thought, appalling! Michael and Raphael Bennet got into an argument over their respective churches, and almost came to blows before they were forcibly separated. Balthazar Bennet seemed to be prepared to make advances to anyone, and actually tried to hit on Sammy again, this time whilst the moose was dancing a third time with Samandriel Bennet! And Dean heard more of Gabriel Bennet's reputation for playing jokes, sometimes of an unpleasant variety, on the local people. The only family member with any redeeming features seemed to be Mr. Turner, who talked politely and eruditely with those around him, a far contrast from his wife and sister-in-law's breathless witterings. Oh, and he supposed Castiel Bennet, because......

He covertly adjusted himself. Again.

And now Sammy was dancing with that ghastly Samandriel Bennet for a fourth time! (Though at least that was better than fifteen minutes ago, when he had led Castiel onto the dance-floor; fortunately no-one had been close enough at the time to hear a certain alpha's growl that an uncharitable observer may have called possessive). Dean just wanted the whole evening to be over with as soon as possible, and had thus far shunned all attempts by the local people to talk to him or get him to dance. The people could whisper about his stand-offishness all they liked. He had standards!

Soon after, the dance's host, the oleaginous Colonel Zachariah Lucas, tried to engage him in conversation. Dean had to fight down the urge to snap at him. He was sure the man was going to suggest a second dance with his son Inias, but instead he looked behind the two of them to the bench.

“Surely you must dance, Mr. Winchester!” he said teasingly. “I see there is someone unattached who would love to step out with you.”

Dean turned, and saw Castiel Bennet now reading a book, clearly disinterested in the proceedings around him. Somehow the omega must have known Dean was looking at him, for those impossibly blue eyes rose to meet Dean's green ones, and there was the hint of a smirk on his handsome face.

“I do not see anyone suitable, sir”, Dean said coldly. “Excuse me, sir.”

He strode into the house, not seeing the raised eyebrow and slight smile on the face of the omega
behind him. Catching sight of Meg, who was clearly still looking out for him, he visited the toilets, then slipped upstairs and made for the quietness of the Lodge bedrooms. He could still hear the raucous music going on far below, but it was only faint now, and besides, his senses were more taken up with smelling.....

Omega? Mate!

Dean actually yelped, as he got hard incredibly quickly. Damnation, what was wrong with him? He was not some dumb young alpha who had only just popped his first knot, and thought everything in life revolved around getting off at every opportunity. He was not!

His denials would have gone on, but he found the door to the room the scent was coming from irritatingly hard to open. Finally he staggered inside, and there, on the bed, was Castiel Bennet. Lying on his back, naked as the day he was born, his legs raised and a smirk still on his face.

Dean let out a noise normally associated with drunks outside the village pub on a Saturday night, and nearly injured himself as he pulled off his trousers and pants before clambering onto the bed. He should have talked, should have discussed what this was and where they were going, but he found himself instinctively raising the omega's legs and pushing home, uttering a blissful sigh of satisfaction. And before he knew what was happening, those muscular legs had somehow folded around him, holding him in place as Dean's knot swelled up in record time, binding them together.

Not again!

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It was a long hour before his knot went down again, enlivened only when Dean realized he had forgotten to lock the door behind him, and had to walk over carrying the omega, who expressed his displeasure by making Dean come (or attempt to come) twice on the way to the door and twice on the way back to the bed. And each time, the bastard had muttered the word “suitable?” to him before trying to kill him! Dean had read somewhere that pleasure and pain were closer to each other than most people thought, but never before in his life had he been in such agony as the omega seemed able to keep his dick both permanently hard and kept dragging orgasm after orgasm out of the alpha's shattered body. It was a tortuous hell, and Dean did not want it to go on.

Weirdly, he also did not want it to stop, either. What was wrong with him?

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It was nearly midnight when Sammy's carriage pulled up at the steps of Netherfield (thankfully his half-sisters had gone in Mr. Walker's carriage), but Dean still had to endure a disapproving look from his cousin the whole way there. The alpha escaped to his own room as soon as he could, and tried to read before turning in, but his mind always ended up thinking of how beautiful his omega was, and how did you go about courting someone when your first three meetings had ended in sex, sex and sex? And that feeling when Castiel had placed his hand over the mark whilst they had been coupled together - Dean had not felt so safe since his mother had been alive. Castiel was his True Mate, and Dean lo..... liked him a whole lot. He fell asleep still thinking of the omega, and if he was smiling into his pillow, well, that was just a coincidence.

Yes it was!
Chapter Summary

Castiel is not above using friends and family to make a certain alpha's life a little more interesting. The quality of mercy may not be strained, as Shakespeare himself once said, but a certain alpha's dick is about to be!

October 1800

Betty, who worked at the manor but lived in a cottage owned by the Longbourn Estate, was one of those girls who could gossip for England, Castiel thought, uncharitably if accurately. Normally he would have reproved her for discussing her employers down at the local bakery, but she was a useful source of information, so he bit his tongue. Though if she said again how 'dreamy' Dean was, there would be trouble! The omega knew that, apart from Samuel Bingley, everyone else upstairs at the house disliked the Bennets intensely, despite their apparent acceptance of Samandriel's relationship with the house owner. Margaret Masters had gone so far to accuse Castiel's brother of throwing himself at a potential suitor. Well, she should know!

Castiel also had it confirmed that Dean was the only one in the house who liked pies, so he must be getting through them at a fair rate, judging from the number ordered from the bakery. Castiel took to adding decorative patterns to some of them, and did one that looked like a pair of lips kissing. Dean needed reminding who was ready and waiting for him, after all.

Dean was very obviously avoiding coming to the bakery and indeed into the village at all, but one Thursday Castiel's cousin Jehosaphat (commonly Jet, Mr. and Mrs. Turner's only son) came by and said that he was expecting Dean at his office in Meryton the following day to sign some papers. Dean would presumably avoid going through Longbourn village. Castiel thanked his beta cousin (a pastry may or may not have changed hands; certainly no money did) and began to plot.

To get to Meryton without passing through Longbourn and by the bakery, Dean could only take the two bridle-paths which connected with the London road just to the north of his little cottage. One ran round Longbourn to meet the paved road to Netherfield's West Gate, and the other to the Longbourn-Meryton road directly opposite the South Gate of Lucas Lodge. Since he did not wish to meet Dean near the main road, Castiel took up his station at the great oak west of Carter's Farm, next to the second bridle-path and from where he could overlook the village.

It was just after nine when the alpha came into view. Castiel had an excellent view of his prey approaching from the main road (served him right for trying to avoid riding past the bakery, the omega thought), and even at the distance he was, he could see Dean tense when he saw the omega waiting for him. He half-wondered if Dean might turn round and gallop away, but after the slightest of hesitations he came on.

It was almost comical, the look of terror on the alpha's face, as he dismounted and looked helplessly at the omega. He was clearly fighting a battle with his body, which very clearly wanted Castiel, and losing it quite spectacularly badly.
“I think I would like to ride you today”, Castiel said casually, as if they had been discussing the weather or some other frippery. Dean gasped, and managed to push his trousers off whilst his mouth slavered at the idea.

Castiel, now totally naked, came up to him and efficiently removed his remaining clothes, before pushing him gently back around the other side of the tree (out of sight of the track; he did not want any witnesses to see him deflowering his alpha) and onto the ground. It did not seem to occur to Dean to object, as the omega laid him out and quickly worked the alpha's erection to where it was painfully hard, before squatting over him and lowering himself onto the head of Dean's cock. The alpha whimpered, clearly terrified for what the omega was about to do to him, and just as clearly equally terrified as to what he might not do. Castiel grinned at him, and lowered himself onto the alpha in one single move, moaning pleasurably as he took Dean inside of him. Dean's hands, more through instinct than any instructions they were getting from upstairs, grabbed the omega by the hips and tried to control his thrusts into that impossible heat, but then he felt his knot swelling again, and he stared blankly at the omega above him as he emptied his seed inside him. He was totally at the mercy of his body, and for that matter of the man now riding him.

And then, once he knew that Dean's eyes were on him, Castiel came.

Castiel would have had to have been blind to have missed the small looks Dean gave him during their couplings. This was an alpha who was definitely interested in batting as well as bowling, and was now clearly imagining Castiel coming like that inside of him. The omega recovered his breath, and grinned down at the prone alpha. Dean's lip quivered. Castiel knew that he was thinking that no omega would be that cruel.

Wrong. Dean moaned in pain, and Castiel gently placed his hand on the birth-mark. The alpha shuddered.

“This makes you feel good, does it not?” Castiel asked.

Dean nodded, unable to put into words what he felt just now. Castiel kept his hand over the mark, and Dean was still shaking from the effect of both that and the omega's death-grip on his cock. Then the alpha's eyes widened as he felt a sudden pain between his neck and his shoulder, where the omega had been gently nuzzling near the birthmark.

“Caaaaaas!”

Castiel grinned, kept licking the now open wound.

“You..... you claimed me”, Dean stuttered, disbelievingly.

“You're mine, Dean. I hope you recognize that – or do I have to make the point again? Or would you rather that I scent you?”

He made the point eight more times before Dean's knot finally went down enough for the alpha to pull out, and flee the scene of their latest encounter. Though Castiel would have wagered that he got off his horse again as soon as he was out of sight. Riding with a sore cock was probably quite painful!

Thank Heaven his cousin was a lawyer, and could be relied on not to talk.

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Only a few days later, Castiel ran into Dean at a reception held at Morecambe House, probably the largest dwelling in the village itself if one excluded Longbourn and the two great houses. A widower
called Mr. Phidippides King had recently arrived in Longbourn from the United States, and he had with him his niece, Miss Dorothy King, who was in her early twenties. She reminded Castiel of a porcelain doll; beautiful but very fragile. It was patently obvious by the way Dean introduced Samuel Bingley to her that he cherished hopes that this might prove a better match than Samandriel, and equally patently obvious that those hopes were ill-founded when Mr. Bingley promptly decamped to talk with Castiel's brother after barely five minutes, much to his cousin's visible annoyance. Castiel felt sorry for Miss King, and suppressed his enjoyment at Dean's reaction (and his notable avoidance of himself) to go and talk to her.

“Mr. Bennet”, Miss King said shyly after a few minutes, “your brother Samandriel seems to be getting on well with Mr. Samuel Bingley.”

Castiel looked across to where the two men were quietly talking. In doing so, he noticed Dean some way off to the right, clearly scowling at the pair of them. The omega suppressed a smile.

“And his friend Mr. Winchester clearly does not approve”, he remarked.

“Is he really a lord?” Miss King inquired. “My dear uncle says he thinks little of people with titles.”

“As the nephew of the current Earl of Hexhamshire, he is permitted to use the title if he so wishes”, Castiel explained, “although any children of his would not. However, I am informed that he himself chooses not to do.”

Miss King hesitated.

“I visited your shop yesterday”, she said, looking around as if she feared they might be overheard. “The lady at the counter was... quite friendly.”

Castiel thought wryly of all the words he could use to describe Charlie Bradbury. He supposed that 'friendly' was one of them, and the people of Longbourn had grown used to her sometimes strange mannerisms. He looked harder at Miss King, who was most definitely blushing for some reason, and a faint bell rang in his head.

“She lives in a small cottage on the eastern edge of the village, down Shepherd's Lane”, he said carefully. “She is a good worker, if perhaps a little... over-effusive at times. The mayor's son was interested in dating her two years ago, but she chose not to return his attentions. He was not her.... type.”

Miss King's eyes widened, and she blushed the same colour as her startlingly red shoes. Castiel smiled knowingly.

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Castiel and Samandriel had walked to Morecambe House, as it was not far from either of their cottages. Samuel Bingley offered them a ride back (in Dean's carriage!), and on reaching Samandriel's cottage (from which one could see the wall surrounding Netherfield), he decided to stay and take a walk around the area with him, much to his cousin's barely stifled displeasure. Though when Castiel asked to be dropped at the shop, Dean's eyes widened into something approaching terror. Castiel smiled inwards, but said nothing until he was alighting from Dean's carriage.

“Would you like to come inside for a moment?” he asked politely. “I am sure I can find a spare pie out the back if I look.... hard enough.”

He stressed the penultimate word in that sentence, and was pleased to see the alpha actually shake in anticipation. Dean followed him inside, and Castiel locked the door behind them, before leading the
“What are you doing to me?” Dean groaned. “I cannot seem to keep my hands off of you!”

Castiel turned and ran his hands over Dean's fine white shirt.

“I do not think it your hands that are the problem”, he rumbled. “It is a little further down, if you ask me. The True Mate bond is not something that can be easily resisted, Alpha!”

He slowly unbuttoned Dean's trousers, silently rejoicing at the fact that the taller man was now visibly shaking in his shoes, let alone the small cries of anticipation (or possibly fear) that were issuing from him. The omega moved slowly, rubbing his hand gently over Dean's cock, which was straining to get out his underpants. Carefully Castiel worked his way inside, and began to systematically jerk Dean off.

The alpha actually whined.

Castiel moved steadily faster, a little concerned at Dean's increasingly erratic breathing, but determined to make this last as long as possible. Knowing the alpha was close, he slowed down, earning himself a noise between a snarl and a moan.

“Cas! I am begging you!”

The omega smiled, and started to work back up to speed again. Dean let out what sounded almost like a laugh, then the next instant he was coming violently, his face contorted with the effort. The omega worked him through it, then carefully guided him to a chair that, mercifully, was not far behind him.

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Thank God that Dean had brought his lighter carriage, the one he drove himself, otherwise the driver would have had some juicy gossip to spread about how the Earl of Hexhamshire's nephew spent over half an hour inside a bakery, and limped out with a large apple-pie and a shattered expression, his clothes a mess. But Castiel was a very fair-minded omega, and he did not openly smirk as the wrecked alpha finally drove off back to Netherfield.

Much.
Chapter Summary

A good rule about sex: never initiate an argument with your omega when you're knotted to him for the next hour. Unless you're some sort of sadist who actually enjoys having their cock squeezed in a vice, and your balls drained so much that they actually hurt when you put your clothes back on.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

October 1800

Dean's life was a mess! Why, oh why had he agreed to come to this dreadful county with its impossible residents? Not only did he have to put up with the obnoxious Meg giving him hungry looks every five minutes, but now there was Cas... Castiel.

That damned omega! Honestly, twenty-nine years in perfect control of his body, a whole queue of satisfied woman behind him, and now his first omega had him on a leash. The little scruff only had to bat those gorgeous eyelashes at him, and Dean would be panting like... well, an omega in heat, begging for whatever Castiel would give him. He was pathetic!

And now he was hard again, less than ten minutes before dinner! Damnation!

Four times now Dean had ended up knotting the scruffy little baker, then Castiel had jerked him off in the back of the bakery – there was probably some rule about hygiene that they had broken, but Dean had just stood there and let an omega.....

Yes. He was pathetic. But oh, it had felt so good! And every time that Castiel's rough hand fitted over that birthmark, Dean felt totally safe, owned, protected.....

No! No, no, no! He was an alpha's alpha, and he was gonna take control of his life back from the gorgeous sex-god whom he wanted to reduce to the same quivering wreck that he, Dean Winchester, always ended up as every time they met. No more! Of that he was absolutely, one hundred per cent certain!

Well, fairly certain.....

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Dean's resolve was tested when he found himself walking through the bakery door the following day. He had not even intended to go into the place – he had had lunch before leaving Netherfield – but apparently his legs had decided for him, and now he was here, he might as well see if there was pie on offer.

There was a short and scruffy beta officer at the counter in front of him, and the alpha recalled that the Chiltern Militia had just arrived outside the town. The man was chatting amiably with Castiel, though leaning over the counter far too much, in Dean's opinion. The omega glanced at the new customer, and the soldier noticed and turned to see who was behind him.
And Dean froze. Metatron Wickham? What the hell was he doing here, in Longbourn of all places?

The death of Dean’s father some three years back had resulted in the young alpha discovering that John Winchester had had an affair years before, the result of which had been an omega called Adam Winchester. The man who revealed this to Dean was his father’s steward, Christopher Wickham, who had been in on the secret and now wished to take the opportunity to retire. He was a good man, and Dean was sorry to lose him, giving him a lifetime tenancy on one of the estate cottages for free.

John Winchester had also promised to reserve a living, that of the village of Kimpton, for his steward’s beta son Metatron, should he wish to enter the Church. Dean had not been at all surprised (and more than a little relieved) when the young man instead asked for money in lieu of the post. Dean paid him a very fair three thousand for it, and he was not in the least surprised when the young man turned up only a few months later, having spent his way through his inheritance, and now asking for the living as well. Not unnaturally, Dean refused.

Metatron Wickham's response, however, had nearly caught the master of Pemberley off guard. Unbeknownst to Dean, the steward’s son, who had learnt of the existence of his half-brother, had been courting the young omega for some little time, and had managed to convince the boy that Dean was a monster, and that they should elope before his new guardian came to see him. Dean was spared the humiliation of what might have ensued only thanks to his Aunt Missouri, who had been appointed co-guardian to the boy alongside Dean. She sent her youngest stepson and Dean’s cousin Captain Gadreel Fitzwilliam to see the boy on her behalf, and he found Adam and Metatron preparing for their flight; just twenty-four hours later and it would have been too late. Fortunately tragedy and social disgrace were averted, and the odious beta had dropped off the scene, though unfortunately not off the nearest high cliff.

And now the vermin was right here in Hertfordshire, and talking to Castiel Bennet. Dean’s eyes narrowed.

Fortunately the beta took a bag containing his purchase and walked out of the shop, openly smirking. The red-headed girl at the kettle – Charlie, from her name-tag - muttered something that sounded decidedly rude, and Castiel flicked half-heartedly in her direction. Dean decided there and then that he liked her.

“You know him?” the alpha asked sharply.

Castiel frowned at the tone.

“Charlie, please take over for a moment”, he said, lifting the counter-flap. “Dean, here!”

The alpha bristled at being spoken to as if he were a dog, but he wanted to ask Castiel about the slime-ball anyway, so he followed him out the back, and into the office where.... Castiel was quickly and efficiently removing his clothes. What the hell?

“I want to talk first”, Dean complained.

Castiel neatly folded his trousers and placed them on the nearest table, then gave Dean a look that was positively feral.

“Inside me”, the omega ordered. “Now!”

No way, Dean snapped. Or that at least the instruction that his brain sent his vocal chords to say, but somewhere along the way it got re-routed to his body and slightly amended to 'remove all clothes as
quickly as possible and get inside horny omega'.

“What are you doing to me?” he grumbled, carefully folding his favourite t-shirt. “People will think I am some kind of sluuuu....”

Dean suddenly discovered that not only was Castiel gorgeous to look at, he was also both fast and surprisingly flexible. He made this discovery as the omega leapt on him, wrapping his legs around the alpha’s waist and manhandling Dean’s dick inside him. Dean knew he should have objected, but he was too focussed on moving them both away from the food preparation area and into the office. Yes, that was the reason.

And once more his bastard body was betraying him, and he could feel his knot beginning to grow. There was no hope of escape; Castiel had his legs tightly wrapped around the alpha holding him in place, and just as Dean thought it couldn't get any worse, the omega somehow managed to lift himself up (how?) and then impale himself forcibly on Dean's cock over the swelling knot, which then held him firmly in place. Dean came violently, tears in his eyes as he filled the omega with his seed.

“Now”, Castiel said calmly, “we can talk.”

Dean stared at him incredulously.

“Now?” he said, at least an octave higher than normal. A slight smirk told him that the omega had noticed.

“Yes, now”, Castiel said firmly. “I take it that you know my recent customer out there?”

Dean blushed, which was quite an achievement as most of his blood was currently some distance away from his face.

“He and I had dealings in the past”, he muttered. “He is the son of my late father's steward, Christopher Wickham, and because that man was so good and faithful, my father promised him a living when the old man retired.”

The omega looked at him expectantly. Dean hesitated, then yelped when Castiel clamped his walls around his now tender cock, dragging another feeble orgasm out of him.

“I hate you!” he ground out.

“I can see that”, Castiel teased. “And you are going to have to go on hating me for the next fifty-nine minutes, until your knot goes down. Now, tell me all about Lieutenant Wickham.”

There was a slight increase in pressure on Dean's cock as he spoke, and the alpha's eyes watered in alarm. He started talking, fast.

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“I do have one more question”, Castiel said as he smoothed down his clothes.

To Dean's eternal annoyance, the omega did not look like he had just had a prolonged bout of sex. In short, he did not look at all like Dean. It was so horribly unfair!

“What is it?” he groused, trying to straighten his clothes.

The omega was suddenly right up in his personal space again, and God, he smelled wonderful.
Dean's eyes widened in terror.

“Or we could have sex again?” Castiel purred.

“Question!” Dean shouted in panic. “For pity's sake, what's the question?”

Castiel actually looked as if he was considering a second round of sex anyway, and the alpha seriously doubted he would survive that. Fortunately the omega then shrugged and took a step back. Dean's sharp exhale was not a sigh of relief, no matter how much it sounded like one.

“Why are you so opposed to Sam and Alfie being together?” Castiel asked.

“Alfie?” Dean asked confused.

“Samandriel's middle name; what the family call him”, Castiel explained. “Go on.”

“It's just.... I think Sam deserves better.”

Judging from the dark look that crossed the omega's face, that had been the wrong thing to say.

“You are saying that my brother is not good enough for your cousin?” he asked archly.

Dean should have taken advantage of the space between them and fled, but instead he ploughed on.

“He did not look that interested in him at the ball, did he?” he said. “I mean, Sammy is a catch, but he deserves someone who wants him for more than his money. And your family.....?”

Too late, he realized his mistake. Castiel closed the distance between them.

“What about my family?” he growled.

“They are not....I mean, they are.... well......."

He knew the instant the thought crossed the omega's face. Then Castiel smiled a terrible smile, and Dean yelped as he felt a rough hand rubbing up against his cock which, incredibly, was straining against his clothes once more. Merciful Heaven, no!

“Office!” Castiel growled. “Now!”

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Back at Netherfield, Dean had dinner sent to his room. Sitting down on a chair was not an option. Come to that, neither was lying on his back. He was so sore, even going to the toilet on his way to the bedroom had been excruciating, and had brought tears to his eyes. Damnation!

He thought about Metatron Wickham again. Dean knew that the beta would never have attained a post of lieutenant on merit, so most likely someone had purchased it for him. It had probably been the price some guardian had been prepared to pay to get the rat away from the girl or omega in their care. Just Dean's luck that he had to wash up here!

And what was he going to do about Sam and Samandriel? The younger Bennet seemed only semi-interested in his cousin; it would only be the money that really attracted him, surely? Which meant that Dean needed to do something before things got serious, or worse, the omega went into heat. It was totally impossible for Sammy to marry into such an awful family.

Unbidden, he had an image of he and Castiel on their wedding-night. Then he yelped as his still sore
dick tried to get hard again.

Chapter End Notes

Note: It was only around this time that the idea of barracks for soldiers, as opposed to making them camp outside towns (which did not usually like their presence) became commonplace. It was slow going; by the end of the war with France there were only 20,000 places for an army and militia in excess of 200,000. Also, the purchasing of commissions for friends and relatives was still relatively common, although the reforms of Frederick (the Grand Old) Duke of York, King George III's second son, were beginning to consign it to the history books.
Greed And Gossip

Chapter Summary

Castiel is torn between defending his unpopular and unsocial (but oh so wonderfully well-hung!) lover, and keeping his feelings for him from the local gossip network.

November 1800

Castiel Bennet did trust Dean Winchester. True, he knew that the alpha could have lied about him over the events concerning Lieutenant Wickham, but then Dean must have known that the omega would check up on what the alpha had said, and that any lies would be Very Severely Punished the next time the alpha was inside him. Castiel uttered up a silent prayer of thanks to God for creating True Mates, and allowing the omegas involved to control the alphas, for once. If only by their knots!

The arrival of the militia had also brought a distant cousin of Mrs. Bennet, one Captain Peter Dennison, to the area. Castiel cornered his cousin that same weekend and asked if regimental matters were keeping him busy. The beta clearly guessed what he was driving at, and blushed.

“You are wondering about Lieutenant Wickham”, he said quietly. They had retired to the library after a family dinner that had been about as bad as expected, but there was always the chance one or other of Castiel's siblings could walk in on them.

“Yes”, Castiel said bluntly. “I do not like the man, and I have certain information that suggests that that feeling is quite correct. What do you know about him, Denny?”

His cousin blushed even more.

“I really should not be saying this”, he said slowly, looking nervously around as he spoke, “but Lieutenant Wickham is something of a rake. He does not have a good reputation at all, cousin; he leaves debts everywhere he goes, and is always trying to seduce ladies and omegas of fortune. I should not have done so, but when I became aware he was coming to this house, I may have mentioned your family's financial circumstances in an attempt to warn him off. He angled for an invitation this evening, but I managed to shake him off.”

Castiel wondered why, if the lieutenant knew about the family's relatively poor financial state, he would still have wanted to come.

“All well and good”, the omega smiled. “And if he is all you say, then we should be grateful.”

“Do you happen to know a Miss King?” his cousin asked.

“Yes, the American lady, recently arrived with her uncle. She seems a nice young lady, if a little shy.”

“Perhaps you might drop a warning to either her or her uncle then”, his cousin said. “I managed not to mention your friend Inias Lucas, but I did tell him that the lady was possessed of a sizeable fortune. His eyes lit up, I am sorry to say.”

“I will call at Morecambe House at the first opportunity”, Castiel promised. “And Mr. Winchester?
He and Lieutenant Wickham seemed to react very badly to each other.”

His cousin sighed.

“Mr. Winchester's father promised a living for his steward's son, Wickham, in return for the father's faithful service”, he explained. “I do not know all the facts, but I do know that Mr. Dean Winchester honoured that promise in that Wickham got money in lieu, quite a bit more than it was worth, apparently. But he spent it all in just months – clearing his debts, I would guess - and then had the brass neck to go back and demand the living as well, only to be refused. There was some scandal that followed soon after; I do not know what, but the elder Wickham, who still lives on Mr. Winchester's estate – for free - disowned his son as a result. The lieutenant has been telling everyone who would listen about that refusal, although of course only the parts that show him in a good light. Not that the master of Pemberley has done himself any favours in this area from what I have heard, especially with his superior attitude. I fear he has set himself up so that people will all too easily believe whatever Wickham says about him.”

“He does not seem keen on winning friends in Hertfordshire”, Castiel smiled. “Unlike his friend, Mr. Bingley. He was much the better person at the dance.”

“Mr. Bingley seemed quite taken with Alfie”, his cousin said carefully. “How is your brother these days, if you don't mind me asking?”

“Considering how you helped us then, I don't mind at all”, Castiel smiled. “He is much better, although there is still the occasional nightmare. I am frankly amazed that someone has not already told Mr. Bingley about it.”

“They did. Or at least try to.”

Castiel's smile faltered.

“What?”

“I heard from Mrs. Pensnett that Lord Zachariah tried to tell him at the ball”, Denny explained. “Mr. Bingley cut him off quite sharply, she told me. He said he was looking to the future, and everyone had things in their past they would probably not rather be discussed in public!”

“Ouch!” Castiel grinned. “An unintentional but deadly blow. Inias' father has several skeletons in the closet, and that is just the ones I know about.”

His cousin looked at him coolly.

“Castiel Bennet, I am sure you know them all, each and every one. Indeed, I am surprised that with your intelligence network, the government has not recruited you to spy on the French for us!”

+++

Castiel made a point of calling in at Morecambe House the very next day, and was more than a little alarmed to find Lieutenant Wickham had been there the day prior. He managed a short interview with Mr. King, a large alpha of a man who remembered him from the reception and the way he had made his niece laugh. He was deeply grateful when he understood the reason for Castiel's visit, and assured him that the soldier would not be left unsupervised with his niece in future.

Denny had assured him that the regiment would be moving on during the winter, but even so, Castiel was a little perturbed that Balthazar in particular seemed to be spending so much time visiting the camp. He always returned with tales of how wonderful Lieutenant Wickham was and how hard he
was working – that was something Castiel could have well done without. But knowing the
imminence of the regiment's departure made him bite his tongue when his mother kept repeating how
handsome and brave Lieutenant Wickham was, usually accompanied with what were presumably
meant to be meaningful looks in his direction. Either that, or she was being troubled by the wind
again.

+++~++++

He might have been holding his tongue at home, but less than a week after his meeting with his
cousin, a visit to the village led to Castiel speaking his mind very publicly indeed. Though there was
some reward for his forthrightness.

He had gone into the grocery store to pick up a few extra items that his mother had forgotten to
order, and had found his aunt and uncle there. Mrs. Turner was busy chatting with the assistant, Miss
Ryder, so Castiel talked amiably with his uncle whilst waiting. At least until he heard his aunt
remark:

“So it seems that Mr. Winchester's father promised to reserve a living worth a full five thousand for
dear Wickham, as a reward for the latter's father having been such a faithful steward. And then once
both men are dead, that dreadful Mr. Winchester cheats dear Wickham out of the living and keeps it
for himself. Disgraceful, I call it!”

Castiel felt his temper rising.

“Who told you that, aunt?” he said pointedly.

“Your dear mama, when the lieutenant visited her house last week”, she said, clearly surprised that
her nephew, let alone an omega, should speak to her in such a tone.

“An increasingly rare visit on his part, then”, Castiel said acidly. “So you only have Lieutenant
Wickham's version of events?”

The three other adults stared at him.

“Are you implying that the lieutenant is lying?” his uncle asked.

Castiel huffed a laugh.

“I have heard a lot about Lieutenant Wickham who, I might add has rarely been near our house since
he found out there were no rich heiresses therein”, he said, a little angrily. “I doubt much he has said
has been an open lie, but I am certain that we have not heard both sides of this particular story.”

The bell rang as someone entered the shop behind them, but everyone continued to stare at Castiel.

“You would believe that obnoxious Mr. Winchester over our own dear Wickham!” his aunt said
incredulously. “After the way he behaved at the dance?”

“All I am saying is that we should not believe everything that Lieutenant Wickham says”, Castiel
said firmly. He fixed his aunt with a hard look. “Everyone deserves the chance to be accepted into
society, aunt.”

It was a direct reference to his uncle, and his initially cool reception by the people of the village
before their eventually coming to first accept him and eventually admire him. His aunt reddened, and
was clearly about to say something back when then newcomer coughed politely. Castiel turned to
see who it was.
Damnation, it was Dean! And he had obviously overheard everything Castiel had just said about him!

+++++

Dean must have followed him back to the bakery, because Castiel had only been out the back for a few moments before he scented the alpha's presence. He heard him talking with Charlie, then the ominous creak of the counter-flap being raised which meant she had allowed him through to the back. No tact, that girl.

He would have to give her a raise.

The alpha looked oddly embarrassed as he came through the door, shutting it carefully behind him.

“You spoke up for me”, he muttered, not looking at Castiel. “Um, thank you,”

“One cannot stop people gossiping”, Castiel said with a sigh, “but at least one can make sure that they have both sides of the story before making their judgement. People round here may not like you, but that does not excuse their misrepresenting your character.”

“I know that I do not socialize well”, Dean admitted gruffly.

He looked up to find Castiel was suddenly a lot closer.

“Then let us adjourn to my office where we can work on that!” he smirked.

The whine that came out of the alpha's mouth was immensely gratifying.

+++++

“You need to get a thicker door to your office!” Charlie grumbled, after a certain alpha had limped out of the bakery's door. “And what on earth were you doing to him to make him look such a wreck when he left?”

Castiel quirked an eyebrow at her, and waited for her to realize what she had just said. Fortunately for his employee, she was quick.

“You dare answer that!” she hissed.

The omega just gave her the smile of a cat that had just got the cream. Which was all too appropriate, really.

+++++

Samandriel came into the bakery the next day, and laughed when his brother told him about the gossip incident (though obviously not what had ensued from it).

“So he publicly insults you, then you come along and defend him!” he chuckled. “You had better not try that at our next family dinner, or poor mama will have one of her turns!”

“I do not like Lieutenant Wickham”, Castiel said flatly. “Indeed, I frankly cannot wait for his regiment to leave the area.”

“Cheer up”, his brother said, still smiling. “If it hurts you, it probably shocked that insufferable Mr. Winchester. He must have been so sure he'd driven away everybody, then you ride to his rescue like a knight saving a damsel in distress!”
“I do not think that Mr. Dean Winchester could in any way be called a damsel!” Castiel huffed.

“Indeed!” Samandriel said. “Well, I am for Longbourn this evening. At least I know that Mother did not get to the kitchen today, so I can eat in safety!”

Castiel laughed.
Chapter Summary

Mrs. Bennet's plans to advance her second-eldest son's relationship backfire, prompting Castiel to tell Dean the truth about his brother.

Chapter Notes

TW: This chapter contains a reference to a past rape. It will be mentioned several more times in later chapters, but never graphically. Kindly be advised.

November 1800

It was probably a flaw in Dean Winchester's character – though not one he cared about – that he took little note of what people said about him. He had known that he was not well liked in the village, if only from the gossip of the servants at Netherfield, but to know that Castiel was defending his honour made him feel...well, it made him feel all warm and fuzzy inside.

Somewhere, his manliness was dying a slow and painful death.

Talking of gossip, which of course Dean hardly ever listened to, he had heard more than one hint that there was something troubling in Samandriel Bennet's past. Whatever it was had to have been big, because otherwise it would have been openly spoken of. Dean wished that he could tackle Castiel about it, but he was afraid that it might anger the omega, who might then take his revenge out on Dean's poor dick. The master of Pemberley wanted to have children one day, and.... no, not going there.

Too late! His unhelpful brain had already got up the image of Castiel Bennet standing at the aisle, wearing his black wedding-suit - damnation!

+++++

The Samandriel Situation took an unexpected turn when Sam invited the young omega over to dinner one day, and he arrived having ridden through a sudden downpour, looking like a drowned rat and coughing badly (quite why his mother had not allowed him to take the Longbourn carriage, Dean had no idea). The alpha would have laughed, but his friend gave him such a stern look that he refrained. Sam had hustled Samandriel upstairs to one of the empty bedrooms, and had insisted on calling a doctor. When he came down some time later, he looked unusually grave.

“Possibly pneumonia, perhaps something worse”, he said, looking sadder than Dean had ever seen him. “He is asking for Cas.”

“His brother”, Dean said.
“I will go and get him”, Sam said. “I know that you and he do not exactly get on, Dean.”

The alpha bit back the obvious comment that Castiel got on (to the end of Dean's dick) quite often, and they could hardly have been closer. And now the love of his life would probably be staying at Netherfield to care for his sick brother. When did his life get so complicated?

+++

Sammy did indeed insist that Castiel Bennet stay at Netherfield until his brother got better, which left his alpha cousin feeling conflicted (though he laughed at Sammy when he told him how he had had to get out of having Mrs. Bennet stay instead). As things turned out however, Castiel spent the next few days almost constantly in his brother's room, and Dean didn't see him downstairs even once. For some reason this also unnerved him.

“I'm worried about Alfie”, Sam said the following morning.

They were in the library. The doctor had just finished examining Samandriel upstairs, and his brother had presumably gone out for some fresh air.

'Alfie', Dean thought. Not 'Samandriel'.

“Why?” he asked, sipping his water.

“I think he's hiding something from me”, Sam said. “He was really open that first time we met, and everything seemed to be going so well. But ever since, he's been…. I don’t know, almost retreating back into his shell.”

Dean thought about suggesting that possibly the eldest Bennet didn't feel for Sam what his young friend obviously felt for him, but guessed it might not go down too well, particularly with the omega so ill.

“Maybe he's not that easy to get to know”, he suggested instead. “The Bennets might be more complicated than we think.”

“Lord Zachariah tried to tell me something about his past at the dance”, Sam said. “He got as far as 'something you should know about that family' before I shot him down.”

“Why did you not just let him tell you?”

“Because he was only doing it to forward the interests of his own son”, Sam said sharply, “and I disapprove of both malicious rumour-mongering and petty spite!”

There was a pointed cough from one of the high-backed chairs by the fire. Castiel Bennet's unmistakable ruffled head was leaning round one of the high-backed chairs by the fireplace. Both men went red.

“I am sorry to intrude, Mr. Bingley....” he began.

“It's Sam”, Sam smiled, “and it's quite all right. I said you could use the library any time you liked. Did the doctor report to you before leaving, like I asked?”

“Yes thank you”, Castiel said. “I stayed with him throughout the examination; he.... does not like being alone with doctors. He said he wanted a rest after, so I decided to come and choose a book.”

“Of course”, Sam said. “You can read it here or take it back to your room; whatever is best for you.”
“Thank you... Sam.”

Dean noticed that the omega did not really smile at his friend, but his eyes crinkled at the edges, as if his face had some idea of what was supposed to happen but could not quite figure it out. He wondered what he would have to do to earn a look like that.

One of the servants came with a message for Sam just at that moment, and the beta left the room. Dean saw with alarm that Meg had finished her magazine, and was heading towards him. He decided quickly that Castiel might be the better, or perhaps least worse, option, and approached him.

“Pilgrim’s Progress”, he observed, tilting his head to catch the title of the omega's book.

“Indeed”, Castiel said, in his gravelled tone. “The story of a man who finds in his faith the one thing he truly values above all else.”

“Are you religious, Mr. Bennet?” Dean asked, leaning against a sideboard. “Your father named you all after angels, I note.”

“Yes, that was my mother's doing”, Castiel said. “There was a fashion for angel names at the time; I believe that all your uncle the earl's sons have angelic names.

“What about your name?”

“I am named for the angel of Thursday, as I was born on that day”, Castiel said. “Also the angel of change, solitude and.... tears.”

He looked pointedly at the alpha, who reddened. It did not take much to recall which of them usually cried during their couplings.

“I think I shall go and see if my brother has awoken”, Castiel said with a polite smile, evidently taking pity on Dean. “Good afternoon, Mr. Winchester.”

He waked calmly from the room. The alpha most definitely did not look at his retreating butt.

Much.

+-+++

Dean was frustrated. Samandriel Bennet was slowly getting better, which was good, but his brother still spent virtually all his time in his room with him. The alpha went to check up on them both one evening, and found the patient asleep in his bed and Castiel having dozed off in the comfortable chair next to him, his book having fallen to the floor. Sighing, he opened the connecting door to Castiel's bedroom, then carried the dark-haired omega through and placed him gently on the bed. He returned briefly to check the patient was all right, and as he left he heard him mutter something in his sleep. It sounded like he was having a nightmare, but fortunately he seemed to stop quickly enough, and slip deeper into his slumbers.

Returning to Castiel's room, Dean saw that the omega had awoken, but still looked drowsy. Castiel had obviously gotten little sleep over the past few days, and the alpha worried that that might not have been the first time he had fallen asleep in the chair beside his brother.

“You need to take more care of yourself”, he admonished, fondling the omega's impossible hair. “Your brother is on the mend now.”

Castiel nodded, and patted the huge bed beside him. Reluctantly, Dean lay down next to him and
pulled him into a cuddle... embrace.

“What does Sam know about Alfie?” Castiel asked suddenly.

Dean tensed. He knew from experience that if he answered untruthfully, Castiel was quite capable of delaying punishment until the alpha was next inside him, then making him suffer. After their first time, the omega had wondered aloud if he could extract twenty orgasms from the alpha whilst they were tied together. That might kill him!

“He knows that there is something big in his past”, Dean admitted, “but nothing in any detail. I suppose that it must be big if it is not just ordinary gossip. People do not not gossip for a reason.”

He could feel the omega smirking at his strangulation of the English language.

“I want to tell you about it”, Castiel said sleepily, “because I think you will understand. But you are not to tell Sam.”

“Of course not”, Dean promised.

Castiel hesitated.

“It call came about because of the link between our families”, Castiel began. “Grandmother Caro had four children from her second, successful marriage; my father, my two aunts and an an omega uncle, Luke. Luke Pellegrino.”

The name was familiar from somewhere, Dean thought drowsily.

“He had his own scandal”, Castiel went on, “although the rest of the family stood by him. Shortly after coming of age, he became a baron's omega, kept by Philip, Duke of Holderness. The duke never married, and when Luke died shortly after giving birth to an alpha son, he adopted him as his own and named him Lucifer.”

“Another angel name”, Dean said.

“He is angel and devil, my cousin”, Castiel smiled. “A very powerful personality; he was determined to make his own way in life, despite his future inheritance. That was what led to disaster, for Alfie at least. Lucifer – Luke, we call him - had a business partner, an alpha called Mr. Richard Roman. He saw Alfie one time when the two of us visited Luke in London about six years ago and, despite my brother's lack of money, determined to have the boy as his own. Alfie hated him, but tolerated him because he was Luke's friend.”

Dean could see where this story was going, and he did not like it.

“One day, not long after we had returned home from that trip, Alfie did not turn up at the library as usual”, Castiel said sadly. “Inquiries led to the fact that Mr. Roman had kidnapped him and taken him to Gretna Green, to be married 'over the anvil'.” He hesitated before continuing. “Needless to say, he claimed him en route.”

“A forced marriage like that could not stand under English law”, Dean said firmly, wincing at the thought of poor Samandriel Bennet suffering like that.

“Dick Roman had already dispatched a letter to Father, offering a substantial sum of money if he accepted the union”, Castiel said. “He said he would not, though Mother was undecided. Omegas have been bought for less.”
Dean shuddered. That was horribly true.

“What happened?” he asked.

“Luke caught up with him”, Castiel said. “He told me all about it later. Mr. Roman had enough influence with all his money to make the marriage legal, so Luke challenged him to a duel and shot him. My cousin in the militia, Captain Denny, was his second, and helped patch his own wound up afterwards. Luke then took Alfie to his own home to recover; my brother was too ashamed to return home. He miscarried after ten weeks. That is why some people in the village refer to him as ‘damaged goods’. Mr. Roman's second, a friend of his called Meyrick Azazel, must have talked.”

Dean was silent.

“Alfie is not open in his affections”, Castiel said, “though I think that now you can see why. I did wonder if Luke felt something for him with all the time they had together, but my cousin is a good man, and he would never have approached Alfie at such a terrible moment. If Sam is serious, then he should declare himself. If not, then he should go away and let him be.”

“Poor Alfie”, Dean muttered.

“Yes”, Castiel agreed. “I am sure that our mother made him ride rather than take the carriage here, so that when it rained he might have cause to spend the night here. Unfortunately her scheming nearly got him killed!”

The alpha had a lot to think about. He cuddled his omega a little closer as they lay on the bed together.

Chapter End Notes

1) Society standards at the time were that women who got married wore white (to reflect their purity) whilst omegas wore black (to reflect their experience). Since the latter could not get pregnant except when in heat, it was thought better that they be well-practiced in sex as the dangers of pregnancy were greatly reduced.

2) Lord Hardwicke's Marriage Act (1754) made forced marriages much more difficult, but it only applied in England and Wales. Once a good road opened through to Scotland in the 1770's, Gretna Green, the first village across the Border, became a common destination for those who wanted to either elope or abduct someone and force them into marriage. These unions were performed by the village blacksmith 'over the anvil', as was his right. Scottish law was not tightened until 1829; today the village is still a popular destination for couples.
Backstabbing And Bailing

Chapter Summary

Castiel has to deal with a complicated family matter. But at least there is always a sex-obsessed alpha to help take his mind (and other parts of him) away from his problems.

Chapter Notes

I know blood types were not discovered until at least a century after this story is set, but I am assuming that in an alpha/beta/omega world, their discovery would have come sooner. Artistic licence, what?

November 1800

Despite his relative poverty, Castiel Bennet had had several suitors in his time, but had never felt attracted to any of them. Indeed, he had been seriously repulsed by both the Browne brothers, rich betas who lived in Verulam Hall, on the Longbourn side of St. Albans, a town some six miles to the south along the London road. Mr. Bartholomew and Mr. Malachi had both made it clear that they would pay handsomely to have him – and with the financial situation at Longbourn, it would definitely have been advantageous for one of the sons to make a good marriage – but Castiel disliked both men intensely, and had flatly refused them. Indeed, the omega had considered them amongst the lowest examples of humanity he had had to meet – until Lieutenant Wickham, that was.

The soldier was charming in his own way – knowing what he did now about the attempt to elope with young Adam Winchester, Castiel would grudgingly admit that – but there was also something vaguely repulsive about him, and after his second call Castiel had made it quite clear that any attentions from him would not be welcome. Irritatingly he had also called on Castiel's parents on a couple of occasions, and the omega's mother had made it clear that she liked him. There was no accounting for taste, Castiel supposed.

At least Lieutenant Wickham had stopped coming to the bakery, for which the omega was grateful. But a week later, Samandriel called in just as Castiel was closing up for the day. This was unusual; his brother lived not far from the shop, and Castiel would more often than not take unsold items to him at the end of the day, even though his own cottage lay in the opposite direction. And his brother looked worried, which was very unlike him.

"Sam was supposed to call and take me for a walk today", he said, a frown on his usually cheerful visage. "But he sent a servant to say something had come up unexpectedly, and he had to go to London on a matter of great urgency."

Castiel quirked an eyebrow at him.

"Do you think he was lying?" he asked, puzzled. He knew that Dean did not like that his cousin was dating his brother, but surely he would not have taken him from the area just because of that? He would not have told his cousin about the omega's past, if only because he knew full well that the
consequences of such a move would for certain parts of his anatomy be extremely painful. If not terminal.

“Mrs. Parsons at the butcher’s said the house had cancelled its meat order”, his brother said, looking oddly uncertain for him. “And when I walked over to Garrovick Hill, three carriages were drawn up outside.”

“So he is going to London”, Castiel reasoned. “For a visit? Or for good?”

“The latter is what I am afraid of”, Samandriel admitted. “Mr. Winchester... he does not like me much.”

Castiel nodded, and quietly began to plan.

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One of the best things about the bakery was that it was the centre of village gossip, so within a few hours Castiel had extracted enough information from his customers to tell him that his brother’s fears were probably all too justified. Two of the village girls who worked at Netherfield had been told they would not be needed for the foreseeable future, whilst his Uncle Rufus had heard that a local man had been employed to monitor the estate over the next few weeks, something hardly necessary if the house was to be occupied.

Also strange was the behaviour of the youngest Bennet, Balthazar, who called into the shop for an early lunch. Castiel had been baking in the back (not hiding, this time), but Charlie had later told him that his brother had seemed strangely smug, even by his standards. Fortunately Castiel had to then run a delivery of pastries across to one of the taverns, so he was able to catch one of the girls who worked at Netherfield and ask her a certain question. Her answer was exactly what he had suspected. Even more fortunately, Balthazar had not tried to hit on Charlie during his visit, so presumably he must have remembered the broken arm from last time. The youngest Bennet had assumed that because there was a counter between him and the girl, he could flirt in safety.

It had proven to be an incorrect assumption.

Castiel thought about all he had learnt on his way back to the shop, and decided on a plan of action. Fortunately it was the one night of the week that the youngest Bennet went into Meryton for reasons his family wisely chose not to inquire into, so there would be no need for delay.

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Castiel felt a little guilty at breaking into Balthazar's room, although he knew he was safe enough from being caught. His parents always took advantage of their youngest son's weekly absence to..... no, Castiel was not thinking about what they were doing in their own room just now.

He winced. Damnation, he had thought about it! Ugh!

He had feared that Balthazar might hide the incriminating item, but fortunately his brother had been as lazy as usual. The document turned up inside the unlocked bed-side table. Castiel frowned as he unfolded and read it:

'Holderness House, London, England
10th January, 1796

Dear Sir,
This is to inform you that your son Samandriel has recovered from his recent ordeal at the hands of Mr. Richard Roman who, I can guarantee, will trouble the family no more. In response to your request for more details, I caught up with him in the town of Dumfries, not far from Gretna Green, and challenged him to a duel. I am sorry to say that, typically, he turned and shot before the count was concluded, but I was able to avoid the brunt of his effort, sustaining only a minor injury which your cousin, Captain Dennison, who was acting as my second, has dealt with. I should also add that the dead man's second, Mr. Azazel, fled the scene saying he would 'tell all'. I have covered all the bills for my cousin's medical care concerning the miscarriage, and he now wishes to return home to Hertfordshire. If you could send Castiel down to collect him, that would be for the best, as I do not wish for him to travel alone in his current state of health, and I presume that you do not wish for my arrival in your county. I am certain that the village gossips are working overtime as it is.

I remain, sir, your obedient servant.

Lucifer Pelthwaite (Mr.)'

Castiel stared angrily at the letter. So Balthazar had found out and, presumably jealous at having been passed over for his elder sibling, had gone and told Sam Bingley everything. And the owner of Netherfield had decided that having a family was more important than having a loyal and loving mate. Bastards, both of them!

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If Sam Bingley was going to London, then his cousin would obviously be going with him. Castiel knew from one of the maids that the two men were planning to send their luggage on ahead, then ride their horses together the following day. He called in to Charlie's house (he was kind enough not to remark on the fact that he passed a somewhat flustered Miss King on the road to it, though he gave his employee a look that made her flush bright red!), and arranged for her to open the bakery the following morning. He then went home. He had an early start planned.

It was still dark the following morning when Castiel slipped out of his cottage and made his way the short distance to Netherfield Park. He knew from experience that Impala, Dean's horse, was bad-tempered with just about everyone except his master, which meant that the alpha would be the one likely to get him ready. The alpha had been more than a little irked when, after one coupling in the bakery, Castiel had accompanied him back to the horse and the beast had welcomed the omega like an old friend. The alpha was even more gorgeous when he pouted!

Sure enough, it was still dark when the stable door opened and a familiar figure loomed against the moonlit yard. Dean walked confidently into the stable, not even bothering to light a lamp before walking over to his horse. Then he caught sight of Castiel leaning on the half-door to the empty stall next door, and his confidence visibly faltered.

“Cas!” he said, clearly striving for anger but unable to keep what was definitely a quiver out of his voice. “What... what are you doing here?”

Castiel grinned. He had left his shirt slightly open, and was rewarded by Dean's eyes widening as they dropped to his chest.

“I wished to talk”, the omega said simply, “and since you do not like awkward conversations, I thought it best to do here. Where we will not be disturbed.”

Dean's eyes widened visibly, and his breath caught.

“Cas!” he moaned. “Please?”
Castiel walked up to the trembling alpha, silently rejoicing in the effect he had on him. Dean's breathing came even faster as the omega leant forward and whispered into his ear.

“The straw here looks quite comfortable, Alpha. Shall we begin?”

Dean whined again, but obediently if inefficiently started to pull his clothes off whilst following the omega into the empty stall. Castiel was naked and ready, his legs raised, before the alpha had got his shoes off.

“Dean?”

The alpha shuddered, and let out a piteous moan. Even though he was still almost fully clothed except for his shirt hanging open, he guided his cock to Castiel's waiting hole, then seemed to hesitate. The omega immediately wrapped his legs around the alpha and forcibly impaled himself, earning himself a noise that was somewhere between pained and ecstatic. Possibly even both. He could feel some part of the alpha struggling to pull back before it was too late, but Dean's knot was already swelling, and Castiel held him easily in place until the alpha came inside him with a semi-strangled snarl that sounded uncommonly loud in the empty stable.

Castiel made sure to jerk himself off, revelling in the hooded look in Dean's eyes as he did so, before turning to the matter in hand.


It should not have been possibly to detect a blush in the moonlight, but Castiel knew that the man tied to him was turning red. Fortunately, he was going nowhere.

“What letter?” Dean asked defensively.

The next moment he was whining in pain as Castiel dragged a second orgasm out of him. The omega felt something that was definitely a tear fall onto his bare chest, but now was not the time to be merciful.

“The letter that Balthazar showed Sam”, Castiel said. “Remember, I can make you come until you admit it. Or until your body cannot take any more. I do not mind which happens first, Dean.”

He put some pressure on the alpha's trapped cock, and Dean burst into rapid speech, admitting that the youngest Bennet had showed him and Sammy the letter when he had called at Netherfield two days back. Castiel found that, to his surprise, his opinion of his youngest sibling could sink lower.

“I promise I did not tell him myself”, Dean said. “But how could I deny what was there in black and white?”

Castiel scowled, and dragged another orgasm out of the trapped alpha, who was now definitely crying for mercy. Of which there was none.

“You are taking Sam to London”, Castiel said once the moaning had stopped. “Perhaps that is for the best.”

“What?” Dean asked, confused.

“If something like this deters his suit, then he is not worth Alfie's having”, Castiel said firmly. “My poor brother feels things deeply, after all he has been through. He deserves the best, and I intend to make sure that he gets it.”
“You can’t control his life, Cas”, the alpha said pointedly.

Castiel grinned, and clenched his walls again, dragging another orgasm out of the trapped alpha, who looked close to tears now.

“Oh?” he growled. “Well, let me show you just what I can control, alpha!”

It was fortunate that the stables were so far from the house, and thus no-one could hear the screams.

+++~+++~+++

“I don’t understand”, Charlie said as they talked at the bakery later that morning. “I would have thought that you would have been all in favour of Alfie and Sam Bingley getting hitched.”

Castiel finished his current set of pastries and covered them before turning to her.

“Allie deserves to be happy”, he said, recalling Dean words about his cousin as he spoke. “I think that he likes Sam as a friend, but he is so eager to please, and would probably marry just to placate our mother. I do not think that he would be happy in such a union. Besides, if Sam Bingley wants heirs more than he wants a mate, then Alfie is better off without him. And then there is Lucifer.”

“Your cousin”, Charlie said, nodding.

“I think he feels something for Alfie, and only the terrible circumstances of what happened with Dick Roman prevented him from acting on them”, Castiel said. “I think that, now Luke’s father is ill and he may soon become a British duke, he may feel empowered to advance his suit, especially as he could easily support Mother should the worst happen. I think Alfie does like him, and there may be happiness for him that way.”

“I was wondering why Sam Bingley came down here in the first place”, Charlie mused. “I mean, I know you and he are related and not related or whatever, but this place is the middle of nowhere. What is there here to attract a rich man like him?”

Castiel had been wondering about that, too.

“For some people, money is not everything”, he said, looking through the open door as the shop bell rang. “Ah, we have another customer. Would you mind, Charlie?”

“Cas!” she whined. “You said that I could go home when you came back!”

“I think it might be Miss King....”

Apparently his employee could run fast when the need arose. Castiel smiled to himself.
Dean's friendship with Sam is more than a little bruised by the beta's reaction to the news of Samandriel Bennet's past. But now they are in London, at least the alpha's dick gets a rest.
Ah....

November 1800

Sammy seemed depressed after their removal from the country, which Dean supposed was natural enough in the circumstances. In truth the alpha had been more than a little surprised with the speed at which his cousin had abandoned Hertfordshire and Samandriel Bennet, especially as he knew for a fact that Sam had taken out a lease on Netherfield for a whole twelvemonth. Why should Sam have to flee the area?

The thought that matings with omegas were, statistically, up to three times as likely to produce alpha offspring as those with females, strutted across Dean's mind, pulled up a comfortable chair and sat itself down. He tried to ignore both it and the memory of a blue-eyed omega looking up at him, controlling him, mastering him, ruling him....

And now he was hard again! Damnation! He hurried off (with more than a little difficulty) to his room.

+~+~+

It was, of course, just a coincidence that the cooling unguent that Dean purchased from a discreet shop not far from Winchester House was so good for his still exhausted cock. And his thoughts when he applied it were his own, thank you very much!

+~+~+

Dean's peace and quiet came to a sudden end on the last day of the month, when his cousin came to him with a problem.

“It is the lease I signed on Netherfield”, he complained. “I promised the owners that I would spend a set number of days there before Christmas, and to pay a penalty if I did not. If only we had stayed there one more night, I would have been fine.”

Dean's dick twitched at the thought of Hertfordshire, as if it wanted to return to that county without its master. Seriously, the alpha needed therapy!

“Are you saying you have to go back there?” he asked dubiously.

“I do not want to be seen back in the area for just one night”, Sammy said defensively. “And you know I do not like riding out on my own. I do not suppose.....”

“Can you not just lie to the lawyer?” Dean groused.
Damnation, the boy was whipping out the puppy-dog eyes again! Dean sighed, and decided to accept defeat sooner rather than later.

“I shall take you there, and come and pick you up early the following morning”, he said, thinking as he spoke that he was going to regret this in some way. “But I am spending the night down in St. Albans, not some cold barn of a place. That way, I can drop you off and pick you up without going through the village. They will not even know that you are there.”

His cousin smiled beatifically at him.

+++

It was already dark when they approached Netherfield the long way round via the West Gate. The main road continued to the village, and a solitary cottage marked where two narrow bridle-paths diverged from it, one left to Netherfield's West Gate and the other right to connect with the Longbourn-Meryton road opposite the entrance to Lucas Lodge. Dean found himself looking up the other track from that path, remembering the day a certain omega had ambushed him by the great oak-tree and....

Happy days!

Having seen his cousin safely installed and whining about how cold it was – he could not light a fire in case someone saw the smoke and came to investigate - Dean rode slowly back to the main road. The moon was nearly full, thankfully, so he was able to guide Impala back along the bridle-path easily enough, though he was relieved to reach the main road. There was now smoke rising from the solitary cottage's chimney, and the dim glow of candlelight through its curtained windows.

He was about to ride by when the door suddenly opened, and the owner came out. It was Castiel Bennet. Honestly, had Dean ridden over a black cat lately or something?

The omega smiled when he saw him, and the two just looked at each other for a few moments. Every instinct in Dean's body told him to nod and ride (or gallop) on, but instead he found himself dismounting and following the omega inside the small cottage. What was wrong with him?

The main (and only) room of the place was sparsely furnished, a bed half-concealed behind a dividing curtain. A commodious double bed, Dean's brain unhelpfully pointed out, and would he not feel more comfortable out of all these clothes? He scowled at the thought.

“You look very serious”, Castiel said, and sure enough the damned omega was only inches away from him. Dean caught a breath.

“Personal space, Cas!” he managed, quite proud he had gone three whole words without stuttering.

“I rather think you like it when there is not much personal space between us”, Castiel grinned, starting to unbutton the alpha's shirt. “In fact, I think you like it when there is no personal space between us at all!”

Dean shivered, despite the warm fire nearby.

“Cas?” he pleaded.

“If you do not want this, you only have to say”, the omega said calmly, finishing with the shirt and pushing it open so it hung on Dean's broad shoulders. “But you do, don't you, Alpha?”

Dean stared at him. Castiel Bennet was not attractive in a strictly physical sense, he had told himself
that often enough. His features were soft rather than rugged, and whilst his body was in good shape – Dean had certainly spent long enough looking at it between all those orgasms – he was on the plain side, even if he was hung as well as (and just possibly more than) the alpha now trembling before him. Yet Castiel only had to look at him, and Dean wanted to bury himself inside the man and never come out. He wanted to take Cas away from this back-end of nowhere, install him as Laird of Pemberley, and make lo....”

His eyes widened in terror, and it was not just where the omega's hand had gotten to. Holy crap, he was in love?

“Trousers”, Castiel muttered as he pulled down both the item in question and Dean's underpants. The alpha obediently stepped out of both, now naked except for his socks (how Castiel had got his shoes off without him noticing, Lord alone knew!). The omega stood up before him, and smiled easily.

“I think I want you to undress me tonight, Dean”, he said quietly.

Dean nodded, and set to work, fumbling with the buttons on the omega's shirt. Castiel's chest was broad and almost hairless, and Dean ran his hand over each of his nipples in turn, imagining him suckling their children. Or him....

He looked up to see the omega smiling down at him, and blushed.

“You know, for an alpha you are surprisingly cute”, Castiel grinned.

Dean blushed fiercely.

“Not cute!” he muttered defensively, pushing the omega's shirt off. He worked faster on the trouser buttons to try to take his mind off of being called such an awful word, which was probably a mistake because....

.... because Castiel Bennet was wearing black and pink lace panties!

Dean whined! He felt a calloused hand run through his short hair, and tried to repress a shudder. He failed by some distance.

“Only for you”, Castiel whispered. “Only for my alpha.”

Dean shuddered again. He had said 'my alpha'. Castiel thought that he was Dean's which meant..... it meant..... no, Dean needed to get his lower brain inside the omega right now and stop thinking with what remained of his upper one.

Castiel seemed to be of the same mind, because he led him carefully over to the bed. Dean thought vaguely that the room smelled more of omega than usual, and guessed that he must have been in heat recently. Which meant that his body had been ready to be mated and filled with Dean's seed, bred with Dean's pups, sweating as the alpha......

He wanted this man so badly!

Dean was almost relieved when Castiel moved the panties aside to present his hole to him. He shuddered – what power did this omega have over him? - and pushed in more slowly than usual, relishing the fierce heat. Even so he felt his knot swelling quickly, and he came in under a minute, roaring his completion to the empty room before all but falling onto the omega beneath him. He yelped as he felt Castiel's walls clench around him before the omega too came, growling in satisfied pleasure.
God, but Castiel Bennet was beautiful like this, sated and panting whilst tied to him, his broad chest heaving in the dim firelight, the feeling of soft silk between them. And in that instant, Dean Winchester knew that, somehow, he was going to make the omega his. Despite his appalling family and poor breeding, this omega was his True Mate, the one he was going to have and to hold, from this day forward, in sickness and in health, till death did them part....

The scream as Castiel drew another orgasm out of his over-pleasured body could probably have been heard all the way back to Netherfield. But then he felt Castiel's hand sliding over his birthmark, and his body melted into submission. He was safe. He was home. He was happy. He was.....

... passed out.

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Dean awoke the next morning to find that, to his abject horror, he had somehow wrapped himself around Castiel during the night, and that, even worse, he rather liked it. Then he caught sight of the clock on the mantle-piece, and his eyes widened in shock.

“I was meant to pick Sammy up from Netherfield half an hour ago!” he yelped, racing around the room and frantically pulling on his clothes.

Castiel eyed him grumpily. Apparently the omega did not do mornings.

“It is too early in the morning to be so energetic”, he grumbled. “Come back to bed.”

“I cannot”, Dean said firmly, though he really wanted to. But he would already be late picking his cousin up, and another hour knotted to the sex-mad omega would only make things worse. “Sammy is expecting me.”

Castiel said nothing, and Dean made the mistake of looking at him to see why. Those blue eyes said quite clearly that this exchange was only going to end one way.

“Come back to bed”, Castiel repeated, a smile flickering on his features.

Dean's eyes widened.

“Please, Cas?” he begged. “Let me go!”

“I promise just cuddling”, the omega grinned. “Only half an hour or so.”

“I do not cuddle!” Dean said forcibly. Castiel frowned.

“Then who was wrapped around me all night?” he mused, pretending to be confused.

Dean opened his mouth to deny it, but found he could not. That and the fact that his body, totally without his permission, was taking off his clothes again. Damnation!

“Half an hour”, he insisted. “And stop looking so damned pleased with yourself!”

++++

He was more than two hours late picking up his cousin, who gave him Disapproving Look Number Three at his dishevelled state. But, Dean thought, it was totally worth it.
December 1800

There were two advantages to having his little cottage some way out of town, Castiel had decided. One, it was on the other side of town from his parents' house, which gave him some excuse to keep his visits there to a minimum. Two, it meant that people (specifically a certain green-eyed alpha) could come and go with the locals being none the wiser.

He was considering the second of these in particular as Dean Winchester lay plastered over his back, knotted to him once more. The alpha had just been ‘passing’ – for the third time this week! - and had decided to call by out of courtesy. And he was definitely practicing restraint; it had taken Castiel nearly two whole minutes to get him out of his clothes and buried inside of him.

Oh yes, a third advantage. The distance from town made it unlikely anyone would hear the yells that his alpha made as he came. Definitely an advantage worth having, since Dean was loud!

Having managed to orgasm before the alpha for once, Castiel smiled when the taller man collapsed untidily on top of him. For an alpha who did not like cuddling, Dean certainly seemed to have a marked preference for being held in a manly manner, as he had put it the night before. Castiel had laughed so much that he had forgotten that they were still tied together at the time, and the alpha had learnt the hard way never to mention the phrase again. Or at least, not whilst he was buried inside his omega.

“What did you tell Sam this time?” Castiel ventured as he cu... wrapped his arms around the sated alpha and lay his head on the man's broad shoulder.

Dean sighed.

“Thankfully he is not there”, he said. “Lilith's husband, Mr. Walker, his uncle up in the Far North of Scotland is seriously ill, and not expected to last. All four of them went to see him. She and her husband will inherit, and probably remain up there.”

“And Miss Masters?” Castiel asked coyly. He had noted how eager she had been to entice Dean into the marital bed. Not a chance, girl!

“Meg and Sam plan to spend winter with their uncle, Mr. Holder”, Dean said. “He married Sammy's Aunt Patricia – Meg's mother's sister - and he has a large house somewhere on the Essex coast.”

“That is quite fortunate, then”, Castiel smiled, as I have some good news for you. He rubbed Dean's broad back, eliciting something that was dangerously close to a purr from the alpha. “My Aunt Ellen and Uncle Bobby have invited me and Alfie to London for the Christmas season, and we shall see in the New Year with them. I believe their house is barely a mile from yours. And with your cousin gone, there is no danger he and Alfie will meet.”
“Really?” Dean said, sounding delighted at the prospect. “But will it not be hard for you to slip away when you have your brother with you?”

The next moment he yelped in surprise.

“I do not think you should lecture me about things that are hard, Alpha!” Castiel teased.

Dean sighed.

“And stop pouting”, the omega added.

“You cannot even see me!” Dean protested.

“But I know you”, Castiel smiled. “All too well!”

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Another good thing about the cottage was that a large outbuilding at the back served as a stable for Impala, away from the inquisitive eyes of any passers-by. Castiel was able to wave Dean off the next day, smiling at the alpha’s obvious discomfort in the saddle in the knowledge that he was the cause of it.

Unfortunately it was also Sunday, which this week meant the ordeal of a family dinner. In church, Castiel uttered up a silent prayer for patience, as well as thanks for a well-hung and almost insatiable alpha.

When he arrived at Longbourn, Castiel could tell at once that something was definitely up. The house had been thoroughly cleaned from top to bottom, and even stranger, his mother was actually dusting, only stopping her half-hearted efforts to pull Castiel away to the front room.

“My son, we are to have an important visitor soon”, she beamed. “Your cousin, Mr. Crowley Collins, will be staying with us for nearly a whole week!”

Not again, Castiel thought uncharitably. He knew his mother’s ambitions in that direction, and as Castiel’s father was five years her senior and not always in good health, there was the strong likelihood that if he died first then she might become homeless, or worse, move in with......

For some reason, Castiel had a random thought about what a nice country Tibet was. He could go there and learn throat-singing.

“I shall be delighted to meet my cousin again”, he said politely. “But the bakery has been so busy of late, I shall not be able to discuss local news with him very much. Perhaps, mother, you might tell me what has happened in the village of late?”

He knew her well; he had just given her an open invitation to gossip. It was worth an age pretending to listen to information he already knew, just so he could avoid any further discussions about marriage.

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His mother was also anxious, Castiel knew, because she hoped her nephew would arrive in time for the soirée being thrown by Mr. King. It was really little more than a large dinner-party with some music, but naturally his mother saw it as a Golden Opportunity, and when her nephew was delayed in Kent for a couple of days so that he would arrive on the day of the event, she felt compelled to come and complain to Castiel at the bakery. He felt equally compelled to hide in the back and let
Charlie deal with her; it was worth letting her go early and take a delivery up to Morecambe House. Especially when she came back smiling broadly.

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The day before the soirée, Castiel called on his friend Inias.

“Mother is determined to get me married to Mr. Collins”, he groused. “If he proposes, refusing him will be very difficult.”

“Why would you refuse him?” Inias asked. “He is an interesting man, not unattractive and very well-read.”

Castiel stared at him curiously.

“What is it?” Inias asked.

“He only came here that one time, and that was when you had the chickenpox”, Castiel said slowly. “How is it that you have met him?”

Inias blushed horribly.

“You and your library memory!” he sighed. “Promise you will not tell your mother?”

“Go on”, Castiel said warily.

“He wanted to see the Longbourn estate without having to see your family”, Inias said, not looking at his friend. “Father arranged it for him. I thought him very nice.”

Castiel stared at him in amazement.

“You and Mr. Collins?” he said slowly.

“He would never look at someone as plain as me!” Inias said at once. “I know people think he talks too much and tries too hard, but it is just nerves. Underneath that gruff exterior he really is a lovely person. And besides, he is full ten years older.”

Castiel continued to stare at him. The younger omega folded almost immediately.

“All right, he has been back a couple of times since, just ‘passing through’”, he said defensively.

Passing through indeed, Castiel thought wryly. But he decided to change to subject to spare his friend's blushes, although he filed the information he had learnt away for future use. Perhaps he might, as the old saying went, kill two birds with one stone.

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At the soirée, Castiel was obliged to undertake a dance with his cousin, and afterwards they went outside on the balcony for some much-needed air. Castiel did not miss his mother's knowing look as they did so, though he could have done without the double thumbs-up. She was so embarrassing.

“Mr. Bennet”, the beta began nervously, “may... may I speak frankly?”

"Of course, Mr. Collins.”

The priest swallowed nervously.
“I really do not know how to put this.”

Castiel smiled.

“You would like to ask Mr. Inias Lucas for a dance?”

A small – well, perhaps not so small part of Castiel always enjoyed the shocked looks he got when people realized he could read them. He had seen Mr. Collins eyeing his friend across the room, and the man had missed five steps as a result, much the irritation of his fellow dancers. And he knew how his friend felt about the beta.

“Your mother thinks I should declare myself to you”, he said, blushing horribly.

“Yet you do not love me, Mr. Collins”, Castiel said gently. “And I think you do feel something for my friend. If you asked, I am sure he would say yes.”

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Inias did, unsurprisingly, although Castiel had to spend the rest of the evening avoiding his mother and her disapproving looks. Fortunately she was distracted by her belated discovery of the fact that Sam Bingley had covertly spent a night at Netherfield (mercifully her source of gossip had not included the fact that Mr. Bingley's friend was also in the area, and in her son!), which gave her and her sister something to talk about all evening. Castiel's only surprise was that it had taken her this long to find out!

Best of all, his mother was distracted enough not to notice that Mr. Collins and Inias slipped into the house, and emerged after a considerable time with them both looking flushed. Castiel smiled as he observed them, and decided to head home. His friend looked truly happy.
Spying And Speculation

Chapter Summary

Dean gets hold of the wrong end of the stick, but Castiel manages to correct him by getting hold of.... look, I'm not doing all the work here!

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

December 1800

A letter to Winchester House in the middle of the month reported that Mr. Walker's uncle had decided the next world was preferable to another winter in this one, and that the Walkers would be staying on their new estate for good (Dean may or may not have had a celebratory drink as a result of that). Sammy and Meg would mark Christmas with their sister and her husband, then travel south to Essex to overwinter the former's uncle in Essex. Which suited Dean perfectly, as it resulted in his having the house to himself whilst a certain omega happened to be in London. Dean looked forward to showing said omega all round his home.

Well, at least the master bedroom!

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A second letter arrived just before Christmas, and its effect on the master of the house was rather different. Dean groaned inwardly when he saw it was from his aunt; he would have to endure her droning on for page after page just in case she had hidden some real news in amidst the drivel, and questioned him about it later. It started with the usual invitation to visit, which bearing in mind the repairs at Pemberley seemed almost palatable for once, before getting down to business.

'As I am sure you are aware from my last letter, nephew, I recently had cause to appoint a new man of the cloth to my local church. My choice alighted on one Mr. Crowley Collins, who is a younger grandson of dear Ned, the Earl of Blackmore, through the earl's fourth son, a beta called Obadiah. The latter married exceptionally poorly, to a Mrs. Rowena DeVille - she maintained her Christian name after marriage, which is Most Unusual in this day and age. However, recent events have left me Perturbed, and since you are 'on the spot' as they say in the horrible Modern vernacular, I am sure you will help me.'

Dean raised an eyebrow. Castiel had explained about how his mother wished him to marry Mr. Crowley Collins, who was his cousin – and yes, the omega had also mentioned an aunt called Rowena, shuddering as he had done so.

'Earlier this month, I most graciously gave leave for Mr. Collins to visit his mother in London, and continue to visit her sister, a Mrs. Charles Bennet, who lives in the very same village that your friend Mr. Bingley purchased a house in. Longbourn or some such place; I was more concerned by the discovery that Mrs. Bennet's husband is apparently a Writer! However, in Mr. Collins' letter to me that arrived only the other day, it appears that he wishes to marry, to an omega whom he has long courted but with little success until now. I am frankly shocked at this Development, although I must be as fair and just as I am rightly renowned for being, and Mr. Collins has stated that he is most
definitely seeking my permission before any such union could take place.'

Dean felt a rising sense of horror at what he was reading.

'Mr. Collins is clearly in such a state at this moment in time that he does not even mention the omega's name, though I have strong suspicions that it may be a cousin of his, one of Mrs. Bennet's omega sons. Such a union would not really be desirable, but then one must endeavour to make the best of things. I have always thought the omega type an Irregularity without which the world would be much better ordered, but I suppose God must have known what he was about when he allowed them to come into existence. All Mr. Collins would say was that the man he was courting had kept their relationship a secret from everyone, and that (mercifully, before I employed him) he had made several covert visits to the area to see him. I therefore wish you to investigate this Most Awkward Matter, and report back to me immediately on what you discover.'

The alpha became aware that there were tears in his eyes. Damnation! Had Castiel deceived him? Had he decided to yield to the pressure from his mother because Dean had been too slow to make his own intentions clear?

He rang for his servants, and ordered them to ready Impala at once.

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The trouble was, Dean thought as he spurred his horse along the road to Longbourn, it all made horrible sense. He had never offered marriage to Castiel Bennet; indeed, he had made clear that he disapproved of the man's family and breeding. The marriage to Mr. Collins would link the fortunes of the entire Bennet family with Lady Naomi de Bourgh; she was flint-hearted enough in most areas, but she would never allow anyone with even a remote connection to her good self to ever fall into penury, let alone the mate of her chosen vicar. And Castiel may have thought that he could keep Dean as a 'friend with benefits' much in the way that certain prominent men 'rented out' their omegas between heats (fortunately this was only done with the consent of the omega nowadays, after the Times had ended the career of a prominent politician caught forcing his mate into such an agreement). As if Dean would let himself be used in such a way!

Well.....

Fortunately his aunt's fateful letter had arrived first post, so it was not yet three o'clock when Dean left St. Albans on the final leg of his journey. It was bitterly cold out, and the leaden skies threatened snow sooner rather than later, but right now Dean did not care. He needed to see his omega and find out what the Hell was going on! He could not have felt worse than he did now.

Though on cresting the hill and seeing the cottage in the distance ahead of him, he may have had to retract that belief. For coming out of the front door was Castiel and an unknown beta. Dean took out his spy-glass and focussed on them both. The beta was presumably the cousin Mr. Collins, as he wore a dog-collar, and.....

He kissed Castiel!

There was thankfully no-one around to hear the alpha snarl, and Dean was momentarily blinded by the sun suddenly pushing through the heavy cloud cover and catching his glass. He put it away, scowling. He had seen more than enough!

He gave the beta time to ride away into the village, then rode down to the cottage and took Impala straight round the back. Returning, he knocked loudly at the door.
“Come in, Dean.”

He frowned as he opened the door. Presumably Castiel must have seen him putting Impala...... holy cow!

Castiel was laid on his bed, naked and presented. Whatever angry words Dean had been about to say were lost as every bit of blood headed straight for his lower brain. His body started to fumble itself out of his clothes even without his telling it, and he may or may not have let out a pitiful whimper (he did). And with only his cock out, he was across the room and thrusting into the omega, his knot swelling even faster than usual until he came with a roar that could probably have been heard by the retreating cleric.

+++++

Some minutes later, there was enough blood back in his upper brain for him to formulate those tricky things called words. However, the omega spoke first.

“I saw you watching from the top of the hill”, he grinned. “You saw my cousin leave.”

“You kissed him”, Dean muttered sulkily.

The next moment he was screaming, as Castiel dragged another orgasm out of his exhausted body. Tears ran down his face, but the omega was apparently not in a mood to be merciful. No change there, then.

“I heard he is getting married”, Dean said quietly, trying to brace himself for another assault on his body.

Castiel looked at him, and a slow smile creased his features.

“Yes”, he said. “He found his perfect omega right here in Hertfordshire.”

Dean stared hopefully at him. The omega stared back – and then giggled! What on earth?

“He has been secretly courting my friend, Inias Lucas”, Castiel said. “You charged all the way up here because you thought he was marrying me!”

“I did not!” Dean protested.

Castiel's response was all too predictable, and it was more than a minute before Dean was able to talk again.

“All right, I did”, he muttered. “But your mother wanted you to marry him.”

“Do you do every thing your family tells you to?” Castiel asked dryly.

Damnation, he had a good point. Dean pouted.

“I am sorry for your hurt feelings, Alpha”, Castiel chuckled. “How can I possibly make it up to you?”

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Dean had to spend the night at the cottage, as what little remained of him was in no fit state to ride back to London. Or walk. Or do pretty much anything. And if Castiel mentioned that word starting with the third letter of the alphabet, then Dean was going to stop holding him in a manly-like manner,
so there!

Chapter End Notes

Technically the local bishop would choose a new priest, although the local landowner on whose land the church sat would be consulted. However, the Bishop of Rochester was scared stiff of Lady Naomi de Bourgh, and had passed the matter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, head of the Church of England. Who had immediately written back and told him to let Lady Naomi choose whomsoever she wished!
Chapter Summary

Both Bennet omegas use the opportunity of their capital trip to slip away on secret visits. Dean has a birthday that comes between 29 and 29+2, and discovers that sometimes it is better to receive than give....

January 1800

The Singers' house in London was, Castiel thought, very handily situated. It was less than twenty minutes' walk from Winchester House and, he had noted, barely ten from Holderness House.

He did not of course know for sure that his younger brother was seeing their cousin, though judging from his red face every time Castiel asked where he had been that day, it seemed likely. However, it was confirmed for him when Lucifer Pelthwaite himself called at his aunt's house, notably only minutes after his aunt and uncle had taken Samandriel out for the evening.


His cousin – half-cousin, Castiel supposed - smiled his crooked smile. Lucifer, Lord Hornsea, had not lived down to his Christian name, and despite his father's wealth, was very much a self-made man. It was a rare point of friction between Castiel and his father that the latter found it difficult to accept all the blond alpha had done for the family over the Dick Roman affair. His father blamed Luke for introducing his fellow businessman to Samandriel in the first place, despite all he had done (up to and including risking his own life) to put matters to rights.

“You know I care for you, Castiel?” the alpha said carefully.

“I do”, Castiel said cautiously. “And you know how I feel about the family's feelings towards you, regardless of what they know of your helping us out that time.”

The visitor hesitated.

“I would suggest that ask your lawyer cousin Jet about your mother's dealings over the bakery”, he said at last. “Particularly with regard to Lieutenant Metatron Wickham.”

Castiel was not expecting that.

“Mother takes no interest in the bakery whatsoever”, he said defensively.

Lucifer shrugged.

“It is just a suggestion”, he said, far too carelessly. “I came across something with regards to the place in my own dealings. You know I would not want you to get hurt, Castiel.”

“I know that”, Castiel admitted. “And that you for the warning, Luke. I shall definitely look into it.”

“How is Alfie?” Lucifer asked, a shade too casually. “I have heard about his recent disappointment with Mr. Samuel Bingley.”
“Why did you not ask him earlier?” Castiel asked dryly.

The alpha blushed.

“Did he tell you?” he ventured.

Castiel shook his head.

“I am worried about my brother”, he admitted. “Inias asked me to go down to Kent for the wedding and stay there through to Easter, but I cannot leave Alfie right now. Though I am hopeful my friend will take the hint, and extend the invitation to him. Especially as he suggested I could bring Uriel!”

“A coach-ride with the ego from Hell!” his cousin laughed. “No-one deserves to suffer that!

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Castiel had been round three days before, and told Dean about Wickham and his mother's bakery. The alpha had promised to sort things out for him, and the omega, exhibiting the sort of cruel, calculating nature which he kept especially for horny green-eyed alphas, had promised to call again on Dean's birthday and do 'something special' for him. Seventy-two hours of painful anticipation later, Dean was more than eager to get things started, as evident by the fact that he virtually dragged Castiel up the long stairs.

“Cas”, he panted, as the omega rutted up against him as if he was totally sex-starved, and they had not been coupled together less than three days before. “Cas?”

The omega smiled dangerously.

“Yes, Dean?” he purred. “Happy Birthday, by the way!”

The alpha gulped.

“Your cousin Jeho.... Jes.... Jet spoke to me about the bakery”, he said, trying to focus as he felt the omega's impressive cock rutting against his own. “You.... whoever told you about it was right. You said that Wickham went to your parents' house a few times?”

Castiel looked at him oddly.

“Yes”, he said, and his tone was suddenly cooler. “And I had already made it clear by that time that I did not welcome his affections.”

“I can see that”, Dean said, before he could help himself. The omega grinned, and slipped a hand inside the alpha's open shirt, gently playing with the man's nipple, his hand edging ever closer to the birthmark. Dean spoke quickly, whilst he still had what remained of his senses.

“I found out that he persuaded your mother to put the bakery up as security for a loan he wanted”, he said. “I am sure you know that he had no intention of ever repaying it.”

Castiel tensed. Then Dean realized his other hand was inside the alpha's trousers, and that he had somehow effected a death-grip on Dean's cock. One wrong word now, and the prospect of future heirs of Pemberley could be cut off completely (and it might not be the only thing!). Dean spoke even more quickly.

“But do not worry”, he said. “I repaid the loan myself, and have made sure your mother has been warned – through a third party - not to make such a mistake ever again. Buying the loan meant that I
could have also had the bakery, but I let her know that I would accept it being transferred over to you now, once you sign the papers I have here.”

Castiel smiled at him. His hand slipped over the birthmark, and once more Dean was overwhelmed with a feeling of total safety and security. He could not have been happier.

“Thank you, Alpha”, he beamed. “Well, it seems that I shall have to something extra as part of your birthday treat to show my appreciation.”

Dean's eyes widened.

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God, if this was what omegas felt like when they were taken, how on earth did they stay sane? Castiel only had one finger inside him, but the teasing of Dean's prostate had the alpha wondering if he had died and gone to Heaven. He had come once already, yet his cock was growing hard a second time, even without being buried in the omega who was torturing him to death.

Oh, and Castiel had brought him an actual present as well. A pair of alpha-sized black-and-green silk panties, which he had just slowly put on the quivering alpha, who was wondering if one could actually die from too much happiness.

He writhed as he felt a second finger being pushed in, and Castiel began to scissor him open, and let out a noise that more properly belonged in a walrus mating colony. It earnt a smile dangerously bordering on a smirk from the omega, and Dean would have complained, except that the third finger followed on very soon after and he finally lost all power of speech. Thank Heaven his house had thick walls!

Then he felt the press of Castiel's cock head against his entrance, and he momentarily tensed. He looked up at Castiel uncertainly, and the omega gazed down at him almost fondly.

“Your call”, the smaller man growled. “Like when it is me on the receiving end, you only have to say the word and I will stop.”

“Get inside me!” Dean quipped, quietly proud of managing a whole sentence.

Then Castiel was pushing home, and Dean let out a strangled wail as he was stretched like never before. When the omega slowed, he could only nod frantically for him to continue, until he very firmly impacted on Dean's poor prostate.

And the alpha erupted, coming like never before. He was grabbing the omega's arms so hard that he was certain to leave bruises, but he was powerless to stop, totally at the mercy of his own body which was seemingly intent on draining every bit of come from his poor balls. It must have lasted for at least a whole minute, before he fell back onto the bed, broken and exhausted. He was almost unaware of Castiel's hand slotting over the birthmark again, though the calming sensation that ran through his broken body told him that it was there.

“Hmm, not bad for part one”, Castiel said. “Let us continue.”

Dean's eyes widened in alarm. Then he felt Castiel's cock beginning to grind across his prostate a second time, and incredibly (and painfully) his own cock started to grow hard once more. It was going to be a long, long afternoon.

With any luck!
Chapter Summary

Dean does something incredible. It involves pie.

February 1801

Dean's great-grandfather, Henry 12th Earl of Hexhamshire, had died when the boy was nine years old, and had bequeathed Pemberley and its estate to him. The administration of that inheritance had gone to Henry's son of the same name, the 13th Earl, but Dean had come into an income of his own on his eighteenth birthday, and of course had made the most of it, until his mother had pleaded with him to stop. One of the worst moments of the young alpha's life had been returning to his hotel with two ladies, and finding his mother waiting for him, a look on her face that could have made the entire French army turn tail and flee. Fortuitously, his grandfather had lasted long enough for Dean to reach twenty-one, but which time he was much more mature and capable of handling such a huge estate.

One of the few good things to come out of those wasted teenage days had been an acquaintanceship with Mr. Victor Henriksen, a young dark-skinned Dutchman who worked in what the latter euphemistically termed the ‘grey areas’ of the law, along the docks and harbours of the great metropolis. Dean had been able to repay the other alpha’s kindness back in part some years later, when Victor had been falsely accused of murder, and Dean had arranged his defence, even testifying as to his character. The case had collapsed when Dean's investigators found the real murderer, and he always sent his old friend a note every time he was planning on being in the capital. Victor was usually out on his 'business', so when the monocled alpha turned up in person at Winchester House on the first day of the month, Dean knew it had to be serious.

He just hadn't been counting on it being that serious. He stared at his friend in shock.

“Please tell me you're joking, Vic!” he managed at last.

His friend had just informed him that he had a son, a ten-year-old boy called Benjamin, who was the almost certain result of a three-week affair Dean had had with his mother, Lisa. That Dean had not known of the boy's existence all these years was not actually that surprising; the Braedens were amongst the most powerful of the London nobility, an ancestor having cannily got in with the future George II on his arrival from Hanover nearly a century before, and their descendants having milked the connection for all it was worth ever since. Worse, Dean could hardly approach the boy himself without risking a first-magnitude scandal.

“And the family back her up in this?” he said angrily, running his hand through his newly-cut hair. Castiel had been round the day before, and had grabbed Dean's long locks whilst riding him to orgasm after orgasm. As soon as Dean could walk, he had summonsed a local hairdresser round to the house. Not someone he would ever use again; the bastard had openly smirked at the alpha needing a cushion to sit on! Especially as his local shop had most inconsiderately run out of their cooling unguent.

“Not willingly, I would judge, but family is important to the Braedens”, Victor said. “I'm sorry, Dean, but you had to know. I only came across the whole thing by chance during another case.”
“Would they accept money for the boy?”

“I doubt it”, Victor said sonorously. “Your best bet is to wait and hope. She recently married, and her new husband isn’t overly fond of the boy. Perhaps in the future, things may change. I'll keep you informed.”

“Thanks, Vic.”

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Dean's mood was not helped by the fact that Castiel had returned to Hertfordshire, though he had made sure that the alpha would always remember St. Valentine's Day fondly. If painfully. He covertly adjusted himself as he walked down Whitehall.

He had learnt from Victor that Lisa owned a small restaurant close to the Houses of Parliament, to which he was now heading. The place was doing well, busy despite the cold weather. His former lover was apparently busy in the kitchens when he arrived, so he ordered a coffee and a slice of pie, and sat down.

There were pictures all round the wall, and he only slowly realized that the one by his table was of his son. He was still staring at it when he realized someone had approached his table.

“Lord Winchester”, came a familiar female voice. “Long time no see!”

He turned and smiled as she sat down opposite him. She was as gorgeous as he remembered, but it did not surprise him that he felt precisely nothing for her. His attentions were most firmly engaged elsewhere, now.

“Hullo, Lise.” She followed his gaze to the picture, and her eyes hardened.

“Are you here about Ben?” she demanded.

“No”, Dean said, a little more sharply than he had intended. “I know that he is my son, and I will do anything you ask of me for him, but he should not have to cope with a father suddenly turning up after all these years.”

She seemed to calm down a little.

“He's out the back, talking with a friend of mine”, she said, sitting down opposite him. “I'm expanding this place, and Mr. Singer is providing me with the money.”

“Not using your own?” Dean was surprised, idly wondering why the name seemed familiar from somewhere.

“The Singers are old friends of the family. They've gone off to look at the House with one of their nephews; the other one is helping Ben with his homework.”

“Hullo, Mr. Winchester.”

Hell, no!

“Hullo, Mr. Bennet”, he ground out, standing up.

Castiel looked between the two of them, and Dean tried hard (hah!) not to imagine him naked. Then the horrible truth struck him; the omega had come fresh from talking to his son, and judging from the sudden look of understanding in those impossibly blue eyes, he had just put two and two together.
“I should get back to Ben”, Lisa said, standing. “Thanks for helping him, Castiel. I'll talk to you later, Dean.”

“Oh. Right.”

She left. Castiel continued to stare at him.

“You know, don't you?” Dean said sourly.

“I suppose that most of us have our youthful indiscretions”, Castiel said gently. “And from Ben's age, he must have been conceived around the time you came into your estate, when you had your own money for the first time in your life. Besides, alphas will be alphas.”

Dean was surprised.

“I thought you had gone back to Hertfordshire last week”, he deflected.

Castiel smiled at the obvious change of subject.

“I did”, he said, “but my aunt and uncle ordered me some new clothes that failed to arrive before I left, so Alfie and I journeyed down for a few more days. I shall see them all this evening, and attend the fitting tomorrow.”

“How is Alfie.... Samandriel?” Dean asked carefully.

“Bruised”, Castiel answered. “Of course I did not tell him the contents of the letter, so he does not know why your cousin abandoned him in the middle of his first serious relationship since.... well, you know. I would not have left him in Hertfordshire, but fortunately my aunt and uncle agreed to his coming along as well. They are all spending the afternoon at the Houses of Parliament.”

Dean suddenly perked up.

“So you are free all afternoon?” he asked with a smile.

The look on the omega's face was both alarming and yet warming. Either way, it promised very good things for Dean.

“Not any more!” Castiel growled.

Dean did not whimper in happiness. It was just a cough that came out wrong.

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When Lisa Braeden came to the table to clear up five minutes later, she saw that most of the pie had been left behind. Her former lover had left without finishing his pie. Her eyebrows shot up.

“Well, well!” she muttered. “You dog, Dean!”
Chapter Summary

Three of the Bennet omegas leave Longbourn on trips to the southern counties.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

February 1801

Four days after Castiel's encounter at the restaurant (and the aftermath, in which Dean had mourned having to leave his pie behind until the omega had most definitely taken his mind off of that!), the Bennet omegas had arrived back in Longbourn, both refreshed from their second capital excursion. Samandriel had not mentioned Sam Bingley at all during the trip, which gave Castiel cautious grounds for optimism that he had moved on from his disappointment. Lucifer had met him out walking one time (very obviously a planned encounter) and asked after his brother, but Castiel had had to admit that Samandriel was still a little fragile.

Castiel himself was also a little depressed that he no longer had his friend Inias within walking distance; the other omega had, during his absence, gone to Kent to be joined with Mr. Collins, something his mother reminded him of every time he met her (Charlie demanded, and got, a raise for helping cover for him when he hid in the back of the shop). Lady Naomi had, apparently given permission for the wedding, but had asked that it not be held on the same day of the year (St. Valentine’s Day) as her own had, so the couple had moved it to the last day of the month. Castiel had had no idea that the gruff Mr. Collins could have been so romantic!

One week after his return, Castiel received another letter from his friend.

“Inias has invited me to Kent for the wedding, and then to stay for five weeks through to Easter”, he told Samandriel as his brother sat in the shop later that day. But it would be more time away from the bakery>”

“I am sure Charlie could cope”, Samandriel said. “Why would you not go?”

“I am worried about you, Alfie.”

His elder brother sighed heavily.

“Perhaps you could see if Mr. Collins has a marriageable cousin”, he smiled. “Someone who doesn't mind about family connections or looks.”

“Alfie! Don’t say that!”

The younger Bennet smiled weakly.

“Go, Cas”, he said firmly. “Fresh air, and the Garden of England. Even if you have to put up with the terrifying Lady Naomi de Bourgh!”

“From what Inias says – or does not say – she sounds a complete harridan”, Castiel laughed.
“Probably one of those old-timers who think us omegas should be collared and barefoot, wheeled out only whenever our alpha wants.”

“You will enjoy it”, Samandriel said, sounding a little wistful.

“So will you”, Castiel smiled. “Inias has invited both of us.”

The way his brother's face lit up made him feel very happy. He owed Inias for agreeing to the extra guest by return of post after his first letter.

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Castiel's happiness did not last. Two days later he was staring at his father in horror.

“You cannot be serious!” he blurted out. “It would be madness!”

The militia had departed for Brighton during Castiel's New Year excursion to London, much to his intense relief. Balthazar had of course been inconsolable; so many handsome men taken from him at once; it was surely the end of the world as he knew it. But misery had turned to joy for the youngest Bennet, when three days after Castiel's return he had been invited to Sussex by an omega acquaintance called Jacob Forster, the mate of Lieutenant Wickham's regimental colonel, to stay with them in Brighton until the unit was formally stood down around the end of April. Balthazar had been ecstatic, and Castiel more than a little worried at the prospect.

“Your brother is a fool, Castiel”, his father said bluntly when his eldest son confronted him on the subject, “and he will never be happy until he has publicly disgraced himself in some manner. At least this way he can do it at minimal expense to ourselves.”

Castiel only briefly considered mentioning Balthazar's role in ending the relationship between Samandriel and Samuel Bingley. No, that was a can of worms he was not opening unless he absolutely had to. Instead, he tried another line of attack.

“Father, you know what he is like”, he persisted. “If he starts going into heat whilst he is down there – it would be disastrous!”

“I am sure Monseigneur Forster and his husband will keep an eye on him”, Mr. Bennet said airily. “And of course, there is always Wickham.”

Yes, Castiel thought, 'dear Wickham', who nearly conned your wife out her bakery. At least the vile beta knew that Balthazar had no fortune to speak of, so he was safe from that particular danger. And following Dean buying out his debt, the alpha's agents had made it abundantly clear to the lieutenant that any further financial misdeeds would most certainly land him in the dreaded debtors' prison, from which he would never escape.

“I just think it ill-advised for someone of Balthazar's.... character”, Castiel said. “But of course I shall respect your decision, Father.”

He left the room, still feeling uneasy.

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Castiel and Samandriel had to travel to London in order to catch the post to Kent. The elder Bennet felt a little aggrieved that he would be passing through the city where his lover was and they would not be able to stop, but he suppressed his annoyance (a couple of encounters at the cottage prior to his departure may have helped just a little in that). Besides, when he had told Dean about his
invitation, the alpha had decided that now would be the perfect time to visit his aunt, so Castiel and he could...... yes.

Fortunately the Kent post went through the village of Medlington on its way down to Dover, and Mr. Collins' carriage would pick them up there. When they arrived in the village, both Inias and Crowley were there to accompany them back to the vicarage.

“You may find Lady Naomi a little... overpowering”, Inias said.

Mr. Collins tutted at his fiancé, but smiled at him, and Inias returned the look. Castiel was pleased to see them so happy together.

“I only know of her as the aunt of the infamous Mr. Dean Winchester”, he said.

“The stuffed shirt alpha”, Inias laughed. “I remember. Funny you should mention him. He will be here as well this Easter.”

Castiel knew that, of course. But to everyone including Inias, Dean was the rude nobleman who had said Castiel was 'unsuitable' to dance with him at the ball, a remark which of course had been all round the village the following day. Everyone knew exactly how Castiel Bennet felt about Dean Winchester.

Everyone was so totally and utterly wrong.

“What?” Castiel said angrily.

His fellow passengers looked surprised at his sudden vehemence.

“He is coming to Medlington – never call it Rosings by the way; Lady Naomi hates the 'official' name – to spend the holiday with his aunt”, Mr. Collins said. “I believe his cousin, Captain Gadreel Fitzwilliam, he earl's youngest son, is accompanying him.”

“I wonder what Captain Fitzwilliam did to merit such a punishment”, Inias mused. “I only hope it was nothing too bad.”

“Inias!” Mr. Collins said reprovingly. “That is verging on gossip!”

“From the man who told me about the bigamy case in the village?” his mate retorted.

His husband blushed.

“Point”, he said gruffly, before exchanging a smile with his mate.

Castiel looked at them fondly. It was good to see his friend so happy. And he suspected his stay in Kent would be a pleasant one, especially as regarded a certain horny alpha.

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Lady Naomi stared at him in horror. Across the table, Castiel could see his friend covertly praying. Mr. Collins had gone a deathly shade of white, whilst Alfie was turning away to hide a smile.

At last the owner of Medlington Manor found her voice.

“You actually have an opinion about the war?” she gasped, clearly stunned.

“Yes”, Castiel said firmly. “Now that Mr. Pitt has been forced out, I am fearful the government will
seek peace with France at any price.”

Her Ladyship continued to stare at him. The clock in the corner had a surprisingly loud tick, Castiel thought.

“But you are only an omega!” she said at last.

There was a only partly-suppressed snicker from Lady Ruby at the far end of the table which, fortuitously, went unnoticed by her mother. Castiel had been introduced to Miss de Bourgh earlier in the evening, and had thought her both unpleasant and proud. Though he had sympathized with the dress she had presumably been forced to wear, which might have been fashionable some time in the nineties. The 1690's.

“I am”, Castiel said. “And?”

Another long and painful silence. The clock’s tick seemed to be getting louder.

“Omegas do not have opinions about such matters!” Lady Naomi managed eventually, still looking like she was about to have a seizure.

“Why not?” Castiel asked at once.

She looked at him as if he had asked why the exterior of the manor should not be painted bright purple.

“It is just Not Done!” she said, the capitals clearly audible.

“Well, we are in the nineteenth century”, Castiel said dryly, ignoring the frantic warning signals he was getting from Mr. Collins out of the corner of his eye. “Who knows? Maybe one day omegas will even have the right to vote?”

The butler, clearly a man of some sense, made a large glass of whisky appear next to Lady Naomi at this point. She downed most of it in one shot.

“Propriety!” she rapped out. “Society would never allow such goings-on! It would be revolutionary! We might as well be French and have done with it! Thank Heaven that my dear nephew is coming soon; he is far too well-bred to entertain such bizarre notions!”

Castiel was sorely tempted to tell his first cousin once removed at this point that her ‘dear nephew' had entertained the omega she was talking to on the end of his cock on many occasions, and had more than once been a batsman as well as a bowler. Not to mention his illegitimate child in London. He smiled inwardly at the reaction all that news would certainly evoke, but he held his tongue. The woman’s face was a somewhat alarming shade of red, he had to admit.

“Society is always changing, madam”, he said with a smile. “The days of omegas being barefoot and collared belong in the history books with the cavemen. And with people who think like that.”

She downed the refilled whisky glass in one go this time, which gave Mr. Collins a chance to ask her about her 'dear nephew'. Fortunately for all involved, the change of subject worked.
The war referred to, which was indeed drawing to a very temporary close, was the first of two attempts by Revolutionary France to conquer Europe (French Revolutionary Wars, 1792-1802), with some success. The truce that ended it, the Peace of Amiens, was indeed being discussed at the time this story was set. And (of course) Castiel was right; hostilities broke out anew in 1803, partly helped by the French selling Louisiana to the United States (roughly the middle third of the continental modern country; they had only asked for the city of New Orleans!), the Napoleonic Wars lasting to 1814 with a brief encore in 1815. This time the French lost badly, but came out of the peace talks well.
Testing And Timing

Chapter Summary

Dean has mixed feelings about his trip to Kent. On the one hand, hot sexy omega, but on the other... would Castiel really make him do It in the house of his fearsome Aunt Naomi? And since when did Dean Winchester start asking himself such dumb questions?

March 1801

It was not that Dean Winchester disliked his Aunt Naomi....

All right, he did. But there was more to it than that (no, apart from the fear!). His aunt was firmly of the opinion that there had been an Understanding between herself and her late sister, Dean's mother Mary, that Dean and Ruby de Bourgh would marry at some point, an opinion she cleaved to despite all efforts to persuade her to the contrary. When he did eventually marry someone other than her daughter (who was not just plain but, more importantly, downright unpleasant), Dean knew that there would be hell to pay. Especially because the omega he was going to marry would not, he suspected, meet with his aunt's approval one little bit. Still, family was family, and since the gods had decided to send his omega to visit his aunt's recently-appointed man of the cloth, now seemed like the perfect time to end... undertake a visit to Medlington.

Dean's travelling companion for this ordeal was his cousin, the current earl's youngest son Captain Gadreel Fitzwilliam, who had presumably drawn the short straw amongst his family. The Fitzwilliams and de Bourghs were not blood-related, but the last earl and Lewis de Bourgh had undertaken several business ventures together, which meant that the current earl wished to remain on good terms with Lady Naomi. Though not to the extent of endangering his own ear-drums or sanity, Dean thought acidly.

Gadreel had done well for himself, having to make his own way in life as he had three older brothers, two of whom were also in the army. The eldest son Virgil Lord Hughenden, had married last year and his wife was just about to provide the next generation of Fitzwilliams (Gadreel had been mortified that one of the poor baby's possible names was also that, making him potentially Fitzwilliam Fitzwilliam!). The blond beta was a few years younger than Dean, tall, muscular of build and handsome in a casual sort of way, though he did have a reputation for being a bit of a rake. If he made any sort of move on Castiel in Dean's presence, then the French would be the least of his problems!

His cousin had brought some regimental correspondence to read through, so Dean took the opportunity to peruse a letter from his aunt which had arrived only hours before they had left the capital. As usual it detailed the way she was doing good for all the people of the village and how terribly ungrateful they were (six long pages!). Dean nearly gave up, but kept on until the end of the letter in case his aunt had any real news to tell him.

For once, she had:

'I must thank you again for your assistance in clarifying matters as regarded Mr. Collins' (ditto, Dean thought wryly, given the pain her last letter had given him, however briefly). 'The position of spouse
to the local man of the cloth is an exceptionally demanding one, but I must admit that I am Most Pleased with the new Monseigneur Collins, who is very respectful. Not of noble blood, which is a pity, but I understand that his father is a retired colonel, which I suppose is Acceptable given that we are at war. It was, I have learnt, his request that they might be wed here at his new husband’s church rather than in Hertfordshire, which I was pleased to agree to, as it allowed me to grant my approval in person. A marriage is a Wonderful Thing, nephew.’

Dean knew that there was more than a passing hint there.

'They were married on the last day of February, and it was, thankfully, a modest affair. I loathe huge weddings; too much expense and too many relatives whom one never wants to see again!' (Dean tried not to think the obvious here, but failed miserably). 'Mr. Lucas as he was then had asked my permission to invite two of his acquaintances from Hertfordshire, the sons of the aforementioned Mrs. Bennet, so in a burst of the generosity for which I am justifiably renowned across this fair county, I agreed to receive them at Medlington. It was a rare error on my part. The younger of the two, Mr. Samandriel Bennet, is despite his name a pleasant enough character, and does not speak unless spoken to, a most Fitting trait in an omega. I wish the same good breeding had been inherited by his elder brother, who is totally unlike him in both appearance and manners. Mr. Castiel Bennet clearly does not Know His Place as an omega in today's society, and his views are highly Modern. It gives me yet another reason to welcome your presence, nephew, as I am sure you will be able to drive home to him just how he really should Behave in this new century.'

The alpha smiled slightly at the unintended double entendre. He knew all about driving things home into Castiel Bennet. And having the omega drive things home into him, too.

And now he was getting hard again, this time on a bumpy road! Damnation!

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Gadreel finished his letter and turned to Dean.

“Tell me who I will be meeting in the Garden of England”, he said. “We are only moments away from the Lady Naomi Experience, after all!”

Dean glared at him.

“I have only met the new Monseigneur Collins once”, he said, “and he seemed pleasant enough, if on the quiet side. His husband is reportedly very garrulous, even for a priest.”

“You are making me dread Sunday!” Gadreel laughed.

“And then there are the Bennet brothers”, Dean continued. “Castiel and Samandriel, both omegas of acceptable appearances. The younger works mostly in a library, and looks some fifteen years younger than he actually is, which is full thirty-three. His face lacks character, his body definition, and his height inches, even for an omega.”

“And does the elder also have a lack of inches?” Gadreel asked.

Dean bit back the obvious rejoinder. It was close, though.

“Mr. Castiel Bennet is of above average height for his type, a little untidy in appearance, but I suppose his heart is in the right place”, he said, trying to sound dismissive. “He owns a bakery in Longbourn.”

“Are either of them single?” his cousin asked.
It took an effort for Dean not to growl his reply.

“Both are”, he said, before hurrying on to quench any ideas his military relative might be acquiring. “However, each of them has but a thousand as their portion, though the bakery run by the elder is doing well enough.”

“Money is not everything”, Gadreel said with a smile. “Did you not say one of them caused you some trouble in Hertfordshire?”

Dean blinked before he got it.

“My friend Samuel Bingley had a narrow escape with Samandriel Bennet”, he said. “The rest of the family are unreservedly appalling, and I am sure the omega was only pushing for a marriage because of his five thousand. Their parents’ estate is entailed, so one of them really needs to marry money, I suppose. Sammy is in the East Country just now.”

“Your cousin should be grateful that he has a friend such as you, then”, Gadreel observed.

“Yes”, Dean said. “If only I could get that awful step-sister of his married off to someone, everything would be wonderful. But Meg has only a relatively small inheritance, although of course there is the connection to such an eminent family as Sammy’s, even if she is a Masters rather than a Bingley. I am just glad she is in Essex now.”

“Names are important”, Gadreel agreed. “We are here, cousin. Let us gird our loins for the battle ahead!”

+~+~+

It had been said that Dean Winchester could detect a pie at a range of over a mile, and the delicious scent pervading the house led him down into the kitchens, where the fearsome cook Mrs. Bridges held sway. Though the pie was for dinner, he was able to charm her into allowing him to take one of the smaller ones she had baked for the staff back to his room. He knew her from his previous visits to Medlington, so, even though his aunt would have horrified had she found out, the two were soon chatting away like old friends.

“You missed a treat the other week, sir”, she smiled, kneading some pastry on a board. “Mr. Collins’ party came over, and Mr. Castiel actually dared to disagree with Her Ladyship over a question of politics! Brooks said he had to supply two extra-large scotches to help her get over the shock!”

Dean could understand that, and did not bother to suppress a smile at the image it created. Even he himself did not openly disagree with his aunt, knowing that she would simply talk at him until he conceded to her point of view. Encountering someone who voiced a different opinion to hers would have been shocking enough, but that person being an omega... his poor aunt's world must have been turned on its head. And since someone as inferior (in her opinion) as Castiel could not be talked to for any length of time, she could not talk him to submission like she could her nephew. He really hoped that he would get to see Castiel doing it again.

“They are both nice young men”, Mrs. Bridges said stiffly, “and they can both cook, I'll give them that. When Lady Naomi had to go down to Maidstone the other day, they came down to the kitchen and helped out. I can see why Mr. Castiel runs a bakery; he was most respectful, and a pleasure to have around.”

He is, Dean thought, especially wrapped tightly around my.... no, not going there.

Not until he was safely back in his own room, at least. With the pie.
It was almost springtime in England, but apparently someone had forgotten to inform the English weather, for it had once more rained all day. Dean had thought about paying a call on the vicarage, but since the Collinses and Bennets were due over for dinner that evening, he decided against it. His cousin would be out for most of the day, having promised to deliver some regimental correspondence to a militia based somewhere near Dover.

The rain relented in the afternoon, and Dean decided to have a short walk before returning to dress for dinner. He pointedly took the other direction from the vicarage, heading to the woods behind the manor house. He quite liked the view from the other side of them, down all the way to the distant Thames Estuary.

“Beautiful, is it not?”

Dean tensed. He knew that gravelled growl. And the scent filling his nostrils was gloriously familiar. He turned quickly.

“Hullo, Cas”, he said lightly. “You.... are coming to dinner this evening?”

The omega grinned, and Dean's stomach plummeted. Dinner was only an hour and half away, and he still had to get back! Surely the man would not be so cruel as to....

“Dean.....”

He took that thought back, as he also quickly took off all his clothes. The permanently horny omega apparently would be that cruel. Damnation!

And how did Castiel get naked so fast? Dean was still fumbling with his trousers when he felt the naked omega rutting against his back, his scent almost overpowering.

“You are killing me here!” the alpha grumbled, finally getting rid of his underclothes before turning and kissing the omega. “How am I meant to get through the next few weeks with you around, making me want you all the time?”

“You can have me all the time?” Castiel grinned evilly. Incredibly, although he was only a few stone lighter than the alpha, he was able to clamber up him so that Dean's hardening cock found itself poised at his entrance, the relief as he slipped easily inside making him almost unaware that he was now holding the omega in his arms. Then Castiel leaned back, and must have caught Dean's cock on his prostate for his eyes rolled back in his head and he moaned in delirium. It was, Dean thought, incredibly hot.

And just when he thought things could not get any more intense, Castiel was somehow able to lower and raise himself on Dean's cock. Which nearly made Dean drop him, especially when he felt his knot swelling, and Castiel's pushing over and back over it made his eyes water. He was thankful that a tree was behind him, and that he was able to back into it and let it take some of the weight as Castiel finally dragged an orgasm out of his beleaguered body, coming himself just seconds later.

“Wow!” Dean managed feebly.

“Lady Naomi will be expecting us at dinner in barely eighty minutes”, Castiel grinned, looking irritantly calm as ever. “Sixty until your knot goes down, Dean. I wonder what state I can reduce you to during that time. Enough, perhaps, that even she might notice?”

Dean looked at him in terror. He would not!
Ten seconds later, Berkeley Woods echoed to the shout of an alpha having a second orgasm pulled out of him.

Oh yes he would.....
Petting And Persuasion

Chapter Summary

Castiel begins to enjoy his stay in Kent, especially when the English weather gives him a helping hand in his relationship with a certain green-eyed alpha.

March 1801

Castiel found himself quite liking Medlington Manor, even if its owner clearly thought him far too outspoken for a mere omega. Ever since that evening when he had openly disagreed with her about the political situation, she had avoided addressing him directly, clearly fearing another bout of Ghastly Omega Assertiveness (he just knew she would have used capital letters). Though Inias had admitted later - back in the safety of the vicarage - that both he and his husband had found the whole thing amusing in retrospect, and Castiel was certainly not going to keep his opinions to himself, especially knowing her nephew so well.

In the Biblical sense, at least!

The Collinses had dined at the manor the day after Dean's arrival, but had missed Captain Fitzwilliam, who had been out delivering military correspondence and sent his apologies for being detained. The unit he had been sent to see had moved on unexpectedly, and he had chosen to spend a night in Hythe rather than risk riding back in the dark and missing dinner anyway. It was no surprise, therefore, when the following afternoon Dean brought his cousin round to the vicarage. The captain was tall, dark-blond, a few years younger than his cousin, and Castiel thought him quite attractive, though not a patch on his alpha. Whom, he noted, had markedly narrowed his eyes at Castiel's welcoming smile for the newcomer.

Jealousy. Interesting.

“Mr. Winchester, what an unexpected pleasure to meet you again!” the vicar gushed, hurrying up to them all. “And so soon!”

Dean's face suggested he did not consider it that much of a pleasure. It was much the same as when Mr. Collins had talked to (at) him the night before, a look of strained politeness. Or possibly constipation.

“Indeed, Mr. Collins”, he said, radiating false bonhomie. “I left Hertfordshire before your arrival there last year, but I was fortunate enough to meet the Bennets. Mr. Bennet here runs a fine bakery.”

“He makes excellent pies”, Samandriel put in. “It really is amazing that no-one in the area has tried to snap him up as yet, except of course for those awful Browne brothers.”

There was a barely suppressed growl from a certain alpha. Castiel smiled, and gave Dean a Look that stated quite clearly what he wanted to do with him. And to him.

He wondered just how far down that blush went. He could not wait to find out.

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The following afternoon brought another sharp shower of rain, the fifth in so many days, but this
time it cleared by the evening, allowing the vicarage party to walk to the Manor. Castiel had little
opportunity to talk to Dean before the meal, but the alpha contrived to exchange a few words with
him as they walked to the dining-room.

“My aunt thinks that I should talk you into behaving more properly for an omega”, he smiled.

Castiel bridled, but then this was the obnoxious Lady Naomi’s suggestion. He could not blame Dean
for that. He smiled up at the alpha.

“I am sure that you can be very persuasive”, he muttered. “And you will soon have plenty of
opportunity.”

Dean missed a step, and nearly fell over his feet. Fortunately they were behind everyone else, so it
was not noticed.

“What do you mean?” he hissed.

“All that rain the last few days has flooded the spare bedroom at the vicarage”, Castiel told him, “so
Lady Naomi has graciously consented to Alfie and I spending the next week sleeping here. Maybe
even longer. I shall be very close at hand, Dean.”

The alpha’s quickened breathing at that made him smile. Yes, he would enjoy
Dean trying to 'persuade' him of things this coming week. Though not without making the alpha work for it.

Castiel was not cruel enough – well, not quite – to carry out his plan whilst Dean was talking with
his aunt. No, he waited until the luckless alpha had been engaged by Mr. Collins and was doing his
level best to look interested (unsuccessfully, the omega thought) before sliding off his boot and
moving his foot across. He had noticed Dean’s increasing alarm when the alpha had discovered that
Lady Naomi had sat the two of the next to each other around a corner of the table, but had not
commented on it. Though he was sure that the alpha had noticed his slight smirk.

Dean's eyes widened perceptibly when Castiel began rubbing his sock-clad foot up the alpha's
trouser leg, and he deflected Mr. Collins' concern by claiming that he had choked on his wine. He
sent Castiel a glare, and the omega replied with an innocent look before withdrawing his foot for a
moment. The alpha still looked tense, which made for a strange mixture of emotions as he was also
palpably bored by Mr. Collins' long and rambling narrative about the wedding.

The omega allowed Dean a few minutes to relax before again sliding his foot slowly up the man's
leg. As the alpha knew from experience, Castiel could be surprisingly flexible when the need arose.
And as his foot neared the centre of the action, he could feel that something was definitely arising.

Just as the alpha was visibly beginning to sweat, Mr. Collins' attention was drawn by his mate, who
was coughing heavily. Dean scrambled to his feet far too quickly and hurried round to Inias' side, all
care and attention as well as now a safe distance away. Castiel smiled evilly, especially once Inias
had confirmed he was all right and Dean had to return to his place. He eyed the omega with
something approaching terror, and eased carefully back into his seat.

Castiel did not molest Dean again during the meal, though every time he sent him a sharp look the
alpha visibly flinched, and was clearly uneasy.

“You do not look well, nephew”, Lady Naomi said sharply. “Do you require a lie-down?”
“I took a longer walk than usual today”, Dean said, with one eye clearly on Castiel as he spoke, “and caught that heavy shower. I think that I may retire to my room, if that is acceptable, aunt.”

“Perhaps you would do me the favour of taking Mr. Castiel Bennet to his room, then”, his aunt said. “He is next to you in the East Wing; I placed his brother and your cousin in the West Wing.”

To be as difficult as possible for myself and Alfie, Castiel thought with a smile, and allow her nephew to persuade me to behave better. It is a pity I cannot tell her that she has played right into my hands!

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“This is your room”, Dean said, clearly trying to be casual whilst keeping a notable distance from the omega.

Castiel's bag had been left on the large double bed, and he looked around the room with pleasure. It was ridiculously large for what was basically a spare bedroom, and he noted a curtain hanging rather oddly on one wall. Walking over, he pulled it back to reveal a door.

“That.... leads through to my room”, Dean said. “It... uh.....”

“I see that the key is there”, Castiel smiled, silently rejoicing at the effect he was having on this alpha. “I am sure it will not need to be locked – at least, not from my side!”

“Cas!”

“A whole week, Dean!” Castiel growled. “Seven days of me creeping into your bed when you least expect it, riding you until you knot me, squeezing orgasm after orgasm out of your wrecked body....”

Dean's eyes were dark with passion by this point, glistening green in the weak light from the bedside lamp. Castiel ran a finger along the alpha's stubbled jawline, and the taller man moaned.

“Or I may just come in when you are dressing for dinner, and jerk you off”, Castiel said lightly. “Perhaps sit in your chair and let you ride me, then wait for you downstairs. Make you go and face your aunt knowing what we just did in her house. Repeatedly!”

The alpha was panting by this time, and he suddenly grabbed Castiel's hand and dragged him through the door and into his room. The omega grinned. It was going to be a fun week.

For him, at least....

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April 1800

The Bennet brothers' stay in the Manor house ended up extending to some three weeks, as the continuing heavy rain delayed the necessary repairs to the vicarage. Lady Naomi asked her nephew on more than one occasion why he looked so out of sorts and perpetually tired. Castiel smiled when he heard that, and when the chance arose looked pointedly at the alpha from behind Her Ladyship's back, enjoying the resultant look of fear and anticipation.

Perhaps toying with the dog-collar of Lady Naomi's pet spaniel whilst looking pointedly at the alpha had been pushing it. Perhaps. But then again, Dean's breathing had noticeably increased.....

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The builders were due to finally finish their work on the vicarage by Friday of that week. On the Thursday prior, they were all assembled in the lounge after dinner. Captain Fitzwilliam had persuaded Castiel to play some music for them (Ruby de Bourgh had strained her hand, an injury the omega suspected she was playing up to avoid spending all evening at the piano). The soldier made light conversation, whilst his cousin sent dark glances towards the two of them from across the room, his jealousy clearly visible. Finally he left his aunt talking to Mr. Collins, and came over. Castiel smiled politely at him, knowing that the slight fold in Dean's collar was due to their rough coupling just minutes before the gong had sounded for dinner. Judging from Dean's slight blush, he was thinking along similar lines.

“Your cousin wishes to disconcert me” Castiel said playfully to Captain Fitzwilliam. “He assumes his magnificent presence will cause me to ruin this beautiful piece.”

“I was actually enjoying it”, Dean said, sending Castiel a warning look that the omega chose to ignore. “You play well.”

“But not as well as Miss de Bourgh”, Castiel observed quietly.

The alpha glanced across at the lady in question, who tonight was wearing a dress that was truly awful (purple and green, ugh!). Castiel allowed himself a small smile. Dean clearly had zero interest in her, and the omega would work to ensure that things stayed that way.

“You play as you feel”, Dean said. “People should never try to be what they are not.”

“That certainly applies to you, Mr. Winchester”, Castiel said dryly. “I am sure you are exactly what you appear!”

“The Winchester is not a social animal”, Captain Fitzwilliam said. “I believe he will not even put himself out to dance, unless he considers his partner worthy enough to be considered as the next Lady or Laird of Pemberley.”

“And certainly not with those he does not deem 'suitable’”, Castiel said with a smile. “Especially country riff-raff!”

Dean visibly blushed.

“I am not fickle enough to make friends lightly”, he said, sounding almost sulky.

“Or at all”, muttered his cousin, smiling as he said it. “Women and omegas lining up to throw themselves at him, and the richest man in Derbyshire is not interested even in a friendship.”

Dean seemed to think about that for a moment.

“Perhaps Mr. Bennet considers himself my friend?” he said tentatively.

Castiel smiled as he played.

“I doubt we could ever be truly.... close friends”, he said.

He left just enough of a pause before the 'close' to make the taller man blush even more. They had been close enough earlier in the evening, when the tie Castiel was now wearing had been put to a decidedly irregular usage. He was sure that Dean could see the mark on it.

Samandriel came over and engaged Captain Fitzwilliam over a book he had found in the library, and Dean relaxed a little, continuing to watch Castiel play. The omega suppressed a smirk as he caught
Lady Naomi's annoyed look at her nephew's abject failure to show the slightest bit of interest in her badly-dressed daughter. Yes, his life was like a melody just now.

And he would definitely be hitting the high notes with Dean later!
Exhaustion And Etiquette

Chapter Summary

Despite the ongoing weeks of sex with that Damned Horny Omega leaving him more exhausted than he has ever been in his life before, Dean wants Castiel in his life. And it looks as if he might actually be able to do the claiming sex in Pemberley, his family home. If he lives that long!

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

April 1801

For the first time in his life, Dean Winchester did not want sex. No, scratch that; he desperately wished to avoid sex with a certain omega whom, he was sure, was trying to make a certain part of his anatomy wear out through over-use!

Castiel's stay at the Manor had left the alpha shattered, to the point that even his aunt had noticed how out of it he seemed. He had been on the receiving end of blow-jobs, jerkings-off and being pinned to his bed whilst Castiel rode him like he was determined to drive him insane! One time the omega had actually fondled his cock just round the corner at the top of the stairs, with his aunt waiting for them below. The alpha had had to flee back to his room to wait for things to, ahem, settle down again. Hell, Dean was only human. He was not built to survive such torture!

Though perhaps he should keep testing that particular hypothesis, just to make absolutely sure.....

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When Castiel told him that he would be leaving for home the Sunday after next, Dean tried not to feel relieved.

“arve it, really”, the omega said off-handedly. “Especially the way you get to hold me manfully afterwards, in a manner that in no shape or form resembles cuddling.”

Dean pouted. So he liked to cuddle the omega after coupling, so what? It felt good, as well as allowing him to recover his energy. And his wits. And he would never admit that it felt equally good to be the little spoon, marred only by the fact that every time he suggested it, he knew the omega was inwardly smirking.

“I was going back to London the following weekend”, he said carefully. “I could leave early, and escort you and Alfie back some of the way.”

“And let us deprive you of your aunt's company?” Castiel chuckled. “When she feels so certain that you are about to marry Lady Ruby?”

“I would almost as soon marry Meg Masters!” Dean said scornfully. “I have business in London that will take a week or so, and then I shall return to Pemberley via my uncle's house, where I shall meet Sam and Meg.” He hesitated before adding, “I will of course be passing through Longbourn on the way.”
“I may not be there.”

Dean looked at him in surprise.

“Why?” he asked.

“My aunt and uncle, the Singers, are taking me and Alfie on a tour of her home county in the North, at the end of the month”, Castiel said with a slight smile. “Castles, battlefields, big houses..... all the tourist things, you know. They love that sort of thing, as does Alfie.”

“Oh”, Dean said, disappointed. At least until Castiel nestled further into his grasp. Dean winced at the pressure on his knot, but it quickly passed, for once.

“She was born in the town of Lambton, which I believe lies about four miles from a big house called Pemberley”, the omega whispered.

Dean tensed.

“And”, Castiel went on, “I am due to enter my next heat some time around the tenth of next month, Dean. It is also six months since we first met, you know, when you took me in that barn. Traditionally that is the time when an alpha who was really serious about me would make his intentions..... clear.”

Dean embraced the omega even more tightly.

“I think I have made my intentions very clear”, he said softly. “Or does the fact that we are still tied together not give you a clue, omega?”

The next moment he had to stifle a yell as Castiel squeezed a further feeble orgasm out of his body. This omega was going to be the death of him!

But at least he would die happy!

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The one downside of Dean's plans was that he would have his cousin and Samandriel Bennet with them all the way back to London, from whence the brothers would immediately take the post to Longbourn. Which meant, most regrettably, no opportunities to knot his sexy blue-eyed omega. Damnation!

However, Dean was to be rescued (or possibly dropped in it) by his cousin, whose regiment was at Brighton and just about to be disbanded as the war seemed to be drawing to a close, or at least a temporary truce following Pitt's departure from office. Gadreel had to go to the Sussex town for that – mere paperwork, he had groused - and would then repair to his home in Derbyshire, a small cottage on his father's Standford estate some ten miles from Pemberley. Since Castiel's brother Balthazar was due to stay in Brighton until Wickham's regiment was disbanded at the same time, it was decided that Gadreel would take the younger Bennet to visit his brother for a few days, then drop both Bennets off in Hertfordshire on his way home, which would be two days before Castiel and Samandriel set off with their aunt and uncle. Dean was delighted with this, especially as the timings meant that Alfie would be staying at his uncle the earl's London house before heading south, so he could have Castiel all to himself.

Though he was sure that his dick groaned at the prospect!

His aunt, of course, was less than pleased at his early departure, but Dean simply pleaded that his
business required him in London as a matter of urgency, and it would be more proper for him and his cousin to accompany the Bennet omegas than for them to travel alone for the whole journey. And Dean had reassured his aunt that he understood how she felt about Propriety; he had truly taken her strictures to heart, and had several long discussions with Castiel Bennet about the importance of Doing The Right Thing.

Dean did not think it of import to add that the majority of those discussions had been carried out whilst they were both horizontal and in the same bed, usually tied together. Such a trifling detail, it was frankly not worth bothering about. Like the choice of underwear that Castiel had asked him to (made him) wear whilst he told her.

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On the ride to London, Castiel was indeed propriety itself, talking politely with Dean when spoken to, but otherwise letting his brother do most of the talking. Indeed, Dean caught more than one exchange of looks between Samandriel Bennet and his cousin that set him wondering if there was anything more behind Gadreel's generous offer to take the former down to Sussex. He and Castiel had discussed the nascent relationship, but at the moment it seemed harmless enough. Omegas, with their fixed fertility periods, were allowed to do what they liked with pretty much who they liked whilst unmarried, as long as they were discreet about it. An omega who was still a virgin on his wedding day was about as common as a Frenchman who could operate a bar of soap!

They dropped their relatives off at the earl's London residence, a grand mansion in Russell Square, before driving on to Winchester House, about a mile away in Grosvenor Square. Dean had been told by more than one person that the place was too small for someone of his standing, but he liked its compact nature, and he and Castiel had already shared many happy memories (mostly horizontal ones) during the omega's winter trip to London.

Their carriage pulled up outside, and Dean helped Castiel out, the omega smiling at his courtesy. They were four days early back from his aunt's house, so that would be four days before he would have to take Castiel back to Hertfordshire and.....

“I really would like sex now, Dean!”

So much for discreet. Dean felt his cock swelling in anticipation and he nodded frantically, almost pulling the omega up the stairs to his bedroom. Both the guest bedrooms were further down the corridor, but the alpha had the distinct feeling that neither of them would be getting much use in the coming days. Unlike certain parts of his anatomy. And he would have to make sure to pay the servants an extra bonus.

And somehow that impossible omega had got himself naked and was already on Dean's bed. Not only that, but after a cheeky grin he was folding himself over and not only presenting his hole to the alpha, but folding himself over so much that.... ye Gods, he was able to suck the head of his own cock!

Telling himself that he was probably not going to survive the next four days and that he should therefore make the most of things whilst he still had his sanity, Dean nearly managed to injure himself trying to prise his recalcitrant trousers off over his now very hard erection, and did not even bother with his shirt. He actually ran the short distance to the bed and managed to position himself over the omega, so that his cock lined up with the presented and now leaking hole. And then he thrust in in one swift movement, burying himself so deep that he half-expected his balls to get inside as well. He arched his back and roared.

Then Castiel suddenly snapped his legs around the alpha – seriously, how flexible was this damned
omega? – and seemed intent on pulling Dean in even further. Dean could feel himself swelling, but was determined to get the omega off first for once, and moved his hands inwards. Once he was fully balanced and his head had stopped spinning, he grabbed the omega's impressive cock with one hand and began to jerk him off.

Castiel grinned up at him, and suddenly Dean's cock felt like it was trapped in a vice. Immediately his knot began to swell in response, and Dean tried valiantly to hold back whilst continuing to jerk the omega off. But it was no good; in seconds his knot was fully grown, and Dean came with an even louder roar than before. He was dimly aware that Castiel followed him over the edge just seconds later, and felt a momentary pang of regret that the omega had won yet again.

Still, at least all the servants knew that their master was home now.

+++~+++

Three days later, and Dean was a wreck. Castiel and he had had more than enough sex whilst at Medlington, he had thought, but ever since arriving in London that damned omega had been insatiable! It was like he was trying to cram four years of sex into these four days! He was lucky that Dean was such a kind and generous alpha, and was prepared to sacrifice himself in such a noble manner to let him attempt just that.

During his last visits whilst he and his brother had been in London with their aunt and uncle, Castiel had only really seen one room in Winchester House; Dean's bedroom. Now, however, he seemed determined to scent the place instead of the alpha who owned it, having sex with the alpha in all eighteen rooms. Not just that, but when he discovered that there was a small area of flat roof which served as a makeshift balcony, he demanded sex there as well! Honestly, Dean had some standards!

He reminded himself of that as Castiel rode him lazily on the blankets he had dragged up there. Sure, he was an alpha, and he liked sex as much as the next alpha, but he was seriously looking forward to mating Castiel and getting him pregnant.

Of course, he had forgotten the omega's freakish mind-reading abilities. Castiel squeezed another orgasm out of the shattered alpha, who moaned in a mixture of ecstasy and pain.

“You do know that pregnant omegas go through a stage when they become hornier than normal, Dean?” Castiel reminded him. “I shall probably want sex around the clock, for weeks on end.”

“You are killing me!” Dean protested.

The next moment he bit back a scream as Castiel dragged another orgasm out of him.

“Not until we have secured the future of Pemberley with an heir and spare”, Castiel said with a grin. “Children, this is where your father lies. I killed him through too much sex, but at least he died with a smile on his face. Even if they found it 'hard' to get the coffin lid shut!”

It slightly worried Dean that such a scenario was not beyond the bounds of possibility. Still, what a way to go!

“What time are we leaving tomorrow?” Castiel asked, his hand once more over the birthmark. The alpha sighed happily.

“After an early breakfast”, he said firmly. “I must call in on your parents, for form's sake, and from what you say of her cooking, I would rather not travel to Derbyshire with food poisoning. I am meeting up with Sammy and his sisters at Standford for a few days before returning home, so I can pay my respects to my uncle the earl. I expect to be home on May the third.”
“You will stop by the bakery, though”, Castiel said. “I have arranged for Charlie to bake a couple of extra pies to take home with you. And my aunt and uncle will be there early next week, so I will be seeing you again very soon. I think from our departure date letter that we will be in Lambton most probably on the first.”

“But you will be spending some at least time with them when you come”, Dean pointed out.

“Aunt Ellen likes walking a lot, and drags poor Uncle Bobby along whether he likes it or not”, Castiel smiled, “so she will not mind me doing my own thing. And besides, you have it wrong.”

“Wrong?” Dean asked, puzzled. “How?”

The next moment his balls actually ached as Castiel dragged yet another orgasm out of him. He whined in protest.

“I am not the one who will 'come’”, Castiel smirked.

Damned omega!

Chapter End Notes

Note: Traditionally, of course, omegas who were mated to or in a committed relationship with an alpha (though not a beta) would scent them at every opportunity, to warn off rivals. Castiel however knew that Dean was not yet ready to reveal their relationship to the world, so refrained. However, there may or may not have been a number of Castiel's clothes which, by some mysterious process, were kept in a separate travelling bag owned by Dean, and Dean may or may not have bought Castiel new ones to replace them. Maybe. Or maybe not.
Herbs And Honeybees

Chapter Summary

Returning home for a few days before his trip north, Castiel finds himself restless. A member of his family brings unexpected news, and he is relieved when his aunt and uncle finally collect him and his brother, and they all head North. And everything in the garden is lovely....

April 1801

Because he had been away so much recently, Castiel felt compelled – very reluctantly - to accept his mother's invitation for a family dinner the day before his aunt and uncle were due to collect him. At least the bakery had fared well in his absence, though Charlie had blushed bright red when Castiel had asked her if a certain lady had called in from Morecambe House at all.

Before dinner, Castiel had a meeting with his father over the bakery, which was now the omega's as of right. Since he had received it from his mother, Castiel was still entitled to his inheritance of a thousand from his parents, but he had decided to ask instead for a small cottage (worth rather less) which the estate owned on the edge of town. His father looked surprised, but nodded when Castiel explained his reasons.

The dinner was, mercifully, not as bad as Castiel had feared. Michael was there but Raphael was not, having been unexpectedly called out to cover another priest in a church somewhere beyond St. Albans, so the dreaded Church of England against Wesleyan argument did not materialize. His mother was still complaining about Inias' marriage to Mr. Collins, and giving Castiel disappointed looks from time to time, but he ignored them, concentrating instead on his hopes for his trip North. Hopes mostly of the horizontal variety.

And how on earth had his mother managed to make solid gravy?

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Ellen Singer was Castiel's paternal aunt. She had married young to a beta called Mr. William Harvelle, who had owned a tavern in London, but he had died in a railway accident some years prior, and had left everything to her. They had had two children together, Asher William and Joanna Elizabeth. Ash was a serious-faced young beta of twelve, who was always reading and loved talking about about the latest technological innovations. He also had a strange fascination with his hair, continually trying out new styles. Jo was two years younger, and was already set on a career in the Church, something Castiel had no doubt she would achieve. The current Archbishop of Canterbury would do well to watch out for her!

Having sold her late husband's tavern, Ellen had married a second time to her current husband, an industrialist called Robert Singer (always 'Uncle Bobby'; he had been named for his grandfather, whom he disliked intensely). He had not formally adopted his step-children as yet, both parents having decided that the choice would be left to them once they came of age, though he had named them as beneficiaries after his wife in the event of his death. Castiel privately considered them an oddly-matched couple, but he knew they were deeply in love with each other.
He noted that his aunt and uncle timed their arrival at Longbourn to late in the evening, so they could avoid his mother's cooking, the cowards! Their children would be staying at Longbourn, but they would mostly be in the 'care' of Gabriel whom, Castiel thought pithily, was about their mental age. The Singers stayed but one night at the house, and picked Castiel up from his cottage early the following day, which was the twenty-eighth. The only slight annoyance was Samandriel, who had not returned from Brighton as yet, but a letter from Captain Fitzwilliam promised to escort him safely to Derbyshire after dropping Balthazar off at Longbourn.

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As it was a holiday, there was no need to hurry, and the party journeyed west through the Chiltern Hills to see the great house of Blenheim, just to the north of the city of Oxford. His aunt laughed at the story the housekeeper told them of how the great Queen Anne had gifted the old Woodstock Palace to her friend and confidante Sarah Churchill, then turned up for a surprise visit one day to find Sarah had had the whole place knocked down and rebuilt as the current palace, named for her husband's greatest victory over the French back in 1704. There was a lot to see, and they spent the night in a comfortable tavern in the nearby charming town of Woodstock.

The following day they stopped briefly to take in Shakespeare's Stratford, before continuing on to Warwick Castle, which was magnificent in quite another sense. They spent that night in the nearby town of Leamington, at a tavern which a friend of Uncle Bobby had recommended. Castiel went to bed imagining himself as a lover of the brave knight Sir Dean, waiting anxiously for his paladin to return from the Crusades or some baronial war so he would reward him for all his efforts.

Very thoroughly reward him!

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May 1801

The following day, which was May Day, they continued via Coventry, Nuneaton, Ashby, Melbourne and Derby, reaching Lambton late in the afternoon. Despite the tiring journey, his aunt still wished to see around the town, but at least Castiel was allowed to retire to his room with his book (earning himself an envious look from his uncle, he noted with a smile). Though not before quietly ascertaining from one of the servants there that yes, the master of the big house was at Standford some miles to the south, and was expected to be at Pemberley on the third, the day after next. His aunt was sure to want to see the great house, as did Castiel, though for possibly somewhat different reasons. It would be nice to see it without Dean being there, and then see certain parts of it with him.

Hopefully starting with the master bedroom.

++++

Pemberley was a magnificent house, its stones seeming to glow almost golden in the early spring sunshine. The housekeeper, a surprisingly young lady called Mrs. Barnes, was pleased to show them around, and lavished a copious amount of praise on her master, which clearly confused Castiel's aunt and uncle as it conflicted with what he had told them of the impression Dean had made in Hertfordshire. She also gave the omega an uncomfortable moment when they came across a painting of Dean standing proud with his horse, and his aunt asked him if it did accurately depict the real-life owner.

“You know the master?” the housekeeper inquired.
“A little”, Castiel admitted. “He came to Hertfordshire late last year, to stay at the house of a friend, a Mr. Bingley. I am afraid that general opinion was that your master was prideful and aloof, especially when a certain Lieutenant Wickham chanced to be in the area and started spreading stories about him. I did not share those opinions, I should add.”

The housekeeper snorted disdainfully.

“That wastrel is a poor excuse for humanity!” she scoffed. “The master can be cool with those he does not know, but those he takes on as a friend will have a friend for life.”

The knowing look that accompanied that statement made the omega feel quite uncomfortable.

“It is a great work”, his aunt praised.

“It was done last year”, Mrs. Barnes continued. “The master drove the poor painter quite mad; he never could sit in one place for any length of time! And he hated having to dress up for it, as well. He would wear nothing but plaid shirts all day and every day if he could get away with it.”

Her tone was fond rather than critical, although Castiel was distracted by the idea of Dean in a plaid shirt. And nothing else. He blushed, but fortunately his aunt chose that moment to make a further observation.

“It's a wonder he has not yet married”, she said. “A house this size deserves a Lady or a Laird.”

The housekeeper sighed.

“I did hope from his letters that he had found someone in your county, sir”, she said, addressing Castiel. “He sounded happier than he had done for many a year. And his letters since..... well, I am hopeful, let us just say that. I think he may have found his O.T.P.”

“His what?” Uncle Bobby asked, clearly confused.

“His One True Partner”, the housekeeper explained. “He is thirty years of age, so it would be in his interests to marry as soon as possible, but despite appearances he is something of a romantic, and I believe that he is waiting for the woman or omega he can love unconditionally. I can but hope that he has found them somehow.”

Castiel blushed again, and it was fortunate that his aunt and uncle were busy examining a piano that, apparently, Dean had had sent up from London for his half-brother who was not there just now. The housekeeper, on the other hand, looked at him knowingly once more. Was the woman psychic or something?

+++++

The house itself was truly stunning, Castiel decided, and he was glad he had come today so that he could take in all its beauty without being distracted by a certain alpha. Many of the rooms had personal touches, and he could well imagine Dean coming here after a hard day out on the estate, changing into some easy clothes and just relaxing in one of the large, comfortable chairs in the lounge or sitting-room. Dressed in some shocking plaid shirt, whilst his omega sat between his legs and.....

He blushed. Still, it was an idea for later, perhaps.

Once they had finished the tour of the main house, Mrs. Barnes told them that there were several parts to the garden, and that if they wished to see a magnificent view of the west side of the estate,
they could take the Long Walk, which was signposted the whole way. Or there was the small herb
garden at the back, behind which the bees were kept. Castiel perked up at that; he had always been
fascinated by the industrious insects, but his aunt's face registered undisguised horror. It was
eventually agreed that the two of them would take the Walk whilst Castiel could look at his herbs
and his bees, and they would all meet back at the carriage later.

The herb garden was lovely, Castiel thought, and he could really envisage himself working here and
with the bees he could hear buzzing away nearby. A signpost indicated that whilst the apiary lay
behind the wall, the other path out of the garden led through a metal gate, behind which Castiel could
hear some strange splashing noise. Curious, he followed it until he came round a sharp corner and.....

Holy Mother of God!
An Englishman's home is his castle – but does that include his garden?

April 1801

When he had dropped Castiel off in Hertfordshire, the omega had told him that he expected to reach Derbyshire with his aunt and uncle most likely two days before Dean removed there from his uncle's house. The prospect of taking the blue-eyed sex god in the marital bed, and then later proposing marriage to him set Dean's heart all a-flutter, even though the latter part would ultimately mean approaching Castiel's parents (ugh!). But then, Hertfordshire was one hundred and fifty miles from Derbyshire – yes, Dean had checked - so visits would be few and infrequent. Especially if the omega allowed Dean to slip away or pretend they were not At Home.

Dean blinked. 'Allowed'? God, he had it bad!

He had arranged to meet Sam's party – the Walkers were there after all, their new Scottish estate house needing serious remedial work before they could move in permanently - at Standford, and to pay his respects to his aunt and uncle. His cousin, he was pleased to note, looked a little more cheerful than he had before departing for Norfolk, though not yet his normal cheerful self. Meg of course was as awful as ever, and when a letter arrived from his steward detailing several important items of estate business, Dean grabbed the opportunity to claim it as an excuse to go a day or so ahead of his friends and sort things out. He was not running away from Meg, whatever anyone said.

His aunt, of course, knew better.

“You seem unusually eager to get home, nephew”, she said, her American accent still strong even now.

“It has been over six months since I have seen the place”, Dean said. “I tried staying during the last set of repairs and it was awful, so this time I kept away. I miss the old place.”

His aunt looked around to see if they were being overheard.

“Are you sure that that is your only reason?” she inquired.

Dean's blush answered for him. Damnation!

“I, uh, met someone”, he said inelegantly. “An omega.”

She looked hard at him. He blushed even more deeply.

“You feel something for him”, she said quietly. “Something more than just securing the future of the estate.”

“Yes”, he admitted, fervently praying that she would not use the L-word. Mercifully she did not.

“I have a small piece of advice for you, nephew”, she said with a smile. “There is a colonel in the
army by the name of Roderick Constantine St. John Bullington-Smythe. The men of the 12th
Northumberlanders know him as Old Thunderguts, and it is reported that he is the only man in the
army of whom even the Duke of York is afraid. His unit will soon be posted to the West Indies, after
the peace is finally signed with France.”

Dean stared at her, uncomprehendingly. But he supposed that she must know something, and that
what she had said would prove useful one day.

It would. Sooner than he expected.

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May 1801

Dean arrived at Pemberley on May Day itself, and quickly dispensed with the matters arising from
his steward's letter. It was good to see the old place again, looking better than ever after the repairs
and improvements. And Mrs. Barnes, bless her, had arranged with the cook to make sure there was
cherry pie for dessert that evening, so Dean went to bed both full of stomach and happy at heart, as
well as looking forward to a certain omega's arrival to the area. For once he would surprise Castiel,
who would not be expecting him until the day after tomorrow.

It was a nice thought.

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Though the town of Lambton had four taverns, only one of them, the Partridge, offered decent
accommodation, and Dean was certain that the Singers would stay there. And since he happened to
have to ride into town the following day – he had to ride somewhere, damn it! - he decided to call in
and see if he could catch them.

They were not. And annoyingly, contrary to what Castiel had said, the party had gone on an
excursion somewhere. The maid cleaning their room had no idea as to where, although the lady of
the party, presumably Castiel's aunt, had at dinner the previous evening mentioned wanting to see the
famous twisted spire of Chesterfield church, which lay some distance to the east of both the town and
Pemberley. Disgruntled, Dean decided to head home.

He was even more annoyed when, on approaching the house, he saw that he had visitors. Some
high-class open carriage – that of a marquis, at the very least - was parked outside the house's main
entrance. Dean sighed in vexation, and decided to hide out in the back until the unwelcome guests
had gone. Having people seeing the house was all right, but some seemed to treat him as part of the
experience as well. It was a great house, not some sort of convention centre!

There was a small shed at the back of the herb garden, where Dean kept a set of towels for when he
wanted to swim in the small reservoir that provided extra water to both the house and the lake. It was
not large, less than fifty yards in length, but it was five foot deep, so he took the precaution of telling
one of the gardeners working in the herb garden where he would be. That way he could have his
privacy, but also the ability to call on someone if necessary. The man also told him that the visitors to
the house had just headed out onto the Long Walk, which would take them over an hour and a half,
so Dean would not be disturbed.

The reservoir had walls all around, and the alpha did not feel the least bit embarrassed at stripping all
his clothes off and wading into the clear waters. The pool was lined, so it was easy to keep clear
except in autumn, when leaves from the trees that currently provided shade fell into it. He did several
laps, enjoying the pull of his muscles as he sped through the water, before resting on one of the two
ladders he had had installed.

His relaxed mood was suddenly ended by the ominous creak of the gate which, he knew, connected the pool to the herb garden. Did one of the gardeners have a message for him? He turned to see who it was..... and froze.

Holy Mother of God!
Ladders And Learning

Chapter Summary

Castiel's visits to Pemberley lead to his conducting himself properly and correctly at all times. In a related development, pigs are sighted flying over north-east Derbyshire.

May 1801

Castiel stared in shock at the scene before him. Dean was resting on a ladder on his side of the small pool, his broad chest rippling with muscles, and if he took just a few steps closer....

The omega licked his lips. And the housekeeper had said that the Long Walk that his aunt and uncle had just embarked on would take at least an hour and a half. Plenty of time for what he had in mind.

“Cas!” the alpha smiled. “I did not expect to see you here.”

Dean made to haul himself up the ladder, only to find the omega blocking his way.

“Stay!” Castiel ordered. “I have never had sex in a pool before, but I suppose that one must adapt to new experiences.”

“Cas?” Definitely a note of terror this time.

The omega quirked an eyebrow as he started to get undressed. Dean looked terrified.

“Yes, Dean?” he said with a smile, removing his shirt. The alpha gulped.

“I want....” he began, then ground to a halt and looked helplessly at the omega. “I just wanted.....”

He seemed more nervous than usual, Castiel thought to himself. He hesitated before dropping his trousers.

“You just wanted what, Dean?”

He could see the alpha's blush some way into the water. Then Dean turned those beautiful forest-green eyes of his fully onto him.

“I wanted our first time here to be when I claim you, in my bedroom”, he said quietly, his eyes dropping again.

Castiel grinned. That was so romantic, and he knew Dean would hate him using the R-word. He took off his trousers and underpants in one swift move.

“Cas!” Dean moaned.

The omega slipped his socks off, and climbed down the ladder, pushing the alpha back slightly. Dean still clung to the ladder with his larger form, rutting against the omega's butt even though his mind was clearly unwilling. Castiel let him for a moment, then turned and faced him. The relief on the alpha's face was almost laughable, but Castiel refrained. Just.
He began to rub their cocks together, both his hands bent back to hold the ladder, and Dean quickly got wind of his intentions, letting go of the ladder with one hand and using it to seize both their cocks. Castiel grinned, and rested his head on the taller man’s shoulder. Dean shuddered, and the omega could feel he was getting close.

“Come, Dean!” he whispered.

And the alpha came with a strangled roar, which Castiel suppressed with a kiss on the lips. His own orgasm followed just a few seconds later, his back arching as he felt his come being squashed between their bodies. Dean was bigger and taller than him, but right now he was totally the omega’s, to have and to hold.

Though Castiel would not pass up further opportunities to remind him of that fact.

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The only minor downside of the day was the knowing look on his aunt’s face when she and Uncle Bobby arrived back at the carriage, and Castiel introduced them both to the house owner. Perhaps the fact that both men still had wet hair was, all things considered, more than a little incriminating.

Castiel had to admit, however, that he was surprised that the alpha so quickly established a rapport with his relatives, especially given the way some in the nobility looked down on those who had made their money ‘in trade’. Dean invited them all back to the house the day after next, when his half-brother would be home and, also, Sam and his sisters. Castiel shuddered at the prospect of seeing them again, but he looked forward to meeting Adam Winchester, and seeing just how much or little he was like his half-brother. Besides, the omega would very soon be family.

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Castiel had naturally assumed that, when his uncle visited Pemberley in two days’ time, he and his aunt would call on Adam Winchester and be formally introduced then. It therefore came as something of a surprise, if not a shock, when a servant interrupted him in his room early the next day to report that two visitors from Pemberley were waiting on his aunt and uncle downstairs. After trying (and inevitably failing) to do something with his unruly hair, he reluctantly went to meet them.

Adam Winchester turned out to be very different from his half-brother. Not just the smaller frame and lighter blond hair, but the fact that he was clearly terrified at meeting strange people. Castiel warmed to him at once, and did his best to put him at ease, sharing anecdotes about growing up with five brothers, as well as discussing their common interest in piano-playing. It seemed to work, and he soon seemed much more relaxed.

Dean, he noticed, oversaw their meeting with practised ease, in between discussing a fishing party with his uncle for the following day. Adam, with a little prompting from his half-brother, formally invited Castiel and his aunt to luncheon at the house whilst the men fished. By this time Castiel had become all too aware of the knowing looks his aunt and uncle were sending his way, but he evaded any further questions by personally escorting the visitors back to their carriage. He said his formal goodbyes to both of them, and had turned to leave when Dean called out to him.

“Mr. Bennet?”

Castiel turned and raised a quizzical eyebrow at him.

“Mr. Winchester?” Damnation, he so nearly called him Dean, which would have been far too informal in front of his half-brother.
“Um.... thank you!”

Castiel nodded, smiled slightly, and returned to the inn. Mr. Winchester must have been thanking him for being so kind to Adam. Of course. That was it.

He slipped back to his room and his book, but did not get much reading done.

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Castiel knew that the trip to Pemberley would be awkward, as it would involve meeting Sam Bingley's step-sisters. He wondered if Margaret Masters' dislike of him came from a vague feeling that there was something between him and Dean, whereas in truth, there was often very little between them. Usually because they were tied together and the alpha liked to.... hold him close in a very manly-like manner.

It was so hard not to use the c-word that rhymed with 'huddle'!

Mrs. Walker was in her room with a headache, but Miss Masters was cold enough for both of them, welcoming the visitors with something bordering on incivility. Castiel set himself to draw Adam Winchester out of his shell again, and they went over to examine the lovely new piano which his brother had had brought up for him. All went well until Miss Masters turned to Castiel and remarked that the removal of the militia from Meryton must be a great loss to the Bennets in particular. Castiel was roused to anger, particularly as he felt Adam flinch beside him. He knew that the boy was remembering his own unfortunate dalliance with Wickham, something Miss Masters knew nothing about, and his protective instincts flared up.

“We bear the loss with admirable fortitude, Miss Masters”, he retorted. “But we struggle on. We cannot all live an empty life of luxury at someone else's expense, you know!”

She reddened considerably, and excused herself from the room. The maid who had just brought in tea and cakes tried (unsuccessfully) to turn a laugh into a cough. Even Adam smiled slightly, and whispered a small word of thanks to him later on when he thought no-one was looking. Castiel felt a little bad for the slight, but told himself that the woman had deserved it.

Dean came in with his uncle and Sam Bingley some time later, and Castiel noted Adam telling his half-brother what had happened. Of course to everyone else he and Dean were merely polite strangers, so Dean formally thanked him, and asked if Castiel had seen the smaller library.

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There was something deliciously sinful about having sex with Dean in the same house where Sam's sisters were staying. Of course they could not go the whole way – someone would surely send after them if they were gone for more than a few minutes – so Castiel had to be inventive. This involved him reading a book on Ancient Rome with one hand whilst his other was down Dean's trousers, rubbing him almost to orgasm before slowing down.

The alpha whined.

“Careful!” Castiel warned. “Remember, someone could come in at any moment.”

“Or Meg could hear us”, Dean ground out. At Castiel's surprised expression, he flicked his eyes upwards. “Her room is directly above this one.”

The omega grinned darkly.
“Perhaps I should go for some noises, then”, he teased. “Just to make her wonder?”

“You would not dare!” Dean said, glaring at him.

His eyes widened as Castiel's grip on his cock suddenly tightened, and his breathing became ragged as the omega started jerking him off.

There was a sharp knock at the door.

“Dean? Adam is asking for you.”

It was Miss Masters. Dean looked at Castiel in alarm.

“Coming!” he called out.

Thankfully she did not enter, and they soon heard the sound of her retreating footsteps. Castiel smirked.

“You will be”, he said.

“What?” Dean asked, confused.

“Coming!” Castiel grinned, and stepped up his ministrations.

Ten seconds later, Dean was. Coming.

+~+~+

All in all (library incident included), it was a successful second visit to the house, and Castiel found himself actually looking forward to the rest of his holiday. Especially if it contained a third visit to the house. And of seeing Dean.

Preferably naked in the pool, again.
Penances And Proposals

Chapter Summary

When the actions of others ruins his plans, his Aunt Missouri's advice proves most useful, and Dean – with some help from the devil himself - makes Metatron Wickham pay dearly for standing in the way of his happiness.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

May 1801

One of the many happy memories Dean Winchester held of his late and beloved mother, apart from the lullabies she used to sing him to sleep with, was her telling the young heir to the Winchester estate that 'good things do happen'. He often times doubted that theory, but with Castiel Bennet just a few minutes away and coming – hah! - to the house the next day, Dean was really beginning to feel that this might be a rare example of that saying being proven true. Of course he could hardly slip away from everyone else and claim the omega upstairs whilst his relatives and Dean's friends were close by.

The thought crossed his mind that the omega might be enough of a bastard to make him do just that, and his dick twitched in anticipation. He probably did need therapy, but at least he was happy.

In retrospect, he should have foreseen that something was going to happen to ruin it all.

+~+~+

Following the incident in the library, Dean decided to ride into Lambton the next day just on the off chance, and see if he could catch Castiel. However, as he approached the turning where the road to Pemberley diverged from the main road (such as it was) between Derby and Manchester, he saw a lone rider approaching from the south, and to his great surprise recognized him. It was his cousin Gadreel.

“Gad?” Dean said, surprised.

His cousin looked equally shocked to see him, then his features relaxed.

“Thank God!” he said. “Please say you know where Mr. Castiel Bennet is, Dean.”

“I do”, Dean said. “What is wrong?”

“Plenty”, his cousin said grimly. “Starting with abduction, unlicensed marriage, and complete and utter social disgrace!”

+~+~+

Dean took his cousin aside for a moment, sitting him down on a flat stone at the side of the road. The young captain looked a mess, and Dean did not want him blundering in on Castiel with whatever bad news he had obviously brought. Gadreel drew a deep breath before beginning.
“You will remember that I left you in London, and was going to take Alfie down to Brighton to meet his brother Balthazar”, he began. “Well, my father's coach was not ready, so Alfie and I, we..... um.....”

“Spare me the details!” Dean groaned. “Just tell me that he was not in heat.”

“Of course not!” his cousin protested hotly. “What do you take me for? Anyway, when we reached the town, we were surprised to find that Balthazar Bennet was not there. We had specifically sent down notice of our delayed arrival, but he and the Forsters had just left to Eastbourne.”

Dean began to have a very bad feeling about this conversation.

“I thought it inconsiderate, but Alfie said it was normal behaviour for his brother. Except that two days ago, the Forsters returned in a panic. Apparently Balthazar had left the inn they had been staying at, in the company of a soldier.”

Dean just knew what was coming next, and his cousin did not disappoint.

“I suspect that you will not be surprised that one officer was missing from the roll-call that came after”, he said grimly. “Lieutenant Wickham.”

“I presume they are gone to London”, Dean said coldly.

His cousin nodded.

“I took Alfie back home to Hertfordshire with me the next day to break the news in person, rather than through the post”, he said glumly. “God, it was awful! I was glad to get away, saying I had to bring the news to Mr. Castiel Bennet as well. Alfie chose to stay with his mother, who is a complete wreck. Overnight travel is hell!”

“You do not look well”, Dean said. “And I see your point. This act will indeed bring social disgrace upon the whole family.”

“Indeed”, Gadreel said sourly. “Poor Alfie is heartbroken; he is sure that this will wreck the marital prospects of the entire family. Including Mr. Castiel Bennet, I suppose.”

Dean's eyes widened at that. What if Castiel felt that this meant he was not good enough for Dean? Unlikely, but not impossible.

Right!

+++-+++

Having directed his cousin to Castiel's inn, he returned to Pemberley and left for London at once, striking across country to take the Great North Road. Changing horses several times, he arrived in the capital shortly after sunset, and went straight to Winchester House, from whence he sent Victor a letter begging him to help find the two runaways as a matter of urgency. Gadreel had said they might proceed to Gretna Green to be married over the anvil, but Dean doubted that.

Mercifully, the Dutchman came through for him even more quickly than he could have dared hope. The very next morning he sent Dean a message that Wickham and Balthazar Bennet were staying at a small inn on the southern edge of the capital, and that the former had left Sussex (predictably) due to his gambling and other debts, taking the omega either as a hostage or a prize. Dean could have used his lawyer to force the man into a debtors’ prison, but he had other, much crueler plans for the rascallion, recalling to mind his aunt's now timely advice. And for the heedless Balthazar Bennet,
for threatening the happiness of the man he loved.

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The one thing that had puzzled Dean was as to why Wickham had taken Balthazar Bennet with him on his flight. The omega had no money, and Colonel Forster had assured Gadreel that he had not been in heat. He could surely not know of Dean's feelings for Castiel, and that the alpha would do anything to protect his omega. What was the motive?

His questions were to be answered by a visitor who called at Winchester House only minutes after Victor's letter arrived. Dean looked at the man's card, and recognized the name.

“Mr. Pelthwaite”, he smiled in greeting. “Castiel told me of your role over that awful business with Dick Roman .”

The man was a blond, muscular alpha in his mid-thirties, and Dean could see some familial resemblance to his beloved Cas.

“You are wondering why Metatron Wickham took my cousin Balthazar with him’, his visitor said. “I can tell you. It concerns a certain lady called Miss Amara Roberts, who was sacked from a London solicitor recently. She avenged herself on her employer by divulging the terms of a most advantageous will to one of the beneficiaries, so that he might fulfill the conditions and inherit all.”

“Who?” Dean asked at once.

“You are wondering why Metatron Wickham took my cousin Balthazar with him’’, his visitor said. “I can tell you. It concerns a certain lady called Miss Amara Roberts, who was sacked from a London solicitor recently. She avenged herself on her employer by divulging the terms of a most advantageous will to one of the beneficiaries, so that he might fulfill the conditions and inherit all.”

“Who?” Dean asked at once.

“Your cousin, Sam Bingley”, Lucifer said smoothly. “You, he and the six Bennet brothers were all potential beneficiaries of a major estate; not for yourselves, but for the first alpha heir that any of you produced. The sum is in excess of your own ten thousand a year.”

Dean's eyebrows shot up. Suddenly Sammy's decision to settle in Hertfordshire made sense, as did his abandoning Samandriel Bennet once he had realized that the omega was unlikely to be able to bear children. Horrible, horrible sense.

“And Balthazar Bennet?” Dean asked.

“Sam Bingley paid Miss Roberts handsomely for the information, and she went to live with her sister in Hove, Sussex”, Lucifer said. “She must have encountered Balthazar in Brighton, remembered the odd name, and presumably got more money from him by telling him what she knew.”

“So Wickham thinks he is to marry the goose that will lay the golden egg”, Dean mused. “Damnation! That means that we have no hold over him.”

His visitor smiled. It was not a nice smile. Dean was suddenly glad this man was not his enemy.

“I think that you need to pay a short trip to Hertfordshire.....”

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It was lucky that Thoriel Fitzwilliam, one of Gadreel's brothers, was in the capital, and even luckier that he was in a position to do what Dean needed. Though he was shocked at the request.

“How much you must dislike this man!” he smiled, pulling out a form. “Of course there are commissions available, even for a misery like Old Thunderguts. You do know he won't allow your man to breathe unless he does it 'the army way'?"
Dean smiled unpleasantly.

“That is my intention”, he said grimly. “And it has the added bonus of his usually being based as far away in England as he can be without leaving the country.”

He did not mention his aunt’s advice about the West Indies, but that thought also warmed him. Both Wickham and his soon-to-be mate could probably do with a good tan.

“It is unlikely that they will see action soon, though”, his cousin said, unaware of his thoughts. “I expect a preliminary peace with the French by the end of the year; I only hope the government does not give away too much. Now that Pitt has gone, the current lot are a weak bunch. But saying that, I wouldn’t expect the peace to hold for long, either. That Napoleon chappie can't be trusted.”

He named a price, and Dean handed over a cheque and signed the relevant forms. The whole thing took less than ten minutes.

“Metatron Wickham is now a captain in one of the most feared regiments in His Majesty's army!” Mr. Fitzwilliam smiled. “Will you be there when he learns who his new master is?”

“Oh yes!” Dean smiled unpleasantly. “And I will be making sure he gets there, and takes his wonderful new mate with him. There is more than one way to give a man a life sentence!”

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Wickham stared at him in astonishment.

“A whole decade!” he stammered. “And Old Thunderguts – even the Duke of York is said to be afraid of him!”

“Ten years”, Dean said firmly. “It’s a simple choice, and one I should have forced on you long ago. Either you accept a full commission in the army and stay with both it and Balthazar Bennet for not less than a decade. Or I take the matter before the courts, and have you thrown in the debtors' prison. From which, as I am sure you are very much aware, you will never escape.”

“I won't do it!” Wickham said firmly. “You never know, Winchester. I could come into money any day now.”

Dean smiled unpleasantly, and handed him a cream envelope.

“What's this?” the soldier asked.

“A copy of my great-grandfather, Henry 12th Earl of Hexhamshire's, will”, Dean grinned. “Yes, Balthazar could inherit a six-figure sum for an alpha son of his – but not if he marries against the wishes of his father.”

“His father will accept this marriage”, Wickham said, although he sounded doubtful.

His face faltered when Dean handed him a second envelope.

“I asked Mr. Singer to call on his brother yesterday”, he said. “They discussed my proposal, and Mr. Bennet summoned his lawyer nephew to have everything made legal and correct. This is a signed note of disinheritance, making your future mate ineligible under the terms of the will.”

Wickham gave him a filthy look.

“Now”, Dean said amiably, “let us talk terms. I will clear all your debts, including the ones you have
doubtless run up in Sussex. I have promised Mr. Bennet that, in return for his disinheriting his youngest son, I will settle a modest amount on him, which will enable you both to live at an acceptable level. It will be quite interesting, I must confess, to see which of you breaks the other first!"

“I hate you!”

“Your choice, Wickham. Balthazar Bennet, or gaol.”

Wickham glared at him.

“Fine!” he snapped. “I’ll take him!”

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Mr. Singer was visibly moved when Dean confirmed the success of his 'negotiations'.

“My brother and I will never be able to repay you!” he said at last.

“I take the expense totally upon myself”, Dean said firmly. “It was partly my own fault that this happened. I could have laid bare Lieutenant Wickham's character to the people of Hertfordshire, but I declined, because I did not deem them worthy of being warned. I was arrogant and prideful, and this is the consequence.”

“It would have taken a great effort for them to believe you anyway”, Mr. Singer pointed out, “given their opinion of you at the time. My poor brother is distraught at the whole business, especially as he was advised against allowing his youngest son to go to Brighton in the first place.”

“Was he?” Dean asked curiously. “By whom?”

“Castiel”, Mr. Singer explained. “Even when he told us of how the two of you met in Hertfordshire, he counselled against believing everything Lieutenant Wickham said. He has always been very good at reading people.”

(Dean really hoped that Castiel had not told his uncle about the first time they had met in the barn, otherwise..... ugh!).

“It is a pity his father declined such good advice”, he said grimly. “He and his family have suffered more than enough as it is. Knowing that a man they dislike sorted out a mess much of his own making probably makes them feel even worse.”

The older man looked at him speculatively.

“I do not think quite everyone there dislikes you, Mr. Winchester”, he said with a smile. “But I must thank you again for acting on behalf of.... my dear nephew.”

He looked pointedly at Dean. The alpha knew for certain that the man could see right through him, and that it was not Balthazar Bennet to whom he was referring. And best of all, he was kind enough not to say any more.

Chapter End Notes
Official stagecoach travel was slow and uncomfortable, especially as suspension had not been invented yet. Not long before this story is set, the fastest coach between London and Liverpool, a distance of about 220 miles, did the trip in three days, at an average of 8 m.p.h. However, for those in need of speed it was possible to do the journey much faster, which was why Dean was able to reach London from Pemberley, about 160 miles, in twelve hours or so. He would have hired horses from the coaching inns along the popular London-York-Edinburgh route, which passed not far from Pemberley, and ridden each one into the ground before getting another one. His coach would meanwhile have done the slow journey to London to collect him for the return journey.
His youngest brother's flight with Metatron Wickham is bad enough, frustrating Castiel's plans to thoroughly (and noisily) ride the bond-knot of a certain green-eyed alpha. Then back in Hertfordshire, Castiel discovers just how far Dean is prepared to go for him.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

May 1801

Poor Captain Fitzwilliam had been full of apologies – he had apparently met Dean on the way into town, and had been accordingly delayed – but the news he brought had been dreadful. Castiel knew that the master of Pemberley had already had reservations about claiming him, mainly concerning the omega's family – reservations, the omega would have admitted, that were all too justified. But this? This was a whole new level of social disgrace. He shuddered to think of how it might affect the bakery, although he doubted many of the locals would dare to raise the matter directly. The last time one of them had commented on Balthazar's way of life, Charlie had escorted the man from the shop. Castiel could still remember being impressed with the girl's right hook.

The three of them left Lambton as soon as they could, heading south for Hertfordshire. Whilst his aunt had been busy packing, his uncle had written several letters to friends and acquaintances in London, in an effort to see what could be done to locate the runaways. They would spend the night in Hertfordshire, rather than risk pushing on in the dark; hopefully the letters would be received that same day, and some news might be forthcoming. Though it would probably not be good.

Castiel's mother was a mess, and his father was not much better. Both wanted to go to the capital, but Uncle Bobby dissuaded them, saying he needed them there in case the runaways decided to make for Longbourn (unlikely, Castiel thought, suspecting it was a ruse for his uncle to avoid being encumbered with one or both of his parents in the capital). The Singers and their children left early the following day, promising to write daily regardless of any developments.

Castiel had been worried how all this would affect his brother Samandriel. He was sure that the relationship with Captain Fitzwilliam had been a harmless fling, but the boy – his youthful appearance always made Castiel think of him as such, despite the fact he was in his early thirties – did not need all this as well. However, when Castiel walked to his brother's cottage one day, he saw as he drew near that there was a familiar carriage drawn up outside. Their cousin Lucifer had called, and most unusually had not yet called on him, even though he would have had to pass both Castiel's cottage and the bakery to get here. Castiel mused over this for some time before turning round and heading back to his own cottage.

Two days later, Mr. Bennet summoned the whole family to hear the news.
“My brother called yesterday”, the alpha announced gravely. “They have been found.”

His wife and sons stared at him, all waiting.

“And?” Castiel asked, fearing the worst.

“They are not married. Worse; Lieutenant Wickham has claimed Balthazar. Having so done however, he has agreed to marry him.”

“That is wonderful news!” Mrs. Bennet exclaimed. “A marriage! I shall talk to Father Joshua at once....”

“No!”

They all looked at him in surprise. Mr. Bennet almost never raised his voice.

“They are to be married in London. At the end of the month, the 31st. My brother and sister, and some friend of his, will be their witnesses. They will then remove to the North, where Lieutenant Wickham will take up his new commission. His new regiment is based in the city of Newcastle, and he and Balthazar will live there.”

“But they will come here first, surely?” his wife objected.

Charles Bennet rose slowly to his feet. Though he never really looked the alpha he was, he could be intimidating when the need arose.

“Understand this, my dear”, he said firmly. “As long as I draw breath, that vile omega, let alone his worse mate, shall never set foot in this house again! Never! Even with this sham of a marriage, he has disgraced us! Balthazar may call in to collect his things, but he will not stay. I have already sent him notice of disinheritance. As far as I am concerned, I now have precisely five sons!”

He strode from the room, whilst Castiel reached quickly for his mother's smelling salts.

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Castiel was summoned to his father's study before leaving Longbourn. Mr. Bennet locked the door before beginning.

“First, son, I owe you an apology”, he said firmly. “You were right about Lieutenant. Wickham and we – the entire village, it seems – were wrong. Had I but listened to your advice, this whole farrago could have been avoided.”

“But at least they are to be married now”, Castiel pointed out.

To his surprise, his father laughed hollowly.

“It is your uncle we have to thank for that!” he said bitterly. “He must have laid out at least two thousand to save our family's good name. I can never repay him!”

“Two thousand?” Castiel gasped. “But why?”

“Because someone as mercenary as Wickham would never take Balthazar for a thousand down, unless he was either forced to or was being paid extra by someone else”, his father explained. “He is a scoundrel, not a fool. This is all your uncle's doing, Castiel, and I can never repay him.”

Castiel could only nod in agreement. Longbourn's finances were stable enough, but they could never
lay their hands on that type of money. Why had his uncle done such a thing?

“The one thing that puzzles me”, his father continued, “is that as a condition of his assistance, my brother asked only that I formally disinherit Balthazar. Of course I would have done so anyway, but it is strange.” He hesitated before adding, “you have not spoken to Mr. Pelthwaite on this matter?”

“I have not, Father”, Castiel said firmly.

But he wondered – was Luke behind this?

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It was just two days later that Balthazar Bennet, as he still was, came to the bakery to collect his things. Castiel's father had refused to have him in the house and, despite his mother's protestations, had arranged for the servants to pack the omega's few possessions and take them down to be collected from the shop. Castiel was not happy with the arrangement, but he supposed that it was for the best.

He still wanted to smite his youngest brother when he turned up though, unkempt and utterly unrepentant.

“Don't know why you're so jealous, Cassie!” Balthazar sneered. “I mean, it was your boy toy who arranged it all.”

Castiel stared at him in confusion.

“What?” he asked.

“That Mr. Winchester person”, Balthazar snapped, looking at his few boxes as if he hoped they would walk out to the cart by themselves. “Hey, red; you don't want to give me a hand, do you?”

Charlie glared sharply at him.

“I'll give you a hand all right!” she snapped. Balthazar yipped and took a step back.

“You are saying Dean.... Winchester arranged all this?” Castiel asked. “The marriage? Why?”

“Probably felt bad about shafting dear Wickie in the past”, his brother grinned. “And best of all, he settled an amount of money on little old me, so I've got my new mate by the balls. He's going nowhere.”

And you totally deserve each other, Castiel thought bitterly.

“Why did you show Sam Bingley that letter?” he asked instead. Balthazar quirked an eyebrow at him.

“So it was you who went through my stuff, was it?” he asked. “Yes, I made a play for Mr Five-Thousand-A-Year, but he preferred our baby-faced brother. Terrible taste for one so loaded. So I just set him right.”

The next minute, Balthazar Wickham was being pinned against the wall by his brother, his eyes wide in shock. Castiel tightened his grip around his brother's scrawny neck.

“Understand this!” he snarled. “If you ever show your face in this shop again, Balthazar, then all the weapons in Heaven will not save you. Get out whilst you can still walk out!
He strode out the back, leaving a shocked sibling behind him. The sound of Charlie cheering did make him smile though.

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Castiel had been able to dispatch a letter to his uncle the previous afternoon, asking him if Dean really had done all that Balthazar had claimed. The reply came just before the weekend. His uncle told him that Dean had sworn both him and his aunt to secrecy over his involvement in the dreadful business, and he was sorry that Castiel had found out in this way. He begged him to keep the information to himself, as it would only embarrass the man who had really saved the family's reputation. The last few lines of his letter were particularly interesting:

'Mr. Winchester 'claims' he did this noble deed because it was his failure to inform the people of Hertfordshire as to Lieutenant Wickham's true character that contributed to this horrible business. But because I am sure that you will keep this to yourself, nephew, I think you know as well as I do that this particular alpha had another reason for acting the way he did (hint: dry your hair more thoroughly after swimming, maybe?). I might add that when I finished the meeting by thanking him for acting on behalf of 'my dear nephew', he obviously knew quite well that I was not referring to Balthazar. I swear his blush could be seen from across the street!'

Castiel blushed himself, and locked the letter away in his draw.

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Mrs. Bennet was planning a reception at Longbourn, in an undeclared celebration of the passing of the dark cloud over the family. Castiel had been fortunate enough to call when she had been out, and having taken one look at the mess, had left (fled) quickly. Halfway back to the village he met Samandriel, who looked oddly out of sorts.

"Is something the matter?" Castiel asked, concerned.

His brother looked at him strangely.

"I just spoke to Mrs. Wilkinson. Apparently she has received a big order for immediate delivery. Mr. Bingley is returning to Netherfield!"

Castiel stared at him.

"Luke?" he ventured nervously.

His brother flushed bright red.

"He cares for me", he said softly. "He came to the village and saw me, when you were up in Meryton yesterday. But after Balthazar... well, papa and mama have had one grave shock already. We both fear that his proposing would be too much."

"Let us see what develops", Castiel said gently. "Take care, brother. I do not want to see you get hurt."

His brother smiled at him, and his hand went instinctively to the chain round his neck. A chain, Castiel knew, that had only appeared there very recently. He wondered, and hoped for the best. If anyone deserved it after all he had been through, it was Samandriel Alfred Bennet.

Though the more he thought about it, the more Castiel thought the return of Sam Bingley decidedly strange. After all, the beta knew full well that the chance of Alfie having children was low. What had
changed? Surely he could not have heard about Luke, and even if he had, what concern was it of his?

It was all very odd. And Castiel Bennet did not like odd.

Chapter End Notes

Probably should have made it clearer, but Dean ensured that all his communications with Mr. Bennet were through Mr. Singer. He presumed that, that way, Castiel would never find out. Dean did not always get human nature very well.
June 1801

The most direct road from London to Pemberley and his abandoned friends lay through Longbourn, so Dean felt quite entitled to take it. And to delay his departure from the capital so he had to spend the night in the village. Or more specifically, a certain cottage just outside the village.

“How was the wedding?” Castiel asked dryly.

They were still tied together, Dean actually having acquired a bruise on his ankle from somewhere as he had tried desperately to get his clothes off even more quickly than usual. It was, the alpha thought, slightly worrying that he had entered the cottage to find Castiel naked and presented for him, and the keening noise he had uttered as a result was something he did not want to be reminded of. Ever.

“It was awful”, he said. “Sorry I am to say it Cas, but your brother is shameless. At least his new husband looked miserable enough.”

“Considering his new post, he was right to so look”, Castiel said with a smile. He shifted slightly on the bed, and Dean moaned at the pressure on his knot. “Why is Sam returning to Netherfield?”

“He is?” Dean asked, clearly surprised. “I did not know. I left him in Pemberley last week, if you recall?”

“The house is being opened up again, and made ready for its owner”, Castiel told him. “Unless he has sold it and not told anyone, he is returning. Yet he still thinks Alfie is unsuitable for breeding.”

Dean winced.

“You make your omega brother sound like a racehorse”, he protested.

The next minute he was yelping in agony.

“Can a racehorse do that?” Castiel asked dryly.

“No!” Dean almost yelled. “Cas, I want to take you and claim you, and God help me, make love to you. I want to marry you and live with you for the rest of my life. However short that turns out to be with all the sex you keep making me have. I love you!”

There was a horrible silence across the semi-darkness.

“You hardly ever use that word”, Castiel said at last, sounding almost sad.

“I have loved you from that moment in the barn”, Dean said, almost surprised as how easy it was to say it. “I will always love you, I swear. Castiel James Bennet, will you marry me?”

“Yes”, Castiel said simply. “But you will have to move fast. My next heat is due in just a few days’
time, Dean.”

“I will be ready!” Dean scoffed.

The next minute he yelped again. Damned omega!

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There was one piece of good news for Dean when he finally made it home to Pemberley late the following day, saddle-sore and... well, sore down there as well, really. Sam's sisters had been invited to visit a friend of Mr. Walker on the Yorkshire coast, and fortunately Meg was too excited by the news that the Prince of Wales himself would be in the area at the time to pay Dean more than the customary annoying attentions for once. Once they were safely seen off the next day, Dean cornered his friend in the library.

“Sammy, have you reached a decision about Netherfield?” he asked casually.

The taller man visibly tensed before replying.

“I am going back, tomorrow”, Sam said firmly. “I was wrong, and I am sure that Alfie will forgive me.”

Dean was puzzled, though he could hardly say so. If Sam wanted to be the first to produce an alpha heir and claim that huge prize, then why was he even considering someone like Samandriel Bennet?

“He may have found someone else by now”, he said carefully. He and Lucifer Pelthwaite had talked for some time, and the older alpha had laid his feelings for his cousin on the line.

“Yes, and you are secretly sleeping with Castiel Bennet!” Sam scoffed.

Fortunately he was facing out of the window as he spoke, so he missed the horrible blush that suffused Dean's features. The alpha swallowed. This was going to be awkward.

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They arrived safely to Netherfield, and Dean went out for a walk early the next morning. If that walk took him into the village and past a bakery that was just opening up, well, that was a complete coincidence. And if he walked (limped) out with a free pie and a smile like a cat that just got the canary, well, that was because he had.

Dean arrived back to find Sam was up, and eager to do down into the village himself to find Samandriel. It was a Saturday, and Dean knew that the omega helped out in the grocery store that day. On arriving there however, the two men were told he was not due in until one o'clock, and would most likely be at his small cottage on the edge of town. Dean noticed how Sam's stride got even longer as they neared the place, and wondered how he would be received.

Sam pushed open the door to Samandriel Bennet's cottage just seconds after one knock, and led the way inside, which Dean might have thought presumptuous. Might have thought, except his thoughts were instead focussed on the large bed and its two very naked occupants.

It seemed that Mr. Lucifer Pelthwaite was visiting his cousin.

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The two visitors stared at the two naked men under the covers. They were not tied together – about
the only blessing, Dean thought – but judging from the heady scents in the room, something had definitely taken place, although mercifully missing from those scents was the one of an omega in heat, which Dean as an alpha would have been able to detect.

Lucifer Pelthwaite got out of bed, seemingly careless of his nakedness, and loomed large in front of Sam. He was most definitely an alpha protecting his omega, and though not as tall as Sam, was more muscular. The beta swallowed nervously before turning and almost running from the cottage. Dean went after him, though not before giving his new acquaintance a thumbs-up, and earning himself a chuckle in return. He caught Sam up at the gate.

“Who the hell was that?” Sam asked, clearly still shocked.

“His cousin, a Mr. Lucifer Pelthwaite”, Dean replied automatically.

Sam looked at him curiously.

“And how do you know that?” he demanded.

Ah.

“He helped me out with the Wickham business”, Dean said. “He is actually the eldest son of the Duke of Holderness – he's Lord Hornsea – and very rich.”

“And you knew!” Sam growled. “Why did you not tell me?”

“I did not know it had reached this far”, Dean said defensively. “After all, Alfie's father and mother have just had to cope with losing one son. I met Luke in London, and he told me he and Alfie were going to take things slowly.”

Sam snorted in disbelief.

“Real slow!” he sniped. “And you let me come all this way to make a complete fool of myself? Why, Dean? What did I do to deserve that?”

“You rejected him on his brother's say-so”, Dean said, not unreasonably he felt. “Just because he was unlikely to give you any sons. He may or may not have loved you, but you threw him over.”

“Well, I wanted an alpha heir”, Sam said angrily.

“Why?” Dean asked simply.

“What?”

“Why an alpha?” Dean asked. “Are they worth more than betas, omegas or girls?”

“They are to me!” Sam shouted.

He looked at his cousin in shock, realizing what he had said. Dean nodded.

“That was it, wasn't it?”, he said angrily. “Luke told me about the inheritance, and that the lawyer's secretary told you. I remember now; you were all over houses in Derbyshire, and then you suddenly went and rented a place down here.”

Sam had gone pale.

“And that was why you wanted Alfie back”, Dean went on. “If you married him and he had an
alpha, fine. If he died trying, then a rival was out of the picture.”

“Yes, well, look at them all!” Sam sneered. “No-one in their right minds would marry any of the Bennets. Two priests, a slut, a prankster, a rape victim and a weird baker with bad hair!”

And something in Dean snapped. He stepped towards his cousin, who shifted back in sudden alarm.

“You want to know something, cousin?” he sneered. “That ‘weird baker with bad hair’ is my future mate!”

Sam seemed to be lost for words. He opened and closed his mouth twice, but nothing came out.

“’I have loved that man from the moment I first set eyes on him’, Dean said firmly. ‘That first time I came to see you down here, and you wondered why I looked like I have just had a really good time?’ He smirked lasciviously. ‘He was the good time I had just had!’”

“Ugh, Dean!”

“I have been back here many times since, Sammy, and we have had sex every. Single. Time”, Dean ground out. “And the man is insatiable, damned flexible, incredibly hot, and…. I cannot see how I can live my life without him. So if you have anything to say about any of the Bennets other than that idiot Balthazar, you go right ahead. Just make sure that you can walk back to the house by the time I have finished with you!”

Sam stared for a few more moments, then turned on his heel and stalked off in silence, his face dark. Dean stared after him, fearing that he had not heard the last of this.

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He was right.
Chapter Summary

Whilst happy that Samandriel's happiness is finally secured, Castiel is forced to resort to threats of physical violence to get his point across to someone he loathes. And then his heat arrives.....

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

June 1801

Fearing (probably correctly) that their relationship would be round the village in short order, Luke had immediately approached Mr. Bennet for the hand of Samandriel in marriage. To Castiel's surprise, he himself was summoned to Longbourn immediately afterwards, and his father actually requested his opinion on the matter. Castiel advised that he considered that Luke had always loved his brother, but circumstances – first Dick Roman and then the business with Balthazar – had kept him from declaring that love. And after the Balthazar business, seeing one of her sons engaged to be married to the son of and heir to a duke had Mrs. Bennet in raptures, two of her brood now safely hitched. True, the first marriage had been.... somewhat questionable, but now she was deliriously happy, a happiness she intended to share with everybody. Or at least everybody who was not quick enough to hide from her.

“You owe me!” Charlie hissed as his mother sailed out of the shop. As per his instructions, she had lied and said that Castiel was out making deliveries, but that had not saved her own ear-drums from a prolonged assault. Castiel smiled ruefully.

“I believe that I have a delivery ready for Morecambe House?” he offered. Charlie shot him a look.

“Do you think I can be so easily bought?” she scoffed.

“I am sorry”, Castiel said, keeping his face studiously straight. “I shall take it myself.....”

“You dare!” she hissed.

Castiel smiled.

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Considering that Dean was now back at Netherfield with his cousin, Castiel supposed that the alpha would be unable to get him to Pemberley in time for his heat a few days from now, especially since Dean would want to have the whole heat experience. The poor alpha did not know what was about to hit him! It would even be worth hearing his mother's shrieking at yet another of her sons going down the aisle.

“How is Sam?” Castiel asked one day, whilst they were still tied together.

Dean frowned, and Castiel shot him a warning look and applied some light pressure to the alpha's knot. Dean's eyes widened in alarm.
“Cas!” he begged. “No mentioning the moose during sexy times, please!”

“I just want to know that you are all right”, Castiel said. “It must be difficult at the house, after all that has come out of late.”

Dean sighed.

“He is very down”, he admitted. “And he blames me for not telling him about Luke and Alfie, even though I did not know for sure.”

“You could have warned him before a one hundred and fifty mile journey”, Castiel admitted. He twisted himself around, earning a displeased grunt from the alpha tied to him before Dean slotted in behind him on the bed. “My heat is due to start late tomorrow or early Monday, by the way. Charlie is already grumbling about having to cover me.”

“She is a good girl”, Dean said off-handedly. “And she keeps the customers in order, I have noticed.”

The next minute he yelped in surprise.

“But not as well as I keep you in order, my alpha!” Castiel teased.

Since his mother was worried about his impending heat, Castiel called on her the following morning to reassure her. She and her husband had of course to go to church, but luckily Castiel’s forthcoming heat meant that he was excused, and he decided to spend an hour in the library before retiring to his cottage.

It was whilst he was sat in the huge bay window that he saw a carriage pull up outside. He stared at it in confusion; he had seen that vehicle several times before. But that it should be here, sixty miles from its usual location – surely it could not be....

He briefly considered making his escape via the back garden, but considered that Lady Naomi de Bourgh must be here for a reason, and would certainly not go away until she had achieved her purpose. And the thought of her pursuing him to the haven that was his cottage was unsettling. Though quite what she wanted with any of the residents of Longbourn was beyond him.

She swept in with some speed, then gave poor Wilton such a glare that Castiel half expected the poor man to crumble to dust. The elderly servant moved faster than he had ever seen him go in his haste to leave the room.

“I am sure you know why I am here, Mr. Bennet!” she began, her voice cold and angry.

Castiel felt his hackles start to rise. She might be his social superior, but her tone was unwarranted, whatever the reason for her call.

“Indeed, your ladyship”, he said politely, “I am at a loss to understand the reason for your gracing us with your presence.”

“Do not trifle with me, omega!” she almost barked. “I have received definitive information that you and my noble nephew, Mr. Dean Winchester, have entered into....” she paused her before almost spitting out the last words, “an Understanding!”

Castiel was so surprised that he did not immediately respond, and she took the opportunity to embark
on a long and vitriolic speech about the Bennets’ low connections, her nephew’s high ones, the social
chasms that lay between them, and how her nephew was already betrothed to her own daughter. By
the time she had rounded it off by demanding he assure her that there was no such Understanding,
Castiel’s patience had not just run out, but had hired a coach and was halfway to London.

“I understand that your nephew is more than of age”, he said dryly. “I believe he is quite capable of
making decisions for himself. As am I, and I see no reason why I should be expected to offer you
any such assurance.”

She recoiled as if he had struck her.

“You impudent personage!” she snapped at last. “Do you presume to tell me whatever feelings you
may or may not have for my nephew stand in any way against his prior betrothal to my own
daughter?”

“I know from Captain Fitzwilliam that any such betrothal is totally within your own imagination,
Lady Naomi”, he said firmly. “Mr. Winchester is not engaged to your daughter. Whatever exists
between the two of us, it is of no concern of yours.”

“I shall not be spoken to in such a manner”, she almost shrieked. “I am the widow of a knight of the
realm, whilst you, Mr. Bennet, are nothing! Do you hear me? Nothing! You will never have my
nephew to marriage!”

“That is for him to decide, not you.”

“Then I shall talk to him! I shall expect a lot more sense from an earl’s nephew than from a mere
omega whose brother eloped with a common soldier!”

That was it. Castiel stood up sharply.

“You will now leave, Lady Naomi!” he growled.

“I have a lot more to say to you, Mr. Bennet. First, I think....”

“You will leave, or I will have the servants throw you out!”

She paled.

“You would not dare!” she snapped.

Castiel stepped towards her, his eyes glinting dangerously.

“Try me!” he growled.

For a moment he thought she actually might start off again, but she drew herself together and swept
from the room, her face as black as thunder. Castiel spared a thought for the luckless Dean, who
would certainly have an uncomfortable interview of his own very soon. From what she had said, she
had called on Longbourn rather than Netherfield.

He belatedly realized that he was sweating, and that the stress and exertion brought on by that
unpleasant woman had probably served to help bring forward his heat. Cursing her under his breath,
he quickly prepared to leave for home.

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It was only a short journey from the house to his cottage, but the direct road lay through Longbourn,
and even for a Sunday, the idea of an omega in heat passing through a country village seemed to be tempting fate. Castiel decided to instead take a wide circle around the village; it would mean skirting Netherfield Park, where poor Dean was about to have that extremely difficult meeting with that awful woman, but the omega could live with that. Besides, there was a public right of way across the house grounds.

He was almost home when the first drops of rain splattered to the ground around him, and he realized that the hot weather was about to break into a storm. Damnation! Fortunately it was only a short run to the front door, although he was soaked by the time he made it inside. He immediately began to remove his sodden clothes, and tried to remember where he had left the towel.

He would have felt far less comfortable had he known that he had been watched since reaching the main road. But he made that discovery soon enough, when the door burst open behind him, and a familiar figure loomed in the doorway.

It was not Dean.......
Relatives And Rescue

Chapter Summary

The first day of Castiel's heat does indeed prove memorable for Dean Winchester – just not quite in the way he had expected. And in a rare proof that time travel does exist, Lady Naomi has a Tina Turner moment.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

June 1801

Dean had given himself some private time in the Netherfield library, partly because Sam had noticed him keep looking at his watch. The alpha had decided to go over to Castiel's cottage after dinner and claim him there, so of course the day seemed to be dragging as a result. He just needed something to take his mind off of things.

Though as he saw the horribly familiar carriage pull up outside the house, he had the distinct feeling that he should have been more careful as to what he had wished for. His aunt was here. In Hertfordshire. And that could only mean one thing.

He braced himself. This was going to be difficult.

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Sam had taken his aunt into the Yellow Room, and had clearly been commanded by her to stay. Dean bowed to his relative, who lost no time in setting about her business.

“I am sure you will be aware of the reason for my visit, nephew”, she began frostily.

Dean felt like the proverbial naughty schoolboy.

“Indeed, aunt, I am not”, he lied.

“Do not trifle with me, sir!” she snapped. “Yesterday evening, I had a letter from your cousin here which contained news of devastating import! And for me to receive such a thing in the general post, of all places! What is the world coming to? Your cousin is somehow of the opinion that you have an...... Understanding with that outspoken slip of an omega, Mr. Castiel Bennet! You, sir, who are engaged to my own daughter!”

He shot his cousin an angry look, which said that they would be having words about his betrayal later, and the beta blushed and looked away. But before Dean could say anything, his aunt was off again.

“I am outraged, nephew! Outraged that you would behave in such a manner. And with such a family. Could you in all honesty have chosen any worse? Do not think I am unaware of how low their connections are, and as for Mr. Castiel Bennet – a rude, insufferable, manipulative personage who, it seems, is determined to have you! He even had the audacity to tell me – me, of all people! – that I had no business in this matter!”
Dean gasped as realization of what she had said struck home.

“You have been to Longbourn?” he said, feeling anger start to rise within him. “You have actually approached Cas - Mr. Bennet - on this matter? How dare you!”

“I am your nearest relative, nephew”, she replied tartly. “Your concerns are my concerns, especially since you are engaged....”

“I am not engaged to Ruby, nor will I ever be”, Dean said, trying to control his rising temper. “You must tell her to look elsewhere for a husband. I love Mr. Castiel Bennet, and no other!”

“What has love got to do with it?” his aunt demanded, her voice rising. “What is love but a second-hand emotion? This is marriage! And to someone so eminently unsuitable, who is determined to ensnare you. And he actually threatened to have me thrown out of his parents' house! I shall have words to say to them if they should ever cross my path, I can tell you!”

“I fully intend to propose to Mr. Castiel Bennet”, Dean said firmly, “and I tell you now, aunt, there is nothing in this world you can say or do that would dissuade me!”

“I am sure the whole family will shun such a disastrous alliance!” she snapped. “And he shall never be admitted at Medlington whilst I am alive!”

Dean drew himself up to his full height.

“The family have more sense than you give them credit for, aunt”, he said angrily. “But so be it. Until the day Monseigneur Castiel Winchester crosses the thresh-hold of Medlington Manor, you shall no longer be admitted at Pemberley!”

His aunt gaped at him, finally seeing to realize just how determined he was. There was a stunned silence.

“Goodbye, nephew”, she said coldly. “I shall return to Kent, and wait until you have come to your senses.”

Dean smiled.

“I am quite sensible enough, aunt, so you do not need to wait. And soon – indeed, this very day - I shall go and claim my omega. Mr. Castiel Bennet will be mine!”

It was singularly fortunate that he caught sight of his cousin as he uttered those words, because Sam had gone a rather odd shade of red. As his aunt stormed noisily from the room, Dean quickly crossed the space between them. His cousin backed away, clearly alarmed, but found himself up against a wall.

“Sammy!” Dean said warningly. “What is it?”

The beta looked terrified. Dean felt panic fast replacing his anger. What had his cousin done?”

“I just..... I knew his heat was due, so I thought.... well....”

Dean's eyes narrowed. He was aware that the room reeked of potential alpha violence, but right now he did not care one jot. Sam's servants could clean up the blood later. He stepped even closer to his trembling cousin, and bared his teeth. Sam whimpered.

“I.... may have told someone else that fact”, the beta admitted reluctantly.
The next moment he was gasping for breath as Dean’s hand closed around his throat. His teeth sharpened, and he was the epitome of the alpha in full fury, ready to rip the heart out of any who stood between him and his omega mate. A servant opened the door, took one look at the two of them, and slammed it shut. His cousin whined in pain, but Dean was in no mood to be merciful.

“What?” he snarled as his cousin whimpered in terror. “Name him!”

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Dean overtook his aunt’s coach on its way out, which was good as it meant that the main gate was already open to let him charge through. The bridle-path that led to the cottage was rough, but Dean was too scared of what might be happening there to risk the better yet much longer paved road to the village and thence the London road. And Impala was sure-footed enough, even though he was riding her without a saddle.

A sharp storm broke out as he crested the low hill and the isolated building came into sight, but he barely even noticed the rain beginning to strike the ground around him, nor that it was soaking his fine clothes. He had but one thought on his mind, and that was his omega. If anything had happened to Cas because of what Sammy had done, he would tear his cousin limb from limb!

It was only when he pulled up outside the cottage and left Impala at the gate – she had more than enough sense not to wander off – that he belatedly noticed it. The front door of the cottage was wide open, despite the downpour. He stumbled up the path, but was only halfway to that door when a gut-wrenching cry of distress echoed through the open door.

“No!” he yelled in horror.

He was too late.

Chapter End Notes

And you thought the drama was over?
June 1801

Castiel Bennet was, he would have been the first to admit, not much to look at (even if a certain sex-crazed alpha could not keep his dick out of him!). But he had a good heart, and always tried to help everyone he could. And they do say that what goes around, comes around.

Back in the late seventies, a rich merchant had decided to retire to Longbourn, buying a small house in the village and keeping one servant whom he had brought back from the Far East. The merchant had enjoyed some two decades of retirement before passing on to the great trading-house in the sky, and unlike so many of his ilk had been thoughtful enough to ensure that his servant was provided for after his death. Said servant, who was considerably younger than his master, had fitted in surprisingly well with village life, and had become a particular friend of the young Castiel, much to his mother's unspoken displeasure. Akira, or Kevin as he was commonly known, had a cottage not far from Castiel's, and the baker always provided him with a free cake or drink when he called into the shop.

As Dean Winchester discovered when he burst panting and unannounced through the open door, the incomer had given Castiel something in return. A beta sat bruised, bound and gagged, whimpering in the far corner, and it took the exhausted alpha some time to recognize him.

"Cas!" he burst out, his attentions turning back to the omega. "Are you.... all right?"

"Of course", Castiel smiled. "Mr. Bartholomew Browne does however seem to have experienced a mild misunderstanding as regards my feelings towards him."

Dean stared at him in astonishment. From his corner, Mr. Browne raised a bruised face and scowled at them both, muttering something through his gag.

"Mis....understanding", Dean echoed, his breathing only slowly returning to normal.

"Indeed", Castiel said dryly. "He misunderstood that I am highly skilled in the art of ju-jitsu, and that I do not appreciate unwanted advances from someone who is not my True Mate."

Dean drew a deep breath, strode over to the captive beta and, with an effort, undid his binds. He left the gag in place.

"You!" the alpha growled at him. "Begone! And if I ever see you near my mate again, I will rip your heart out. If I can find it!"

The bruised beta whined and scurried for the door, disappearing down the pathway to the relief of both men.

"I am sorry for all this", Castiel said politely. "And you look soaked to the skin. Perhaps you should get out of those wet clothes?"
Dean seemed to belatedly detect the heat scent in the room. The alpha's eyes widened, and he let out a possessive snarl.

“Shut the door first”, Castiel smiled at him as he removed his own underpants. “We do not want any more unwelcome visitors, do we, beloved?”

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It was verging on comical, and Castiel had to bite his lip not to laugh, but a Dean Winchester about to do a claiming mate was... well, funny. Especially when he managed to fall over and knock his head on the fireside chair whilst trying to remove his clothes. The alpha glared suspiciously at the barely repressed chuckle, but Castiel just smiled brightly at him from his position lying ready on the bed, his legs raised.

“Are you ready yet?” he asked cheekily.

Dean nodded, words clearly difficult for him right now, and stumbled over to the bed. He knelt between Castiel's legs and scooted forward, lining up his cock with the omega's entrance. And then he was pushing home, and Castiel had never felt more complete. At least until he felt Dean's knot swelling, and turned his head away.

“Now, Dean!” he ordered.

The pain was sudden, and then he felt the alpha's mouth sucking at the wound as his own mind floated somewhere above them both. He was just about aware of Dean coming inside him, but most of his feelings were, frankly, shot. This was glorious, and Dean was now fully his.

Still, better not take any chances......

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Dean came to slowly, blinking in confusion as he tried to pull himself upright. Cas was watching him, and grinned when he saw realization hit home.

“Uh, Cas?” the alpha said, still sounding slightly dazed.

“Yes, Dean?” Castiel said calmly.

“You, uh, tied me up?”

“Yes, Dean.”

“Oh, why?”

Moving swiftly, Castiel positioned himself so he was squatting over the alpha's cock, which was already rising to attention despite its dozy owner. Dean strained at the four binds that held him, but as the previous visitor to the cottage had found out, tying knots was something the omega was highly skilled in. The alpha was going nowhere.

“Because I want this claiming to be thorough”, Castiel said calmly, smiling as the exhausted alpha's cock seemed to reach for his hole. Instinctively Dean tried to thrust upwards, but he was bound far too tight. “And, my beloved, I was you to understand that you are mine now. All mine!”
And with that he impaled himself on the alpha's cock, silently revelling in the look of stunned amazement on Dean's face as he was taken inside the omega. Oh, this marriage was going to be such fun!

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“So, uh, will you marry me?”

Castiel grinned evilly. Dean was standing (well, listing slightly) fully clothed at the door, looking exactly like an alpha who has just had seventy-two hours of virtually non-stop sex. To whit, he looked a complete wreck.

A happy one though, judging from his goofy smile.

“I suppose that I might consider you as a suitor”, Castiel said cheekily. “But I would need you to prove yourself worthy of me, Dean. Very, very often!”

The alpha flushed bright red. They had arranged that Dean would return to Netherfield to collect his things, and then come back and spend a further night at the cottage before taking his carriage back home, Castiel having extracted a promise from Dean not to murder or harm his cousin. And the alpha was sure that he and Castiel could find some way to pass that night together.

The omega brushed back Dean's hair, which had grown rather too long of late.

“I am sorry over Sammy”, the alpha said reluctantly. “His telling that bastard about your heat – that was unforgivable!”

“It was a foul act”, Castiel agreed, “though I have to say, the consequences have been most pleasant. Especially the horizontal ones.”

Apparently it was possible for the alpha to blush even more deeply. Dean leant down and kissed him, then went to mount his horse. Castiel smiled, and hoped that Charlie had kept the bakery going during his heat.

+++++

“You are lucky that you're so adorable!” Charlie grumbled when he finally showed his face in the shop. “I have been run off my feet keeping this place going whilst you played Ride-An-Alpha.”

“Riding an alpha is quite pleasant, actually”, Castiel grinned. “And Mrs. Pensnett in the dressmaker's shop tells me that you did have a certain friend from Morecambe House helping you out on more than one occasion?”

Charlie's blush was almost as bad as Dean's had been.

“She may have helped out a bit”, she admitted. “Her uncle wants to go back to the United States, you know. Apparently he and the English weather do not get on. It brings on his gout.”

“And is she going with him?” Castiel asked.

“Probably”, Charlie said, looking depressed. “I mean, what is there for her over here?”

“That reminds me”, Castiel said. “Dean proposed, and is taking me to live with him in Derbyshire. Of course that means I shall have to let go of the bakery.”

“Oh”, Charlie said, looking even more depressed.
“I did think of selling it on for a nominal amount to someone I thought could keep it going”, Castiel said, looking nonchalantly at her. “Someone who can be trusted. Someone who's name starts with a 'C'. Someone.....”

His next hint was lost beneath a torrent of red hair, as Charlie promptly kissed the living daylights out of him.

“I had damned well better be your maid-of-honour, Castiel!” she hissed. He smiled at her.

“We are to be married here in Longbourn, so yes, I think that could be arranged. And because you have done so much for me, I decided that rather than you getting me a wedding-present, I should get you one.”

“Cas, you shouldn't have!”

He took an envelope out of his pocket and handed it to her.

“The deeds to your cottage”, he explained. “I asked my father for it instead of my inheritance. I think Dean and I can just about scrape by on his.... oof!”

She had attacked him again.

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The wedding of Castiel Bennet and Dean Winchester was the social event of the year, and was attended by almost everyone of note in south Hertfordshire. Almost everyone. The Browne brothers down in St. Albans pleaded business in London, a business which, as things turned out, very soon after required their removal to the capital permanently. The sudden departure of the current tenant of Netherfield Park from the area was remarked upon by more than one person, at least until a few days prior to the wedding when it was announced that Mr. Samuel Bingley had revoked his lease and was staying in Kent with his aunt, Lady Naomi de Bourgh.

Charlie Middleton, the new owner of the Longbourn bakery, was indeed maid-of-honour at her best friend's wedding, whilst the groom's half-brother Adam Winchester came down from Derbyshire to be best man. Mrs. Bennet wept, Mr. Bennet smiled at his eldest son, and Lucifer and Samandriel hugged each other silly, since their own wedding was scheduled for the very next day.

Two days before the wedding, Castiel had received a letter from Balthazar and Metatron Wickham, congratulating them both and asking when they might wait on the happy couple at Pemberley.

“The twelfth of never!” Dean had growled, much to Castiel's amusement.

Castiel's friend Inias Collins sent him a congratulatory letter from himself and his husband, the two of them having decided to decamp to London in order to escape the wrath of Lady Naomi. She had written her nephew an angry letter of such pure vitriol that he had sworn that he would get his solicitor to draft a reply, cutting off all communication with her for good. In the circumstances (more of which anon), Dean bore the loss with surprising fortitude, though he did insist on lots of extra sex to help him get over such a grave disappointment.

He really had to learn about being careful what he wished for! But he enjoyed learning, at least this time!

Two weeks after his own wedding, Lucifer Pelthwaite was able to purchase Lynton Grange, less than four miles down the road from Pemberley, so the four of them became neighbours as well. All in all, Castiel could truly say that things had never been better.
Well.....

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