One Missed Text

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Archive Warning: Graphic Depictions Of Violence
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Character: Sam Winchester, Mary Winchester, Crowley (Supernatural), Rowena (Supernatural), Charlie Bradbury, Bobby Singer, Claire Novak, Annie "Alex" Jones, Jody Mills, Impala (Supernatural), Castiel, Castiel (Supernatural), Dean Winchester, Lady Toni Bevell
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One Missed Text

by anyrei, mugglerock

Summary
The Darkness was gone, the world had yet again been saved from obliteration, and for once it seemed as though everything might turn out alright. But things were never that easy for the Winchesters. Sam has been kidnapped, loved ones are returning from the dead, power-hungry bookworms are trying to take over the world, and Dean and Castiel struggle to understand what they mean to each other. Season 12 as presented through angst and emoticons.

Notes

This is Any: I play Cas. You might already know that, if you’ve read “Dear Dean”. Guess what? I found another victim to be my Dean and forced this plot bunny idea on her *evil laugh*. And then this happened.

And this is Frankie: I am not the genius writing partner Drunk_Idjit, in case you can’t tell. And I play Dean. Any had a great idea of doing a text epistolary, and I happily volunteered to play the Dean to her Cas. What started as a baby plot bunny has turned into this monster of a fic. More narrative than epistolary, but whatever.

P.S. Any again: She says she volunteered, but in reality I’ve cuffed her to a chair and told her it wasn’t an option.

P.P.S. Frankie again: Psh, like that’s a threat. I convinced her to wear a Zorro mask, so we’re good.

This is the Season 12 fangirls/boys deserve to have. You want glaring continuity errors fixed? You got it! You want Destiel? Done! You want Mary and Sam conspiring against Dean? You’ll get it! You want some of the wrongs the writers made right? Here you go! Also Amara didn’t just bring Mary back but also Charlie and Bobby.

Edited to add: We now have a joint tumblr for our writing. If you find yourselves amused by our antics or simply are just bored, follow us here!
One Missed Text
by anyrei & mugglerock
May 25, 11:32 PM

Dean: Dude you need to pick up
Dean: I'm not dead
Dean: Answer your phone man
Dean: You better not be in mourning!

Dean stared down at the phone in his hand, mentally willing his brother to respond, to call him back, something. A part of him wanted to hope that his brother was sleeping, or better yet, out with some lady of the night, working out his frustration and grief in a healthy, manly way. But the realistic part of him had a feeling of dread. Something wasn’t right.

Mary gently grasped her son’s shoulder, “Everything alright, Dean?”

He shook his head, “I’m not sure.” He looked at his phone and moved up his contact list to Cas’s name.
After three rings he heard a, “Whomever found this device and decided to call its contacts, that is a cruel prank. The owner is deceased.” His voice was strong, steady, and monotone, but it was Cas.

“It’s me, Cas. I’m not dead.”

A soft gasp before he heard a very timid, “Dean? I… I don’t understand.”

“I’ll explain later, buddy. Can you come get us, I’ll text you the coordinates and you can use your GPS to find us. We’re about 37 miles from the bunker.”

“Us?” Cas asked, his curiosity mixed with what sounded like uneasiness.

Dean let out a sigh, “Look, Cas, I promise I’ll explain, but if you trust me…”

“Of course I do.” Cas interrupted.

Dean smiled fondly. He couldn’t help but enjoy the happiness he felt at realizing just how far the two of them had come. “Me too, buddy.”

“Thank you, Dean.”

“So, uh, can you get us out of here?”

“I… Dean, there is something I have to tell you. I’m not at the bunker. Something or someone banished me and I can’t reach Sam.”

“Fuck!” Dean cried out, causing his mother to look at him with concern. He shook his head at her, nonverbally communicating with her that he’ll explain in a moment as he backed away, trying to give himself some privacy.
“I’m so sorry, Dean. You told me to look after him and I failed you…”

“No, Cas. Man, you couldn’t have known that was comin’…” He sighed, “How far are you from the bunker?”

“Not far. I could be there in an hour.”

“Okay, we’ll start walking in that direction. When you get back, grab the keys to Baby and come find us. Text me when you’re getting ready to leave and I’ll send you the new coordinates.”

“You’d… let me drive your car?” Cas asked in disbelief.

Dean smiled into the phone, even though it was short lived, coming to the realization that his ‘worst case scenario’ was playing out in regards to Sammy. “Of course, Cas. You’re like a brother, remember? You’re family.”

Cas let out a deep breath, “Thank you, Dean and I’m truly sorry… I should have… I’ll come as soon as I can.”

“Cas, I told you, you got nothin’ to be sorry about. I’ll just… I’ll talk to you soon, okay?”
Chapter 2

K were at these coordinates 39.8097 n at 98.5556 w

...and...and?...

Chapter 2

I'm at your "Baby". Where are you?

Dean, I'm a celestial wavelength of intent. I can multitask.

I don't give a damn what your secretarial skills are. No scratches on my girl.

Great thanks cas. See you soon

I'm at a stop sign now. And I would never "hurt" your "Baby".

We're by a welcome to Lebanon sign

Then prove it and stop texting while driving

Okay.

Dude! No texting and driving baby!

Dude seriously?

When I was a baby I had to

If you don't want me to text back, stop texting me!

Then prove it and stop texting while driving

I'm not the one who's driving!

I'm at a red light. Not driving.
May 26, 12:46 AM

Cas: I’m at your “Baby”. Where are you?

Dean: K were at these coordinates 39.8097 n at 98.5556 w

Cas: I’ll be there in ten minutes.

Dean: Great thanks cas. See you soon
Dean: We’re by a welcome to Lebanon sign
Cas: Okay.

Dean: Dude! No texting and driving baby!

Cas: Dean, I’m a celestial wavelength of intent. I can multitask.

Dean: I don’t give a damn what your secretarial skills are. No scratches on my girl

Cas: I’m at a stop sign now.
Cas: And I would never “hurt” your “Baby”.

Dean: Then prove it and stop texting while driving

Cas: 😝

Dean: Dude seriously?

Cas: 😜
Cas: If you don’t want me to text back, stop texting me!

Dean: I’m not the one who’s driving!

Cas: I’m at a red light. Not driving.

Dean put his phone on lock and angrily shoved it into his back pocket.

“So who are you, uh, talking to... on your... communicator?” Mary asked with uncertainty in her voice. Dean turned around and couldn’t help grinning about her using a word from Star Trek to describe his cell phone.

“It’s a phone. And I was talking to Cas. He’s... He’s my best friend.” For a moment, Dean thought about telling his Mom that Castiel was an angel, but he didn’t want to overwhelm her with too much information all at once. They had talked a lot on their walk back to Lebanon and he had tried to explain to her what had happened. He still couldn’t quite believe that he got her back. It had to be even more difficult for his mother to adjust to the situation. The last thing she remembered was... dying when Dean was four years old.
Dean couldn’t imagine what was going through her head right now.

“Cas? That’s an unusual name.”

“It’s short for Castiel,” Dean gave her a smile that she returned. If talking about Cas helped his mother to distract her thoughts from what had happened, Dean would gladly talk about his friend for hours. “He’s going to pick us up in a few minutes.”

“He’s named after the angel?” She asked curiously.

Dean decided to be honest about Cas now that his mother had asked him directly. She would find out sooner or later anyway. “No, he is the angel, Castiel.”

Mary looked at him with disbelieving eyes, “You’re telling me, that your best friend is an actual, real, honest-to-God angel?”

Dean grinned, “Remember when you told me as a kid that angels are watching over me? Turns out that was true.”

Mary just stared at him for a moment before she whispered in amazement, “And he’s coming to pick us up in a car? An angel… and he’s driving a car…”

Dean thought for a moment. How the hell was he supposed to explain the situation with Cas without telling her everything that had led up to it? And hell, it would probably be best to wait to tell her until there was somewhere for her to sit. “Uhh… That’s a long story, I’ll tell you, but I promise,” He gently grasped her shoulder in a comforting manner, “I’ll explain everything to you once you’re settled in, okay?”

She nodded and offered her son an appeasing smile. After some apparent contemplation, Mary turned to her son and said, “Where is John?”

Fuck. This was not a conversation he wanted to have. He took a deep breath, “Dad, uh… Dad passed away a few years ago.”
She gasped, her sadness and surprise evident on her face, “I never saw him in Heaven…”

“That’s because…” Dean didn’t know how to say it. How do you tell your mother that her beloved husband sold his soul and has been in Hell for years? He couldn’t do it, instead he just shook his head sadly.

Mary gasped again, but it sounded more like the start of a sob.

Dean pulled his mom forward and clung to her smaller frame, pressing his face into her neck. He took a deep breath to stop his own tears from falling. Before he could say anything else, a couple of headlights lit Dean and Mary up on the dark road side. It was Cas.

The angel pulled the Impala up along the side of the road, stopping a few feet away from their still hugging forms.

Dean and Mary finally pulled apart when the sound of the driver’s side door opened and Cas stepped out. His gaze lingered on Mary, a look of astonishment etched into his features.

“That’s our car! You still have it.” Mary smiled, clearly happy to see something so familiar.

“Of course I still have her.” He corrected, changing the subject he turned to his friend, “Uh, heya, Cas.”

Cas didn’t hesitate for a moment, walked straight up to Dean and hugged him. “I’m so glad you’re alive.”

He chuckled, gripping handfuls of Cas’s trenchcoat in his hands as he returned the hug, “Me too…”

Mary cleared her throat, politely interrupting their moment. “Um, hello. Castiel, is that right?”

Dean stepped away from his friend, feeling a little awkward. He straightened his posture, grateful the dark of night hid the heat that was staining his cheeks. Fuck, his first interaction with an angel of the lord in front of his mom was him clinging to Cas like a stupid teenager in love. He didn’t want to think just how damn inappropriate she might find that. Dean cleared his throat and gently pushed Cas
towards Mary, “Uh, yeah. Mom, this is Cas; Cas, this is my mom…”

“Mary Winchester. It’s an honor to meet you.”

Dean noticed Cas’s smile. It warmed his heart, his mom was reacting to meeting Cas the same way Sammy had. She seemed totally in awe of the angel; something his friend probably wasn’t used to seeing anymore considering his run of bad luck in the people skills department. Dean noticed Cas tried to not grimace as he slowly shook Mary’s hand, which was weird. He seemed really uncomfortable with the thought of someone being in awe of him. It broke Dean’s heart a little at the thought that his best friend felt he wasn’t good enough for that sort of response.

Cas shot Dean a questioning, almost imploring look. He probably wanted an explanation.

Mary continued to hold Cas’s hand, staring at the angel with a wondrous smile. Cas shot Dean a pleading look then, clearly uncomfortable.

At that Dean approached them and gently pulled Mary’s hand from Cas’s, “Alright, uh… anyway. Let’s go home.” He turned to face the angel and held out his hand expectantly. Cas tilted his head in confusion, clearly not understanding the gesture. Dean barked, “Cas! Key!”

And his angel had the audacity to pout before he scoured through his coat pocket. Cas handed over the key reluctantly, a sad look on his face. Dean was sure he had learned how to make that face from Sam… Um, wait. Did he just refer to Cas as “his” angel in his head? No, he was probably mistaken. It had been a long night and all. And he had nearly died. And he got his mom back. And Sam was god knows where… He clearly had bigger issues to focus on. It didn’t keep him from watching fondly as Cas voluntarily gave up sitting shotgun for Mary. It left a warm feeling inside of him.

Dean smiled fondly as he slid behind the wheel of Baby, he felt like he sat on something and rolled his eyes as he remembered his phone was in his back pocket. He leaned his right side up to pull the phone out and dropped it into his coat pocket. Dean revved the engine and sighed happily, throwing the car into drive he repeated, “Let’s go home.”
Frankie here: Our goal is to post a chapter a week, and if Any's stupid internet ever starts working again, we might be able to start posting two a week, but no promises! Short chapter this week, but this monster is getting longer and longer by the minute!

Chapter 3
May 26, 4:02 PM

Claire: R U busy?

Castiel: Define busy.

Claire: Nice sass. IDK if it means anything, but some guy named Bobby is here asking ??’s about U & the poor man’s Hemsworth brothers. Figured U guys should know.

Castiel: Bobby Singer?

Claire: I think that’s what he said. Is that a bad thing? Do I need to grab my hunting kit?

Castiel: No, that’s wonderful news.

Claire: U sure? I could take him.

Castiel: Yes Claire, I’m sure. He’s a good man and a very good hunter. I’ll tell Dean about it and we’ll call Jody later. Thank you for telling me.

Claire: K. YW.

Castiel: Your text messages continue to confuse me.

Claire: LOL. GL figuring it out.

Castiel: Is that code for something? Claire, is everything okay?

Claire: LOL. I’m fine. K is okay, YW is you’re welcome. GL is good luck. And LOL is

Claire: LOL is lots of love
Castiel stood up from the table in the library and walked to the kitchen where Dean and his mother were making something to eat. It had taken a while for Dean to settle down after they had arrived. Castiel had already told him that Sam was gone, but Dean still searched everywhere in the bunker, just in case. Especially when they had found Sam’s cell phone and (most likely) his blood on the floor. It wasn’t much blood, but it was clear that Sam hadn’t left voluntarily.

Dean had also found the banishing symbol. Someone with a vast knowledge of the supernatural world and the location of the bunker was obviously behind Sam’s abduction. Someone who also knew so much about them, that they were smart enough to get rid of Castiel.

Castiel had looked up a tracking spell in the library to find Sam, but came to the conclusion with a heavy heart that his grace was too weak to perform it. He knew that there was a solution for that problem, but he wasn’t sure if he should go there. Actually he was afraid of the significance of that solution.

Claire’s text message had been a welcome distraction from his thoughts. He was glad that he could at least tell Dean some good news. He was tired of failing him all of the time. Although Dean had told him that it wasn’t his fault that Sam got abducted, he still felt guilty about it. Lately he just felt more and more useless. Like he kept making mistakes and misjudging things with horrible consequences.

He just wanted to make things right again. To help Dean. To be the angel his friend deserved.

It was nice to see Dean and his mother sitting and eating together at the kitchen table like it was the most normal thing in the world. Dean didn’t smile very often and now he was sitting there with a real smile on his lips, eating a sandwich his mother had made him. Castiel wished that smile could stay there forever. He wanted nothing more than to make Dean happy.

“I’m sorry to interrupt your meal, but I’ve got an important message from Claire.”

Dean quirked his brow, “She okay?”

“I think so... Dean… Bobby is back, too.”

Dean dropped his sandwich, letting it fall back on the plate, “What? Bobby is alive? Like Mom?”
“It appears so. You may want to call Sheriff Mills?”

“Yes, yes, um, where is my phone?” Dean muttered half to himself, patting his pants pockets in his search.

“In your jacket, right pocket,” Castiel answered without hesitation, which made Dean look up for a moment in surprise.

“Thanks, Cas,” he mumbled and quickly retrieved his phone before he started looking for the Sheriff’s number. He smiled and held the phone up to his ear, “Jody, hey!” Dean stepped away for privacy, although still remaining in the room as he continued his phone call with her. It seemed silly of the hunter to do, he knew damn well that Castiel had superhuman hearing.

“Dean! I was just about to call you!”

“Yeah, yeah, Cas told me. Is… Is it really…” Dean started, unable to finish his sentence.

“Yes, I can’t explain it. He passed all of the tests, it’s really Bobby! I don’t know how, or why, but it’s really him.”

Dean visibly relaxed as he let out a sigh, “That’s…” He paused for a moment, “I’m texting you our address. Get your asses out here.” Dean appeared to think it over before he continued, “and I guess bring tweedle dee and tweedle angst.”
Frankie here: I'm on my way to Jamaica for a month, so you'll definitely only be getting one chapter a week for the next four weeks!

Meanwhile Any: is crying because guess what? No internet

Frankie: But we're going to do everything in our power to post a chapter every Saturday, come rain, shine, or evil internet stealing trolls

Any: Please someone call the Winchesters or Cas to slay these trolls!!! I need my internet!!!
P.S. I would even retype this from my phone to post another chapter!!!!

Frankie: LOL I love you, Any.

Any: I love you too, frankie :) 

Frankie: <3! And here's chapter four, we hope you like it!
Dean locked his phone and dropped it into his shirt pocket. He leaned back in the chair, kicking his feet up on the table in the bunker library. A moment of respite, a little time for him to think about what it all meant. His mom was back. Bobby was back. Were there others? Dean shook his head of the hopeful thoughts there. He couldn’t bring himself to feel as happy and as excited as he wanted to without Sammy there to share these moments with him.

He wasn’t sure how they were going to do it, but they were going to find Sam. The Winchesters had had enough hits throughout the years, they couldn’t be given a win just to have it yanked from under them. Although, considering their history, he should probably be grateful that there was still the possibility that Sammy was alive somewhere. A melancholy overwhelmed Dean in that moment. Maybe he should have known better, he hadn’t done anything to deserve any kind of positive karma, or what the hell ever.

_Fuck_. He needed to focus his thoughts on something different, something pleasant. He thought of Cas. Cas was free from Lucifer, and safe, and _home_. That was one win, he supposed. He must have done something good to end up having a fiercely loyal, freakin’ angel of the lord as one of his best friends. Dean smiled to himself, feeling his heart swell with a fondness he didn’t have for many people.

But because he was a bipolar motherfucker, his brief sweep of happiness dissipated. He didn’t deserve the angel’s blind devotion, considering how often he had used it against Cas. His friend was by no means innocent, but it always felt far more naïve when the angel made the wrong decisions for the right reasons. Dean had maimed, tortured, and killed; and sometimes he’d done it just for the hell
At least he had been able to learn from his mistakes, he knew that much. After years and years of bad decisions that not only caused the deaths of innocent strangers, but of people he and Sam had grown to consider family. Years of lying to each other for the so-called good, years of idiotic betrayals; he and Sam had finally gotten their heads outta their asses. Now they talked like actual grown ups.

Even though they had come so far, Dean still couldn’t help but sometimes feel like he was drowning in guilt. His guilt tainted him, tainted him beyond repair. He would let himself feel happiness, let himself bask in a brief period of joy, but he wouldn’t, he couldn’t let himself feel hope for too long. Hope for the outcome of Sam’s abduction to end happy, hope for more wins, hope for peace, hope for love. Again he thought of Cas and smiled to himself sadly. His internal reverie was interrupted by a soft,

“Dean? Are you alright?”

Someone’s ears must have been burning, Dean dropped his legs down, causing the chair to land forward with a hard crack onto all four legs. “Heya, Cas. Yeah, I’m okay.” His tone was soft and sad, even super-oblivious Cas was likely to catch it.

The angel approached him, offering a sympathetic smile, “I… I think I might have a way to find Sam…”

Dean instantly brightened up at that. He jumped up, excitement evident on his face, “How?”

Cas hesitated, “There’s a spell that can… That could track Sam’s location.”

“And you’re only telling me this now?” The hunter half-yelled, not sounding angry as much as incredibly annoyed.

He shrugged apologetically, “I… I had only just thought of it, my apologies for not recalling it sooner.”

Dean waved the apology off and gave Cas a questioning look, ”So you can track Sam? Find out where he is with that spell?”
Cas nodded hesitantly, “But I will need your help. I can't do it alone.”

“Anything, Cas. What do you need?” He stepped closer to the angel, his expression imploring, desperate to find his brother.

Cas took a deep breath, looking at him with his big blue eyes, which always made it difficult for Dean to look away.

Cas seemed slightly nervous, briefly looking at the floor of the library before he explained what he needed Dean for, “As you know… I’m not at full power at the moment. So, I need some of your energy to perform the tracking spell.”

“You mean like when you touched Bobby’s soul?” Dean asked to clarify the situation.

“Not exactly… This method wouldn’t be dangerous for you. Instead I… I could use our bond…” Cas explained quietly.

“Our what now?” Dean asked, his tone low and rife with confusion.

Cas was clearly uncomfortable speaking about it. “I only recently learned about that. When Amara tortured me and Lucifer, she used our bond.” He pointed to himself and then Dean, “To communicate with you. I wasn't aware we had one… Lucifer kindly explained it to me.” The last part of his explanation was dripping with sarcasm.

Dean didn’t really want to know what that meant. He suspected that Lucifer hadn't treated Cas all that well during the time he had possessed him. He actually wanted to forget all about that, because the reminder of how he felt the whole time, knowing that he could possibly have lost Cas forever… No, he really didn’t need to think about that.

“So, what bond?” Dean asked. He tried to keep the annoyance out of his tone, but failed. It wasn't that he was annoyed with Cas, it was more because his last experience with a bond had been damn creepy and near life-ruining.

“It’s from the time I rescued you from Hell. I used part of my grace to repair your soul and your
body. It formed a connection between the two of us. But you don’t have to worry about it. It doesn’t have any consequences for you. It just leaves us a very convenient method to power up the remainder of my grace, however briefly.”

Dean had a thousand different thoughts and questions running through his mind after Cas’s little speech. But that could wait until they had found Sammy. He tried to focus on the here and now.

“Okay… that’s… We’ll talk about this later, okay? What do you need me to do?”

“First I need some of your blood for the spell,” Cas took Dean’s hand and held it over a silver bowl he had already prepared earlier.

It was the same ingredients Cas had once used to find Anna. Dean wondered for a moment why Cas hadn’t already cut into his palm, he never saw him hesitate or ask before. Cas hovered the blade over his palm, holding his wrist with a strong grip. He looked at Dean and the hunter realized that he was asking his permission. Dean nodded and winced as the angel blade cut into his flesh, painting the bottom of the silver bowl with red splatters of his blood.

“Sorry,” Cas murmured as he put his blade on the table and lay his hand softly over Dean’s palm. It started to glow faintly as Cas dragged two fingers over the cut and healed it. He knew Cas didn't need to caress him like that to heal him and somehow that made his heart beat faster. Cas’s warm hand lingered another moment over his hands, the other still holding his wrist as they looked at each other.

Dean wished he knew what Cas was thinking when he looked at him like that. He carried so much pain in his eyes and in that moment Dean felt tired. Tired of seeing that broken and sad look in the faces of the people he gave a damn about.

“Thanks,” Dean rasped, wondering why his voice suddenly sounded so rough. Cas let go of his hand and Dean tried to not feel disappointed by that. “So what now?”

“I have to touch the place where you carried my handprint.”

Dean rolled up the sleeve of his t-shirt, “It was somewhere here. Faded over time. You remember where it was?”
“Yes.”

Dean looked at him expectantly. “Ready when you are.”

“There is another thing I should mention.”

Dean rolled his eyes, ”Of course there is.”

“For a moment we will be connected. You will feel everything I feel and I apologize in advance for making you uncomfortable.”

“I’m sure I can handle it, Cas.”

Cas looked away, but Dean could see that he wanted to say something and had apparently decided otherwise then. Dean noticed that this was obviously hard for Cas, his friend was taking a deep breath before he stepped in front of him, right into his personal space.

Cas took one of Dean’s hands and intertwined their fingers before holding them against his chest. “Come closer,” he murmured quietly as he looked up into his eyes, making Dean’s heartbeat stumble with the intensity of their moment. The tension between them was palpable and Dean could feel the hairs on the back of his arm rise.

“Lean your forehead against mine and stay like that. Hold me close and don't let go.”

Dean was sure that Cas’s voice had never been so low. He did as Cas told him, leaning his forehead against the angel's, trying to stay still. It was nerve-wracking. He closed his eyes and somehow that made him even more aware of how intimate their position was. He could feel Cas exhale against his lips, only inches away and weirdly tempting. Dean shook his head of those thoughts.

He felt Cas’s hesitation, his hand hovering over his shoulder before he took in a deep breath and laid his fingers on Dean’s skin.

The connection was like a shock. Dean felt the air leaving his lungs for a second as his mind was flooded with images and feelings that weren't his. The images flashed by like the creepy tunnel in
Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory. Everything lit up around him in bright lights and colors, colors that changed with the emotions being felt.

There were flashes of red and anger when images of Lucifer danced around him; flashes of blue and sadness when the images were of Sam; flashes of a softer blue and overwhelming guilt when the images became Claire and Charlie; and lastly, a soft blue-ish purple and a feeling he couldn’t quite place; a feeling of dread, and regret, and love? Dean felt dizzy as those colors enveloped him and he saw images of his own face flitter around him. What the hell did that mean? Just when he thought he was going to drown in all of the colors, he gasped and suddenly everything was normal. They were no longer touching, their connection was broken. Dean’s chest heaved as he gasped for air, he placed both of his hands on the table to steady himself. Cas’s gaze on him was strong and unyielding, his eyes shimmering with concern for the hunter.

Cas gently grasped Dean’s shoulder again, “Are you alright?”

Dean nodded, waving his friend’s concern off, “Yeah… Just uh, it was a… That was something.” He concluded, unable to think of how to put what he just went through into words.

“I am sorry for that, but I think it worked,” Cas apologized with a soft smile.

Dean smiled back before asking, “How do you know?”

In that moment Cas disappeared and a soft wind circled him briefly. Before Dean could call out for his friend, he heard the familiar sound of wings fluttering. Behind him Cas stood in the doorway, holding a basin and other ingredients he assumed would be used for the tracking spell.

Cas had a triumphant smile on his face as he started preparing all of the ingredients for the spell. He poured holy oil into the bowl and stirred the ingredients before he held his hand over it and spoke some words in Enochian. Dean wondered if he was imagining it, but somehow it sounded like Cas’s voice always got deeper when he spoke in Enochian.

“Zod ah ma ra la ee est la gi ro sa.” A red flame shot from the bowl and Cas gasped like he was in pain. He scrunched up his nose and staggered slightly, breathing heavily as he tried to hold his hand in place over the bowl. Dean suppressed his instinct to go to his friend and steady him, but refrained out of fear of disturbing his concentration. Finally Cas stepped back from the table, covering his face with his hands as if he had a headache, before he looked down with a concerned frown on his face.
“Did it work?” Dean asked, his tone uncharacteristically hopeful.

“No, it did not. There’s a serious binding and blocking spell around Sam’s soul. I don’t understand...” Cas rubbed his chin, his forehead scrunched up in confusion.

“Damnit!” Dean cried, ruffling a hand through his hair in frustration. “How the hell are we supposed to find him?”

The angel seemed thoughtful for a moment before he hesitantly suggested, “If... If we can figure out what the spell being used is, we could potentially find a counter-spell.”

“How the hell are we supposed to do that?”

Cas fidgeted nervously, almost like a frightened child. “Rowena?” He offered.

Dean growled, he knew Cas was right, but that didn’t mean he had to like it. After a few minutes of awkward and tense silence, Dean huffed, “Fine! I’ll text Crowley.”
Chapter 5

Chapter 5

I need you to do me a favor.

I'm not your whore.

A) don't even try to pretend you don't love me and b) what? No questioning about who this is? If this is actually Dean?

Who else would be so impertinent to disrupt my tea time?

Is impertinent another word for sexy? ;)

You're such a flirt, squirrel. Get to the bloody point. I'm a busy man.

What's in it for me?

I still have the cowboy hat...

Dean, Dean, Dean... Did you break up with your blue-eyed toy-boy? You know? The angel that follows you around like a puppy?

1) shut your mouth 2) shut your mouth and 3) seriously? Can you help me or not?

I could, of course. But why would you want my...

Are you sure he didn't just finally leave you to start a moose rescue?

Sammys missing

Are you sure he didn't just finally leave you to start a moose rescue?

No he didn't leave by his choice. Come on dude I'm begging here

I love it when you're like that. Begging suits you, squirrel.

Okay, I'll send you her number. But don't come running to daddy if she stabs you in your back... Or come running *kiss kiss*

Thx daddy

Delivered
May 28, 7:13 PM

Dean: I need you to do me a favor

Boris: I’m not your whore

Dean: A) don’t even try to pretend you don’t love me and b) what? No questioning about who this is? If this is actually Dean?

Boris: Who else would be so impertinent to disrupt my tea time?

Dean: Is impertinent another word for sexy? ;)

Boris: You’re such a flirt, squirrel. Get to the bloody point. I’m a busy man.

Dean: You don’t happen to have rowenas number do you?

Boris: What’s in it for me?

Dean: I still have the cowboy hat…

Boris: Dean, Dean, Dean… Did you break up with your blue eyed toy-boy? You know? The angel that follows you around like a puppy?

Dean: 1) shut your mouth 2) shut your mouth and 3) seriously? Can you help me or not?

Boris: I could, of course. But why would you want my dear mother’s number, pray do tell?

Dean: Sammys missing

Boris: Are you sure he didn’t just finally leave you to start a moose rescue?

Dean: No he didn’t leave by his choice. Come on dude I’m begging here

Boris: I love it when you’re like that. Begging suits you, squirrel.

Boris: Okay, I’ll send you her number. But don’t come running to daddy if she stabs you in your back… Or come running *kiss kiss*

Dean: Thx daddy

Dean rolled his eyes at the device in his hands, before placing it on the table between him and Cas. He shook his head in amusement and looked up to be met with an intense, incredibly blue-eyed, stare.

Cas tilted his head, clearly curious about their exchange.

Dean shrugged, “He’ll text me her number when he locates it. Apparently she’s not on his speed dial…” He chuckled.
The phone lit up with a text notification. Cas looked down at the device and picked it up, “Why is Crowley listed in your phone under Boris?” he asked. Dean apparently didn’t know how to change his settings to hide the text message preview on his locked screen. All the message showed was the name “Boris” and a picture of Crowley holding up a bottle of whiskey in salute to the camera. Cas handed the phone back to its owner.

Dean chuckled again when he glanced down before pocketing his phone. “You know, Rocky and Bullwinkle?”

At Cas’s confused stare, Dean elaborated, “Come on, man! Rocky and Bullwinkle. A tall clumsy moose, and a flying squirrel?”

Cas shook his head.

Dean put on a very bad Russian accent, “Boris and Natasha always referred to Rocky and Bullwinkle as ‘Moose’ and ‘Squirrel’.” Dean stopped using the accent and added, “It’s what Crowley calls me and Sam.”

Cas continued to stare, his head tilted in the way Dean found stupidly endearing. He quirked his brow at the confused angel, “I thought Metatron downloaded like, all of the Matrix into your brain?”

“I don’t know, perhaps whatever you are referencing is so esoteric, it was not considered significant enough to include?” He offered in response with a shrug.

“You take that back!” Dean threatened before a huge grin broke out on his face.

The angel raised his arms up, feigning surrender, sharing a smile with his friend.

In that moment, Dean found himself taken aback by the beauty he saw in the other man’s visage. It had been far too long since he saw his friend smile. Not like they had a lot to smile about at any given moment…

Cas’s blue, seriously blue, eyes lit up. He could have sworn they were sparkling, as corny as that sounded. The way the skin around his friend’s eyes crinkled, the way his mouth quirked up a little
higher on one side. It was pretty damn awesome. Dean let out an exaggerated sigh, but his smile and look of fondness for his friend belied what he was really feeling. He slung his arm over Cas’s shoulders and went on to explain, “So, Boris and Natasha are these two Russian spies who always seem to have their evil master plans thwarted by Rocky, the squirrel and Bullwinkle, the moose…”

The following day, Dean had successfully gotten Rowena’s number and convinced her to meet them at a neutral location in a couple of days. And by convinced, he meant she had spat out in her Scottish brogue, “It’s only because I’m indebted to you for my life, and I will be in no one’s debt, especially not a Winchester!” Before she hung up on him.

Dean was in the kitchen, preparing dinner for the three of them. While Cas hovered around him, looking helpless and anxious, Mary was seated at the table, sipping at a cup of coffee and watching the two men with an amused smile.

“Cas! Stop hovering! If you want to make yourself useful, grab me some paprika and thyme.” Dean barked, finally fed up with his friend’s fidgeting.

“I would love to help,” Cas answered, his blue eyes impossibly huge. He dove for the spices in the apparent hope of not losing a single second to fulfill Dean’s order.

The hunter laughed and sidled up next to the angel, placing his hand over Cas’s to still it, “Whoa, there! It’s not life or death, man. It’s just dinner.” Dean tried to not think about how well his friend’s hand fit under his own.

Cas sighed, his eyes cast downward at the rough yet strangely soft hand covering his. He looked up, eyes rife with pain and regret, ”I just... I would really like for something I touch to not be destroyed. I want to be of use to you.” The angel turned his gaze downward again, regret and a profound sorrow on his face.

“Hey, hey. Look at me…” Cas turned his face away, so Dean lifted his hand to his friend’s chin. Gently, he tilted Cas’s head upward, forcing him to look Dean in the eye. His heart felt like it cracked in that moment, seeing those blue eyes shimmer with unshed tears. A solitary tear fell and Dean brushed it away with his thumb, “Cas… Not everything you touch gets destroyed. I mean, look at me,” He stepped back from the angel and extended his arms outward in an offer, “I’m in one piece…” He shrugged and gave his friend a comforting smile.
Cas returned the smile, somewhat shy and hesitant, before he looked back at the ingredients, “Thank you, Dean.” He pushed the spices on the counter back and forth with his free hand before he looked up again, “What is this called? The food that you’re making?”

“It’s uh… It’s a paprika chicken and spinach in a white wine butter and thyme sauce,” Dean rubbed the back of his neck, feeling a little embarrassed. He wanted to make their first real dinner with Mary special. And he needed a distraction from the constant worry for his brother. Dean returned to the pot on the stove to sprinkle the ingredients into the poor man’s remoulade he was making.

Cas leaned in close to the hunter, watching in fascination. Sometimes their shoulders brushed or even their hands when Dean asked Cas to hand him something he needed. It was easy to work with Cas, like he was completely tuned in to Dean’s needs, anticipating his every move. Dean wondered when he had become comfortable with Cas having his laser like focus on him. If he was honest with himself, he was more than just comfortable. Every time they shared a look, he felt like he could get lost in his friend’s eyes. Not lost in the big bad wolf on the way to grandmother’s house kind of way; more like when he looked into the angel’s eyes Cas was somehow able to ground him, assuring him he’d always be there at his side and supporting him. Like he always did.

He offered Cas the spoon to taste-test the sauce, holding it out to the angel’s lips with his free hand held underneath to prevent any drops landing on the floor. Cas quirked his brow in confusion, clearly unsure of what to do. Dean chuckled, “Taste the sauce, tell me what you think…”

As Cas’s lips wrapped over the side of the spoon, Dean’s eyes darted up and down, looking the angel over in fondness. When Cas closed his eyes and made an appreciative sound, Dean had to bite his lip to stifle his treasonous vocal cords. His heart rate was probably in the 300’s, considering how hard the little muscle was pounding against his chest.

“The combination of molecules form a tasteful bond on my tongue. I’m glad my grace isn’t at full power at the moment, so that I can enjoy this… with you.”

Dean quirked his brow in apparent confusion, “Wait, I thought you used my soul for a power refill?”

The angel nodded, “And then I performed a very energy draining spell. It sadly doesn’t work as a permanent solution.” Cas explained quietly. He almost looked as though he was ashamed of admitting that.

“But you can still fly?”
“Yes, you healed my wings. That is permanent.”

Dean couldn’t help but feel particularly pleased at having been of some significant and positive use. He wasn’t even pissed over the weird, accidental bond thing. It healed his best friend’s wings, as far as he was concerned the bond was going to be counted as a win for them.

They shared a smile and Dean held Cas’s gaze probably longer than was decent or truly platonic. His breath hitched. The tension between them was electric, he was sure of it. He was shaken out of his reverie by his mother clearing her throat. Dean coughed and took a step back from the angel.

“It’s nice to see that you enjoy cooking so much, Dean.” The mischievous smile that played on his mother’s lips told Dean that he and Cas had inadvertently put on a show for her. And damn it, why did he always forget that other people were around when he was with Cas?

“Uh, thanks, Mom. Yeah, it’s kind of nice to have a kitchen for once…”

“And I’m sure good company helps as well?” Mary’s grin got even wider and Dean could see how similar her smug grin was to the one of his brother.

Dean rolled his eyes at the woman and turned his attention back to the sauce, hoping that neither Mary nor Cas noticed the redness tinging his cheeks. Dean kept his focus on anything but the angel standing too close for comfort, that he almost didn’t hear the faint gasp of his friend. He turned to Cas, “You okay?”

“Yes. I’ve just received a text message. It’s from Charlie.”
Thank you for all your comments and kudos so far :D! I hope you will enjoy the new chapter. Let us know ^___^! We love comments as much as Cas loves Dean, bees and this one place in Heaven with the man flying his kite.
May 29, 6:22 PM

Charlie: Charlie to Cas, Charlie to Cas, do you read me?

LOL. That's one expression I know from Claire. :) Dean isn't happy with me, that I won't give him my phone. He says I won't get any food.

Tell him his queen says that withholding food is a dick move, he'll get all the Charlie time he wants.

Are you guys at the bunker?

I'm a couple of days drive from you guys if you are. I don't know how, but I woke up in an abandoned house in Oregon.

We have a lot to tell you. Dean says he wants you to come... pronto.

Well, I don't have wings, so unless you happen to know some sort of celestial being who could give me a hand with that, he's gonna have to wait until I can find a car.

I can get you! I've got my wings back!

Where are you?

Don't mind that, just pray to me. I will find you.

Aww, that's great, Cast. I'm super happy for you!

You got it, see you soon!
Castiel: Yes! Charlie. We can’t believe you’re alive! Dean is standing next to me.

Charlie: Tell that bitch thanks a lot for changing his number, thankfully I can count on my angel BFF.

Castiel: He says he is sorry, your majesty? I don’t know what BFF means. I’m confused and Dean wants to take away my phone.

Charlie: LOL, damn right he’s sorry. And BFF’s are what you and me are. Best Friends FOREVER. And tell him his queen commands that he not steal your phone.

Castiel: LOL. That’s one expression I know from Claire. :) Dean isn’t happy with me, that I won’t give him my phone. He says I won’t get any food.

Charlie: Tell him his queen says that withholding food is a dick move, he’ll get all the Charlie time he wants.

Charlie: Are you guys at the bunker?

Charlie: I’m a couple of days drive from you guys if you are. I don’t know how, but I woke up in an abandoned house in Oregon.

Castiel: We have a lot to tell you. Dean says he wants you to come… pronto.

Charlie: Well, I don’t have wings, so unless you happen to know some sort of celestial being who could give me a hand with that, he’s gonna have to wait until I can find a car.

Castiel: I can get you! I’ve got my wings back!

Castiel: Where are you?

Castiel: Don’t mind that, just pray to me. I will find you.

Charlie: Aww, that’s great, Cas! I’m super happy for you!

Charlie: You got it, see you soon! <3<3

Castiel: :-)

“I’m going to bring Charlie here,” Castiel smiled at Dean, who still clearly couldn’t believe that she was alive again. He could see the battle in Dean’s eyes. He wanted to be happy, but he knew that his worry for Sam was holding him back.

Castiel laid his hand on Dean’s shoulder, “We’re going to get him back, Dean.”

Dean smiled at him, a sad smile that didn’t reach his eyes, but still conveyed a gratefulness towards Castiel for his attempt at consoling him. Dean laid his hand over Castiel’s for a moment and squeezed it before he turned away from him, “Don’t keep the queen waiting, Cas.”

Castiel could hear Charlie’s prayer and couldn’t suppress a smile when she called him “dreamy angel” before he spread his wings to fly to her. What Dean called “teleporting” had always been an inaccurate description, but he had never corrected him on that. Every time he had tried to explain
aspects of his powers, Dean interrupted him with a, “Forget I asked.”

It felt good to fly. He almost felt like a real angel again.

Almost because he wasn’t sure about the current situation with his grace. The fact that he could fly again was something he never thought would be possible. He had never believed the short union with Dean would lead to healing his wings. Their bond was so much stronger than he had anticipated. But it wasn’t a permanent solution and every time he used his grace, it would grow weaker again. He would always need Dean to replenish his grace and that thought bothered Castiel. He didn’t want to be a burden to Dean.

Castiel had dreaded that union though. He had been afraid that Dean would find out about his feelings for him, he did his best to hide them from the hunter. Castiel had loved Dean since the first time he had laid his eyes on the hunter’s soul in Hell. And he knew he would never love anything more in his existence. He also knew that he would lose Dean if he ever found out about that.

Dean longed for a female partner and although Castiel didn’t have a gender, his vessel… his body was undeniably male. The hunter wouldn’t accept Castiel’s feelings if he ever found out and Castiel was sure he would lose Dean’s friendship in the process.

The last thought caused Castiel’s landing at Charlie’s position to not be very graceful. He tried to not let it show though and he doubted Charlie had noticed as she whirled around and hugged him fiercely.

“It’s good to see you, Charlie.” Castiel had liked Charlie since the first moment he had met her. She radiated so much joy and love, it always felt good to be around her.

“Do you have things you want to take with you?” Castiel asked as he looked around the small cabin.

Charlie showed off the satchel draped over her shoulder and across her chest, it contained the few worldly possessions she had left. “Everything I own is right in here,” she proclaimed rather proudly as she tapped the bag. Before Castiel could reply she punched him in the arm playfully.

Castiel wondered why all of the humans kept doing that to him. He shook his head slightly and touched her forehead as he spread his wings and flew them to the bunker.
As they gained their momentum back, Charlie shook her head in amazement, “Whoa! If I'd known that taking the Cas express was so cool, I would have made you do it more often!”

“I think you’re the first person to express any appreciation about this form of travel.”

She chuckled, “Screw the naysayers, angel is the ONLY way to travel!”

Castiel smiled at that and he turned around when Dean walked into the room. Seeing Dean’s expression when his eyes landed on Charlie made Castiel’s heart clench painfully.

Dean was smiling, truly smiling, it was breathtaking. He strode forward, determined, with purpose and before either of them could greet the hunter, he grabbed Charlie. Dean lifted and spun her around before pulling her into a tight hug. The joy on his face was unlike anything Castiel had ever seen before.

“Hi, kiddo.” He whispered as he finally let go and gently pet the top of her head.

“Hey,” she smiled brightly before she punched Dean in his shoulder, “So whose soul did you sell to get me back?”

Dean let out a bark of laughter, “Let’s just say I have an interesting relationship with the king of Hell.” He winked at her.

Charlie lowered her eyebrows, “Please tell me no one sold his soul for me. I’m serious!”

“Nah, no one’s interested in this soul…”

Castiel stared at Dean, annoyed that he would even think that, “That’s not true, Dean.”

Dean appeared taken aback by that comment, his brow quirked up in curiosity as he looked at Castiel, “You can’t possibly tell me someone is interested in my tainted freakin’ soul?”

“I don’t know why you believe your soul is tainted. It’s the most pure and bright soul I’ve ever
seen,” Castiel growled, before he realized that was probably too much information and not something Dean wanted to hear. But Dean needed to know that. Even it made him uncomfortable.

Dean’s mouth was agape, clearly unsure of how to respond, “I…” He faltered. He stared at Castiel for a few moments, shaking his head slightly as if he disagreed, but didn’t know how to argue. “Really?” He finally asked.

“Yes,” Castiel stated firmly, willing Dean to believe his words. Dean’s broken question was almost too much for Castiel to handle and he needed the hunter to know how sincere he was.

Charlie cleared her throat next to them and made Castiel look away from him for a moment. She shook her head as she stared at both of them in disbelief, “You guys are seriously too much! And Dean, you haven’t answered my question! Not that I’m not grateful, because duh, but how about you give your queen a well deserved update?”

Dean cleared his throat, denoting his discomfort at having been caught in an intimate moment with Castiel. He sighed, “It’s kind of a long story…”

“You could give me the cliff notes version?”

He shrugged, “You asked for it.” Dean took a deep breath before continuing, “Basically, I had a bond with God’s sister, God is Chuck by the way, because after we removed the mark of Cain she was released from her cage and was so grateful, she got, I don’t know, infatuated with me? Anyway, she was going to destroy the world because she hated that her brother chose the world over her. Lots of bullshit, Full House moments, and weird team ups between witches, demons, angels, Lucifer, and Chuck. Long story short, our attempt to subdue her backfired and in the end we pissed her off more. The sun was dying because Chuck was dying. We made a bomb out of souls and I was going to kamikaze her in the hopes of at least stopping the death of everything. Instead I Dr. Phil’ed the shit out of the situation, Amara and Chuck made up and as a reward she brought you, Bobby, and my mom back. At least, I’m guessing that’s why…”

Charlie shook her head, clearly trying to process everything she had just heard. “I can’t leave you guys alone for five minutes…” She murmured, before she smiled, “I’ll get to meet your Mom? Um… Wait a sec…” She looked around, “Where’s Sam?”

Castiel laid his hand on Dean’s shoulder, answering her question for him, “He’s been kidnapped… We don’t know who did it, but we’re trying to find out.”
“Shit… I’ll help in anyway I can.”

“Thanks, kiddo,” Dean added quietly.

Charlie waved him off, “Psh, you’re family, no thanks required.”

Dean couldn’t stop staring at her, a look of amazement as well as genuine fondness. Castiel felt overwhelmed in that moment with the emotions that were pervading his mind. Dean wasn’t looking at Charlie like he looked at Sam, and for some reason that worried him. Could Dean feel more for her than a familial bond?

Charlie ruffled Dean’s hair, giggling over his new haircut, playing with the longer strands on top before rubbing her hand along the nearly shaved sides. He responded by gently pulling on her hair and they proceeded to get into a playful fight involving tickling.

Castiel watched them, baffled by the fluttering of different emotions. He wanted to smile, to share in their joy; but the unhelpful and negative part of himself reminded him that it was not his to share. He feared he and Dean would never have such an easy and joyful camaraderie. They’d been through far too much. That realization hurt more than he thought was possible. Physical pain he understood, it made sense. It was tangible. Emotional pain was something altogether different. That sort of pain was both better and worse at the same time. Seeing their easy playfulness, questioning Dean’s feelings for the delightful woman, in that moment Castiel realized; he was **jealous**.

The door to the library slammed open and in walked Mary, Bobby, Jody, Claire, and Alex followed by a lot of excited shouting and commotion. Castiel let out a relieved sigh at no longer having to concentrate on his negative emotions.

Dean had been feeling a little overwhelmed with being surrounded by so many people he loved, people he had thought were long gone, it was like it was too good to be true. He couldn’t bring himself to feel as happy as everyone was. Not with Sammy missing, not knowing if his brother was okay, or even alive. Their excitement and happiness felt tainted because he wasn’t able to share it with him. This had been something they wanted, pretty much their whole lives. It wasn’t fair that Sam was missing out on it.

Dean was hiding in the greenhouse. No one would think to look for him there and being surrounded
by the plants and flowers gave him a weird sense of calm. Cas had taken over the care of the greenhouse and the garden. He had told Dean once that he found it satisfying to take care of and watch these plants grow, literally springing to life. After years of being behind countless deaths and destruction, it was cathartic to actually breathe life into something for once. Dean’s musings were interrupted by his phone buzzing with a text notification.

May 29, 9:27 PM

Cas: Where are you?

He smiled at the screen. Good old Cas, leave it to him to notice Dean had disappeared.

May 29, 9:28 PM

Dean: In the greenhouse just needed some space

Dean pocketed his cell phone, knowing Cas would be there shortly. He assumed the angel would mojo his way up to the greenhouse, but after several minutes and Dean assuming that he wasn’t coming, he heard the door open and a tentative,

“Dean?”

He turned around and saw Cas poking his head through the door, seemingly hesitant to step in further. Huh. Flying Charlie must have weakened his grace. Although it was probably still better than it was before.

Dean smiled, “You can come in, Cas. I wouldn’t have told you where I was if I wanted to be left alone.”

That appeared to appease Cas as he made his way into the greenhouse. He approached Dean, gently placing a hand on the hunter’s shoulder, “Are you alright?”

Dean shrugged noncommittally, “I’m fine.”
Cas eyed him skeptically, clearly not buying what Dean was trying to sell, “Dean.” His tone stern, as if he was talking to a child. The angel said nothing else, just stared at Dean as though he was willing the man to talk to him.

After a few minutes of a silent staring contest, Dean finally sighed in acquiescence, “I’m not fine.” Cas’s head tilted again in question. That was going to be the death of Dean, it was stupidly adorable. Dean shook his head, “It’s just… Sammy.”

The angel nodded, as if a lightbulb turned on. “We’ll find him, Dean.”

Dean was overwhelmed with a sense of déjà vu in that moment. Sam constantly saying those words to him when he had been so distraught over Cas saying yes to Lucifer. It made him miss his brother all the more. His lip wobbled slightly, and in that moment Dean got angry. Angry at the assholes who took Sam. Angry at whatever fucked up karma he had that gave him his family back, but took away the one person who meant more to him than anyone else. Angry at himself for letting his emotions get to him. He wasn’t going to cry.

Dean pushed Cas’s consoling hand from his shoulder and turned his back to the angel to stare at the couple of cacti that Cas had gotten ready to repot. He swiped the empty pots off of the table, feeling strangely satisfied with the loud crunching sound of ceramic shattering on the stone floor.

Cas gave the hunter some space for a few moments before speaking. “Dean… I know it doesn’t matter what I say, but we all will do anything to get Sam back. And you know Sam. He’s probably already making the lives of his kidnappers a living hell.”

Dean sighed, “I suppose you’re right.” He thought about what Cas had said and turned back to face him, “Hey! What you say does matter, you should know that by now…”

Cas looked down, trying to hide the little smile that played around his lips. A smile that didn’t go unnoticed by Dean. “Did you know that Sam taught me a trick he uses sometimes when he’s in trouble?”

Cas's lips quirked up in the crooked half smile he gets when he's thinking of something funny. It was nice to see, his friend didn't smile enough. Whatever happened after they found Sam, And they would find Sam. Dean made a promise to himself in that moment that he would make sure he'd get the angel to smile like that at least once a day.
“It’s... he calls it his ‘puppy eyes’. And Sam said he could get away with murder with that look. I don’t think I would go as far to believe that, but I’ve seen him make it and he might be right.”

Dean smiled. He knew his brother’s pathetic puppy dog look was pretty good, but it never worked on him. Cas seemed so convinced that Sam was going to be safe because of it, he didn’t have the heart to tell him that his brother had been joking with him. Instead Dean lied, “I don’t think I’ve ever seen it.” He thought for a moment. He could have fun with this, “Can you show me?”

Cas smiled eagerly, obviously happy to show Dean what he had learned. He stepped a bit closer to Dean, looking down for a moment. When he looked up again, Dean felt like he had been punched in the chest with a ton of bricks. Cas’s eyes were wide, with a profound sadness in them, his lips slightly parted with a silent question that spoke of vulnerability.

Dean laughed, a nervous and unsure sound, “Uh, I don’t think that’s how Sam does it, Cas.”

Cas raised an eyebrow at that, looking slightly disappointed, “Did I do it wrong? I thought I finally knew how to do it...”

The hunter smiled at his friend. He really needed to stop thinking that this badass, angel of the freakin’ lord, was adorable. It was probably one of the last things he should be thinking. “I didn’t say it was wrong, but if Sam could pull off a puppy dog look like that, shit, I’m sure at least one of the apocalyptic moments in our lives wouldn’t have happened...”

The smile Dean earned with that comment was radiating and took his breath away. How he was able to put it there on Cas’s face would always be a little bit of miracle to him.

“So you think it works?”

Dean smirked, “Dude, if it worked any better you could probably use it to start the evil league of evil and take over the world...”

“That’s good to know... Not that I would like to take over the world... again... But maybe this new learned skill will help me to get your forgiveness. I forgot to bring the pie you had asked for.”
When Cas gave Dean the exact same puppy dog look, the hunter burst into laughter. His eyes crinkled as he closed them and bent forward, holding his hands against his stomach the longer and louder the laugh became. Still bent over, he reached out and held Cas’s forearm as he tried to compose himself. After a few minutes he took a deep breath and stood up straight again.

At Cas’s confused look, Dean shook his head in amusement. He had needed that. “Come here, man.” Dean half demanded as he pulled the angel forward and hugged him. He wrapped his arms around his friend and whispered into his ear, “Thanks.”
Chapter Notes

A shorter/filler chapter for this week, but next week we will more than make up for it! Thank you so much for reading and leaving kudos/comments!

Chapter 7

Messages
Her Majesty
Details

Are you sure you don't need backup for meeting the wicked witch?

Lol thanks your highness. But the last time you were in a room together it didn't end well and I'd like to keep you safe.

I can look after myself, Dean. Don't make me into a damsel in distress.

Fine then we need rowenas help and we don't need you murdering her.

Yes, that sounds more like me. I accept that.

Hate to break this to you red but you're about as terrifying as a bunny rabbit.

You should know that in every game I've ever played, it's always deadly to attack a rabbit. Never disrespect the bunny... And the chickens. It's the terror in disguise.

Okay Tim the enchanter.

So you took dreamy Cas with you?

Yes just to be safe. And why do you call him dreamy? I thought you liked the fairer sex your
May 31, 12:35 PM

Charlie: Are you sure you don’t need back up for meeting the wicked witch?

Dean: Lol thanks your highness. But the last time you were in a room together it didn’t end well I’d like to keep you safe

Charlie: I can look after myself, Dean. Don’t make me into a damsel in distress.

Dean: Fine then we need rowenas help and we don’t need you murdering her

Charlie: Yes, that sounds more like me. I accept that.

Dean: Hate to break this to you red but you’re about as terrifying as a bunny rabbit

Charlie: You should know that in every game I’ve ever played, it’s always deadly to attack a rabbit. Never disrespect the bunny…. And the chickens. It’s the terror in disguise.

Dean: Okay Tim the enchanter

Charlie: So you took dreamy Cas with you?

Dean: Yes just to be safe. And why do you call him dreamy? I thought you liked the fairer sex your majesty?

Charlie: That didn’t change, but I have eyes, you know? He’s so dreamy he could probably change everyone’s sexuality with a smoldering look.

Dean: Okay space cowboy step away from the bong and the fanfiction

Charlie: You’re such a Klingon.
Dean: Does that make you a tribble?

Charlie: You keep picturing me with fluffy fur. It’s not healthy, Dean.

Dean: And you keep mooning over a Vulcan

Charlie: If you say so, Kirk.

Dean: Captain of the USS starship enterprise and besties with a bad ass alien. I’ll take that compliment thank you

Charlie: You know that Kirk was totally in love with Spock, right?

Dean: That’s it your internet privileges have been revoked

Dean pocketed his phone and returned his attention to the annoyed looking witch who was at that moment yelling at Cas for accidentally knocking into the table with all of the ingredients for the spell. “Alright, Rowena, you can stop harassing Cas. It was a damn accident.”

“If you want this to work, you should put your angel somewhere he isn’t in the way. Now let me work in peace. I have to concentrate,” She shooed Cas away before she raked her hands through her long hair and sighed deeply, looking back to the potions and books on the table in front of her.

“How long will this take?” Cas growled at the witch, ignoring her comments.

Rowena rolled her eyes dramatically and gave the angel an exaggerated look, “It takes as long as it takes. It takes even longer when you continue to interrupt me, my feathery friend.”

“I am not your friend,” Cas bit out, punctuating every word as the air buzzed with tension between both of them.

Rowena barked, “Winchester! Get him away from me or I’ll turn your pet into the lapdog he is!”

Cas was about to argue again when Dean grabbed the angel by the elbow, pulling him a few feet away from the witch. “Come on, dude, we need her. You’ve gotta stop annoying her.”

Cas’s lips were thin with anger before he snapped at Dean, “You're taking her side?”

“Dude! Cas, it’s not about sides! She’s helping us to find Sam, think of the bigger picture here!”
Dean huffed.

Cas looked at him like he couldn’t believe what he had just heard, “You are telling me to think of the bigger picture? I certainly don’t need to be reminded of that! Have you even thought that maybe we shouldn’t trust her? She always has her own agenda! We shouldn’t just let her do this without having some control and taking her words at face value!”

“Dude! It was your idea to ask her for help, remember?” Dean let out an aggravated sigh as he ruffled his hand through his hair in frustration.

“Because we don’t have another choice. That doesn’t mean we have to trust her! I want to know what she is doing. Why should we abide by her rules?”

“Because she’s holding all the cards, man! We can’t find Sam without her help, even you can’t track him. The way I see it, she’s our only shot at getting my brother back.” Dean’s tone went from loud and angered to soft and sad by the time he finished responding to Cas’s question.

The anger suddenly left Cas’s eyes and turned apologetic, “I’m sorry, Dean. It’s just… I’m angry mostly with myself, that I couldn’t help you and that we need her to find Sam. I just wish I could do more. I feel rather useless.”

Dean clapped Cas on his shoulder softly in a comforting gesture, “Nah, man. I get it. It sucks feeling helpless, but we’ve gotta get through this without biting each other’s heads off if we want to find Sammy and bring him home, okay?”

At Cas’s nod, Dean walked up to Rowena. “Can we get at least a rough estimate of when this will be done?”

Rowena huffed out a sigh, “That’s it! If you aren’t pestering me like children begging for a biscuit, then you’re working through your marital issues with each other!” She murmured a soft incantation and waved her hands in Dean and Cas’s directions.

Dean opened his mouth to ask her what she had done and realized he couldn’t speak. He turned to Cas and the angel was mouthing something but no words were coming out.

Rowena smirked victoriously at the pair of them, “There. That’s better.”
AN: Any and I had so much fun writing this chapter. We hope you enjoy reading it! Also, in case you were wondering, not every single text exchange will have a graphic. It’s rather labor intensive, not to mention the graphics could potentially disrupt the flow of the story; so only the opening texts will get graphics.

Chapter 8

**Messages**

_12:49 PM_  
**Fergus**

I had to mute your precious squirrel and his pet angel for being obnoxious. You’re welcome.

Pictures or it didn't happen.

And how would one take a photograph of muteness?

I would just love to see their stupid faces. But I wouldn’t sell my non-existent soul for it before you ask. It’s always something with you.

You must be really bored if you felt the need to text me. Getting lonely at

**Details**

_12:50 PM_  
**Fergus**

if you felt the need to text me. Getting lonely at your age?

A mother tried to do something nice for her son and this is the thanks I’m given? I guess next time I just won’t bother.

Here’s the image you requested:

This is just precious. I apologize for doubting your motherly impulses.

**Messages**

_12:49 PM_  
**Fergus**

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Here’s the image you requested:

This is just precious. I apologize for doubting your motherly impulses.
May 31, 12:49 PM

Rowena: I had to mute your precious squirrel and his pet angel for being obnoxious. You’re welcome.

Fergus: Pictures or it didn’t happen.

Rowena: And how would one take a photograph of muteness?

Fergus: I would just love to see their stupid faces. But I wouldn’t sell my non-existent soul for it before you ask. It’s always something with you.

Fergus: You must be really bored if you felt the need to text me. Getting lonely at your age?

Rowena: A mother tried to do something nice for her son and this is the thanks I’m given? I guess next time I just won’t bother.

Rowena: Here’s the image you requested:

Rowena:
Fergus: This is just precious. I apologize for doubting your motherly impulses.

Rowena: As you should, Fergus. You should be grateful I didn't turn him into an actual squirrel, I know how attached at the unhealthy obsession you are with the eldest Winchester.

Fergus: You're just jealous that they're my pets.
Fergus: Play nice, we might need them again

Rowena: I'm always nice.

Fergus: In which universe?

Rowena: In all of them, Fergus. Not loving you has made you the king of hell, my neglect led to your success and that is one of the nicest things I could have done for you. Now stop pestering me!

Fergus: Oh mother dearest, it is always a pleasure talking to you. Let's not do this again.

Rowena: Agreed.

Rowena smirked as she watched the two imbeciles attempt to communicate with each other nonverbally. And failing miserably at that. She may have owed the eldest Winchester for saving her life, but that did not mean she was going to sit around and listen to the pair of them bitching at each other and then making up like lovesick teenagers. She turned her attention back to her work.

May 31, 12:51 PM

Dean: Here cas instead of charades we can just text

Castiel: Before you ask Dean, I can't "mojo" this away

Dean: Damnit! And we can't kill her we need her. How long is this supposed to last?

Castiel: As long as she wants it to. What should we do? I could attack her and we could force her to lift this from us, but she probably won’t be too cooperative after that

Castiel: And we need her
Castiel: I can't get past the sigils that hide Sam

Dean: Fuck we can't do that if we want her to find him. Why don't you go put the moves on her? See if that works
Dean: XD!

Castiel: The moves, Dean?

Dean: Lmao you know? THE MOVES

Castiel: Writing the words in capital letters doesn't make them more clear to me

Dean: Sorry I forget that texts don't give tone. Anyway the moves is slang for hitting on her seducing her. Go use your angel mojo to make her quiver or some shit and maybe she'll take this curse off us

Castiel: My angel “mojo” doesn’t work like that. Why aren’t you trying to seduce her? At least you have the looks for it.

Dean: I’m pretty sure if I even thought about trying it she’d cut my dick off. With a rusty spoon

Castiel: o.O that sounds unpleasant. You shouldn’t try that then.

Dean: So go on! Give it a shot!

Castiel: So it’s okay with you if I get my penis cut off?

Dean: No man that’s not okay with me but aren’t you guys like lizards?
Dean: If something gets cut off doesn’t it grow back?

Castiel: <.< I’m not in any way like a lizard, Dean. I could heal you though if she cuts off your penis, so you go!

Dean: Fuck it let’s just not take the chance. If push comes to shove we’ll just have to text each other for the rest of our lives

Castiel: I would miss your voice

Dean: Aww cas you sure know how to make a girl blush

Castiel: That wasn’t a compliment. I was just stating a fact.

Dean: I know dude. I was joking. There goes the moment!

Castiel: That’s what I mean! It’s hard for me to tell if you’re joking, sometimes I can hear it in your voice, but it’s even harder if I just read your texts. That’s why I love emoticons by the way. They make it easier to understand the context of things.

Dean: K I get it. While were stuck with this how about if I’m making a joke I’ll end the text with a JK or just kidding? Will that help

Castiel looked up from his phone and stared at Dean. This was the first time his friend had ever offered to teach him something or make something easier for him to understand. Usually Dean just said things and rolled his eyes or made an annoyed sounding comment when Castiel didn’t understand. He felt a bit overwhelmed that Dean took his time in this strange situation to be a little
more patient with him.

At Castiel’s continued staring, Dean gave his friend a goofy smile. Castiel rolled his eyes and looked back to his phone to reply.

May 31, 12:59 PM

Cas: Thank you, Dean. That’s very considerate of you.

Dean: Hey I’m a considerate guy!

Cas: Since when? ;)

Dean: Lmao nice. Fuck you too :p
Dean: Well since she refuses to tell us how long it’ll take wanna go grab a burger?

Cas: Do you think that’s wise? To leave her alone, she may decide to not follow through with locating Sam.

Dean: There’s no guarantee she’ll do it with us standing here and at least if were out of her way she won’t turn us into frogs or something

Cas: That makes sense. Should we text her to tell her that we’re leaving? Perhaps we should maybe ask her again how much longer this will take… On the other hand maybe not… The last time you asked her that she muted us.

Dean: Nah man just follow my lead

Dean pocketed his cell phone. He walked up behind Rowena and tapped her on the shoulder.

When she turned to face him, her lips pursed in an annoyed manner, “Yes?”

Dean motioned with his hands between himself and Cas. He then mimicked putting food in his mouth and pointed at the door to indicate they were going to leave.

“What is it boy? Timmy fall down a well?” Rowena chuckled.

Dean narrowed his eyes at her before he repeated his gestures with a little more exaggeration.

She quirked her brow, “Are you trying to tell me you intend to go outside in order to perform fellatio on each other?”
Dean let out a huff at her being purposely obtuse. He shook his car keys at her, grabbed Cas by the sleeve of his trench coat and dragged the bewildered looking angel out of the creepy abandoned warehouse. The pair of them got into Baby and Dean gave his friend a warm smile before cranking up his Led Zeppelin cassette and putting her into drive.

They found a small diner a couple of blocks away. The kind of place where you sat yourself. They slipped into a booth, sitting across from each other. Dean grabbed a menu and then something occurred to him.

**May 31, 1:20 PM**

Dean: Shit how are we gonna order if we can’t speak?
Dean: Maybe point at what we want?

Castiel looked around the diner with a calculating gaze, evaluating every person who worked there before he smiled and answered Dean’s question on his phone.

**May 31, 1:21 PM**

Cas: Just tell me what you want. I will handle the order

Dean shrugged and smiled before turning his attention back to his phone.

**May 31, 1:23 PM**

Dean: The bacon avocado burger fries and a coffee
Dean: Please

Castiel nodded and walked up to one of the young girls working behind the counter. He waved her over with a friendly smile and started to use sign language to order their food. She was surprised that he knew she could understand him, but nodded when Castiel signed that he had noticed her hearing aids.

Castiel gave her one last smile when she had finished writing down their order and went back to the table, phone already in his hand.
May 31, 1:27 PM

Cas: Just ordered our food. :-D

Dean read the text message and looked back up. He was staring kind of dumbly at Cas, weirdly touched by seeing his friend communicate with the waitress in sign language. Sam had told him how Eileen had to learn to read lips out of necessity more so than desire, because it was so damn hard to attempt to communicate with hearing people sometimes. Cas probably had no idea how significant their interaction was to her. Dean smiled again, feeling an overwhelming sense of admiration and affection for the angel.

May 31, 1:28 PM

Dean: That was nice of you cas

Castiel: Ordering food?

Dean: No dummy noticing she was deaf and talking to her in sign language

Castiel: I didn’t think of it that way. I was just happy to still have a way of communicating. Otherwise that would have been difficult. But I think I understand her better now. Knowing that she doesn’t have a spell on her that can be easily fixed… like we have. That must be hard.

Dean: You’d be surprised. Deaf people aren’t handicapped. Eileen told me that there’s like this sense of pride they have for their struggle

Dean: It’s fucked up to assume that they’re broken and need to be fixed

Castiel: Perhaps the world around is just in need of fixing, to be more open and considerate of the way other people see the world.

Dean: You could say that again

Castiel: Who is Eileen?

Dean: Didn’t I tell you about her? She’s this awesome hunter who just so happens to be deaf

Dean: Between you and me I think Sammy has a crush on her

Castiel: And did you like her too?

Dean: She was definitely cute but not really my type

Castiel: What is your type?

Dean: Ready willing and rarin’ to go!

Castiel looked up at Dean and raised his eyebrow, giving him a playful look.

May 31, 1:34 PM
Cas: I don’t believe that is everything that you look for in a partner.

Dean shook his head. Was Cas flirting with him? Two can play at that game…

May 31, 1:35 PM

Dean: Maybe not but it helps and so does having blue eyes ;)
Cas: It does?
Dean: Of course haven’t you heard? Blue eyed people have the most sex appeal
Cas: I have blue eyes… but wouldn’t that mean people would flirt with me?

Dean smiled as he shook his head. And back to the clueless angel! So much for that flirting theory. Dean attempted to quell the disappointment he felt.

May 31, 1:36 PM

Dean: Dude cas you get flirted with all the time
Cas: o.o I’m sure I would notice that!
Cas: At least I think…

Dean let out a silent laugh. Damn, that stupid witch had completely muted his vocal chords. He turned his attention back to their conversation.

May 31, 1:37 PM

Dean: Alright mr oblivious. Time for a lesson in flirting 101
Dean: Look around the restaurant and see if you see anyone that you think is hot

Castiel looked around as Dean had told him, but then his eyes landed back on the hunter. He smiled at him.

May 31, 1:40 PM

Castiel: Okay. I found someone.
Dean: Okay this might be a little more difficult cuz we can’t speak but all you gotta do to get your
flirt on is nod to whichever lady you got your eye on and give her a real smile. If she smiles back you’re good and you can give her a wink got it?

Castiel: It’s not a lady, will that make a difference?

Dean: Oh uh I don’t usually flirt with dudes but I guess it’s the same principle

Castiel: So I’ll just nod to the one I think is hot and smile?

Dean: Yup that’s all you gotta do

Castiel: Okay, wish me luck ;-

Dean: Luck

Castiel looked up from his phone and nodded to Dean, flashing him a tentative, and what he hoped was a flirty, smile.

May 31, 1:42 PM

Cas: Like that?

Dean let out another silent laugh. He shook his head in amusement and returned Cas’s smile.

May 31, 1:42 PM

Dean: You were supposed to pick someone hot you nerd

Cas: I did exactly what you told me, Dean. You told me to look around and pick someone hot. I did that. You’re the most attractive person in this restaurant.

Dean bit his bottom lip as he smiled again, the faintest color of red warming his cheeks. His chest gently shook as he silently chuckled. He was a little taken aback at how much Cas’s words affected him. He was attractive, sure, but no more than the average guy. He had a crooked smile, too many freckles, and was bow-legged. Dean wasn’t ugly, but he wasn’t what he would call hot.

Cas stared at Dean expectantly and the hunter shrugged, thinking, ‘why not?’ He made his blue steel face at the angel as he texted a response without looking down.

May 31, 1:46 PM

Dean: Alright flirty show me what you hot
Castiel smiled again before he dipped his head and looked up at Dean through thick lashes, giving him a quick wink.

May 31, 1:47 PM

Cas: Was that good?

Dean felt his mouth go dry. Cas was a quick study, that was for sure. He was also pretty sure Cas winking at him was not supposed to make him feel so warm. He was grateful that at that moment the petite waitress who took their order brought their food to the table. He watched in fascination as Cas signed something to her, causing her to blush before she went back to the counter. Grateful for the change of subject Dean grabbed his phone.

May 31, 1:50 PM

Dean: What did you tell her?

Cas: I thanked her for the food and that I thought the color of her lipstick suited her.

Dean: Look at you! One lesson in flirting and you’re already a pro!

Cas: Maybe you’re just a very good teacher.

Cas: But how can I see if the other person is interested?

Dean decided then that he had to get Cas back. Even if the angel didn’t realize what he was doing, it was the principle of the matter! Instead of responding through text, he got up from his side of the booth and sat next to his friend. He leaned in close and made it a point to grab his tie, looking down as he playfully toyed with it. Dean slowly lifted his gaze, blatantly licked his lips, and winked.

At Cas’s stunned expression, he slapped his hand on the angel’s shoulder and smirked. Dean got up again to return to his seat and grabbed his phone.

May 31, 1:54 PM

Dean: Something like that ;)

Cas: Okay… that was nice. And it also brings me back to my first statement. I think that I would have known if someone flirted with me like that. So my blue eyes might not be as attractive as you said.

Dean: Well I was laying it on pretty thick. That sort of flirting isn’t the “i like you” kind of flirting. That flirting was more of the “let’s get out of here and find the first available horizontal surface” kind
of flirting

Cas: What would you do if you want to subtly flirt with somebody?

Dean: Well, uh. Here let me show you

Dean pushed his plate of food to the side, which was saying something. Their burgers had been on the table for a few minutes now and the fact that he wasn’t just brushing Cas off to eat the greasy mess of deliciousness was really saying something about how invested he was in this playful, silent banter.

Dean leaned forward somewhat. He held his phone in his right hand to text, while he used his left hand to gently grasp Cas’s free hand.

May 31, 1:57 PM

Dean: I haven’t seen you around here before

He turned Cas’s hand over and started to trace the lines along the inside of his palm.

May 31, 1:57 PM

Dean: Gee your hands are so soft. How come I’ve never seen you here before?

Castiel knew that this was a game and he should play along with Dean’s messages. But still his heart started to beat faster when Dean started to stroke his hand. It felt like electricity, like sparks dancing on his skin where Dean’s fingers touched him. Game or not, he was going to take advantage of an opportunity to be honest under the guise of playfulness, because Castiel knew that he was never going to be brave enough otherwise.

May 31, 1:59 PM

Cas: The more important question is, why haven’t I seen you before? I would have never forgotten such a beautiful pair of green eyes.

Dean bat his eyelashes before he ducked his head in feign embarrassment.

May 31, 2:02 PM
Dean: I bet you say that to all the boys

Castiel: I don’t. I only say that to the very special ones.

Dean: And what makes me so special?

Castiel: Nothing that could be conveyed in a text message. This language isn’t adequate for describing your beauty, your soul, and your heart.

Dean: You sweet talker. If you’re trying to get me to kiss you you’re doing a great job so far

Castiel: I would hope so. I would love to taste your beautiful lips.

Castiel bit his lower lip after he texted that, feeling a strange sensation in his stomach - like bugs flying around in his body. He couldn’t look up from his phone, afraid his expression would betray his real feelings.

May 31, 2:05 PM

Dean: Wanna feel how soft they are?

Castiel had stopped breathing. Not that he really needed to breathe, but that wasn’t the point. He really wanted to feel Dean’s lips. But he couldn’t write that… or could he?

May 31, 2:06 PM

Cas: Yes.

Shit. Dean didn’t think Cas would keep playing along. But that’s all it was, right? They were playing with each other, it didn’t mean anything. At least that’s what he kept telling himself. Dean knew he was having an affect on his friend, but he summed it up to the angel’s general lack of experience in romance and sex, and not anything more substantial than that. There was a part of Dean that was finding this flirtatious exchange rather exciting. Perhaps that’s why he went farther with the game than he would have intended.

Dean leaned forward a little further and pulled Cas’s hand towards his lips. He placed a soft kiss into the angel’s palm and smirked when he heard his friend’s breath hitch. Dean trailed kisses up the palm and over his fingers. He waggled his eyebrows before placing his phone down on the table in order to take Cas’s hand in both of his.

Cas couldn’t seem to take his eyes off of the hunter, he also didn’t seem to be breathing. Dean smirked and gently folded Cas’s other fingers and thumb into his palm, leaving his index finger
extended. Dean licked his lips before slowly taking Cas’s finger into his mouth, letting his tongue swirl around the digit while he gently sucked. When he finally pulled away, before either of them could grab their phone to respond; a large brunette waitress slapped their bill down on the table and chuckled. Her nametag said ‘Andrea’.

They both pulled away from each other rather quickly, redness tinting their cheeks.

She smiled and said, “You’re a cute couple.” Andrea walked off humming ‘Secret Lovers’ by Atlantic Starr.

Dean coughed in order to compose himself. A silent cough that for once he was thankful for. Thoughts darted around his brain in a frantic, erratic manner. ‘He’s your best friend!’ ‘You just sucked on his finger!’ ‘What are you? A teasing 20 year old girl?’ ‘He’s an angel!’ ‘What the hell is wrong with you, Dean Winchester?’

Dean shook his head and grabbed his phone, choosing to ignore his brain.

May 31, 2:10 PM

Dean: So yeah it might go something like that

Cas didn’t respond, he just stared at Dean before he nodded slowly. He raised his eyebrow and looked to the door with a question in his eyes. Dean didn’t need his phone to understand that Cas was silently asking if they should check on Rowena’s progress. Dean nodded.

May 31, 2:12 PM

Dean: Can you ask the other waitress for a couple of to go containers? Shouldn’t let the burgers go to waste

Castiel smiled and nodded, taking the moment of asking the waitress to calm his racing heart. That had felt amazing and Castiel hoped there would be a repeat in the near future.

The drive back to the abandoned warehouse was awkwardly silent, and not just because Rowena
magicked their voices away. Dean kept his eyes strictly on the road as he contemplated their interaction in the diner just moments ago. Initially he’d just been fucking with Cas, the immature part of him that enjoyed messing with people was beyond giddy with his behavior. It was the other part of him, the part he has repressed and will continue to repress that made him feel a weird combination of terrified and intrigued.

Cas had always challenged aspects of Dean that, had they never met, he likely would have never had to address. The angel not only made him question his strength and his faith, but his sexuality. Dean had always considered himself heterosexual, it was unwavering, he liked women. He was nowhere near vanilla in the bedroom, though. Dean has worn his fair share of panties, he’d let one chick use a strapon on him; hell, he’d even had his fair share of sexual encounters with other men. Even then he didn’t feel like he was anything but straight, he just had a healthy sexual appetite. Just because he enjoyed sex with guys sometimes, didn’t mean he wanted to date a guy.

And then eight years ago, in walked Castiel; bad ass angel with stupid blue eyes and a deep gravelly voice. A handsome face paired with a beautiful naivety that was solidified in a fierce loyalty to him and Sam. It took a couple of years for Dean to realize that he was actually attracted to his friend. When Cas returned from purgatory, memory-less and a matted filthy mess. They brought him to their motel room and when the angel walked out of the bathroom, clean from head to toe, it caused Dean to shift uncomfortably.

He wasn’t stupid, he was well aware that he felt a sexual pull towards Cas, but he knew better than to try to act on anything. Every chick flick in the history of ever was basically finite evidence that sex complicates things. When it comes to friends, sex often led to feelings and in their line of work? Feelings were a weakness, a means of manipulation. Now if Cas would be into a possible friends with benefits type of deal...

Flirting was fine, it was harmless fun that would not complicate things, but taking it to where he did in the diner? Dean wasn’t sure if he had crossed a line. He didn’t want to have upset the angel, or worse, made him uncomfortable. Dean didn’t know where they stood at that moment and it terrified him. As they pulled up into the also abandoned parking lot, he glanced at Cas. The angel was staring outside of the passenger side window, lost in his own little world.

They parked and Dean killed the engine, his eyes returned to the angel who was not moving, still staring out of the window. He pulled his cell phone out.

May 31, 2:36 PM

Dean: You okay cas?

The angel, pulled his phone out and read the message. Still not looking at the hunter, he tapped out a
May 31, 2:36 PM

Castiel: Yes. Just utilizing the silence for some quiet contemplation.

Dean: I didn’t make you uncomfortable right

Castiel: Of course not.
Castiel: It was nice.
Castiel: Are you uncomfortable?

Dean: K I was just worried I might have upset you
Dean: Not at all but I know sometimes you don't understand when I'm joking

Castiel: Why would I be upset? I participated didn’t I?
Castiel: I know you don’t find me attractive, Dean

Dean: Awww come on man you know you're pretty xD!

Castiel rolled his eyes at Dean before he typed a reply.

May 31, 2:40 PM

Castiel: I thought you were going to write JK if you wanted to joke?

Dean: Well yeah but we were playing around so a jk wouldn't have really worked you know?

Castiel: No I meant when you just wrote that I'm pretty. Or is XD the same as JK?

Dean: Dude cas I wasn't joking I was being silly but honestly you are really attractive. You know that right
Dean: I wasn't messing with you when I said you get hit on all the damn time

Castiel looked up at Dean, evaluating the man’s face in an attempt to decipher if Dean was being serious.

May 31, 2:42 PM

Cas: Actually, I didn't know that. Thanks... Um... You’re very attractive, too.

Dean stared at his phone. He wasn’t sure where this conversation was heading, it kind of terrified him. When he finally looked up at Cas, the angel was staring out of the window again. He could see the faintest coloring on Cas’s left cheek. Dean had to tread lightly, he wasn’t sure how to respond.
So, he went tried and true. Sarcasm.

May 31, 2:45 PM

Dean: Yeah I'm a real bogie cas! Jk
Cas: :-)
Cas: You know that you're good looking
Dean: You're right I'm the handsomest handsome to have ever handsomed xD!
Cas: Accurate!
Dean: Hah! Shut up
Cas: :-) If you always have this reaction to a compliment I will compliment you more often
Dean: Dude were guys compliments are for ladies
Cas: Why?
Dean: Huh you know I don't know? Probably some machismo bullshit or something
Cas: I don't think compliments should only be given to women. Where is the equality in that? You deserve a compliment as much as anyone else.
Dean: I guess you're right! Compliment away then!
Cas: You're a very attractive and wonderful human being
Dean: And you're attractive too you could get any lady you wanted
Dean: Or dude I guess if that's what you like too
Cas: I'm utterly indifferent to the gender of a person. I find that only the soul, the character of someone, is what matters to me. I'm more attracted to a person’s heart, you could say.
Dean: So like you dig the person not their gender that's cool but how does like sexual stuff work?
Dean: Like if you see a particularly hot lady or dude and know nothing about them
Cas: I think every human is a beautiful work of art... But I have to get to know them before I feel attracted to them.
Dean: Wait is that why you were so nervous about hooking up with that pro all those years ago?
Cas: That was more because I didn't know what to do, it was a whole new experience for me and I don’t like to go into situations without information. I was afraid to make a mistake... And well, I was right.
Cas: She threw something at me.
Dean: Lmao man that night was awesome
Cas: Yes, I’ve never seen you laugh so much before. It’s a nice memory.
Dean: We don't have enough of them
Cas: We should make more of them. Take the time. I would love to spend more time with you. We don’t get much time to just be together like that without our work getting in the way.

Dean looked up and smiled at Cas. He felt butterflies in his chest as his friend returned the smile. He would never admit it out loud, but he couldn’t be more happy that Cas wanted to spend more time with him. Dean was relieved and exhilarated all at the same time.

May 31, 2:52 PM

Dean: Hell yeah cas I promise once we get Sam back we're going to do that okay? Maybe hang up the suspenders for a minute and just live or some other hippie shit

Castiel: What would you want to do?

Dean: Huh I guess I never thought about that before. Whatever normal people do I guess see a movie go to a concert go to a stupid haunted tourist trap for fun and not work

Dean: What would you want to do

Castiel: I know you hate flying... But now that I have my wings back... I could take you anywhere. I would love to see the world with someone I care about, to see it from your perspective maybe. Sam could come too.

Dean: Lmao okay Aladdin you totally just tried to make me a Disney princess cas

Castiel: I just tried to picture you in a dress and on a flying carpet.

Dean: LMAO dude I wouldn't look good in a dress. Pink satin panties on the other hand XD!

Castiel scratched his chin and tried to picture Dean in pink underwear. Dean punched his shoulder playfully.

May 31, 2:55 PM

Dean: Don't judge man I was 19!

Castiel: I'm not judging. I just tried to imagine it :P

Dean: Hey sometimes sex is best when it's a little crazy

Dean: You shoulda seen future you when Zachariah back to the futured me

Castiel: I wouldn't know

Castiel: ?

Castiel: You never told me you met me there?

Dean: I didn't?

Castiel: No

Castiel: Why didn't I send you back?
Dean: You were human and an orgy having druggie it was weird

Castiel: That doesn't sound much like me

Dean: It wasn't. Like you were you but without the stick up your butt. It was actually kind of sad like you were broken
Dean: I like you you. Just how you are you know
Dean: Future you got my jokes but you you I don't know you're just more fun

Castiel: Thank you Dean. That’s why you told me I should never change!
Castiel: Now I get it

Dean: You remember that?

Castiel: Of course, I never forgot that and I’ve tried not to ever since.
Castiel: Although sometimes it’s hard not to change with everything that has happened
Castiel: I think I've changed

Dean: Yeah but in a good way you know? Like neither of us are as fucked up as our future selves so that's a win

Castiel: I guess. I like that I can feel emotions better now. It’s still hard for me to understand or control them, but I'm getting better. I also like that I can understand more of your references, although that was forced upon me.

Dean: I like that you get them now too but that was a shitty way to get them and feelings are dumb xD!
Dean: They get in the way of shit you know

Castiel: Maybe, but feeling nothing... It's not very desirable.
Castiel: It's hard to make good decision if you don't have an emotional connection to something

Dean: I guess man alright this shit is getting too heavy change of subject now so where would you take me Aladdin

Castiel: Is there a place where you have always wanted to go if you weren't afraid of flying?

Dean: Never really thought about it cuz fuck airplanes. I guess Morocco?
Dean: Yeah that'd be cool

Castiel: You really want to be my princess for 1001 nights?

Dean: Lmao hey man that's only like 3 years when you think about it
Dean: And goddamnit why am I the princess why can't I be the genie

Castiel: You’re too attractive to be the genie and since I'm Aladdin and I’m taking you with me, you get to be the princess. I don't make the rules, but also you would make a beautiful princess

Dean: Shut up lol
though he was getting better at picking up these strange human interactions, there were still a lot of

times he was left feeling confused. But he enjoyed the banter with Dean immensely, loving how

much more open Dean was with him when he could hide behind text messages and didn’t have to

say any of these things out loud. Castiel was sure Dean wouldn’t be as open with him if they were
talking. He smiled before he texted a response.

**May 31, 3:01 PM**

Cas: You started it

Dean: Not even dude you totally made a reference to showing me the world that shit was started by

you

Cas: That was not intentional.

Dean: Still counts

Cas: What no! Why?

Dean: Lmao this is the dumbest fight we've ever had next you'll be pulling my hair xD!

Cas: Don't be ridiculous. I would never pull your hair.

Cas: I would mess it up though...

Cas: And there would be nothing that you could do about it.

Dean: Don't you even think of it

Dean: And you wanna bet?

Cas: Okay what will be my reward when I win?

Dean: Okay if I'm able to overpower you and mess up your hair then you have to learn to bake a pie

from scratch and if you win well what do you want?

Cas: I'll get your first born son

Dean: Dude it has to be something real

Dean: And also creepy rumplestiltskin!

Cas: Do I have to write JK to at the end of my texts too? ;)

Cas: Okay, let me think...

Cas: Oh I know, you are going to accompany me for one week on my research to learn and

experience normal human things.

Cas: Without judging me.

Dean: What normal human things?

Cas: Normal things like, how to go shopping, going to the cinema... Or maybe on a date...

Cas: I'd also like to go to a fair.

Dean: You wanna take me on a date cas? XD!

Cas: If you let me experiment with you? ;)

Cas: You could be my guinea pig.
Dean: Yeah cas maybe you do need to start putting JKS at the end of your texts that almost seemed like you were serious

Cas: So no guinea pig date, I see. I guess I’ll have to live with that. But the other things on the list are still on. Shopping, cinema, fair. When you lose, you have to accompany me. Deal? Or are you too afraid :)?

Dean: I'm not scared of nothin! Deal well do that shit for a week!

Cas: You were afraid of being my guinea pig.

Dean: Lmao man it's not that but you can't experiment with dating with someone you aren't actually interested in you know?

Cas: Why not? You could show me how it works. What I should do and what I shouldn’t do.

Dean: Alright I promise we can have a practice date I'll show you the ropes so when you meet someone you'll know what to do

Cas: Thank you, you know I will win this bet, right? You have no chance.
Cas: So how are we doing this? On a count of three?

Dean: Aren’t we cocky? Yeah count of three I'll start the countdown

Dean pocketed his phone, he raised his hand holding up three fingers and slowly lowered each digit down in a silent count. When Cas’s hand reach forward to his head, he pushed it away and soon ensued a ridiculous attempt at dominating each other over Baby’s front seat.

Cas was much stronger than Dean and had managed to pull the hunter’s legs toward the passenger side, causing him to fall back against the seat, sprawled out on his back. Dean attempted to buck Cas off of him and the angel smirked as he used his body weight to pin his legs down. Cas grabbed Dean’s wrists and pinned them together in one hand above his head against the driver’s side door. They were silently laughing.

Dean knew he had lost, he gave his friend a soft nod, acknowledging that Cas had won. Cas ruffled Dean’s hair with his free hand and they shared another soundless laugh. They stayed like that, each trying to catch their breath. Dean glanced to Cas’s lips and felt this weird, overwhelming urge. He could kiss Cas. He could lift his head and kiss the angel if he wanted to. Why did he want to?

Cas’s hand was still in Dean’s hair, gently stroking the strands now. The hunter had never been more grateful that his sounds could not be heard, because goddamn it that was driving him insane. When they made eye contact again, their faces were soft and serious. Cas seemed to be getting closer, causing Dean’s heart to flutter in a combination of excitement and panic.

This was it. They were about to cross a line that they couldn’t uncross. Dean felt his eyes flutter
closed, he had stopped breathing. Despite the panic that wanted to set in, despite the flurry of thoughts rushing around in his brain, in that moment the most prominent thought that stood out was, ‘Fuck it.’ He was ready.

And then a loud, “Oi!” was heard from outside of the car. Dean and Cas pulled away from each other like teenagers caught in a heavy makeout session when the sharp rapping on the driver’s side window completely obliterated their intense moment.

Rowena was standing by the window, hand on her hip in an expectant and annoyed manner. “Have you two actually been out here performing fellatio on each other all this time?” She huffed loudly to be heard over the glass.

Cas’s cheeks were incredibly heated from apparent embarrassment, whereas Dean narrowed his eyes in annoyance and flipped her off. He rolled down his window to cuss her out and suddenly remembered he couldn’t make any sounds.

She laughed cruelly, “Serves you right. Anyway, I thought you might want to take a break from your lovemaking to know I found the location of your wee baby brother.”

Dean pushed the door open and stepped out. What happened next, to this day he would deny up and down at having ever done. The slight woman eyed the man warily and stepped back as he approached her. She wasn’t quick enough to stop him when Dean pulled the witch into a hug.

Rowena groaned, “Get off!”

To rub it in a little more he kissed her cheek.

She cried out and shoved him away. “That’s enough! You will get your grubby paws off of my person if you want to leave here with your brother’s location and your bits still attached!”

Dean pulled away and nodded, but he still managed to catch the tiniest smile on the witch’s lips before she assumed her cool and stern mask.
Chapter 9

We're on our way back to the bunker. We've got Sam's location from the witch.

Shut up!

I actually can't speak. Rowena muted Dean and me. She still hasn't lifted the spell. It's annoying.

LOL seriously? That's hilarious!

It's not hilarious. Just annoying. Although it led to some interesting conversations with Dean.

Really? He taught me how to flirt with a guy once, too. So what did he teach you?

How to smile at and compliment someone. Things like that. He also lost a bet against me and has to show me other human things for a complete week. I will make the most of this opportunity.

You guys made a bet? For what?

If I could mess up Dean's hair. He also tried to mess up mine but of course he failed. He should have known he was no match for my strength and speed. I wonder if he accepted the bet, knowing he would lose, so he had an excuse to do something nice for me without saying so.

You guys have the weirdest mating ritual going on...

What?? No! We don't!

Yes you do. He taught you to flirt before you both attempted to mess up each other's hair in order to try and win a bet where you do something nice for each other. Why don't you both just do what normal people do and make out?

I just wanted to say, we're coming home now. See you later.
May 31, 3:21 PM

Castiel: We’re on our way back to the bunker. We’ve got Sam’s location from the witch.

Charlie: Shut up!

Castiel: I actually can’t speak. Rowena muted Dean and me. She still hasn’t lift the spell. It’s annoying.

Charlie: LOL seriously? That’s hilarious!

Castiel: <.< It’s not hilarious. Just annoying. Although it led to some interesting conversations with Dean. Dean taught me how to flirt.

Charlie: Really? He taught me how to flirt with a guy once, too. So what did he teach you?

Castiel: How to smile at and compliment someone. Things like that. He also lost a bet against me and has to show me other human things for a complete week. I will make the most of this opportunity.

Charlie: You guys made a bet? For what?

Castiel: If I could mess up Dean’s hair. He also tried to mess up mine but of course he failed. He should have known he was no match for my strength and speed. I wonder if he accepted the bet, knowing he would lose, so he had an excuse to do something nice for me without saying so.

Charlie: You guys have the weirdest mating ritual going on…
Castiel: o.o What?? No! We don’t!

Charlie: Yes you do. He taught you to flirt before you both attempted to mess up each other’s hair in order to try and win a bet where you do something nice for each other. Why don’t you both just do what normal people do and make out?

Castiel: I just wanted to say, we’re coming home now. See you later.

Charlie: LOL awww, sorry if I made you uncomfortable. Are you guys still going to be mute when you get back? How long will the spell last?

Castiel: Rowena says until she’s safely out of reach. Very vague answer.

Castiel pocketed his phone and gave Dean a quick nod to indicate that he had told Charlie the good news. Dean quirked his brow and responded with a questioning look, probably wanting to know what had taken Castiel so long to pass on the message. Castiel chose to ignore the silent question. He was embarrassed enough by Charlie’s innuendo. He turned to look out of his window the whole drive back to the bunker and tried to not look at Dean.

In his mind he was already thinking about the incredible possibilities the lost bet would offer him. Of course, Sam was their top priority at the moment. He was worried about the younger Winchester and hoped he was okay. Not only for Sam’s sake, but also for Dean’s. He only wanted Dean to be happy and he knew how much of that was influenced by Sam’s wellbeing.

But still he looked forward to a time where Dean did not have anything to worry about and they could have some fun together.

When they finally pulled into the garage, Dean turned off the engine and turned to face Castiel. The angel still wasn’t looking at him, so he took out his phone and started texting.

**May 31, 3:38 PM**

Dean: Penny for your thoughts.

Castiel: You don’t need to pay money to ask what I’m thinking about.

Dean: It’s just an expression cas.

Castiel: I know, actually. There’s no easy answer to your question though.

Dean: Why not?

Castiel: I just have a lot of different thoughts on my mind. I’m mostly worried about Sam.

Dean: Me too cas. But we have his location now so let’s get inside and come up with a plan to find
Dean lowered his phone and placed his hand on Castiel’s shoulder in a comforting gesture. Castiel looked up at him, meeting the hunter’s soft, green eyes and gave him a short lived smile. It was strange that Dean felt the need to comfort him, when it was his brother that was missing and the hunter probably felt worse. But on the other hand it was typical behavior for the hunter. A character trait Castiel loved about Dean. Dean had a propensity to put others before his own well-being, no matter the cost. The sheer capacity for love the man had was almost astonishing, considering the hunter was practically nigh incapable of verbalizing those feelings. He always tried to be strong for others even when he, himself, was in need of comfort.

Castiel laid his hand over the one Dean had on his shoulder and squeezed it, giving him another quick smile and a nod before he turned to exit the car. They had a lot of research and planning to do in order to get Sam back.

Once inside of the bunker, Claire was the first one that stopped them before they could even reach the library. “Charlie told me you can’t talk?!”

Cas nodded and Dean rolled his eyes. Claire’s grin turned smug as she faced Dean and poked his chest, “Hasselhoff, I like this bunker. I’m so happy you want me to move my stuff here and refurbish a room for me. That’s so nice of you! Thank you. Okay, I’ll be back, I’m watching netflix with Alex. Keeping her from being homesick and all. Not everyone can be a badass hunter like me. See you, old man!”

Dean’s eyes widened in horror, he kept waving his arms around in an adamant gesture that he hoped was conveying the “Hell no!” that he could not say aloud. But Claire was already gone, ignoring his attempt to respond entirely.

Everyone else shared a laugh at Dean’s expense. After the game of telephone with everyone attempting to explain their muteness and what they had learned from Rowena, everyone congregated in the library to start doing as much research as they could on Sam’s location. Apparently he was being kept in a secret Men of Letters lair in England.

Dean had found a book on all of the different Men of Letter’s branches throughout the world. Rowena had told them that Sam was being kept in an underground bunker in Westminster, London; beneath British parliament that had housed the original Men of Letters. According to Rowena, the Men of Letters dated back to the 12th century. Merlin had aided a select few of the monarchy in
confidence that the supernatural world not only existed, but that certain aspects of it were not necessarily evil or demonic.

They had the location, but no way of knowing what sort of protections or guards were in place. Going in blind was never a good idea, but if push came to shove, Dean would gladly run in guns blazing, consequences be damned. He flipped through the pages of the overly large tome until he found the section on the British Men of Letters.

There was a page of blueprints that laid out all of the different entrances to the bunker. Dean must be dreaming, there was no way they could get this lucky. He got up and sat next to Cas, dropping the book in front of the angel to get his attention. When Cas looked up, Dean smiled and pointed at the blueprint page. He pulled his cell phone out.

May 31, 4:43 PM

Dean: Do you think this is still accurate?

Cas: The map predates the end of the second world war. I could go over and check if the underground station is still there?

Dean: Dude yes! How long will that take?

Cas: A few seconds, a minute?

Dean: Awesome!

The moment Dean had pressed “send” Cas vanished into a gust of air next to him. The hunter didn’t have a chance to feel worried about his friend because, like the angel had told him, he reappeared a few seconds later, windswept hair and everything.

Cas grinned at him and typed a text message on his phone.

May 31, 4:46 PM

Castiel: Aldwych Station is closed to the public. But it’s still there. There is angel proofing so I can’t teleport us in there, but I can open the door for you and you could get rid of the sigils that prevent me from entering.

Dean: That’s awesome cas! Okay so let’s plot out some of the details and go get Sam!

Castiel: Okay, once we’re in the station, we have to find the entrance to the tunnel. It leads directly under the House of Parliament. We have to go over a mile through it.
Castiel grinned at Dean before he texted him again.

May 31, 4:48 PM

Cas: You think you can manage a little walk through absolute darkness?

Dean: I’m not even going to dignify that with an answer.

Dean rolled his eyes at the angel before playfully shoving his shoulder into Cas’s. Cas shoved back, but it was rougher than he had probably planned. The chair Dean was sitting in tipped over and he landed on his side against the hardwood floor.

“Damnit, Cas!” He cried out before he suddenly realized his voice was back. Dean’s anger was short lived, “Hey! My voice is back! Is yours?”

“I’m not sure.” Cas said. His eyes lit up, obviously grateful they were able to communicate verbally again.

Dean smiled as he moved to get up. A part of him was incredibly happy being able to hear his friend’s voice again, but a small part of him, very small, was a little disappointed. Dean had grown to enjoy how open they were with each other through text. He’d never been much of a talker, it was ingrained into him from a young age, but there was something about texting that gave him the courage to be a little more forthcoming.

They spent the next forty minutes finalizing their plans to rescue Sam before Dean felt ready to break the news to Bobby and the others, who were still sitting at the other table with their heads in the books.

Bobby wasn’t going to take their plan well. Dean knew the hunter would want to come with them. Cas sat down next to him, like a reassuring anchor, as Dean sat across from Bobby, Charlie, and his mom.

It took a few minutes for Dean to explain all of the details of the plan and when he finished his explanation, he was rewarded with the totally expected glare from the older hunter.

“Boy, I hope I’m not hearing that right. I’m coming with you,” Bobby growled at Dean.
“No, you’re not. Cas and I are going,” Dean tried to fill his voice with as much authority as he could muster. Bobby was pretty much his dad. Dean’s default setting was still to obey the older hunter.

“All we know about these guys is what the Scottish witch has told us. We’re in no way prepared to just storm in there and get Sam. At least we could all go and maybe outnumber them.”

“No! I’ve just got you and Charlie back, I won’t risk losing you again! Cas and I are going. That’s final, Bobby!”

Bobby glared at him and before he could argue any further Cas interrupted him, “It’s okay, Bobby. I won’t let anything happen to Dean or Sam.”

Bobby ignored Cas and kept his eyes on Dean, “So, you gonna keep us on the bench ‘cuz you’re scared we’ll die again? That ain’t no way to live, son.” The anger in his tone had dissipated somewhat, making his statement sound more tired than anything else.

Dean sighed, “It’s not like that. In this one instance, this one hunt, I would feel better knowing all of you are here safe. Like you said, we don’t know what we’re going into. Having two or three extra hands probably isn’t going to do us much good, so how about this? If shit goes bad, if something happens, Cas will fly back here and grab you guys to do a double rescue, is that fair?”

Bobby growled and sighed before he closed his eyes in reluctant defeat, “Fine.” He gave Cas a pointed look, “The moment something goes wrong you come and fetch me, you hear that?”

“I promise,” Cas reassured him in a serious tone before he turned to Dean, “You should collect all the things you want to take with you and get ready.”

As Dean stood up to go to his room, Charlie walked up to him and gave the man a tight hug, “Get Sam back safely, okay? And please come back in one piece.”

He smiled fondly down at the little sister he never knew he always wanted. “Sure thing, Red.”

Mary approached Cas, she pulled him in for a hug, leaving the angel a little bewildered. “Please bring my sons back safely, Castiel.”
AN: Frankie here: Guess what? We’re posting TWO chapters this week! One today and
the regular update on Saturday! Aren’t you some lucky motherfuckers? We’re going to
try our best to post two a week, but it is entirely dependent on our schedules and how
much writing/editing we are able to get done.

What makes this fic particularly special, is almost all of the dialogue and texts were (or
are being) written live in as much of an organic character exchange as we can muster,
considering it’s two ladies playing, like, I don’t know, 12 fucking characters? So, when
Any says she plays Cas and I say I play Dean, we’re being fucking literal. And if you’re
curious who plays which characters, just ask, we are more than happy to tell you!

Thank you again for reading, leaving kudos, or comments. We love your support as
much as Dean loves pie, Sammy, Baby, and certain blue eyed angels that he spends an
inordinate amount of time having (not so platonic) staring contests with.

Cas here: Are you talking about me?

Dean here: Uhh… No dude I don’t know what she’s talkin’ about

Chapter 10
May 31, 6:52 PM

Mom: I hope this works. Charlie showed me how to write a text message. She’s very nice although most of the time I don’t understand what she’s talking about.

Mom: I know you haven’t left yet but I just wanted to tell you, Stay safe. Both of you.

Dean: We will be safe I promise
Dean: We’re gonna get Sammy back

Dean had tried to keep a clear head about the rescue mission, but he was failing miserably. He felt angry and tense. He couldn’t stop thinking of how Sam must be feeling, thinking that no one would come for him and that Dean was dead. He hoped, prayed even, that Sam wouldn’t give up. That he somehow would find a way to stay strong.

Since Dean learned about Sam’s abduction, he had one mantra repeating over and over again in his mind, “When I find him and I will find him, there will be consequences for whoever did this."

Those words empowered him, but they were also fueling him with an overwhelming anger and need for revenge. Cas seemed to be able to feel the anger emanating from the hunter, anger and rage that was leaving his mind clouded. Dean didn’t need that, he needed to focus on the mission. Focus on saving his brother.
The angel put his hand on Dean’s shoulder, but he didn’t transport them right away. He took a second to look at Dean. His voice was calm, “He will be alright, Dean.”

And with those words Dean somehow felt calmer, the dark cloud in his mind vanishing and leaving him more focused. He nodded at Cas to indicate he was ready.

It was night time when they appeared at a corner of a street in front of a building in the middle of London. There were still people standing around and waiting for a bus not far away from them, but not close enough to have noticed two people appear out of nowhere. Not for the first time, Dean marveled at how Cas always managed to find the right moment to appear somewhere undetected.

“The entrance is around the corner. I will open the lock on the door so you can enter and destroy the wardings,” Cas took Dean’s wrist and pulled him closer. Out of nowhere the angel revealed a pen and turned Dean’s hand so that his palm was open. He scribbled the sigil into Dean’s palm, “That’s what they look like.”

For a moment Cas’s hand lingered on his wrist, his fingers slowly releasing him as he tenderly dragged them over the hunter’s open palm. Dean felt his heart stumble for a moment. He took a deep breath, looking down at the symbol on his hand to avoid Cas’s intense gaze.

“You have to destroy at least four of these symbols before I can enter the underground station.”

“Consider it done,” Dean nodded before he glanced around to see if anyone was looking in their direction. They were lucky. A bus stopped and all of the people who had been waiting on the street left, leaving no witnesses to their break-in to the unused underground station. That only left the CCTV camera on the other side of the street. “Can you do something about the camera, Cas?”

Cas looked up at it and made a quick movement with his hand, “It’s off now.”

Dean grinned, having Cas on the team was like having a freaking private army at his disposal. Only a million times better. He watched how Cas touched the locks securing the entrance and how they snapped open under his touch. The easy part was done. Dean just hoped he wouldn’t get any nasty surprises as soon as he was alone in the underground station. The hunter slipped inside of the dark room behind the door and nodded to Cas to close it again, “I’ll try to be quick.”
“Be careful, Dean.”

Dean was in complete darkness for a moment before he switched on his flashlight. He slowly followed a stairway down to the tunnel and the platform. Dean searched the walls with his flashlight as he carefully treaded the abandoned station.

The empty platform was eerie, loose cables hung down from the ceiling and one was giving off sparks, brightening parts of the tunnel in short flashes. A cold wind howled through the tunnel, making Dean shiver every time an icy draft washed over him.

The first time he searched the walls for the sigils with his flashlight he couldn’t find anything. They were probably hidden from plain view, so he looked around in search of possible hiding places for angel deterring sigils. He jumped down onto the tracks and checked the side of the walls. They couldn’t be seen from the platform and there he finally found a lot of markings and sigils that had been engraved in the stone.

Dean pulled out his knife and started working on the first sigil that looked like the one Cas had drawn on his palm. He scratched into it to destroy it, which was way more difficult than he had anticipated. The stone wall was pretty solid. He needed a few minutes before he was satisfied with the outcome.

The hunter followed the tracks, keeping the light of his flashlight on the wall to find the next sigil. He didn’t need to go far and tried to work faster on the second one. This place was creeping him out for whatever reason and he felt more and more tense with every second he spent separated from Cas.

Two sigils down, two to go. He cleaned the dust from his knife on his jeans and ran down the tracks faster than before; the light of his flashlight dancing haphazardly over the stone. Dean felt an uneasy sensation, like he was being watched. The hair on the back of his neck raised and he looked around, attempting to see if anyone, or thing, was down there. He held his breath, trying to listen for suspicious noises. He could only hear the wind and the occasional crackle from the electrical wires.

Dean reached the third sigil and roughly scratched into it with his knife, carving into it with an almost panicked speed. Something was down there with him. He just knew it. He had to destroy the last sigils fast. Dean frantically looked around while destroying the third marking, hoping whoever or whatever was watching him wouldn’t attack him before he was done.

As soon as the third sigil was broken, he rushed down the tracks to the last one. An icy, harsh blast of wind hit him as he approached the dark tunnel. The light of his flashlight seemed to get swallowed
by the darkness.

Dean couldn’t bring himself to look away from the abyss of unending darkness. His instincts were screaming at him to not go any closer. There was something in the tunnels that was dangerous. He turned around on the tracks so he could keep an eye on the dark entrance, while destroying the last sigil at the same time.

His breath came out in a white fog. *Fuck! Temperature drop. Cold spot.* That could only mean one thing. There was a ghost somewhere in this tunnel. *Shit, shit, shit.* He didn’t have any iron on him. He was fucked if the ghost attacked him.

He hit the sigil with as much force as possible, hacking splinters off of the stone to break up the lines. His thoughts turned into mumbled prayers to Cas, “Cas, please hurry up. I’m gonna get offed by a ghost if you don’t wing your ass in here soon. Come on, come on.”

Dean was knocked into the wall, his head hitting the concrete ledge with a loud crack. Dean was unable to do anything for a few seconds other than see stars. He fell to the ground, holding his head, disoriented by the sudden assault and pain. He held up his knife in an attempt at defense, knowing it probably wouldn’t do much considering it was made out of carbon steel and not iron. He could kick himself for being so careless. But how could they have known the British Men of Letters had a ghost on the payroll?

He tried to see where the ghost was, rubbing the tears from his eyes caused by the sudden blow to his head. Where the fuck was Cas?

The moment he finished that thought, Cas appeared right in front of him, stumbling and falling to his knees. He coughed up some blood before he looked at Dean with a pained expression.

“She’s okay. Are you okay?” Dean pulled the angel towards him, trying to keep an eye out for the ghost, but it was hard to look away from Cas. *Fuck.* Dean had thought the angel would be okay if he destroyed the sigils. But something down there was hurting the angel, “Tell me what to do, Cas!”

The angel shook his head, “I’ll kill the ghost, just stay here.”

He stood up on wobbly legs and looked around, the angel blade ready in his hand. Dean watched Cas squint his eyes before descending into a fighting stance. He raised his hand in the direction of the tunnel before them, “Show yourself!”
The ghost materialized at the tunnel entrance. Dean had seen a lot of nasty ghosts in his lifetime, but this one earned an entry in the Guinness Book of World Records for ugliness. It looked like it had been rotting in the underground station for a few thousand years.

“Close your eyes, Dean!” Cas barked at him.

Dean quickly obeyed and covered his face with his hands. The darkness turned into a warm and bright red color where the light shone through his fingers and eyelids. He heard the ghost screaming in agony before everything went deadly quiet again.

Dean opened his eyes and blinked away the red dots, like he had inadvertently looked into the sun. He thought that was an accurate comparison. Cas was like the sun, bright, strong and unforgiving. And hot… Dean smirked at his own thought.

A smirk that was gone the second he saw Cas, kneeling on the tracks looking like death warmed over. “Cas!” In a second he was his friend’s side, trying to steady him as the angel tried to stand up. “Tell me what to do!”

Cas coughed up blood again, nearly keeling over. His face was sweaty and his eyes glassy like he had a fever. But angels didn’t get fevers. Cas’s voice had an unhealthy rattle, like he couldn’t breathe… like he had blood in his lungs, “Help me over there.”

He pointed at the wall in the middle between both tunnels. Dean got his arm under his shoulder so Cas could lean on him as they walked over to a bunch of sigils. “Turn around,” he mumbled before he hit the sigils with his angel blade so hard that bits of the stone sprayed around them.

Dean could feel Cas’s body shifting next to him, how he suddenly straightened his back and turned around to face him. He looked normal again and Dean felt like a weight was finally off of his chest, he could breathe again.

Cas raised his hand, caressing the hunter’s cheek. For a moment Dean was confused before he understood that Cas was healing his head wound. “Thanks, Cas,” He mumbled almost sheepishly.

The angel nodded and if his worried gaze and hand lingered on Dean a bit longer than necessary, Dean wasn’t about to complain about it.
“We have to go through that tunnel,” Cas nodded in the direction of the creepy ghost tunnel.

Dean quirked an eyebrow, “Hopefully there are no more ghostly surprises.”

“Well, now I’m here,” Cas smiled and turned his angel blade around in his hand. Smooth, badass motherfucker. Dean grinned, feeling better about entering the tunnel now that he had Cas with him. It was incredibly reassuring to have an angel perched on his shoulder.

Dean felt like he was losing time as they followed the tracks deeper into the tunnel. It felt like they had been walking for hours until they finally reached an iron door. Cas nodded at Dean’s questioning look and tried to open it. It was locked. Dean combed through his pockets for his lockpicks.

“Step aside, Dean. I might be able to open this faster.”

“You’re not going to blow up the door, right?” Dean asked with a raised eyebrow.

Cas responded with a bitchface he had clearly learned from Sam. He laid his hand on the lock with a concentrated frown on his face.

It clicked a few times before the door opened with a creepy noise. Not very inviting. The tunnel behind the door was dark too, the walls covered in ugly mint green tiles. They followed it for a few minutes before they reached another door. Cas nodded at Dean’s questioning look and tried to open it. It was locked. Dean combed through his pockets for his lockpicks.

They found themselves in a storage room that reminded Dean of the bunker at home. A quick game of eeny-meeny-miny-mo and a very disturbed looking angel later, Dean decided to try the second door leading out of the storage room. They hugged the wall as they quietly made their way down a hallway, a creepy mimicry of their hallway bunker at home. Apparently all Men of Letters bunkers had the same interior designer.

The blueprints had shown Dean where the dungeon of the bunker might be and they had decided to check there first. Logic would dictate that would be where a person was being held against their will, so the chances were highest of being Sammy’s location. They passed a few locked doors as they headed down the creepy hallway before finally reaching a turn.
Dean laid his hand on Cas’s chest to signal him to stay backed against the wall. He pulled out a gun and held it at the ready as he quickly checked around the corner for any people or creatures. They were lucky. The hallway was empty.

Although Dean wasn’t naïve enough to believe in luck. This rescue mission was going too smoothly for his liking. He had a feeling they were walking into a trap and whoever was behind Sam’s kidnapping already knew they were there. They had to be careful. A quick glance behind him to Cas showed that the angel was obviously thinking the same thing.

It wasn’t the right moment to think about his and Cas’s relationship, but Dean couldn’t help but notice how often they both understood each other without words. How early on in their friendship it had happened. He recalled the first time they shared such an unspoken understanding; their subtle exchange when it came to saving Sam from Lilith all of those years ago. Dean was grateful more than anything else not just for Cas’s powers as an angel, but for just having him always be there.

Dean stepped around the corner first, followed shortly by Cas as they carefully trekked down another creepy hallway. The newer hallway was darker as they were delving deeper and deeper into London’s abandoned underground. The hunter pulled out his flashlight again and held it at the ready with his gun.

Cas gently grasped his shoulder and shook his head, moving to turn off the device. In that moment, the angel’s eyes lit up a bright neon blue and he nodded for Dean to follow him. How had he never realized that angels come with built-in night vision? Dean had practically memorized the blueprints and knew, despite being engulfed in darkness, that they were close to the dungeons.

Another corner was checked for possible foes as they then reached the dungeon hallway. It was alight with gothic candelabras that lined the length of the hall. Dean and Cas moved away from each other, checking the cells on either side as they made their way down. The last cell at the end, Dean felt a lump form in his throat. Sam was there, he looked beaten up, visible bruises and lacerations on his neck and arms, but he was clearly breathing as he was sleeping on a mattress-less cot.

Dean used his lockpicks to open the door, whispering a harsh, “Sammy!”

The younger hunter jerked awake and when he saw his brother, he shook his head in apparent disbelief, “Dean?” His voice crackled from dehydration, “You’re alive?”
When Dean successfully opened the door, he rushed to his brother, pulling him into a hug.

Sam whispered, “I thought you were dead.” His tone was relieved, but also slightly defeated, as though he had finally come to terms with losing his brother.

“How did you find me?”

Cas stepped into the cell and answered for Dean, “Rowena provided your location to us.”

Sam smiled at seeing the angel and stepped forward. He pulled Cas into a hug as well, “I’m glad you’re okay, Cas.”

Dean didn’t miss the sad smile on the angel’s face. He knew that look. It was a look of guilt, of regret. As much as he was enjoying their reunion, the longer they stayed there, the more dangerous it became. “We need to get the hell out of here.”

Cas nodded and placed a hand on each of the brother’s foreheads. When nothing happened, Dean and Cas shared a concerned look. “What’s going on, Cas?”

The angel shook his head, “Something is keeping my powers dormant.” He closed his eyes, Dean assumed he was trying to sense what it was that was impeding him. He was met with startlingly blue eyes again, widened in concern.

“We need to leave, now!” Cas whispered, sharp, panicked.

As the three of them turned to the door, it was slammed shut. They were greeted by an elegant looking blonde woman in her early 30’s, in a simple, dark blue powersuit, hair perfectly coiffed in an old fashioned updo. She smiled as she approached the bars, “My, my, my. What do we have here?”

She eyed the three of them carefully, before her gaze lingered on Dean, “Your brother told me you
“He was wrong.” Dean growled. There was something about the woman, something that rubbed him wrong. Maybe it was because she had been behind his brother’s abduction, but years of being a hunter, it was instinctual to know when he was in the presence of evil.

The woman chuckled humorlessly, “I can see that. Well, it appears that my theory of using your brother as a fox trap has proven correct. I knew we could depend on your unhealthy codependency on each other to be your ultimate downfall.”

Dean scoffed. Who the hell talked like that outside of James Bond movies? “What did we ever do to you?”

She tsk’d at them disapprovingly, “Mr. Winchester, it is not so much what you have done to us directly, more so your roles in, how many near world-ending events?”

Castiel frowned, “Near is the operative word. The world is still intact and that is in thanks to the Winchesters.”

The woman laughed, “Oh, Castiel. Of course you jump to their defense. Sweet, naive, angel who has fallen so irreversibly. And what has it all been for? To wind up as Lucifer’s plaything and a pariah in the eyes of Heaven? And all for two fallible humans who continue to instigate apocalypses all because they refuse to let each other die.”

Dean was enraged. His hands were slightly shaky as he tried to keep his cool. Kidnapping his brother, setting up a trap, insulting his best friend. He was fucking done. “I don’t know who you are. I don’t know what you want. And frankly I don’t care. You made a fucking mistake kidnapping my brother. You have one chance to let us go and I will let this slide. But if you don’t, I will look for you, I will find you, and I will kill you.”

The blonde woman had the gall to laugh. To fucking laugh.

Dean narrowed his eyes at her, “Look, bitch, we are well aware of our fuck-ups. But we have also done right by owning them and doing what we can to fix them. And who the hell are you to pass judgment on us?”
For the first time since their encounter, the woman dropped her smug expression. Now she appeared annoyed, her pretty face turned ugly with a scowl of disgust, “You and Sam are a danger to the world as long as you’re around and continue to wreak havoc. Keeping you from continuing to do harm is not an act of judgment, it is a community service.” She turned abruptly and stormed away from the cell, the clicking of her heels fading away as she left the dungeon.

Dean grabbed the bars and poked his head through, “What the fuck does that mean?” His question fell on deaf ears and he turned to Cas and Sam. “Well, shit.”
Frankie here: We have a surprise for our lovely readers in the next chapter, so we decided, fuck it, we’ll post three updates this week! Thank you so much for reading and all of your kudos and comments!
June 1, 2:59 AM

Dean: I don't know how much time I have but we need your and natashas help asap

Boris: You have to be kidding me.
Dean: Seriously I wish I had time for a dick measuring contest but I'm pretty sure a bunch of MOL dumbfucks are planning some shit

Boris: And thus concerns me how?

Dean: I guess it doesn't. You know what? Fuck it were friends and friends help each other when they're fucked
Dean: So as my friend please crowley won't you save our asses one more time?

Boris: Bollocks. Okay. Since you asked so nicely. But I hope you know what a sacrifice it is for me to endure my dear mother AGAIN to help you. Bloody hell. There was a time I was a respected KING OF HELL... Where are you anyway?

Dean: We're under British parliament in an abandoned subway station that has a jailcell. Cas is mojo less so we're hoping you might be able to get us out of here. Sammy is breaking the demon traps. Do we uh pray to you like we do with cas?

Boris: Oh brilliant, you're in the heart of a MoL bunker. There are probably millions of dodgy sigils down there to bind demons too. Stop being a wanker, squirrel. Of course you don't pray to me. I'm not a feathery Christmas decoration. Get that cell of yours sigil free and I'll try to get you out.

Dean: K were destroying every sigil in our reach I owe you!

Boris: You do. And I already know how you will repay me. I will need to rent your angel toy for a day.

Dean: For what?

Boris: Since it's kind of his fault that I lost my throne, I will need him to get it back. No one will think twice challenging me when I have a pissed looking Constantine look-alike standing behind me.

Dean: As long as it isn't for something pervy you got yourself a deal

Boris: Don't make me chunder all over my suit.

Dean: Man I hope chunder means throw up

Boris: Of course it does. Get ready. I'll be there as soon as I finish my angry birds game.

Dean: Dude seriously?

Dean shook his head at his phone and turned to Cas, “Okay, I was able to get ahold of Crowley. He’s coming, but we need to destroy every sigil within our reach.”

Sam and Cas nodded at the hunter, quickly dispersing to three different corners of the cell in order to damage every sigil they saw. Dean couldn’t help but feel suspicious, being left to their own devices in a secluded cell with their phones on hand. Perhaps the British Men of Letters douchebags wrongfully assumed that they wouldn’t be able to harness what little bit of Cas’s mojo they could in order to send a text message; but too often life had demonstrated that it was a deadly mistake to make assumptions when it came to your enemies.
It was probably some kind of trap. The kind of enemy that knew enough about them to be able to dispatch an angel and kidnap one of the best hunters in the business, they weren’t the sort of people to make such casual mistakes. But at that moment, he couldn’t bring himself to care. As long as they could escape, Team Free Will could spend their time in the comfort of their home figuring what the angle was for these James Bond villain motherfuckers.

Fuck it, or maybe for once it was a damn win. Cockiness sometimes led to glaring mistakes. Dean realized in that moment he had been spending too much time around the weirdly optimistic angel. When he locked eyes with Cas, he gave his friend a soft smile. It was returned, albeit confusion was etched into the angel’s features. In that moment, stronger than the fear and skepticism Dean was feeling, he felt determination. They were going to get out of there and he was going to make good on his promises to Cas. They would get their normal human activities. They would even get their fake date, dammit.

He looked up and noticed some sigils on the ceiling. He snapped his fingers at Cas, “Dude, give me a boost.”

Dean was expecting the angel to kneel down and offer his hands as a makeshift step ladder, he had not been prepared to be bodily lifted up and onto Cas’s shoulders. He was grateful the man was unable to see his cheeks heat up. It was a weirdly intimate action. Sam chuckled at the pair of them and Dean narrowed his eyes at his younger brother.

Trying to gain balance, Cas wobbled slightly, attempting to keep the man on his shoulders upright. Dean cried out, “Don’t drop me!”

Dean could physically feel the annoyed sigh that was emitted from the angel, “I’m pretty sure if I could raise you from perdition, I am more than capable of holding you up to scratch some sigils off of a ceiling, Dean.”

“No need to be a bitch, Cas.”

“I am in no way being a female dog!” The angel responded in a huff, intentionally swaying his body to throw the hunter off balance.

“Dude! Don’t drop me!” Dean cried out again, attempting to hold himself steady with his hands braced against the ceiling.
Cas scoffed, “You seem to have lost what little faith in me you did have…”

Dean let out an annoyed sigh, “Me asking you to not drop me is not a lack of faith, Cas…” Before he could further continue his explanation, their argument was interrupted.

“As much fun as it is to listen to you two bicker, I believe I was called upon to save your arses?” Crowley quirked his brow at the pair of them, a twinge of amusement tugging his lips upward in a smirk.

Sam was chuckling and Dean glared at him, “Shut your mouth, Sammy.”

Before he could contemplate how to get his feet on the ground again, Cas shifted his hands up and grabbed Dean’s hips to hoist him down. With ease, the angel flipped Dean around, and as the hunter slid down, he felt a slight shock of electricity when his cheek came into contact with Cas’s. They stood for a few moments, staring into each other’s eyes. Dean searched the angel’s face for understanding, had the electric pulse been just normal static electricity, or had it been something entirely new?

Crowley cleared his throat and Dean jumped away from Cas. “Yeah, um, so, Crowley,” Dean tried to keep his voice as low and growly as possible, “Can you zap us out of here?”

“What about our little arrangement? I hope we have a deal,” Crowley asked with a raised eyebrow.

“What deal?” Cas asked with a frown.

“No worries, angel. I’m not taking souls from your favorite humans. It’s more like I scratch your back and then I disinfect myself kind of deal. I will need your shiny light to get my throne back. The one that I’ve lost because of you.”

Cas rolled his eyes, “We can talk about this later. First of all, get them out of here.”

Dean narrowed his eyes in suspicion, “What do you mean by ‘them’, Cas?”
“You and Sam. Crowley won’t get me out of here the same way. I’ll have to find another way.”

“No fucking deal, we all leave together or not at all!” Dean was infuriated. They could find a different way out, there was no need to abandon Cas. He wasn’t about to trade one loved one for another. Too often Cas had beared the brunt of his decision to save Sam before everyone else and he had made a promise to his brother that they would work on that.

“Don’t be daft, Squirrel. Your brother doesn’t look so fresh and your angel is right about our options. I can come back for him. Don’t worry your pretty head. After all, he’s my meal ticket to regaining my personal iron throne. You know, winter is coming and all. So we should be moving.”

Dean looked over at his brother, who seemed torn over the prospect of having to be a choice again. He couldn’t abandon either of them, Dean was sick of having to make that choice. “No, Crowley, figure out a way to get all of us out of here. Can’t you just possess Cas again?”

Cas opened his mouth to protest, but Crowley stopped him, holding his hand up, “That wouldn’t work. Possessing his vessel doesn’t make him un-angelic-ish, or whatever.”

Cas nodded, “He is right, Dean. There is no other way. Just take your brother back to the bunker. I’m not important here. We came to rescue Sam and he is injured. I have better chances of escaping without you being here. Just go.”

“Fuck you, Cas! I am sick and tired of hearing you say you’re not important, you’re damn important and I’m not leaving here without you, got it?” Dean attempted to ease his shaking by taking a few deep breaths. The room was momentarily and eerily quiet after his outburst. When he locked eyes with the angel, he knew that look. Dean was bizarrely reminded of another time when Cas refused to include himself in the rescue. When he gave his friend an imploring look he was met with sad eyes as Cas shook his head slowly. It was the same way he had looked at Dean when he had found him in Purgatory.

“Dean…” Cas said in an apologetic tone. He exchanged a quick look with Crowley and nodded to him slightly. It was just a minuscule movement, one which could have easily gone unnoticed. But Dean caught it.

It was too late, though. Crowley had already grabbed him and Sam and had transported them away.

It took Dean a few moments to realize what had happened, as the surroundings of the bunker library
came into focus. He saw red, “Take me back to Cas!” He invaded Crowley’s space and used his
taller stature to attempt to intimidate the demon.

Crowley’s eyes glowed red as he pushed Dean backwards against the table, “Your angel doesn’t
need you to save him. You would only get in his way. Let’s get real for a moment. He’s more
powerful than everyone in this room combined and that’s why I need him for my purpose. He can’t
unfold his full potential when you are around, so back off and let the professionals do their job. See
you in a few.”

Crowley winked and disappeared with a snap of his fingers.

Dean let out an angry howl, he turned to the table and grabbed one of the antique lamps. He threw
the pathetic object against the nearest wall, feeling the smallest sense of satisfaction when an
electrical spark gave off from being yanked from the outlet. But it wasn’t enough. He charged the
nearest book shelf and started pulling books from it.

His brother’s cries were muffled and muted until he was yanked around, meeting Sam’s concerned
gaze. “Dean! Calm down. Please. Just... He will get him back. It’s Cas. He always comes back. Just
calm down, okay?”

Dean’s hands were shaking, he wanted to punch the nearest wall until his hands turned into bloody
nubs. He might have, too, if their mother didn’t walk in at that moment. Clearly distressed.

“What happened? Dean? Are you...” She stopped in the doorway as her gaze fell on Sam. His
younger brother stared back. “Sam?” She asked carefully.

“Mom?” Sam asked, disbelief in his voice as he stared at her and then at Dean.

Fuck. He probably should have prepared Sam for that little fun fact. Suddenly it hit him. He and Sam
had their mother back. Their mom was alive. They were all alive. The Winchesters were almost like
a normal family. Dean felt dizzy and he swayed a little, Sam caught him before he fully collapsed
onto the floor. He took a few deep breaths and looked up into his little brother’s eyes, “Thanks,
Sammy.” He chuckled at just how freakin’ stupid he felt, almost fainting like a goddamn southern
belle. He shook his head and continued, “So, uh... By the way, Mom’s back...”

Sam just gaped at him for a few moments before he looked back up at Mary, who was still standing
in the doorway, clearly not sure what to do. Not that there was a guideline for situations like this.
“H… how?” Sam stuttered after a few moments of awkward silence and staring.

Mary tentatively took a few steps into the room, looking Sam up and down, “You’re injured, Sam… Dean… what happened? Where is Castiel?”

Dean’s eyelids fluttered, his anger overwhelming him at that moment, a single tear fell down his left cheek. He shook his head and wiped the betraying bodily fluid from his face, “He’s stuck in that fucking place!” He pushed his brother’s hands away, “Crowley had to leave him there and no one would fucking listen to what I had to say about it!”

“Dean, calm down. They could be back any moment, right? Crowley said he would get him out. And maybe he’s right, you know? Cas is an angel and not a damsel in distress.” Sam offered, his tone hopeful.

“I know that! I’m so sorry I don’t like the idea of my best friend being stuck in that hell hole!” Dean bit out, his sarcasm as sharp as the blade in his boot.

Sam groaned in pain and sat down in one of the chairs, grasping the side of his stomach. Dean’s eyes widened in concern, darting to his brother’s side. Sam waved him off as he said, “I get that, Dean. Sorry. It’s just… it’s a bit much. You’re alive… and Mom? I still don’t understand…”

Mary looked down at Sam with concerned eyes, “I’ll fetch the first aid kit. Don’t move.”

Sam turned back to Dean, giving him an expectant look. Wanting answers to questions that Dean was not in a good mindset to even attempt to answer. “I…” He paused, unsure of even how to begin. Finally Dean exhaled, “Amara, man.”

Sam shook his head, “I don’t understand.”

“Amara! She suddenly decided to play happy family with Chuck, so she brought Mom back, and Bobby… And Charlie. As some kind of thank you, I guess? They’re all back, shit they’re all here. I’m sorry, Sammy. I’ll explain better later. I’ve gotta… I’ve gotta get out of here.” Dean rushed, ignoring the cries and footsteps that followed him until he managed to find Cas’s favorite spot in the garden.

It was just beyond a small cobblestone path that led to a stone bench on a small, grassy knoll.
Surrounded by ceramic cherubs among several bushes of the flowers bees liked to pollinate the most. He landed himself onto the bench, attempting to calm the erratic breaths that were threatening to turn into a panic attack. He should have known it was too good to be true. Dean Winchester never truly won. His middle name might as well be ‘sacrifice’ for how often that was the norm for his life.

Dean couldn’t help but feel a little lost in that moment. All he wanted to do was pray. So he did.

“Cas, man, I don’t know if you can hear me, but you’ve gotta come back to us.” He took a deep breath and amended, “You’ve gotta come back to me…” He looked around, half expecting to see the angel appear. He swore his heart constricted with every second that hope did not become reality.

“Dean?” A tentative and small female voice called out. It sounded like Claire, but the lack of her preferred nickname for him made Dean question it. It wasn’t until she appeared from behind one of the trees that he realized it was Claire.

She approached the hunter carefully, “Dean?” She asked again. When he didn’t answer her, she sat down next to him on the bench, rubbing her hands together as if they were cold, “I heard what happened…”

Dean let out a sigh, “You here to make fun of me for acting like a spazz?”

Claire ignored his accusation and instead asked, “He will come back, right?” Her tone was much more serious than Dean was used to from her; she was worried, searching Dean’s eyes for support in this, for some spark of hope.

Dean slung his arm over her shoulder in a means of comfort. He was even more surprised she allowed him to. He gave her a sad smile, “He fucking better.”

Claire nodded and looked at her feet, dragging patterns in the grass, “He’s such a doofus… But – and don’t ever tell him this – he’s the closest thing I have left to family. I mean… he’s not my father… but… he looks like him… and he…” Claire angrily wiped her eyes, “He sends these stupid cat pictures every day and asks about school… I just… I don’t want to lose him, too.”

Dean’s heart hurt for her. The kid had been through the ringer and she deserved a damn win, too. He started to rub her back, “He’s strong, Claire. He’s come back from a lot worse.” When she refused to make eye contact with him, he pulled her in for a side-hug and continued, “If it makes you feel better, if anything does happen to him, I’ll make those fuckers pay, okay?”
“I’ll help you and before you say anything, that’s not up for debate… but I don’t know if I’d feel better… I just… isn’t there anything we can do now? How long was this supposed to take? Shouldn’t he be back by now?” She kicked a stone away that lay near her feet. It collided hard against a tree. The sound of the wood cracking as splinters flew in varied directions was weirdly satisfying. Not satisfying enough to still the rage and desperation coiling in his chest, but he did understand Claire’s feelings.

Dean realized in that moment how much alike the two of them were. The fact that she couldn’t stand sitting around doing nothing was an echo of all of the emotions coursing through himself at that moment. It was kind of weird, Claire had Dean’s attitude and Cas’s, or technically Jimmy’s, appearance. Huh. She would basically be the kid he and Cas had. Whoa, hold it right there, Winchester. Dean shook his head, his errant thoughts running far too rampant for his liking.

He refocused his thoughts back to the fact that Claire had a damn good point. He didn’t know if Cas should have been back by now, but he knew that he wanted him to. Dean ruffled his hair with his free hand, before rubbing the ache from his neck. An ache that spoke of not just a physical exhaustion, but an emotional one as well. “I don’t know. We… we just gotta have faith in him that he’ll come back to us, okay?”

“I’m not good with faith…” Claire whispered. She bit her lip for a moment, deep in thought before she looked up at Dean, “But he’s pretty badass, right? He’s probably kicking some serious ass to get back to us.”

Her blue eyes were full of hope and reminded Dean so much of Cas in that moment. He offered her a smile, “Hell yeah he is. I know he’s not technically your dad, but he loves you like a daughter, you know that, right?”

“He does?” She choked, suddenly looking more like a child than a teenage girl.

Dean tilted her head upward, forcing her to make eye contact, “There’s a couple of things I know. One: Bert and Ernie are gay and two: that guy loves you more than he loves bees, and that’s fucking saying something. So, don’t you ever question that, you get me?”

Claire chuckled, the smile on her lips reaching her eyes. Dean would bet that didn’t happen often enough in Claire’s life and if he could, he was going to change that, “Yeah, Bert and Ernie are totally gay!”
Dean chuckled, “Alright, let’s go inside and scare the shit out of everyone with the fact that you and I are getting along? Sound like fun?”

She smiled up at him, “You’re a pretty okay guy… You know, for being so old and lame.”

Claire squealed as Dean pinched her arm playfully, prompting her to run back to the bunker, leaving him behind in the quietness of the garden.
Chapter Notes

Frankie here: So my little sproglets, did you know that our beloved Any, did you KNOW that she draws, too? Some of her long term followers and fans may know this, but I? I found out shortly after becoming a beta for her. Not only does she draw, oh, no. She’s a fucking artist and she will be providing you lucky lucky munchkins art for some of the chapters. Fucking beautiful art. I’m convinced she’s a unicorn, so if you ever get the pleasure of meeting her in person, steal a lock of her hair. That shit’s gotta be magical.

See the end of the chapter for more notes
June 1, 7:37 AM

Evil Tilda Swinton: For some absurd reason my dearest son requested my presence at your hideout and asked me to provide security for another Men of Letters incursion. So chop-chop. Don't keep me waiting in front of your door with my newly acquired shoes.

Dean: Why did he want you to come here?
Dean: And it would have been nice to be told what your son was planning

Evil Tilda Swinton: He asked me to renew your protection sigils. If you don't want my help, would you please write it down so I can tell him you refused and I still get my payment? Cheers, doll.

Dean: He did? What's the catch?

Evil Tilda Swinton: My personal opinion, it's because he's obviously your trained monkey. No self respect, that boy. I wonder what I did wrong when I decided not to raise him.

Dean: LOL. K I'll be out there in a sec

Evil Tilda Swinton: About time.

Dean: Yeah yeah I better make sure I let you in before it rains and you melt got it

Evil Tilda Swinton: Rude.

Dean: At least I'm pretty

Evil Tilda Swinton: That's debatable. The self-righteous, guilt-ridden and self-tormenting alcoholics with unhealthy codependent family ties and the fear of allowing positive emotions because of a deep rooted feeling of worthlessness and being undeserving of anything good is not really my type.
rooted feeling of worthlessness and being undeserving of anything good is not really my type.

Dean: Be nice or I'll steal your ruby red slippers

Evil Tilda Swinton: Adding a shoe fetish to the list of your faults.

Dean: Whatever is make that shit look gooood

Evil Tilda Swinton: As much as I love our little chin-wag I would much rather continue this inside.

Dean chuckled at the conversation with the witch, locking his phone as he made his way to the front entrance of the bunker. He flung the door open and bowed at the annoyed looking woman, holding the door open and extending his right arm out in invitation. “This way, mum.” He said in a pretty poor British accent.

“You should stop watching Downton Abbey and drinking your tea too hot, boy,” She rolled her eyes dramatically before she passed him to descend the stairs in an elegant fashion, rolling out a scroll when she reached the middle of the war room. Noises from the library made her look up with curiosity, “Are you keeping a zoo down here?”

“Yup! The Winchester petting zoo, fun for the whole family! Just don’t pet the wendigos, they’re a little bitey…” He smirked at the witch.

“Who are you calling a wendigo?” Sam asked from the doorway with Mary right behind him. She had treated Sammy’s wounds when they first got back a few hours prior. He looked more like a mummy with all of the bandages than a wendigo.

“Ah, the large hairy one is back I see. Good for you,” Rowena unfolded her scroll and tried to ignore them. Dean wondered if it was safer to just let her work in peace, not wanting to experience a repetition of the mute spell. But he needed to know if she knew something about Cas and Crowley’s whereabouts. He needed to know that Cas was okay.

“Have you heard from Crowley?” He asked without having to outright ask what he needed to know. Did they escape? Is my angel safe? Dean ignored the part of his brain that made Cas his angel.

“No, I haven’t heard from him. Believe it or not, I’m not very high on his list in terms of letting me know how he’s doing or what he’s up to. It’s shocking how he treats his own mother. I’m just worried about him, but does he acknowledge my feelings? No, never. Why are you worried about him? I thought this… ‘friendship’ of yours was a one-sided delusion of my son?”
She eyed him suspiciously before her eyes widened with realization, “Ohhhh, it’s not about Fergus. It’s about your angel. Awww, laddie. You're worried about your boyfriend! You could have just said that...”

Dean rolled his eyes at the witch, purposely ignoring the boyfriend comment, “Can’t you use your magic mirror and see if they’re alright, or something?”

“You’re utterly twee, my boy, but sadly my magic mirror only tells me that I’m the fairest of them all. Just let me work and I’ll try to scry for them later… if you ask nicely and make me a nice cuppa.”

“You’re a witch,” Mary stated and gave both of her sons a look like she was asking if they had lost their damn minds letting a witch inside of the bunker.

“Aren’t you a regular Sherlock? And who might you be? The new lady of the house?”

Dean shuffled a little awkwardly, like a child who had been caught drawing on the walls, “Uh, Rowena, this is our mother. Mom, this is Rowena and she's one of the good…”

“You take that back!”

Dean faltered, “Okay maybe not good, uh…”

Sam interrupted him, thankfully, “She helped us stop the darkness. She’s kind of on our side?” The question was asked for all of them as much for Mary.

Rowena looked at them like she couldn’t believe her ears, “It’s a temporary alliance. One that is vastly grating on my patience and will hopefully be over soon, so I can keep the rest of my sanity.”

Mary eyed the witch, silently evaluating the woman. She stepped forward and extended her hand, “If you helped my family, I cannot assume you are all that evil. It's nice to meet you, Rowena. I'm Mary Winchester.”

Rowena took her hand after a moment of hesitation, “At least some of your family has manners. Nice to meet you, too. Although, I am confused. I’ve read those supernatural books my son seems to
fancy and it said you were dead.”

Dean let out a groan, “He reads those stupid things?”

“They are quite entertaining. Especially when you know they’re real,” Rowena smirked, clearly wanting to provoke Dean. She turned to face Mary, “Did you already met Dean’s boyfriend, the dreamy angel?”

“Okay, seriously? Did Chuck actually write Cas as ‘dreamy’? What the hell?” He didn’t give a damn if Chuck was God, the dude was going to get a punch in the face if he ever saw him again.

“Didn’t you read the books? There is a passage where Dean describes him as dreamy in his thoughts. You should read it, it’s very revealing.” Rowena’s eyes twinkled, clearly enjoying antagonizing the hunter.

Dean’s cheeks heated. *Fuck*. He was pretty sure she was fucking with him, but he wasn’t entirely certain that that thought hadn’t come into his brain at some point. He did drink a lot and sometimes he had *thoughts*. Although, he did have one argument for her, “Pretty sure I’ve never used the word ‘dreamy’ in my life…”

“Maybe you didn’t say it *out loud*, Dean,” Sam murmured unhelpfully from the door.

Dean narrowed his eyes at the taller man, “Bitch.”

“Dean!” His mother scolded, surprising not only herself, but also Dean and Sam.

Sam gave Dean a cocky smile, the kind of smile a child gives their sibling when they get in trouble. In that moment, Dean was overwhelmed with a profound sense of loss. *This* is what they had never gotten to experience, a normal childhood. For the hell of it, he poked his tongue out at his younger brother.

Sam grinned back and the look on his face told Dean that he was thinking the exact same thing. Although, it must have been strange for his brother, who had never experienced anything like a normal family in his life. Dean could at least remember their mother, but Sammy didn’t. He only knew families from the few friends he had in college or school… or from commercials, as sad as that sounded. Dean knew they wouldn’t get another chance at having a childhood, but now that their
mother was back they could get to know her. They were given the chance to get to know each other
and to, at least, be a family again.

They could be happy. They had a chance to start over… Now, if only Cas would get his feathery ass
back to the bunker, they really could be a family.

Rowena had watched them in curiosity and put her scroll down on the table before she approached
Sam with squinted eyes, "Well, let's first take whatever spell is binding your soul off, eh, Moose-
man?"

Instantly, the happy feelings and thoughts of having a complete family again dissipated when reality
bitch slapped them. “His soul is binded?” Is what he asked, what went unspoken were the fears he
felt as he recalled the behavior of his brother when he came back from Hell without a soul. Dean
hadn’t meant to, but for whatever reason, he sent a silent prayer to Cas. Please come home .

“Nothing to worry about. Well, now that I’m here anyway. You should be thankful, if I hadn’t
spotted it, he would have died in a few days. The spell feeds off of his soul energy. I’ll just break it
and everything will be fine.”

The witch ushered a panicked and bewildered looking Sam out of the room before Dean could
explode. Mary approached her eldest son and pulled him into a hug. She hushed a soft, “It’s okay,
baby. It’s okay.”

…. :::: :::: …. 

“In my professional opinion, these Men of Letters have some wicked plans if they used such a spell
on your boy.” She dusted her hands off in a soft clap, “Well, I have done enough good for today. I
feel rather dirty and in dire need of a shower. So if you’ll excuse me…” Rowena left the room before
Mary could thank her properly. Mary had a feeling that Rowena had done that on purpose, not
feeling comfortable with being thanked for doing something nice.

“How are you feeling, Sam?” She asked when she took in the sight of her pale looking son sitting on
the bed in his room.

He gave her a tired smile, “A little exhausted, actually. A lot of information to process in a short
amount of time…”
“I can imagine. It was quite a shock for me, too. I guess it will take some time to get used to all of this. I’m just happy I get a second chance, getting to know you…” She took in a deep breath as the emotions threatened to overwhelm her.

She never wanted this life for her boys. She had made the decision to live a normal life with a family, but everything she hoped and dreamed of had been destroyed. Her sons had been thrown into the hunter life, despite her only wish being to protect them from it. And she couldn’t have prevented it. Her own death was the reason her family had to endure all of this and she just hoped that now she was back, she could somehow make it better.

Sam reached out and patted the empty space of his bed next to him in invitation. “I can’t believe this is real.” His voice was a little dazed.

She sat down next to him, not sure what to do next. It was so strange, looking at Sam all grown up and real. “Yes, it’s a bit surreal. The last few days… I’m alive. My sons are grown up, living in a bunker as… hunters… I met a real angel!”

She tried to change the topic, talking about something other than her feelings about her sons becoming hunters. She didn’t want to cry in front of Sam. “Dean doesn’t take it well that he’s… that he hasn’t come back, yet.”

Sam let out a chuckle, “Yeah… he’s, uh… not all that great with dealing with Cas being gone. Every time it’s happened, Dean falls into a one-sided relationship with Jack Daniels and we usually end up having to replace several electronics and some furniture…”

Mary remembered a fight between John and her many years ago. It escalated to the point where she had left to go to her friend’s place for the night. When she returned the following morning, she had found John curled up on the floor clung to one of her dresses, surrounded by broken glass and empty beer bottles. Dean was a lot like John it seemed. She had also noticed that Dean looked at Castiel the same way her husband used to look at her. “Are they just… friends?”

Sam snorted in derision, “That’s what Dean will tell you…”

“So, you also see that there is more going on between them?”

“Blind men from ancient tribes that have never had contact with the outside world can see there’s more going on between them than just friendship, but…” Sam hesitated, appearing to choose his next
words very carefully, “Dad wasn’t always the most understanding guy. He had expectations of us, of what it is to be a man and Dean… Well, he was hellbent on being the man Dad wanted him to be. Not that I’m saying that Dad was a dick, it’s just… I don’t know, he really affected Dean’s way of thinking I guess.”

“So, Dean thinks… that it’s not okay to like Castiel in that way?” Mary asked, trying to understand what Sam was telling her. It was hard to hear Sam saying such things about John. He didn’t sound much like the John she knew. And that thought left an ache in her chest, her death had turned her husband into, apparently, a ruthless hunter. Into someone that made Dean feel that he couldn’t be himself or open to feeling things.

Sam shook his head, “No, I don’t think he does. Which is kind of sad, cuz I’m pretty sure he’s in love with Cas. And I’m pretty sure Cas loves him, too.”

“Has he ever talked to you about this?”

“No, Dean doesn’t do ‘feelings’. It’s just, the way he is with Cas… Dean’s usually happier when he’s around, and it really messes him up when he’s not. It’s way more than friendship, whatever it is that’s between them.” Sam let out a sigh and shrugged at Mary, clearly out of explanations.

Mary wondered if she should try to talk to Dean about that at some point, but decided to wait for the time being. They needed time to grow together as a family before he would accept motherly advice. Also it would probably take a bit of time to get through to him. Dean seemed to be as thickheaded as John in a lot of things. It was a good thing she was used to dealing with behavior like that. She nodded to her youngest son, “I see. Nothing easy with you boys.”

Mary gave Sam a warm smile, “What about you? Is there anyone in your life?”

He chuckled and shook his head, “No, not at the moment. Neither of us have had much luck in that department.” Sam cleared his throat, “I wanted to ask you something…”

She nodded, wondering why Sam suddenly looked so grave. Her youngest son took in a deep breath as if to steel himself for his question. He fidgeted with his hands before finally asking, “How are you coping? Is it… You seem really calm considering, well… everything…”

“It’s a work in progress, but I think I’m getting there. Especially now that you’re back and safe.”
Sam smiled at her, he looked hesitant, his fidgeting still persisting. She placed a hand on his knee in an effort to comfort her son, to still his worried hands. In that moment she was rushed by her son, pulled into a tight embrace, his face buried into the curve of her neck. She hushed her youngest son and rubbed his back as they sat there in a hug that made her heart swell with love and affection for the sons she’d missed out on seeing grow up.

“... :::: :::: ...

“... The Men of Letters knew a lot of weird spells. How come that they can use magic, but when witches do it, it’s a bad thing?” Claire pondered loudly as she thumbed through a spell book for location spells and summonings. “Can’t we just summon him like you once did?”

Dean was immensely grateful in that moment that at least one other person in the bunker wanted to find Cas as much as he did. It had been almost ten hours since Crowley had brought Sammy and him back to the bunker. Ten freakin’ hours and not a single word from the king of hell or his best friend. When Claire came bursting into his room, pissed that no one was looking for the angel; he had let out a sigh of relief.

Dean leaned over and looked at the spell Claire’s hand was pointing to. He shook his head, “I don’t think so, but honestly, at this point, it couldn’t hurt to try. There’s a cupboard in the kitchen across from the fridge, it has all the ingredients for the spell. You go grab those, I’ll get everything ready?”

“Okay,” a quick smile on her lips showed him how relieved Claire felt finally having something to do and to stop sitting around unhelpfully. A notion he could understand perfectly. He already felt better just by having found a way of maybe getting Cas back to them.

It took them about fifteen minutes to set everything up. The bowl with all of the ingredients required, sat before a circular sigil that was separated into four quadrants with different Enochian symbols in each section laid out on a makeshift platform on the floor. Claire had lit the four candles at the head of each quadrant while Dean placed the four trinkets required at the opposite end from the candles, just below the Enochian symbols that surrounded the circle.

Dean checked the Enochian dictionary one more time, making sure he drew all of the symbols correctly before dropping a lit match into the bowl. The fire flew up momentarily, engulfing them in a deep orange hue, before finally fizzling out. Dean looked around for Cas and felt an overwhelming sense of dread. That should have worked.

Claire appeared just as concerned, “How long does this usually take?”
“It’s supposed to be pretty instantaneous. I don’t think we messed anything up. I don’t know…” Dean didn’t even try to hide the concern from his voice.

He moved to the other table and started flipping through the pages of the spellbook Claire had been searching when a familiar sound of wind and rustling filled the quiet of the library. Dean looked up and saw Crowley holding Cas up, the angel barely able to stand on his own, covered in bruises and a few cuts, blood dripping from his nose.

“Cas!” Dean cried out and rushed to where they were standing. He moved to wrap Cas’s other arm around his shoulder for support, before he and Crowley walked the angel to the nearest chair, helping him to sit. Once Cas was seated, Dean cupped his face, looking him over for any other injuries he might have missed. Hands still on the angel’s face, he turned to look up at Crowley, “What happened?”

The king of hell looked stern, pursed lips and stormy eyes, “I told you, you should have waited! What the bloody hell were you thinking summoning him? Did you want to cut your angel into pieces? You’re lucky, I had almost destroyed every binding sigil in that other bunker.”

Fuck. Dean didn’t even think about all of the binding sigils. He returned his attention back to Cas, gently stroking the side of his face with less bruising, “Shit, I’m sorry, Cas. What can I do to help?”
“Nothing…” he coughed, his lungs rattled when he spoke. “I will heal… in time.”

Claire came up behind them and smacked Dean upside the back of his head.

“Fuck, Claire! The hell?”

“Why didn’t you think of that? That he could get hurt?” Dean knew that she probably was just as angry with herself as she was with Dean, her anger being an outlet for her guilt and concern. Shit, they really were similar when it came to dealing with emotions.

Dean nodded to her, “I’m sorry, I just… I didn’t think about it.”

“Claire…” Cas coughed again, his voice sounded scratchy and it looked like he was in pain when he
spoke, “It’s not his fault, he didn’t know. I will get better.”

“Hey, what about our bond? Can’t we use that again?” Dean offered.

“Boys, I understand you’ve been separated from each other for several hours, but there IS a child present. Perhaps you should take this to a bedroom where it belongs,” It was clear as day that Crowley was curious about their bond. Dean just wished he would ask about it like a normal person, without making stupid sex jokes.

He rolled his eyes, “You’re still here?”

Cas cleared his throat before he spoke and Dean didn’t like the way he suddenly seemed to get paler. His hands had moved down to Cas’s arms and he could feel the angel physically tense up before he finally said, “That… would work…”

Dean nodded, he shrugged off his jacket and moved to his knees, leaning upwards against the angel. He grasped Cas’s hand, as the angel had done, and held their entwined hands against his chest. He motioned for Cas to lean forward so that their foreheads could touch. “I’m ready.”

Cas’s free hand trembled as he slowly lowered it to Dean’s shoulder, the area where his handprint had once been. Their foreheads touched and Dean automatically closed his eyes, waiting for the moment Cas’s hand would touch his shoulder. Like the last time, the angel seemed hesitant about doing the ritual and Dean wondered why that was. This was a great thing and Dean was happy that he could do something to help his friend. He would gladly take a bit of dizziness and the awkwardness of diving into Cas’s emotions in exchange for a fully powered up angel at his side. One who could heal himself in quick second. And seeing as he put Cas into the position he was in, it was the least he could do.

The moment Cas’s hand snuck under the sleeve of his t-shirt and made contact with his shoulder, Dean was engulfed in the whirlwind of colors and emotions like the last time. He gasped at the sheer beauty of it all. Last time he had had no idea what to expect, but this time, knowing what was coming, he was able to really pay attention. It was like he was standing in the middle of the northern lights, as beautiful flashes of color danced around him. This time was a little different, because the colors fought for dominance, reds and pinks were battling the greens and blues. It was a deep purple color that ended up engulfing him, Dean felt like he was floating as tingles of electricity coursed through him.

Suddenly he was drowning, whatever emotions Cas was feeling were overwhelming, he couldn’t place them because he was getting dizzier by the minute. Images of Dean abruptly fluttered around
him, quick flashes of smiles, and laughter. Their moment at the diner came to the forefront of Cas’s mindseye and the purple exploded into a hot yellow that caused Dean to gasp for air.

The world came back into focus and he collapsed backwards, landing on his back in the middle of the library. When Dean opened his eyes he was met with the concerned gazes of Cas and Claire, and the amused smirk of Crowley.

Cas’s cuts and bruises vanished in front of his eyes; his friend looked agile, like the tower of strength that Dean had come to depend on. “Are you alright, Dean?” Cas asked in a worried tone as he stood up and held out his hand to help the hunter up.

Dean chuckled, unable to mask how tired the ordeal had left him. “‘M fine, Cas.” When he straightened up, it struck him. Everyone he loved was safe, everyone he loved was home. The Winchesters finally got a real win. At Cas’s continued look of concern, Dean smiled and pulled the man in for a hug. He clung to the angel’s frame and whispered into the crook of his neck, “Glad you’re home.”

Cas’s stubble scratched against his skin as he felt his friend smile, “Thank you, Dean.”

“As touching as this little reunion is, I’m very busy and important, so just a few things: not a single person checked on us in that dungeon, Squirrel. I don’t know what those twats are up to, but if I were you lot, I would stiffen up your security measures.” Crowley interrupted their moment.

Dean nodded, feeling the impending sense of dread at whatever bullshit the Winchesters were eventually going to have to deal with. “Rowena already came by,” he responded, kind of dazedly.

Crowley quirked a brow and made some noncommittal noise, “Good, well, seeing as I am no longer in need, I’ll be off.” Before anyone could respond, the king of hell dissipated in a puff of smoke.

Claire approached them and asked, “Are you okay now?” At the angel’s nod, the teen rushed him and buried her face into his chest, clinging to him. Cas looked at Dean, a little unsure, so he gave his friend an encouraging nod. The smile on Cas’s face when he looked down at the young tow-head before finally reciprocated the hug made Dean’s heart swell with affection.

Whatever plans the British Men of Letters had were going to take a back seat. He had his family all under one roof for once and he’d be damned if he was going to let them ruin that.
Isn't that art fucking beautiful? Fucking bombard her with love and devotion, like this amazing woman deserves!
AN: Frankie here: First of all, there is a scene in this chapter based on this beautiful comic strip by sketchydean from tumblr: sketchydean's comic

She kindly gave us permission to replicate this scene, we just hope we do her awesome comic justice!

I’d also like to thank my coworker, Kathleen, for allowing me to practice some of the physical flirtations on her to get a better idea of how they would look in writing. We decided it would be fun to include as many cliche romcom tropes in our story as logically possible, so we hope you enjoy!

Any here: I also painted a bit of fanart again. I hope you guys will like it :D
June 3, 3:56 PM

Dean: Don’t forget the Angels envy if we’re celebrating were doing it right!

Bitch: Dean, is there something you wanna tell me with your choice of bourbon? ;-)P

Dean: Dude shut your cake hole that shit is delicious

Bitch: Delicious like angels?

Dean: I’ll send your ass back to the Brits if you don’t shut up

Bitch: LOL, no you won’t. You looooted me too much. And that was a serious question, Dean. Answer the question!

Dean: Have you been reading fanfiction again dude?

Bitch: Don’t change the subject. You know the one who complaineth too much

Dean: Ignoring you now and don’t forget my bourbon!

Bitch: i’ll bringeth thee thy angelic ecstasy. But I’m sure you could get it elsewhere too ;-)

Dean: Oh yes Sam you caught me. My preference for that bourbon is just code for years and years of pent up sexual frustration for my best friend. Great work detective

Bitch: A fault confessed is half redressed.

Dean: And he whoever smelled it dealt it
Bitch: And he who laughs last laughs longest.

Dean: Alright that’s enough masterpiece theater man get the booze and I’ll see you soon

Dean left his phone on the charger at the table and moved back into the kitchen area. His brother really was a pain in the ass sometimes. He was getting a little tired of all of the boyfriend jokes everyone kept making about his friendship with Cas. Maybe if he just kept ignoring them, they would all eventually give up.

Mary was near the sink, carefully molding some cookies she was preparing to bake. Dean chuckled as he looked at the bright yellow apron Charlie had gotten her that said, ‘Your opinion wasn’t in the recipe.’ He then grinned as he looked down at the one Charlie had gotten him. It said ‘Kiss the Cook’ with the letters designed as the KISS band logo. Damn, now that he thought about it, he really needed to upgrade his cassette collection to include some KISS.

Dean made his way to the stove top, where a griddle was laid out cooking the burgers and hot dogs he was making for all of them. Sam was safe and home, they were a real family, and they were going to celebrate like normal fucking people for once.

“I like this bunker, Dean. It feels like a real home,” Mary smiled before she put the cookies into the oven. “I’m glad I’ve been given a second chance to see you and Sam again. Even if it makes me sad that I didn’t get the chance to see you grow up for myself.”

Dean put the spatula down and walked up to her. Instead of responding, or saying something stupid, he pulled her into a hug. When they pulled apart he looked at her face and smiled, “We’re together now.”

Her smile got a little wider, “And I’m making the most of it.” Mary checked over the cookies one last time before she turned back to Dean, “So, your friends are nice. Charlie and Jody… and those girls. It’s like Sam and you found your own family.”

At that Dean grinned, “Bobby always taught us that family don’t end in blood.”

“I’m glad he looked after you. He’s a wise man.” She cleaned up the rest of the flour from the countertop and grinned, “Castiel is… I guess… a good example of that. I still can’t believe he’s an actual angel. He is so… handsome.”

He shrugged, “I’m not sure what being handsome has to do with being an angel…”
“Nothing. He’s just not what I imagined,” Mary added carefully, still cleaning the kitchen, although every bit of dough and flour was gone by now.

Dean’s hand stilled over the makeshift grill. What was his mother trying to say? That there was something wrong with Cas? He turned in her direction and asked, his tone slightly defensive, “What did you imagine?”

Mary raised her eyebrow and playfully hit Dean with the dish towel. “I don’t know, I guess some otherworldly being with wings and a halo. Not a handsome, nice, man who is your... best friend. I like him, Dean.”

Why did it sound like the “best friend” part of her speech came out more like a question? He had introduced Cas as his best friend to his mother and didn’t understand why she sounded so uncertain. “He is my best friend, Mom.” He affirmed.

She smiled knowingly before changing the subject, “Have you ever seen his wings? He has wings, right? Oh, and will he be joining us for dinner? I haven’t seen him for a while.”

Dean chuckled, “Uh, well the answers to your questions are no and yes, I have seen their shadows, but not the wings and yes he’s joining us. You haven’t seen him cuz he’s probably outside playing with bees.” He visibly relaxed as a small smile curled his lips. His thoughts were ones of recollection; remembering the almost innocent joy that emanated from Cas when the angel talked about his stupid love for bees.

His thoughts of Cas were short lived when he noticed how his mother was looking at him. He knew that look. Sam and Charlie often had the same look on their faces whenever Cas was brought up in Dean’s presence. He wasn’t stupid, even if he did choose to ignore those damn smirks and smiles. It wasn’t his fault what happens to his face every time he thinks about his best friend or after he has talked with him. Great. Now his mother had apparently joined the fanclub. Just great.

“I would love to see them. I bet they look impressive.”

She could look as innocent as she wanted. Dean knew what she was doing. Fuck, he had almost forgotten the fact that she was raised as a hunter before she started her own family. Mary knew how to interrogate people and she knew how to get people to admit to stuff they didn’t want to. Dean placed the spatula down and wiped his hands on his apron, before crossing them against his chest as he leaned his back against the counter, “Alright, what’s the angle here?”
“I don’t think I understand what you mean, honey?” Mary asked, sounding suspiciously innocent.

“I mean, Dad raised us to be hunters, I can tell when someone is prying for info. So, just ask me what you want to ask me...”

“It’s just... The whole time I’ve been with you, I’ve seen you together. I saw how much he helped you through this time, before we got Sam back. How hard it was on you when he didn't return with you two when you rescued Sam. How close you two are. And how you look at each other. I’m your mother, Dean. I just want to make sure you’re happy. You can tell me anything, you know that, right?”

_Goddamnit_. Between Sam, Charlie, and now his mom he was never going to escape this stupid, what was it? Deastiel? Why the hell were they so insistent that there was more to his relationship with Cas? God forbid a guy develop a close friendship with another guy! He shook his head, “We’re just friends, Mom. Please stop drinking the koolaid that Sammy and Charlie are giving you, okay?”

Before Mary could respond, a door was slammed, followed by the sound of Sam and Charlie laughing as they lugged in several cases of beer and bags with even more booze. When Charlie saw Dean and Mary wearing the aprons she had bought them, she grinned. In that moment the smell of what Mary was baking struck her nose, “Please, please, please, tell me I smell cookies?”

“You smell cookies. And they’re almost ready,” Mary cheerfully replied. “Dean, would you call everyone for dinner?”

Dean walked over to the entryway of the kitchen and yelled, “Get your asses in here, it’s time for dinner!” When he turned back and returned to his place in front of the griddle to start placing the burgers on the buns, he noticed the annoyed look on his mom’s face, “What?”

“That’s not a very nice way to call for them, Dean. And what about Castiel? How do you expect him to have heard that? Can you call him?”

Dean rolled his eyes before closing them, “Uh, dear, Castiel, I pray that you... Uh, aren’t pulling a full on Renee Zellweger at the moment so that you can get your feathery ass to the kitchen for some grub.” He smiled cockily at the confused expression on Mary’s face.

A sudden change in the air and the pages of the cookbook flipping was the only warning Dean got
when Cas suddenly appeared right in front of him, staring at him with annoyed blue eyes. “My ass isn’t feathery, Dean.”

“Shut up,” He smiled. “It’s dinner time!” He proudly proclaimed as he handed a freshly made cheeseburger to the perturbed looking angel.

Cas’s gaze was on Dean’s apron. He slowly took the cheeseburger from the hunter before he leaned in and kissed Dean on the cheek. Just a chaste kiss.

Dean backed away and held his arm up, “Whoa, there, cowboy! The hell are ya doing?”

“I simply assumed your apron was a call to action...” Cas looked down at Dean’s apron again, “A human custom perhaps?” At Dean’s very stunned expression, he continued, “My apologies, I must have been mistaken.” He mumbled, not meeting Dean’s eyes. The familiar whirl of air surrounded Dean when Cas disappeared from the kitchen with his cheeseburger.

Dean turned back to face the griddle, his cheeks tinged a deep red. He rubbed at the spot Cas had just kissed in a daze. Damn, that had been pretty fucking adorable. Stupid, literal angels and their ability to make him feel a little spacy.

“You’re going to wear that apron all the time now, huh?” Sam chuckled and Dean vehemently wished he was a single child.

Dean narrowed his eyes at the pain in the ass that was his baby brother, “Shut up and hand me the whiskey.”

“The angelic one?” Sam grinned and Charlie burst into laughter.

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Everyone was gathered around the makeshift dining room, the sounds of laughter, chatting, and general joy filling the once empty spaces. Dean glanced around the table, at the animated and boisterous voices and expressions of the most important people in his life. This must be what it feels like for normal families. No worries of impending or imminent doom looming over their heads, being able to just, be.
Cas caught his eye, flashing a small smile from across the table. Dean returned it. For the first time since he could remember, he felt happy. *Shit,* he wasn’t drunk enough to deal with those sort of emotions. He stood up and announced on his way to the kitchen, “Grabbing another beer, anybody else?”

Claire snapped her fingers at Dean, “Right here!”

He rolled his eyes at her, “Nice try, Robert Downey Jr.”

“Actually,” Jody interjected, “You can grab her one…”

Everyone turned to stare at Jody as though she were a pod person. Claire asked, “Seriously?”

She turned to address Claire and Alex, “The thing is, you’re both technically adults, and the crap you’ve been through, that you’ve seen and survived through, it’s kind of a sick joke that you aren’t allowed to have a damn drink. The thing is though, this is a controlled environment, and I’m not wanting either of you to go crazy and this is not permission to go out and start getting drunk all of the time with other teenagers. But you’re safe, surrounded by family and tonight is a celebration, so if either of you would like to drink, you may.”

Claire and Alex’s eyes lit up with excitement and Jody continued, “If either of you go overboard, or attempt to drink more than the rest of us deem appropriate for you, you’ll be done and grounded, understood?”

The two girls nodded emphatically and Dean laughed, “Alright, Olsen twins, couple of beers?”

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Everyone had moved from the makeshift dining room to the library. Jody, Bobby, and Mary were sitting on the ground, their backs up against one of the bookshelves. Claire, Charlie, and Alex were sharing the small, dark maroon leather upholstered couch that Mary had found in one of the unoccupied rooms and decided it would look better in the library. Sam was on the floor between Charlie’s legs. Dean and Cas were leaning against each other, their legs extended underneath the coffee table with their backs against one of the walls that faced the girls and Sam.

Everyone was also pretty buzzed. Dean had to convince Cas to go get a couple of fifths of whiskey
in order for him to reach their same human levels of inebriation. He had been pleasantly surprised that the angel agreed. He smiled as he looked over to his friend, who at that moment was talking to a june bug that was crawling over the sleeve of his coat.

Charlie tapped Sam on his head, when he looked up to her, she winked, before she made a letter “d” with her hand and waved it in a circle at him. Sam nodded and laughed. Dean narrowed his eyes; those two speaking their own language was probably anything but good.

Charlie cleared her throat and announced, “You know this kind of feels like a high school slumber party.”

Claire chuckled, “Not even high school. My last slumber party was when I was nine. Way before high school.”

Dean quirked his brow, noticing that Cas, Alex, and Bobby all had genuine looks of confusion on their faces. He smirked and turned to Charlie, “That’s not a universal experience, kiddo. Not everyone here did the whole slumber party, hair braiding thing.”

Charlie gave him an exaggerated shocked look, “Well, we need to change that! That’s like the best thing! And since we’re having a “Sam is back” party…”

“A Samabration!” Dean offered as he nodded with a genuinely pleased grin at coming up with yet another hilarious word hybrid.

She rolled her eyes, “Fine, a ‘Sam-a-bration’. Anyway, we should totally do slumber party stuff! With everything that entails. Shots… Um drinking games… oh holy Hermoine! I know! We can play truth or dare!”

Sam smiled at her before Dean could say anything, “That’s a great idea. Haven’t played that since Stanford. I’m in!”

Now that his brother was on board with Charlie’s plan, Dean couldn’t say anything against it. Sam deserved something good after all the shit he had been through, but that didn’t stop him from rolling his eyes at both of them.

Bobby moved to stand up, “Well, you kids have fun and play, but I’m going to bed,” He mumbled,
slightly shaking his head at their drunk playfulness.

“No way, old man! If I’m being forced to do this, so are you! Sit your ass right back down,” Dean exclaimed cheerfully.

Jody winked at Bobby, “Yeah, old man. Come on, sit down next to me. You can’t leave me alone with the kids.”

Mary nodded her agreement, “That goes double for me.”

And would wonders never cease? Bobby rolled his eyes and sat down next to Jody on the library floor, giving her an amused smile that was there for just a second, before he schooled his expression back to his usual gruff one. “Alright, ya’ idjits.”

Cas looked around in confusion, “What’s truth or dare?”

Alex scoffed, “It’s a dumb game where you pick either truth or dare, if you pick truth you have to answer someone’s question honestly, or if you pick dare then someone dares you to do something embarrassing.”

Claire smirked at her and poked her shoulder, “You sound like you’re afraid of a little game.”

Dean watched in fascination, there was no way that Alex was going to fall for that pathetic attempt at reverse psychology. He was surprised, yet again, when the older teen bumped Claire’s shoulder and said, “Fine! If that’s how it’s gonna be, bring it on, Novak.”

Sam chuckled, “Alright, well, since it’s my party, I get to go first. Cas, truth or dare?”

“Truth?” Cas sounded so uncertain that Dean couldn’t help but smile encouragingly at him.

His brother appeared to be contemplative for a moment. When he had a lightbulb moment, his grin was positively feral, “Alright, Cas. Now if you don’t want to answer, you have to do a dare, okay?”
“I understand,” Cas nodded with a tense expression.

“Okay, so truthfully, what is your ideal physical type? Like what physical features do you find attractive in a person?”

Cas seemed shocked for a moment before he looked at Dean and then down to the floor. His hand rubbed over his neck in a manner that reminded Dean of the time he had asked Cas if he was still a virgin. Cas was clearly nervous. “Freckles.” He finally breathed out.

It was practically inaudible, but Dean had heard it. The entire damn room had heard it from the smirks and sniggers he could hear. Okay, freckles…. That didn’t mean anything. Right? Lots of people have freckles. Dean looked around the room. Charlie and Claire were trying really hard not to laugh; Sammy had a big shit-eating grin on his face; Alex rolled her eyes; and Jody, Bobby, and his mom all had amused looks on their faces. Fuck all of them.

Sam broke the tension with a laugh, “Nice. Alright, Cas. Now it’s your turn. Pick someone and ask them truth or dare.”

“Okay, I pick Claire. Truth or dare?”

Claire smirked at him with a playful twinkle in her eyes, “Dare!”

Dean could see Cas hadn’t thought that far ahead when he had picked Claire. He was clearly at a loss. His friend leaned over causing their knees to touch. Dean tried to ignore the warm, tingly feeling in his stomach.

“What should I tell her?” He quietly asked, his eyes pleading. Cas was taking this game way too seriously and Dean pondered if he should give Cas more alcohol to loosen him up.

He handed Cas the bottle of whiskey and nodded to him to drink some more. After the angel took a couple of gulps, Dean gave him a mischievous smirk as he whispered, “Okay, the point is to get people to do something they wouldn’t normally do. So, I dunno, dare her to act like a perky cheerleader until her next turn or something.”

Cas gave him a stern look, “That sounds inappropriate…” He squinted his eyes before he finally looked up, clearly an idea had hit him, “I know. I want you to sing the David Hasselhoff song you
keep making fun of in your text messages. You know, the one you refer to when you make fun of Dean?”

Dean stared at her, feigning being serious and hurt, “I thought we were passed that, Miley Cyrus!”

Claire rolled her eyes at the hunter. “I’ll get you back for this,” she pointed her finger threateningly at Cas and searched for the lyrics on her phone with a deep sigh. “You know, this totally backfired because now you’re all getting tortured with this.”

By the time Claire finished the song, everyone in the room was in tears from laughing so hard. Even Cas had a huge grin on his face. Claire stood up and took an exaggerated bow. She plopped herself down on the couch again, “Alright, my turn! Jody! Truth or dare!”

“If I’m forced to sing, you guys will sue me for blowing your eardrums out, so truth.” She chuckled.

“Psh, bawk, bawk,” Claire imitated a chicken before she chuckled and asked, “Okay truth! Date, marry, kill and your choices are Castiel, Sam, and Bobby. Go!”

“Shit. Uh, well, I guess I’d kill Castiel, cuz he wouldn’t stay dead.” She nodded to the angel, “Sorry, Cas.” Jody shrugged as she continued, “I’d marry Bobby, and I’d date Sam? Those aren’t very good options…”

Claire smirked with a side glance at Bobby’s face, who tried to hide behind his baseball cap, “I gave you the best options that are in this room.”

“Hey!” Dean cried out, “What am I, chopped liver?”

“No, you’re Hasselhoff. We already established that, Dean. Pay attention.”

Dean picked up one of the bottle caps on the floor next to him and chucked it at the blonde teen. She hit it away with her hand and gave the hunter a cocky smile.

“Alright, you two…” Jody chastised them half-heartedly before continuing, “My turn now and I choose Charlie. Truth or dare?”
“Dare!” Charlie didn’t even hesitate for a second.

Jody looked around the room and then laughed, “Okay, I dare you to trade clothes with Cas and you have to stay in each other’s clothes for the rest of the game.”

“Ohhhhh fuuu..ish…” Charlie looked down at herself and then at Cas. “I could totally rock his outfit, but Cas… I’m sorry. You in a skirt,” She shrugged, “Okay. Come on, big guy.”

Dean gave his friend a comforting smile when Cas sent him a confused and helpless look as Charlie grabbed his hand and pulled him behind one of the bookshelves. He turned and could see flashes of the two of them through the cracks between the books. When he happened to catch Cas shrug off his shirt, he also caught a glimpse of his friend’s stomach. Dean turned back to face the group. Sam quirked a brow at his brother and Dean felt his cheeks heat. Thankfully only Sam seemed to have noticed him being a peeping tom.

A few minutes later, Charlie stepped out from behind the bookshelf, absolutely swimming in Cas’s clothes. The shirt hung loosely, the pants and sleeves of the coat dangling a good foot passed her hands and feet. Everyone laughed, Dean had to admit, it was pretty damn cute. His amusement was shortly interrupted.

Cas tentatively stepped out from behind the book shelf, wearing Charlie’s black pleated skirt and a t-shirt with something about guild wars on it. While everyone else was hooting and hollering at him, Dean was shocked into silence. The shirt was too small, so it clung to his frame like a second skin. It was basically a crop top, the way it was riding high above the angel’s belly button, so high that his tattoo was visible.

As Dean’s gaze lowered, his brain short-circuited. Cas had fucking crazy hips, like weirdly beautiful, considering he was a guy. The skirt barely fit as well, hanging low on the angel’s hips and only falling to about mid-thigh. Dean’s eyes darted up and down. *Fuck*. That should not be as hot as it was. It really didn’t seem to help the fact that Cas seemed to have no problem wearing the outfit. He didn’t appear to be even slightly uncomfortable.

When they finally made eye contact, Dean gave his friend an awkward half-smile, before forcing himself to look somewhere else.

“I hope someone dares me to change my clothes back again. I think your t-shirt is too small for me, Charlie.”
Charlie chuckled and nodded, “You’re right, I’m drowning in your clothes. But you totally rock my outfit. Nice tattoo by the way. So it’s finally my turn now! How about you, Dean?” She gave him an evil smirk and for a moment Dean thought he might be having a mild panic attack. “Truth or dare, my dearest handmaiden?”

Dean suddenly knew what a deer in headlights felt like. He was screwed either way. Fuck it, “Dare.”

“Everytime I say ‘Kirk’ you have to act like him until your next turn for the rest of the game. But first I want you to reenact a death scene worthy of our beloved Captain.”

Dean laughed, seriously grateful it didn’t go somewhere particularly awkward. “Alright, who’s gonna be my alien?” He punctuated every other syllable, mimicking Captain Kirk.

“Cas,” Charlie responded without hesitation.

Cas looked up at Dean, totally confused, “What do I have to do?”

Dean stood up and held his hand out for Cas to take. Once the angel was on his feet, Dean hunched forward into a Shatner-esque fighting pose and explained, “Okay, basically just come at me super slowly, I’ll pretend to punch you, and you’ll block it. Just follow my lead, okay?”

“Okay,” Cas made a fist and slowly walked up to Dean. He raised his arms and pretended to punch Dean in the face.

He ducked the punch dramatically, dipping low before coming up and pulling Cas into an embrace, struggling against him. Cas appeared confused, so Dean whispered, “Struggle against me, too, pull me close like you’re trying to get me in a headlock.”

Cas reached around Dean’s upper body and hauled Dean closer with a quick pull that made him stumble against the hunter’s chest. Dean’s hands involuntarily slid over Cas’s exposed stomach, before he could grip the angel’s hips to stabilize himself.

As his hand graced over one of Cas’s hipbones, Dean inhaled sharply. Goddamnit, he thought he had gotten off light with this dare. How wrong he had been. Cas then flipped Dean around and
pulled him flush against himself, his arm draped gently across Dean’s neck. The hunter reached behind and pinched Cas’s side, causing the angel to cry out and step away.

“Dean,” he growled threateningly. The sound shot straight to Dean’s dick. He was grateful his jeans were loose fitting. Cas looked like he would smite Dean in that moment, and even in a skirt the angel still somehow managed to look dangerous.

At this point, if he kept this fake wrestling shit up with Cas, he was either going to get fucked up or fucked by the angry angel, neither of which he wanted to have happen in front of their entire family. When he turned to Charlie, he noticed everyone was staring at them with big grins. “Alright, I think that’s enough, don’t you? Do I have your permission to take my turn, your majesty?”

“No, you still have to die. I want my death scene.”

Dean let out a sigh, he collapsed into Cas, who thankfully had enough sense to catch him. He proceeded to let out over exaggerated groans and said punctuated goodbyes to everyone in the room. He died spectacularly in Cas’s arms and the entire room burst into applause. Dean stood up and took a bow. He elbowed Cas and nodded for the angel to do the same. “Alright, now it’s my turn.” Dean looked around the room, but it was for show, he knew who his victim was going to be, “Sammy, truth or dare?”

Sam took a sip from his beer, analyzing Dean’s facial expression before he shrugged, “Dare.”

He looked way too sure of himself. Time for payback. “You asked for it. Alright, you’ve gotta make out with Jody for three minutes, somebody got a timer?”

Alex and Claire both voiced their opinions of Dean’s dare very clearly and adamantly.

“Ewwwww, Dean. That’s so gross.” Claire made a face and feigned being sick.

Alex agreed with Claire for once, “I don’t want to see that!”

Dean caught the faintest smile on Jody’s lips. Clearly the girls saw her as a mother figure and it was particularly touching.
Dean shrugged in surrender, “Alright, alright, fine. I dare you to make out with Charlie for three minutes.” At that the girls laughed and held up their phones in solidarity with Dean to act as the time keepers.

Sam shrugged, but Charlie narrowed her eyes at him. “Is this your idea of payback, Dean?”

“Mess with the bull, you get the horns…” He replied, a cocky air in his tone.

Charlie grinned, “If you think I have a problem with making out with your brother for three minutes, you’re in for a huge disappointment, mister. No problem at all. Unlike some people, I’m very secure in my sexuality.” She moved to the ground and sat next to Sam.

Sam laughed at the expression on his brother’s face before he was unceremoniously yanked forward by Charlie into a passionate kiss. Everyone in the room cat-called the pair in between bouts of laughter. When Claire yelled out, “Time’s up!” Charlie moved back to her seat, a triumphant smirk on her face.

Sam leaned back against Charlie, giving her a high five behind his back before his smile turned into an evil smirk, “My turn. Truth or dare, Dean?”

“Uh uh, not fair, I just went, don’t you have to pick someone else?”

“There’s no rule for that! But let me ask, anyone else want to trade with Dean?”

The answer from everyone was a resounding, “No.”

Sam shrugged, “You’re out of luck.”

This was going to be bad. Very bad. His brother had always tried to out-do him. In that moment he thought back fondly on their prank wars before reality struck. Fuck. There was no way he was going to let Sammy ask him a question. Finally Dean replied, “Dare.”

Sam made a little fist pump in the air and Dean paled. He had a very bad feeling about this. “Three minutes. Make out with Cas.”
“Dude! You can’t force someone else into your dare!”

“Like you forced Charlie? Don’t be a hypocrite and do it! Or are you too chickenshit to take the dare?”

Dean narrowed his eyes at his brother and flipped him off. He turned to face Cas, “Sorry, buddy. You okay with this?”

Cas didn’t look okay, but he nodded anyway.

Dean’s eyes flicked from Cas’s and then down to his lips. It was weird how fast his heart was beating, this was just a dumb dare. It wasn’t real, they were about to kiss for a stupid childhood game. It wouldn’t have to mean anything. It wouldn’t mean anything. Finally he leaned in and softly pressed his lips to the angel’s. It was a soft brush, hesitant, asking permission.

Cas tilted his head slightly and grasped the side of Dean’s neck, pulling him in closer. When he let out a soft gasp, Dean deepened the kiss, tapping his tongue playfully against Cas’s lips before he slipped it between them. Dean was lost in the moment, the way Cas tasted of whiskey and longing, the feeling of Cas’s tongue against his own, as they each attempted to take control. He’d never been kissed like that before. It wasn’t a kiss, Cas was claiming him. He was sure of it.

Dean raked his hand into Cas’s hair and gently tugged, eliciting a growl from the angel’s lips. Fuck. That sound was going to be the death of him. When Cas slipped his tongue into Dean’s mouth for the first time, the hunter closed his lips around it and gently began to suck. The angel’s eyes fluttered open and they pulled apart for a brief moment, before Cas grasped both sides of Dean’s face and pulled him back in.

Dean was lost then. All that existed in the world was him and Cas and the incredible heat they were generating as they continued to explore each other. Cas moved slightly, never breaking contact, as he then pushed Dean up against the wall, pinning one of his hands above his head. With Dean’s free hand, he clutched onto the tiny bit of shirt he could grasp onto. Dean wasn’t sure how long they’d been kissing. Five minutes. Five years. Time didn’t exist in that moment.

Unfortunately, sound did. He heard a loud, “Hey!” And suddenly the world came back into focus. Everyone was staring at the two of them. A combination of surprise and smugness on their faces. Sam chuckled, “Your time was up like four minutes ago…”
Cas’s eyes widened in surprise. Before Dean could react or say anything, the angel was suddenly gone, only the fluttery sound of his wings echoing in the silence of the room.

Dean shook his head at Sam, then eyed everyone, “You guys are a bunch of dicks.” He ignored their protests and apologies as he left the library to try and find Cas.

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Castiel couldn’t believe he had lost control like that. Sam said three minutes and he had tried his best to play by the rules. He didn’t want Dean to know how much he had been affected by their kiss. He thought he would be protected under the pretense of the game, to finally get to feel Dean’s lips without the risk of exposing his feelings.

There was no way Dean wouldn’t have noticed now. He really messed everything up.

Castiel groaned and rubbed his hands over his face. How could he ever face Dean again? Flying away to the bunker’s garden probably didn’t help much with the situation. But he couldn’t have stayed, facing their friends, facing Dean after he had lost control so embarrassingly fast. He knew he was going to have to face them at some point. He couldn’t run forever. But for the time being, he was going to stay hidden.

He felt the pull of Dean’s longing, something he usually felt before Dean started to pray to him. He tried to ignore it by burying his face in his hands, wishing their kiss had never happened.

The wish wasn’t honest. Kissing Dean was in no way like he had imagined it. Castiel had never felt like that before. He didn’t even know such a feeling existed until Dean had enlightened him. Castiel had kissed people in his life, he had experienced that subtle intimacy, but it never reached further than his lips. Kissing was nice, but he had always interpreted the sensations he felt from more of an observational perspective. He had never truly felt them. Not like this. Not with such an unadulterated passion. Dean’s kiss awoke something from deep within Castiel and he desperately wanted to do it again.

Castiel was conflicted. He hated the situation that caused their kiss to happen, but he was also grateful for it. It was probably the only opportunity he would ever get to kiss the hunter. For that, no matter how much embarrassment or distress he was feeling, more than anything he was grateful for getting this once in a lifetime chance.
His feelings were so contradicting, Castiel let out a groan of frustration into his hands. He felt so ashamed and confused, but also so happy that he was granted this one moment with Dean. Lying dormant under all of those other emotions was a profound sense of loss. Having now tasted the so-called forbidden fruit, he knew their one shared moment would never be enough, not after having experienced true ardor.

How did humans deal with all of these different emotions on a regular basis?

He didn’t look up when he felt Dean’s presence in the garden, not even when the hunter sat down next to him. For a while they just sat next to each other in companionable silence, before Castiel took a deep breath and looked up at Dean, “I’m deeply sorry for my inappropriate behavior.”

Dean shook his head, “Nothin’ to be sorry about, Cas.” He appeared to be contemplative, carefully thinking of what he was going to say next. Neither of them had made eye contact with the other,
Dean staring steadfastly straight ahead. Castiel watched as Dean finally shifted, turning his body toward the angel, moving his left leg up on the bench they were sitting on. “It’s okay, you know? It was just a kiss, there’s no need to let those dicks make you feel embarrassed. If it makes you feel better, you’re a really good kisser.” He offered with a soft chuckle.

Castiel lifted his gaze to make eye contact with Dean. For a moment he couldn’t believe his ears. Dean thought that he was a good kisser. He felt his heart reacting to that, as he thought about what Dean had said. The hunter wrongly assumed that he had left because of their friends, not because he had lost control and displayed his obvious feelings for Dean. Maybe it wasn’t too late to salvage their friendship. He gave Dean a shy smile, “Thanks you… um… you too… I’m still sorry. I hadn’t expected… Did I ruin the game?”

He shook his head, “Nah, they ruined it by being jackasses. It wasn’t you. And what didn’t you expect?” Dean’s face appeared earnest and genuinely interested in the words that remained unspoken by the angel.

Castiel had a strong urge to borrow one of Dean’s curse words in that moment. He had hoped Dean would let that slide. He looked down at his feet, biting his lower lip, “I didn’t expect it to be so difficult to stop at the appropriate time.”

“Hey, man, we both got a little lost in the moment, you know? I didn’t hear them say our time was up either…” Dean offered a comforting smile.

Castiel returned the smile, his chest felt a little lighter with Dean’s words, “It felt… really good.”

Dean chuckled, “You can say it, Cas. It was pretty fuckin’ awesome. Kissing is a lot of fun, and if the person knows what the hell they’re doin’, then it’s even better…”

“I guess, you’re right. I have only ever kissed two people, and while it was nice, it wasn’t quite like that. They had been a demon and a reaper, so perhaps they did not have much kissing experience?”

Dean elbowed Castiel playfully, “Are you saying that I’m sluttier than a demon and a reaper?” He teased and gave the angel a saucy wink.

Castiel’s first reaction was shock at Dean’s question, because he would never think that of Dean, but then he realized the hunter was teasing him, flirling with him. He could do that. He winked back at Dean with a playful smile, “I would say: more experienced.”
Dean quirked his brow, “Are you slut-shaming me, Castiel?”

Castiel had to refrain from reaching out and pulling the hunter in for a real kiss. There was something particularly exhilarating at hearing Dean say his full name. He wasn’t sure if it was the way he said his name, or if it was connected to the significance of his full name being spoken by this enigmatic human. “Why would I do that, when it led to those really good kisses?”

Dean appeared a little taken aback, but the look on his face seemed impressed. “You're getting better at flirting,” he smiled before playfully punching Castiel’s arm.

“I have a good teacher,” he nudged Dean’s shoulder with his, trying to give the hunter his most charming smile. The one he had practised in front of a mirror after Dean and him had shared their mute dinner.

Dean let out a bark of laughter. “Much you have still to learn, padawan.”

Castiel was incredibly thankful that he could understand Dean’s references now – not thankful to Metatron, just that something good had come of it, “I hope you will continue to teach me, master jedi.”

“Okay,” Dean clapped his hands together and moved to sit Indian style on the bench, facing the angel. “Lesson two: physical contact. A huge part of flirting is touching, but it has to be subtle.” He leaned forward a little and lifted his hand to Castiel’s chest, just laying it over his heart. Castiel hoped Dean wouldn’t feel his fast heartbeat. If he did, he didn't show it as he winked again, “You must workout…”

Castiel wondered what he should say. He looked down at Dean’s hand on his chest, feeling the heat from it through Charlie’s way too tight shirt. He looked up at Dean, his eyes questioning, coming up empty with how to respond in an appropriate way, “Should I touch your hand, too?”

Dean shook his head, “You can touch me back, but maybe something different. Like, here,” he grasped Castiel’s hand and lifted it to his earlobe, “Now gently play with my ear, pretend I’m wearing earrings and pretend that you’re interested in them. An excuse to touch, without being super aggressive.”

Castiel couldn’t believe this was happening. He loved the new game between them, the fact that he
was allowed to touch Dean under the pretense of flirting lessons. The hunter’s ear felt soft under his fingers and he stroked his thumb over the earlobe in a gentle caress. He had gotten so lost in the the feeling of touching Dean, he forgot what his friend had told him to say. He looked up at Dean, into his beautiful face and intense green eyes. When Sam had asked him earlier what he liked physically in a person, he had only mentioned one thing he liked. The truth was, he liked everything about Dean. Dean was the embodiment of everything that he found physically attractive.

Dean looked at him expectantly and Castiel tried his best to remember what they were supposed to be doing. Flirting, right. Something about invisible earrings. “I… um… like your earrings?” He knew he sounded uncertain and not very flirty, but Dean was willing to teach him. So if he was bad at it, Castiel hoped that would mean their flirting game would be dragged out for as long as the hunter was willing to participate.

Dean chuckled, “Try: those earrings are pretty…”

“Not as pretty as your eyes,” the words had left Castiel’s lips before he could even think about them, or their consequences.

Dean seemed taken aback, but the shock was short lived. He smiled and leaned into Castiel’s hand, “Is that right?”

Castiel used that opportunity to slide his hand down, cupping the side of Dean’s neck as he pulled him closer, his thumb gently stroking his cheek. “I’ve seen stars and gemstones, beautiful wonders in nature, all of which pale in comparison to your eyes. ‘Pretty’ is a rather inadequate description.”

The hunter’s cheeks reddened, Castiel was pretty sure that wasn’t fake. Dean broke their eye contact, his eyes cast slightly downward before he slowly lifted his gaze again. Dean’s pupils were dilated, either the man was a very good actor, or Castiel’s words were having an effect on him. His thumb continued its ministrations as they continued an unwinnable staring contest. Finally Dean responded with a quiet, “Cas…”

Castiel couldn’t stop the soft gasp falling from his own lips, his eyes flickered over Dean’s beautiful face, licking his lips in an uncontrollable impulse. Dean’s eyes followed the movement of his tongue for a moment before he looked back up. The hunter’s gaze was pulling him closer, like he was a meteor succumbing to a planet’s gravitational pull.

Dean’s breath hitched as their faces drew closer, his eyes fluttered closed. Castiel could feel Dean’s shaky breath as he exhaled against the angel’s lips.
“Guys?” Sam called out from behind the sycamore trees a few yards away.

Castiel had to refrain from groaning as they pulled away from each other. The moment broken, lost.

Dean rubbed the back of his neck and let out a nervous sounding laugh, “I… I guess we should get back inside.”

Castiel tried to mask his disappointment with a half smile, “I also should give Charlie her clothes back. They aren’t very comfortable.”

Dean looked down at the skirt and way too small t-shirt before laughing outright. He shook his head, clearly amused and stood up, offering his hand to help Castiel up, “Come on, then.”

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The bunker was quiet in the early morning hours. Castiel knew it was a bad idea for him to come back to the garden, sitting in the same spot where he had been with Dean earlier.

He shouldn’t let his thoughts linger on their moment. Shouldn’t think about the “what ifs”, the things that could have happened, if Sam hadn’t disturbed them.

He should be thankful for Sam’s interruption. There was no way it could have ended in a good way. He would have just embarrassed himself further. Dean wouldn’t have failed to notice his feelings a second time.

Castiel closed his eyes, feeling torn between the urge to replay this memory over and over in his mind, and to stop thinking about it entirely for his own sanity. He felt his urges winning and sighed deeply, leaning against one of the trees.

He recalled Dean’s soft lips when they had kissed, the taste of his mouth and the urgency in every touch to get closer. It felt like the birth of a star, the heat and pressure between them increasing to a point that where they to unite, it would collapse into something new and brighter.
Of course it had been impossible for him to stop. How could anyone resist that kind of force?

He shouldn’t think about it, but his body wanted to surrender, to stop fighting it and enjoy the feeling that these thoughts brought him. Castiel felt the heat in his body expanding and his heart beat faster. He felt dizzy with these memories, his skin started to tingle all over. He noticed his breathing became ragged and shallow, his physical reaction perplexing him; Castiel felt sick, pained, and dizzy, but the overall thrill was also so enjoyable.

He got lost in images of Dean sitting close to him, recalling the feeling he had when he had touched the man’s face. How Dean had leaned into him, like he wanted to be touched. He thought about the crack in Dean’s voice as the hunter had said Castiel’s name.

Castiel felt himself reacting to all of these memories. It wasn’t the first time he experienced an erection, but this time it brought his thoughts to a screeching halt. He tried to calm down, taking a couple of calming breaths. He couldn’t do this. If he crossed the line and succumbed to his desires, there was no coming back. He knew it could break him and for his own sake, he decided to stop himself.

Indulging in this little fantasy wasn’t doing him any good. And it certainly didn’t help in trying to avoid showing Dean his real feelings. Maybe he would be brave at some point. But not as long he wasn’t getting clear signals from Dean that he wanted the same thing.

He couldn’t risk losing Dean over his feelings.
Frankie here: Heads up, there’s some NSFW content in this chapter, not super graphic, but it’s still there. Also there is homophobic language (not said by Cas or Dean) in this chapter, if that’s a trigger for you, I wanted to make sure it was listed.

P.S. Again, we’re experimenting with cliche romcom tropes and we hope you enjoy this chapter as much as we loved writing it!

P.P.S. You get TWO fanarts this chapter, go worship Any right now!
June 11, 11:33 AM

Dean: Dude cas if you’re serious about this stupid human activities for a week thing the smith county fair is going on right now

Cas: You want to go with me?

Dean: Why not? I can’t even remember the last time I went to a fair

Cas: I thought you would conveniently forget about it because it would be a reminder of how you lost epically against me in the car.

Dean: Dude did you just use the word epic? And shut up you cheated anyway

Cas: It’s an accurate description and I would never cheat.
Cas: I would love to go with you to the fair.

Dean: You totally cheated being an angel with your powers. You took advantage of a poor dimwitted human!
Dean: Me too cas

Cas: I didn’t use my grace, I’m just stronger. You are in no way poor and dimwitted. If anything you’re an infuriating human.
Cas: When do you want to go?

Dean: Infuriating is angel speak for sexy isn’t it?
Dean: And let’s go tonight Styx is playing

Cas: Infuriating is angel speak for infuriating.
Cas: I’m looking forward to tonight. See you later, Dean :-D

Dean: Hah! You love my infuriating ass
Dean: See you in a bit

It had been a week since the truth or dare fiasco. When Dean lost himself so fully to his base desires and attraction for his best friend. Lost in the heat of Cas’s breath, his lips, his touch. God help him, he had loved every fucking second of it, but Cas’s reaction afterwards made him realize that he had to tread carefully with the angel. Just because he was attracted to Cas, didn’t mean the angel felt the same way.

Dean was less worried about feelings developing, more so than taking advantage of the angel. He was pretty sure Cas was attracted to him, but ‘pretty sure’ was subjective. How could he approach the task of pursuing a friends with benefits type deal with the angel? Dean wasn’t sure, but he did know for certain that he wanted to. He could keep feelings out of sex and Cas was an angel, so it wasn’t like he could fall in love or anything stupid. He felt hope that the attraction was reciprocated when Cas played along with another flirting lesson. Dean was pretty sure that, had his brother not cockblocked them, Cas would have kissed him again. Would have kissed him for real. And he would have let him.

When he saw the ad for the Smith County Fair, Dean recalled their stupid bet. He texted Cas immediately, genuinely pleased the angel was up for it. Fuck it, if no one else wanted to go with them, he was going to make his move.

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Dean and Cas went to the fair alone, nobody else was in the mood. Dean promised his brother he'd bring him back a clown, to which he received a rude hand gesture.

After they found parking and Dean spent twelve minutes attempting to explain to Cas why they wouldn’t be allowed into the fairgrounds with his angel blade; they were finally inside. The sun was starting to set, so the dusky orange hues that cascaded over the summer sky gave the dirty fairground an air of magic. Dean smiled at the mystified look on Cas’s face. A being that had literally seen the dawn of creation and he was mesmerized by the neon lights that glittered the rides and booths.

“The games are rigged?” Cas asked with a frown.

Dean laughed, “Of course! That's how they make money. But I've got an angel on my shoulder, I'm sure he could help me win.”

“I’m guessing it’s not cheating if they already cheated, right?” Cas asked with a little smile playing on his lips.

“That's the spirit! So, what would you like to do first? Styx doesn't hit the amphitheater for another two hours.”

Cas looked around the fair, taking everything in with curious eyes. “What’s that?” He nodded in the direction of a creepy looking building. The entrance was a wide open mouth of a clown. A pity Sam wasn’t there.

“That appears to be a funhouse.” Dean chuckled as he pulled his phone out to take a picture of the entrance before sending it to Sam. He pulled Cas by the sleeve of his trenchcoat in the direction of the creepy clown mouth, “Let’s go!”

He was surprised at feeling Cas slightly resist before he slowly followed Dean, eyeing the entrance in trepidation. “It looks suspicious, don’t you think? And not very funny… for being called a funhouse.”

“Yeah, they’re supposed to be creepy as hell, but considering we’ve seen way more f*cked up shit in our lives, I highly doubt anything in there is all that scary.” Dean paused for a moment, Cas looked a little paler than usual. He quirked his brow and practically smirked at the angel, “Cas? Are you scared?”

“I don’t have my angel blade. If something happens I can’t protect you with my powers being so weak.”

“Aww, you are!” Dean proclaimed, his tone halfway between condescending and sincere. He wrapped his arms around the angel from behind, pressing his head on Cas’s shoulder, their cheeks touching, “No need to fear! I’ll protect you, my little turkey.”

“I said my powers are weak, Dean. Not that I didn’t have enough to smite you into oblivion.”
Dean pressed a kiss to Cas’s cheek and released his hold, “Come on, tough guy, you wanted to do human things, let’s do human things!” He grabbed the angel’s hand and continued to hold it as they made their way to the entrance. It was weird, he kind of felt like a kid. Sharing an experience like this with someone who had never had the chance, it was making it more fun than these podunk county fairs had any right to be.

Cas’s glare turned into a radiating smile as he followed Dean into the building. “Why do people like to get scared?”

Dean shrugged, “Beats me, my guess it’s got something to do with the fact that most people don’t know that all the scary things they make movies about are real. If they knew that, I doubt half this shit would exist.” He had to duck under a low-hanging piece of wood that barely counted as an entryway. Who constructed this terrible place? Armless people? They finally arrived to the area with all of the misshapen mirrors. He saw Cas’s reflection behind his, a confused look on the angel’s face. He smiled. Damn, he was cute. Dean shook his head, bad brain!

Cas raised his arms and tilted his head, watching how his body shape transformed in the mirror. “That looks strange.” He turned around to face Dean before he broke into a wide smile, “Look behind you, Dean. Your ass is massive.”

Dean turned around and looked over his shoulder to see what the angel was talking about. He let out a bark of laughter, “Damn! Maybe I should go be a backup dancer for J-Lo…”

“You can dance?” Cas asked, still smiling and watching Dean’s distorted reflection.

“Let me put it to you this way,” He answered before grabbing Cas by the hands and pulling him in close. Dean placed Cas’s right hand on his left shoulder, dropped his left hand to the angel’s hip, and grasped his free hand with his own. At Cas’s perplexed stare, Dean smiled, “I’m no Gene Kelly, but I know a thing or two…”

Dean proceeded to force Cas into an awkward and clumsy waltz in the small space surrounded by mirrors. The angel laughed, an actual, honest to god, laugh. He had never felt more proud in his life than at that moment.

Cas looked down at their feet, probably so he wouldn’t step on them by mistake, before he looked up again with a happy smile, “I’ve never danced before. Thank you, Dean.”
“Don’t thank me just yet!” He proclaimed before dipping Cas backwards. He held him there for a couple of minutes as they both shared a laugh. When they returned to a promenade stance, Dean twirled the angel out, before twirling him back, now in a sweetheart position. After another turn out, they came face to face again. Dean almost pressed his forehead against Cas’s, a gap of mere centimeters. Cas’s eyes were cast downward, his dark lashes beating against his cheeks. Dean couldn’t stop his hands from slowly drifting upward, his right finding its way to the angel’s face, as his left crawled up Cas’s chest, to rest against the lapel of his trench coat.

They swayed together like that for a few moments. Dean wished they could stay like that forever. Carefree, worry free, just the two of them, sharing a dance. When the sound of other people’s laughter grew louder, indicating they were no longer alone in the funhouse, Dean pulled away and released Cas. He chuckled, “Not bad for a beginner…”

Cas smirked at him, “I’m a quick study in everything.”
Dean quirked his brow. Cas was definitely flirting. He had to admit, flirting with Cas was fun as hell, but it was more than that. Maybe it was because it made him feel normal. Acting like a regular thirty something with friends and not having to constantly worry about the impending doom that lurked over the horizon. He thought back to their kiss, maybe not so normal, but in that moment, he couldn’t have even attempted to bring himself to care. Cas was a surprisingly good kisser, and hell, sometimes you just needed to enjoy the feeling of another person against you.

He decided he was going to take Cas’s comment as the challenge that it was, “Is that right?”

“Yes, why? Do you want to test me?” Cas looked up at him with a flirty smile.

Hell yes he wanted to test him. “Come on,” Dean said as he took the angel’s hand again and dragged him out of the funhouse.

By the time they got outside, the sun had completely set and the grounds were lit up in neon and strobe lights. He stopped when they reached an abandoned awning and Dean decided it was time to make his move. “Hey, wasn’t this supposed to be a date?” He extended his arms out in an offer, “Come on, Cas. Woo me.”

“You’re right,” Cas stepped closer to Dean, right into his personal space, like he always did. Not that Dean was bothered by it anymore. Cas let one of his fingers slowly wander up Dean’s arm before he rested his hand on his shoulder. The hunter was grateful he wore a long sleeved shirt, otherwise Cas would have noticed the trail of goosebumps his fingers had traced into his skin. “You said the games here are rigged. How about I win you something you can take home with you as a memory of this evening?”

“Hell yeah!” He exclaimed, secretly thrilled that Cas was playing along. Now he just had to make the angel realize this was not a game, not anymore.

Dean grabbed Cas’s hand, intertwined their fingers, and dragged him toward the carnival games. They stopped in front of a booth with milk bottles stacked on top of each other. He pointed to the bottles and whispered, “They’re weighed down, so no matter how hard you hit them, it’s practically impossible to knock them down.”

Cas leaned over to whisper back at Dean, his lips brushing over Dean’s ear, “I’ll bet angelic strength would suffice to knock them down.”
“If you knock one down, you get one of the smaller prizes, three or more, the medium sized prize, and all of them, you get to take home one of the large prizes. Five bucks for three balls.”

The top of the booth’s awning was lined with three different sized teddy bears in all different colors. Normal sized ones, ones about as big as a toddler, and massive ones that were almost as big as himself. He gave Cas a feigned innocent look and batted his eyelashes, “Win me the biggest one, babe?”

“Of course, honeybee,” Cas delivered that comeback so smoothly and straight faced that Dean couldn’t suppress a chuckle. His angel had come a long way, especially since that infamous night in the barn when he gave Dean a curious look while casually removing Ruby’s knife from his chest. The night Dean’s life had been forever changed.

Cas took the soft ball, which probably weighed nothing, and shot the sleazy guy a raised eyebrow and an almost bored expression. Dean couldn’t stop grinning with anticipation. Cas likely had the ability to throw this ball so hard that he could knock out Mr. Sleazebucket.

For any bystander it looked like Cas was throwing the ball like any other normal human being. But the result was pretty impressive. The whole construction of milk bottles didn’t just fall down, they flew back and nearly hit the back of the booth.

The game operator jumped back, “What the fuck?” He shook his head in apparent confusion, “Uh, well, pick the one you want.” He mumbled in an annoyed tone as he pointed to the largest teddy bears lining the back row.

“Do you prefer a specific color, Dean?” Cas smiled, ignoring the rude guy from the booth.

Dean looked at all of the options, literally every color in the rainbow. He turned to Cas and the earnest and almost sweet look in his eyes appeared to make his decision for him, “I want the blue one.” He addressed Cas, but loud enough for the carnie to hear him.

The guy struggled to pull the blue teddy bear down, so when it finally was free from the hook, he shoved it into Cas’s arms with a gruff, “Here’s your prize.”
“Thank you, that is very kind of you,” Cas responded, still ignoring the rudeness of the carnie. He turned to Dean, “Here you go, honeybee.”

Dean grabbed the ridiculously huge bear and pressed a kiss to Cas’s cheek. The carnie let out a disgusted scoff and murmured under his breath, “Fuckin’ faggots.”

“What did you say?” Dean challenged, his voice dangerously low. Fucking bigoted asshole, who was he to judge others? Dean might not be gay, but that didn’t mean he would stand by and listen to some homophobic epithets directed at him and his best friend.

The guy rolled his eyes and Dean saw red. What a fucking asshole. He narrowed his eyes, “You got a problem with my boyfriend?” He punctuated the word to make a point. And before Cas could react or respond, Dean slammed his lips against the angel’s. Less of a sexually driven or passion driven kiss, more of a “fuck your bigotry” type of display to rub into the face of that homophobic asshole.

The carnie flipped them off before putting up a “closed” sign and leaving the booth.

“Fuckin’ dick,” Dean spat at the guy’s retreating form. He turned back to Cas who appeared to be in a bit of a daze.

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“Cas? You okay?” Dean asked as he waved his free hand in front of the angel’s face, his tone clearly concerned for Castiel.

Castiel looked at the stony path under their feet. He needed to clear his mind. Dean had surprised him with this kiss and calling him his boyfriend. It wasn’t real, no matter how badly he wanted it to be.

But still, it felt real for a moment and he was desperate for this feeling to stay. It certainly wasn’t healthy or in any way good for his mind to lose himself in the fantasy, but he felt like his rationality was losing this battle
He looked up at Dean’s concerned face and felt the overwhelming urge to wipe any worry away. He wanted the easy laughter back, he wanted to see the carefree side of Dean again. “I'm okay… You just surprised me. That’s all.” He needed to change the topic, “I hope the teddy isn’t too heavy for you.”

Dean gave him a wink and said, “Well, a real date would offer to hold my teddy bear for me…”

“I could carry it if you want me to,” Castiel smirked, “Of course, if you two want to be alone I would understand. He looks very soft.”

Dean handed the bear to Castiel, leaned in close to the angel’s ear and poked his tongue out to swipe it softly against his earlobe. He whispered, “Not as soft as your lips.”

For a moment it felt like his heart must have stopped and he had died. He wondered if it was okay to wish that this night would never end. He wanted to keep Dean like that. Not only because he was touching and kissing him, but also because he had never seen Dean so genuinely happy and carefree.

“I’m glad you prefer me over your new friend,” He smiled and kissed Dean’s cheek in a streak of bravery. He felt the sexual tension between them getting almost palpable. Like before when Rowena had interrupted them or later in the bunker’s garden. He wondered if Dean was feeling it, too.

“I want to go on the ferris wheel, Dean,” He stated, looking over to the beautiful and colorful lights of the prominent attraction, “I’ve never been on one.”

Dean smiled, took his hand again and led them to the line. There were six people ahead of them, all appearing to be couples. When the ride operators started guiding everyone to the carriages, Dean pulled one of them aside and handed him a twenty dollar bill before whispering into the man’s ear. The din of the crowds and music meant that Castiel was incapable of hearing what Dean said to him.

He wondered what Dean had paid the man for and gave the hunter a questioning look. Dean answered it with a cryptic smile which wasn’t really an answer, but Castiel let it slide. He would probably find out soon anyway.

When it was their time to board a carriage, Dean placed the teddy bear on the far left, sat next to it, meaning Castiel had to sit next to Dean. The massive size of the plush toy also meant that they were sat flush against each other. Not that Castiel was complaining, mind you. When the ride finally started to move, Castiel smiled at Dean and took the man’s hand as he intertwined their fingers. He
looked down at the fair, growing smaller beneath them. The noises faded away, leaving only the wind whispering in their ears. For a moment it felt like the world around them was disappearing, leaving only the here and now with Dean.

He turned to face the hunter, showing him with his smile how much this moment meant to him and how happy he was when suddenly, the ride came to a stop. They had reached the top of the wheel and Castiel looked around for a moment, wondering if the ride was broken.

He looked at Dean as he felt the hunter’s fingers tighten around his hand. For a moment Castiel thought he had lost the ability to breathe, at least, that’s how it felt. The neon lights of the ride reflected in Dean’s eyes, making them shine like emeralds. He was caught in the intensity of Dean’s gaze, unable to look away. His heart started to race, it felt exactly like the other times before they had been interrupted. But this time no one could. They were suspended in the air, alone, and no one would disturb them.

He heard the couples in the other carriages whispering in alarmed voices, probably as confused as he was about the sudden stop, “Should I go get help?”

Dean chuckled, “I paid the guy to stop the ride when we reached the top, it’s nothing to be worried about.”

Castiel heard his own voice coming out in a hush, “Why did you do that?”

Dean let go of Castiel’s hand and slid his arm around his shoulder instead. He smiled as he moved his free hand forward to gently hold Castiel’s hand again, “The most cliche, rom-com, first date kiss is always at the top of a ferris wheel. Watch any chick flick.”
Castiel felt his mouth going dry and he swallowed to get rid of the strange feeling, “Dean?” He looked down at their hands. “Are… Are you going to kiss me again?”

Dean’s eyes flicked to Castiel’s lips, an unwavering stare that felt like it went on for eternity. Until slowly, ever so slowly, Dean’s eyes met his again. He moved the hand around his shoulder to gently caress Castiel’s cheek, “If that’s okay with you?” A hesitant sound, one he’d never heard Dean make before.

Castiel nodded slowly as Dean slipped his hand down to his neck, his fingers playing with Castiel’s hair. He felt like he was in a dream and he didn’t care what was right and what was wrong in that instant. Dean was pulling him in and he could feel his shallow breath grazing his lips before he felt him, soft and tender. A fleeting touch before Castiel melted into the hunter. Everything was gone, the world around them ceased to exist. It was just them, their hearts beating in unison, their bodies becoming one. Castiel didn’t know where his body ended and Dean’s began. In his mind there was only space for one word: Dean.
Clinging to each other, their kiss became more desperate, a need to touch, to taste, to get utterly and irrevocably lost in the passion that was driving them. This was just as exciting as their first kiss, but so much more terrifying. They weren’t prompted by some silly game, Dean leaned in and took his lips like an explorer staking a flag in the ground he was laying claim to. The hunter leaned into him and he could feel Dean’s erection press into his hip. Castiel groaned, he had never been so aroused in his entire existence.

Castiel let out a soft gasp when he felt Dean’s hand trail down his chest, lower and lower, until it reached the seam of his pants. No pretenses, no teasing, the hunter cupped Castiel’s erection, causing him to pull back slightly. He searched Dean’s eyes for answers to the million questions he had, but all he saw were lust-blown pupils.

Dean looked down at where his hand lay against the angel’s groin, when he met Castiel’s gaze again, it was in a silent appeal for permission. Without even thinking, the angel nodded and pulled Dean in, their lips crashing together in a frenzied passion and fight for dominance.

Castiel let out a positively indecent moan when Dean started to rub his erection through his pants, a tantalizingly firm yet slow stroke. Despite Castiel’s eyes being closed, all he saw was stars. Stars and the beautiful, utterly breath-taking face of Dean Winchester. His breathing grew ragged, the sensations of physical pleasure combined with the proximity of the man he was so desperately in love with was teetering Castiel over the edge.

He gasped when the ride started to move, but Dean pressed on, “Come for me, Cas.”

And he did. Dean’s words drove him over the proverbial edge with a muffled moan as Castiel buried his face into Dean’s shoulder. Dean held him close through the waves of ecstasy, feeling like the anchor Castiel needed to not lose himself completely in the torrential waves of their connection.

He breathed heavily into Dean’s shoulder as he tried to calm down, slowly relaxing into the hunter’s body when he wrapped his arms around him to pull him closer. Dean nuzzled his nose into Castiel’s hair and he felt him press a kiss to the top of his head. He had never felt so intimate with another person and so… safe. It was a foreign feeling, but so beautiful. He never wanted to not feel like this again.

Dean ran his fingers through Castiel’s hair, “Are you okay?”

Castiel smiled, face still pressed into Dean’s shoulder, leaving a tender kiss on his throat before he looked up at the hunter, “More than okay.” He suddenly felt shy again. This was far out of his scope of experience. “Do you… um… want me to reciprocate?”
Dean smiled at him, “Another time. Our ride is almost over and I don’t want to give the folks here a show, you know? Besides, this date is about you. You won the bet. This is your night.”

Castiel smiled at the prospect Dean was giving him. He hoped Dean would be open to do this again. For the first time he felt hopeful, hopeful that Dean maybe felt the same about him.

He looked down at himself, his hand glowing for a moment as he removed the wet stains from his pants and shirt. Dean chuckled lowly in his ear, before he placed a soft kiss to his earlobe, “That’s really practical, man.”

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As they walked in companionable silence, hand-in-hand to the food court area, Cas still holding the ridiculous teddy bear for him, Dean smiled to himself. It was nice to pretend, however short lived it would be, that he could have something like this, something relatively normal. But the reality of the situation was he was Dean Winchester and, sooner or later, the other shoe was gonna drop.

In the meantime, it was nice being intimate with Cas. Dean was getting too old for one night stands, and he made peace years ago with the fact that a legitimate relationship wasn’t in the cards for him. That didn’t mean he had to be freakin’ celibate though, and if he was able to get some sexual gratification with, well, whatever the hell was going on between him and Cas; he wasn’t about to turn that down.

Dean wasn’t entirely sure what he’d done to deserve Cas, his friendship, his loyalty, and now this unspoken friends with benefits deal. Thankfully, the guy was an angel, which meant a romantic attachment wasn’t going to happen. For either of them. At least, that’s what he kept telling himself. He didn’t have the luxury of developing feelings, not real feelings, for any male. The heat, the passion, the fluttering of butterflies in his stomach whenever he thought of Cas, well, that was to be expected, right? Sexual attraction often gets confused with emotions, which is why it usually leads to complications and bullshit.

But not Dean and Cas. He was not about to potentially lose the best friend he’s ever had over bullshit emotions and feelings. As long as they kept it casual, there would be nothing wrong with taking their friendship to a physical level. Dean was not about to fuck up yet another relationship because of falling too far, too fast. That’s why Cas was such a great choice, he was a dude, there was no way he could fall in love with him. Besides, falling in love with anyone, especially a freakin’ angel, just meant doom and heartbreak in the end.
He was shaken out of his thoughts by Cas, offering him a corndog with a stupidly sweet look of concern, “Dean?”

He accepted the food and shook his head, “Sorry, I guess I was in lala land.” Dean offered a small smile in thanks.

Cas still looked concerned. He shuffled his feet, like a nervous child, apparently hesitant to say whatever was on his mind. Finally he asked, “Are you having regrets?”

“About what we just did?” Dean found it difficult to put into words what they had just shared. It was so much more than a quick jerk off and make out session on a ferris wheel, but at the same time, he couldn’t let it be more than that.

At Cas’s nod, he moved to sit down on one of the many benches littering the fairgrounds, waving for Cas to follow him. They laid the teddy bear out across both of their laps. Dean took a deep breath, contemplating how to say what he wanted to say. Fuck it. Word vomit it was, “I have a lot of regrets, Cas. I’ve done some pretty terrible things, hurt a lot of innocent people, made a lot of bad decisions. But what we just did? Nah, man. I don’t regret that. It’s probably weird for you, and for that I’m sorry. I get if you don’t want to keep it up, we can go back to being just friends…”

“No!” The angel interrupted.

Dean chuckled, “Awesome. Well, we don’t have to label it, we don’t even really have to think about it, let’s just go with what we’re feeling and shit, just stop thinking. So if I want to…” Dean leaned forward and pressed a gentle kiss to Cas’s lips. He pulled back, “Do that. I can. Or if I want to…” He grabbed the bear and tossed it to the ground, scooting closer to the angel without impediment.

Dean lifted his hand to Cas’s cheek, his gaze held on the lips of an actual angel. When their lips met again, he let himself get immersed in all of the sensations. The need, the hunger he felt. A gentle kiss quickly morphed into something more raw, more animalistic. He gripped Cas’s tie and clung to it like a life preserver as he swore he was drowning. When he felt the angel grip his hair, a tug that was somewhere between pleasure and pain, rough enough to be a fucking turn on, Dean groaned into Cas’s mouth. When they came apart, breathless, foreheads pressed together as they tried to steady themselves, Dean finally finished his sentence, “Kiss you, I fucking can.”

Foreheads still pressed together Cas breathed out, “And I am permitted to do the same?”
Dean smiled, “Hell yeah.”
June 12, 12:08 AM

Castiel: Dean, I really enjoyed our “date”.
Castiel: And I thought a lot about it.
Castiel: There is something I need to tell you.
Castiel: I’m sorry I’m doing this in a text message, but I feel more comfortable that way.
Castiel: Olani hoath ol

Castiel closed his eyes and bit his lower lip. For a moment, a wave of panic hit him when he reread the lines on his phone. It was done. There was no way Dean wouldn’t find out what those words meant.

He had said them in Enochian because he still felt his own language described his feelings better than
the English translation, but who was he kidding? He also did it because he was afraid to say those words outright. He hoped it wasn’t a mistake.

He couldn’t leave his feelings bottled up like that any longer. In the past few weeks they had spent so much time together and now that their family was finally complete again, he wished… He just wished Dean would be open to a possible relationship. All of the flirting, smiles, and little touches, the encounter on the ferris wheel; all of it had led him to believe that they may have a chance and that Dean might feel the same.

Still, he was glad that he had left the bunker for this. He felt ridiculous, being afraid of a few words. Castiel had laid siege to Hell, had slain armies of demons, but the rising panic was not fading away as he waited for Dean’s reply with a constricted feeling in his chest.

**June 12, 12:16 AM**

Dean: Sorry man I was in the shower and you’re a dork texting me when you’re two doors away. I enjoyed it too btw
Dean: Dude what language is that?
Cas: It's Enochian.
Dean: What does it mean?
Cas: A bit of research never hurt anyone, Dean.
Dean: Really? Research is sams thing not mine
Dean: Well unless it's a life or death thing
Cas: This time it isn't. But if you want to know, you should find out by yourself. You shouldn't ask Sam to help you. It's only meant for you.
Dean: But Sammy understands enochian i could just text him real quick
Dean: I mean whatever you tell me you can tell Sammy we're family right?
Cas: Yes we are but still I would feel uncomfortable with him knowing what I wrote to you before you know
Cas: And you would too
Dean: K do you know where the enochian dictionary is?
Cas: In the library second shelf from the door
Dean: K give me a couple minutes
Cas: I'll give you as much time as you want

Dean rolled his eyes, but thought, ‘what the hell?’ He made his way to the library and found the
Enochian dictionary. He flipped through it while heading back to his room. Dean sat on his bed and pulled his phone out to re-read the text while thumbing through the pages of the worn out book. *Olani hoath ol, olani hoath ol.*

Dean dropped the book when he saw what the words meant in English. Fuck. *Fuck fuck fuck.* Maybe it was a typo? Maybe it wasn’t intentional? Maybe Cas didn’t mean ‘I love you’ in the way Dean was dreading, fearing.

**June 12, 12:25 AM**

Dean: Uh cas? Do you realize what you said?

Cas: Of course, it's my language
Cas: And I meant it

Dean: I uh... Like a brother right?

Cas: Not exactly... I realize you might not feel the same way, but I needed you to know. You can just ignore me. I don’t expect anything. I just needed you to know.

Dean: Wait cas. Fuck why would you say that?

Cas: Because that's how I feel and I can't continue lying about it every time you tell me I'm family or I'm like a brother to you. It feels like I lied to you and I don’t want to do that anymore.
Cas: I apologize, I guess I'm very selfish sometimes

Dean: Fuck cas I don't know what to say
Dean: Fuck I didn't even think angels were capable of love like that
Dean: Cas?
Dean: Come on dude you can't say that and disappear on me where'd you go? You're not in your room!

Cas: I wanted to give you some space. I'm sorry for making things awkward between us. I hope you can forgive me. Angels probably can’t love, but I’m not a very good example of one.

Dean: Cas man don’t say shit like that
Dean: I don’t want to have this conversation through text man

Cas: I'm sorry... Again. I tried so often to tell you this, but I guess I'm a coward. It's strange that I never felt fear in battle but when it comes to this... I'm sorry. I would understand if you don’t want to talk to me again.

Dean: I don't know how to process this. You know I'm bad with feelings and shit but I don't want you to not talk to me. I refuse to lose you over something like this. I'm sorry I can't say it back to you but don't make me lose my best friend. Please?
Dean: Cas man please I won't say you're family cuz it hurts you but you have to know that losing you would fuck me up
Dean: I'd rather have you in my life I'm sorry I can't be what you want but it doesn't bother me I'm not uncomfortable we've been through enough bullshit
Dean: Don't ignore me man come on
Dean: Awww cas buddy please just talk to me
Cas: I'm sorry but I can't... I... I'm sorry

Dean: Cas! What do you want me to say? What do you want me to do??!!
Dean: Seriously you can't just drop a bomb on me like that and refuse to talk to me
Dean: What do you want from me??!

Cas: I want... I don't know. I've told you that I know you don’t feel the same... And I thought I would be okay with that. But I think I'm not okay. So I don't know anymore. I want you... And it hurts. I don’t think I've ever experienced so much pain before and I don't know what to do. I'm sorry. I don't have any experience with these things. This has never happened before in my whole existence. I just don’t know how to handle this. Maybe I'll just need time. This will go away, right? Cas: I'm sorry, Dean

Dean: Cas man fuck. Dude you can do so much better than me. I'm broken. I think you love the idea of me but reality is I'm an inconsiderate asshole most of the time. I have a temper. I don't do well with emotions. The longest relationship I've ever had is with my car. You will get over this because you'll eventually see that I'm so not worth it
Dean: Case in point of me being an asshole I'm being selfish and begging you to not leave because I need your friendship more than I care about your feelings
Dean: I care man I do but damnit I'm sorry. I'm sorry I can't be what you want or need.

Dean stared at his phone, willing Cas to reply. After several minutes of nothing, Dean cried out, “Fuck!” He pocketed his phone and went to the kitchen. Thankfully everyone else was either sleeping or holed up in their room. He grabbed the full bottle of Jack Daniels and a couple of beers before going back.

He sat on his bed, sipping a beer in between gulps of whiskey straight from the bottle. *Fuck*. Cas was in love with him? What the fuck? How did he fuck up so badly? He should have known better, he should have known that attempting to have a purely physical relationship with his best friend was bound to end badly. *Stupid, stupid, stupid!* He knew there were signs, indications that maybe Cas wasn’t getting that this was just friends messing around, a friends with benefits deal that hadn’t gone passed heavy petting... yet.

Cas wasn’t supposed to develop feelings, especially not for Dean. A broken man with more emotional scars than physical ones. A man who was utterly incapable of feeling love. Not the familial type of love that he and Sam had pushed beyond healthy limits far too often, he could feel that. No, the type of love that when you see that person, *your* person; your stomach twists into some morbid rendition of an emotional hernia, invading your chest cavity and choking the air out of your lungs. You are gasping for air, drowning in the horizon that carries on forever just behind their deep, blue sea eyes.

As the image of Cas invaded his mindseye, Dean swayed and fell against the head of the bed board. He grasped on. *Fuck*. *Fuck*. No no no no no. Not possible. They were best friends. Best friends who happened to enjoy making out. That shit happens all the time, it doesn’t have to mean more than it does. It shouldn’t mean more than that. *It didn’t.*
It wasn’t fair, they had a great friendship. Why the hell did Cas have to go do something so stupid? Falling in love with Dean was probably one of the dumbest things anyone could do. It would have been one thing if the angel was just attracted to him, just wanted to have sex, to continue to explore their attraction.

While Dean preferred women, he’d had sex with men in the past. Sometimes a guy just needed a quick fuck in an alleyway. Or maybe it was a means of comfort when creatures in Purgatory were constantly on the hunt for you, like with Benny. Sex he could do. Sex he could handle, but emotions? Feelings? That always ended badly, at least as far as the Winchesters were concerned.

In less than thirty minutes Dean had finished off three beers and more than half of the bottle of whiskey. He was pretty fucking wasted, considering he was cuddled up to a four foot blue freakin’ teddy bear. Thinking about losing Cas, thinking about how royally he fucked up, a tear rolled down his cheek. He angrily wiped it away and pulled his phone out to start texting him again.

June 12, 12:59 AM

Dean: Caaaasssss casssss why are u ignoring me I don't want u to do that why why I don't get it I know I'm s piece job hjkd fuck punch why don't sur indirect duck!! Autocorrect isn't working right now. Whatever you know what? Fuck your for telling me u love me fuck u for making me feel like I could be worth more to someone. Why would u do that??
Dean: U know what I didn't mean tha I'm sorry Casablanca o mean cas.why Casablanca? you know that movie? That movie is sad like this right now
Dean: Of all the gin joints in all the towns in allll hte world
Dean: U walked into mine
Dean: I don't like gin though seems like an old man drinkable snfno snfno damnit
Dean: I like u though
Dean: Cas u Harv to promise u won't tell anybody this but I cried when Amara took u and luci man no one knows I cried cuz I was scared that shy was hurting u man
Dean: And I'm crying now but u have to not say snythibdfb cuz it's embargo kludge embstedkfykfv fuck! Its embarrassing
Dean: But I'm crying cuz now I hurt u and I don't like it whhhhyyyy why do I just fucking fuck it u deserve so much better than me ur a ducking beautiful beautiful person and I'm nothing and u are magical and SOOOOO awesome u know that right?
Dean: Imma text u until u respond or I run outs of whiskey and passage out but whatever
Dean: Cas cas cas cas cas
Dean: U know I like ur name?its soft but ur not u know
Dean: Castiel Castiel that's sad like cas likeu
Dean: Cas cas cas stop being a dick stop it and aijdsdhjnjbb answer fuck
Dean: Piijiizzaa u should bring me foooos cuz then we can talks instead text cuz we need to talk Ingush I mean it also mdde me realized how much autocorrect fixed the texts
Dean: I'm not gonna shoot. Stop I mean until I hear from join you
Dean: Duck I ruined everything like always now u won't talk bob to me cuz I'm a havkadffb jacsdfh damnit who iv why is texting texting so much harder harder
Dean: My sheets are blue like ur eyes u know they? Ur eyes are so ducking blue man
Dean: Like smirk surf fuck you autocorrect
Dean: Like a smurf
Dean: Blue like smurfs
Dean: U know I had sex with Benny
Dean: I never told anyone that's
Dean: U can't tell anyone either
Dean: The sexy wag was good but it was different like I liked it
Dean: But when. I. care fore something or people ghosh. They get get hurt
Dean: All I do is hurt
Dean: Cas please don't be math mad at me please
Dean: Cassss casss
Dean: Why can't we go back to when. Before times and then u would not feel bad and we'd still be talking
Dean: Even if o could say it it eohldntb be ok cuz u are better than that u need some kind who hurts people
Dean: Who doesn't hurt
Dean: Thatch what I mean
Dean: Duck cas please talk
Dean: U know what I like I like when yu say my name hello Dean helo Dean makes me happy
Dean: U say it so nice
Dean: Damnit cas talk
Dean: Please please please please pluses please
Dean: U know what's weird is that I can talk better on texts
Dean: Like I never would have told u about Benny
Dean: Benny sad was nice and see what happened to him

Castiel had chosen to retreat far up in the mountains, away from any civilization. He had been lying sprawled out on a patch of grass for hours, just staring up at the sky, trying to somehow find a way through the pain he was feeling. He couldn’t understand how humans could bear all of the pain he was feeling. It wasn’t a physical pain, like something he had any control over. His grace always protected him from that. This was something inside of him and felt like it was tearing him apart, like he was losing himself somehow.

Dean was the most important thing in his whole existence. He was the only aspect of his life that gave his life any meaning. After everything he had done… Castiel just knew if Dean didn’t need him, if he hadn’t had the hunter in his life, he would have killed himself after what he had done to Heaven.

And now he had probably destroyed their friendship forever with his foolishness. How could he ever face the hunter again?

He heard the quiet noises coming from his cell phone in his pocket. His hand grabbed it without thinking, but he didn’t pull it out. His fingers just gripped the device harder.
It could be Dean. It could also be someone else. Maybe Claire wondering where he was.

He didn’t know if he hoped it was Dean, or if he hoped it was someone else texting him. He realized he did want it to be Dean, but at the same time he dreaded any further conversation with the hunter.

The sound of text message notifications started bombarding his cell phone with rapid speed, but he still couldn’t bring himself to look. He was afraid of Dean’s words, words that he now knew could hurt more than someone cutting him with an angel blade.

He was sure now that the messages were from Dean. He could feel his longing. This ever present undercurrent of Dean’s wordless prayers, something the hunter was thankfully unaware of.

He sighed deeply and pulled the cell phone out of his trenchcoat. He couldn’t ignore Dean any longer. He was never good at that.

Dean had sent him a lot of messages and Castiel squinted his eyes as he read the partly illiterate text messages. They were full of mistakes. Dean was never fond of using punctuation in his messages, but this was nearly unrecognisable. It took him a moment before he realized that Dean must have been drunk when he wrote them.

It hurt to read them, knowing that he was responsible for Dean’s drunken escapade. He had obviously hurt Dean… He should have known better. He should have known that Dean didn’t want him like that.

It was so difficult to interpret the things Dean was saying to him. The hunter seemed like he was attracted to him, writing about Castiel’s eye color and that he liked the sound of the angel’s name. But that didn’t mean anything...

When his eyes landed on the next text message he felt like he’d been stabbed in the heart.

U know I had sex with Benny

For a moment Castiel just felt just numb. The only feeling was something tearing through his chest. He didn’t know how long he stared at that message. New messages kept beeping, but he didn’t look at them.
He gasped painfully as a tear fell down from his cheek and onto the display of his phone. And then there was anger. Anger that filled him up and eradicated the numbness that paralyzed his body.

He pressed on the display with more force than necessary, opening the rest of Dean’s messages as he let his anger ask the question at the forefront of his mind.

**June 12, 1:22 AM**

Cas: You were with Benny?
Cas: Did you have a relationship with him when you both returned to earth?

Dean: Uhhhh not really

Cas: What does that mean?

Dean: We didn’t have any kind of relationshop jsut sex and it was beofre we foudns u

Cas: Did you let him kiss you?

Dean: How pissed are u gonna be if in honest?

Cas: Please tell me you just said that to make me angry, so I would reply. If you and Benny... No, please...

Dean: Fuck cas

Cas: Why him? Why don’t you want to be with me?

Dean: It's not the same with u! We didn't know if wed live yo see another day it was just sex
Dean: U can't be mad man or jealous cuz he's dead hea ducking dead now cas
Dean: And u said u love me not that u want to just fuck me its not the same yjing

Cas: It doesn't matter. Now I know.
Cas: I know that this isn’t the same, but I can’t change the fact that I want both. I assumed because you wanted me physically... It doesn't matter, what I want is irrelevant now.

Dean: I do want u I just
Dean: I cannt give u both cas

Cas: I'm sorry for misinterpreting things. I really thought you could love me. But that was foolish of me. I'm sorry.

That fucking text was helping sober Dean up pretty damn quick. He read it three times. Four times. He could feel his heart literally break for his best friend. For the friendship he was about to lose. Why was he so goddamn stupid and selfish?
Dean let his dick do the thinking for him in regards to their attraction. He could hear his father’s voice echoing through his whiskey addled brain. A deep voice booming about what it was to be a man. That fateful day when he was seventeen and his dad had caught him making out with the older brother of one of Sammy’s friends. A nice guy, sweet, and a decent enough kisser.

**September 22, 1996 - Glendale Arizona**

After John had sent the two brothers home, he took Dean for a drive, more for privacy than anything else. He kept his eyes on the road, whereas Dean couldn’t tear his eyes away from the foreboding man. Where was this going to go? Was his dad going to drive him out to the middle of nowhere to beat the homo out of him?

Finally, after what had felt like several hours in Baby, John pulled over to an abandoned rest stop. He killed the engine and turned to face his son, “What I witnessed in there, I don’t know, Dean. I don’t wanna know. But I’m hoping that it’s just a phase.”

“I…” Dean hesitated, he had no idea how to answer his father. He looked down at his hands before asking, “What… what if it isn’t?”

A deep sigh, a slight pause, and then his father’s gruff voice molding the words that would shape Dean for the rest of his life, “It has to be son. This life I’m getting you and Sam ready for, it’s not a life for men who aren’t real men. A real man, he might feel attraction, hell, he might even act on it. But if you develop feelings, or god forbid love another man; you’re gonna lose. You’ll lose big time, you’ve gotta be a real man. I won’t always be around and I need you to be the man your brother is gonna need to help keep him safe. You understand?”

**June 12, 2016 - Lebanon, Kansas**

Dean shook his head as the words of his father echoed in a loop, unable to stop the tears, he collapsed against the teddy bear and clung to it. The wetness trailing down his cheeks all but forgotten as he tried to focus his thoughts. It’s not that he didn’t love Cas back, it’s that he couldn’t. Dean angrily wiped away the tears before taking a deep breath and responding.

**June 12, 1:34 AM**

Dean: Duck cas I dont know what tooo say
Dean: Love isnt in the cards for me i wish itcoudl be
Dean: but it cannt
Cas: You can’t, or you don’t want to?
Dean: Dude how fair is that how can u ask me that
Dean: Its not the same its bad enoughs i’m attratced to u its one tkjing to duck a guy but lovev? I itsa different I dont know Im not supposedf to love a guy
Dean: so its can’t
Cas: I never was supposed to love a human but I fell for you anyway.
Dean: If i could lovbe u dont yu think i would?
Cas: How would I know? I obviously know nothing. I can’t even distinguish between a mere attraction and real feelings. I really thought…
Dean: Thought what
Cas: I thought you could see me… as more than a friend. I even… no. Just forget it.
Dean: Why would u even want someone like me u deserve better cas
Cas: Oh and I am so deserving? I lied to you, I betrayed you, I nearly destroyed the world twice out of selfish reasons, I attacked Sam, I killed people, I destroyed Heaven and killed thousands of angels.
Cas: The question of deserving is an odd one here.
Dean: Like I havent done all the same betrayed and caused the deaths of people i loved reigning in apocalypsoes and shit the shit I did as a demon.
Dean: Duck man I was a fucking demon how is
Dean: Whatever
Dean: Please come home and talk to me
Cas: I can’t.
Dean: Yes u can u can come home we can talk about this I can iudak talk bettet than I cahn type please cas
Dean: And I'm damaged goods please man
Cas: It doesn’t matter if you, for whatever reasons, believe you don’t deserve my love. You have it, you have my heart. I can’t change that. Stop belittling yourself. I hate it when you do that. You are a wonderful person, Dean.
Dean: I'm not belonging belittling fuck man I'm being honest here
Dean: U wanted truth I'm giving u truth msn
Cas: We have a different view on the truth then.
Dean: What the duck is that supposed to mean
Cas: I don't see you the way you see yourself
Dean: That's what I'm talking about man! U have this warped and naive idea of me like I'm some tragic thing that if u love me I'll be magically better and it doesn't N ePub work like that life can't be that way
Dean: U want something o can't give
Dean: U want to fuck me u want to feel me that's all good
Dean: But u want more more that I cantt give to u
Dean: Benny and I knew what it was we knew what we meant to each other which was not more than a quick fuck to release stress man

Cas: Are you done now?

Dean: Yeah I'm done

Cas: I won't try to reason with you being obviously inebriated. I don't want to change you, I know exactly who you are, maybe even better than you do, I saw your soul, I mended your broken body when I rescued you from Hell, I know your worst side and I know your best side and if I tell you I love you... I mean it wholeheartedly. I'm not a child Dean, never treat my emotions with so much disrespect again. I accept you don't want me. But don't you dare tell me again that I'm naive about my feelings.

Dean: Fuck cas I didn't mean it like that
Dean: Man I get you're angry I do but u put me in a tucked up position man
Dean: Can't we just start over

Cas: I don't know, Dean.

Dean: What do you mean you don't know

Cas: You asked me, if we could start over.
Cas: I would love to... but I don't know if I can

Dean: Why why can't we start over

Cas: I think I need some time to think

Dean: Let's go back back to before I told you about Benny back to before you told me you loved me

Cas: you mean just ignore it?

Dean: I don't know I just don't wanna lose you

Cas: Dean... you will never lose me. But I'm not of any use to you at the moment. I need to clear my head.

Dean: What can I do?
Dean: Tell me what to do how can I fix this?

Cas: Dean, there is nothing to fix. I just need time. Can you give me that?

Dean: How much time?

Cas: I don't know how to answer your question. Like I said, I have no prior experience to fall back on. How long does it take not to feel anything anymore?

Dean: Fuck man I don't know it's kinda what I use booze for drink til I can't feel feelings anymore
Dean: Are you
Dean: Are you gonna leave again

Cas: Yes

Dean: Fuck please I'll do whatever I'll give you space I'll give you time but please don't leave
Dean: We can get past this
Dean: We need you
Dean: I need you cas

Cas: Please don't say that to me... I don't understand why you're doing this. Why would you need me? I'm sure you would get over me leaving you. You have all your friends and family with you. You're not alone. Why would you need me? I would just make you uncomfortable... and even you can't ignore the things I've told you... I just can't

Dean: Why can't I say that to you?? I'll never not need you cas! Never! I know I'm not alone needing people has nothing to do with being lonely. You're my best friend goddamnit
Dean: Please don't do this

Cas: If you're really my best friend you wouldn't ask this of me. I don't want you to see me like this. Like I am now.
Cas: Dean, I'm not okay.

Dean: Cas please we've seen each other at our worst come on I don't want to be a selfish but I'm not okay either at the thought of you leaving either
Dean: This is your home cas
Dean: Please don't let something as stupid as feelings run you out of your home not over me

Cas: My feelings aren't stupid and I can't come home. As much as I want to. I just can't. I'm sorry that this makes you somehow uncomfortable, though I still can't understand why, because I'm sure you would be more uncomfortable with me being there. I'm sure you don't want to deal with me right now. Not even I want to deal with me right now.
Cas: I just want this pain to stop
Cas: Being with you would make it worse

Dean: God I keep fucking up don't I? I'm sorry cas. I'm so fucking sorry. I'll do whatever you need. If you need to leave then I won't stop you. I don't want you to feel pain anymore. I'll leave you alone. If you ever want to text me or call me if you ever feel like you can again I'll wait right here

Cas: Thank you Dean.
Cas: I'm sorry

Dean: Me too cas. Me too. Please be safe and if you could at least text Sam from time to time to let him know you're okay? You don't have to text me but I just need to know you're okay

Cas: Of course

Dean: Thanks. I'll see you around?
Dean: I guess this is goodbye then. Bye cas I'm sorry I hurt you

Chapter End Notes

Frankie here: This is essentially our season break, but no worries, we won’t make you guys wait several weeks for the next update or anything! Our chapters will continue to be uploaded on a weekly basis. Also, just a warning, from here on out, it’s angst town. I bet you thought we were exaggerating with our tags? No such luck! Just be glad that Any reigns in my deep, dark angst desires for our beloved characters. But honestly, we’re both very sorry for what we are about to put you guys through; cuz in the end,
this is still a Supernatural fanfiction...

Thank you again for all of your wonderful support and comments!

P.S. I’d like to apologize for Dean’s drunk texts being practically illiterate, hopefully it wasn’t too difficult to read.

Any here: Also a huge THANK YOU from me. I’m drowning in work at the moment and all your comments and kudos really help me through my days! You guys are awesome. And I'm also very sorry for what is to come. Please don’t kill us.
Chapter 16

Sam

Cas! Hey buddy! Is everything okay? And Dean is Dean, you know how he is.

No, but I hope it will be at some point.

Dude what’s going on? Dean said you needed to find yourself, do you need help? Is there anything I can do?

You’re a good friend, Sam. I appreciate the offer, but I’m afraid there is nothing to be done. I have to go through this alone.

Dude you never have to go through anything alone. Have you never heard the term "misery loves company"? When you're sad sometimes you just need a sympathetic ear, or text in this case, but still.

Sam

I'm just worried you know? Dean’s been grumpier than usual, drinking more, he tends to do that whenever you leave.

You guys are okay, right?

It's complicated. If he hasn't told you anything, it's not my place to do it.

Dude you're my friend too, and as your friend you're totally allowed to tell me what's bothering or upsetting you. Dean doesn't have dibs on me. Let me help.

I don't know Sam... It's a big deal and Dean would probably kill me.

I don't want to drag you into this.
June 14, 1:12 PM

Castiel: Sam, how is Dean?

Sam: Cas! Hey buddy! Is everything okay? And Dean is Dean, you know how he is

Castiel: No, but I hope it will be at some point.

Sam: Dude what's going on? Dean said you needed to find yourself, do you need help? Is there anything I can do?

Castiel: You're a good friend, Sam. I appreciate the offer, but I'm afraid there is nothing to be done. I have to go through this alone.

Sam: Dude you never have to go through anything alone. Have you never heard the term "misery loves company"? When you're sad sometimes you just need a sympathetic ear, or text in this case, but still.

Sam: I'm just worried you know? Dean's been grumpier than usual, drinking more, he tends to do that whenever you leave

Sam: You guys are okay, right?

Castiel: It's complicated. If he hasn't told you anything, it's not my place to do it.

Sam: Dude you're my friend too, and as your friend you're totally allowed to tell me what's bothering or upsetting you. Dean doesn't have dibs on me. Let me help.

Castiel: I don't know Sam... It's a big deal and Dean would probably kill me

Castiel: I don't want to drag you into this.
Sam: Dude Dean is a dumbass and I won't let him kill you cuz you're my friend too. I won't force you to talk to me, but you sound like you need a friend and after saving my ass yet again I feel like I haven't been a very good friend to you and I want to be better about it.

Castiel re-read Sam’s last message a few times. It was the first time since... Castiel closed his eyes and bit his lower lip. The little smile that Sam’s message had provoked vanished again as his thoughts returned to Dean and what had happened between them. He wondered if he would ever feel better again. The truth was that Castiel felt like an alien out of water. He had no experience in things like that, how he should go on with his life. What he should do. He was alone and had no one to talk to. No one that would help him understand.

Except Sam...

June 14, 1:23 PM

Cas: You always are a good friend to me, Sam.
Cas: I... Maybe you're right. I could use a friend.
Cas: I'm in a situation I've never been before
Cas: And it's hard for me
Cas: I don't know where to start
Cas: I've made a mistake, Sam. Yet again. I misjudged something very horribly and I may have ruined my friendship with Dean.
Cas: This may come to you as a shock... but I've told your brother how I feel about him... that I love him. And I don't mean that in a brotherly way.

Sam: Wow. Please tell me he wasn't an asshole to you, cuz I'll beat his ass if he was.

Cas: Please don't tell him I told you that and please don't beat his ass.
Cas: He didn't take my love declaration well. I don't know why I thought he would. Why I've let myself hope. It's not his fault, Sam. I've just made a mistake.

Sam: Hey I'm gonna be honest with you and I hope it doesn't hurt you more but can I be honest with you?

Cas: Of course

Sam: So the thing is I know why you told Dean
Sam: You told him because you thought he reciprocated your feelings because he's an asshole who flirts with you and he's not flirting to be mean, he likes it and until you told me just now I honestly thought he had feelings for you too
Sam: I won't tell him I'm talking to you about this just so you know
Sam: But I'm sorry he put you through this cas and I get why you feel like you need your space

Cas: Thank you. And you're right. That was exactly what happened. I thought he was feeling the same. I misjudged the situation and now I don't know what to do. I never anticipated that this would hurt so much.
Cas: He expects me to bury my feelings and come back. I don't know if I can

Sam: Heartbreak is a bitch and I wish I could tell you it'll go away but you'll always feel it, but in
time it gets easier to live with
Sam: Of course he does because all he does is bury his feelings. He's not a role model for healthy
coping habits

Cas: Perhaps not

Sam: In time you'll start to not feel pain when you think of him. In time you'll be able to even be in
the same room as him without it hurting. In time you'll meet someone who will be nice and treat you
well and you'll eventually develop feelings for that person because you deserve it. I can't say when
but it will happen. I promise that much

Cas: I can't see it at the moment. Maybe it's too early for me to think about that. With Dean... I don't
know, I've never had to hide. He knows what I am. How would I even find anyone who would
accept me? Not that I want to find someone else...

Sam: I'm sorry my brother is emotionally constipated. And you feel that way now but cas come on
you're awesome, I don't think you should tell people what you are right away but if you meet
someone and get to know them then you'll start trusting each other and if they're great they'll
understand when you tell them you're an angel

Cas: Thank you, Sam. Can you tell your brother that I'm okay? I'm not, but I don't want him to
worry. He said he wanted to know…

Sam: You got it cas. And it's half true cuz you will be okay

Cas: You were right. It helped talking with you. Thank you, Sam.

Sam stared at his phone for a few moments. What the hell was wrong with Dean. Anyone with eyes
could see that Cas was in love with the guy. Why would he lead him on like that if he didn't even
slightly reciprocate those feelings? A wave of anger on Cas's behalf washed over Sam. He had to
figure out what the hell was going on in his brother’s head, but he had to be sly about it. He wasn’t
about to break his promise to Cas.

Sam pocketed the phone and made his way to Dean’s room. He knocked and at the lack of answer,
carefully opened the door. Dean was sitting on his bed, staring down at his phone, leaning against a
ridiculously huge teddy bear.

“Dean?”

His brother looked up, put down the phone, and gave him a half-hearted smile, “Yeah, Sammy?”

Sam was a little taken aback by how much anguish was in his brother’s eyes. He’d never seen him
like that in his entire life. “I… I just got a text from Cas, he wanted me to let you know he was
okay.”
For a brief, flicker of a moment, there was a flash of hope in Dean’s eyes. “Did he…” He paused, apparently to carefully construct his next words, “Did he say anything else?”

Sam shook his head, “No, just that he was okay and to let you know that.”

The semblance of a smile that was on the man’s face disappeared, “Oh.” It was the most heartbroken sound Sam had ever heard. He was sure of it.

He came into the room, gently closed the door, and sat on the bed next to his brother. “Dean? Is everything okay?”

“Sure, why do you ask?” He answered without turning to look at Sam.

The anger Sam had felt when he came to the room, the determination he had to pry the story out of his brother, to figure out why he would hurt their best friend; it evaporated. His heart hurt for Dean in that moment. The rejection Cas was feeling, it looked like it went both ways. He softly clapped his hand on Dean’s shoulder, “You don’t seem okay. Did you and Cas get into a fight?”

Dean’s posture stiffened a little, he was about to get defensive, “You said he didn’t say anything else.” An accusation.

“He didn’t, but if you aren’t fighting, why is he texting me to tell me he’s okay and to let you know, instead of just texting you?” Sam asked, his tone gentle, wanting to avoid confrontation.

Dean took a deep inhale and breathed out slowly. Still refusing to look up finally answered, “We did fight. He said he needed to find himself, I told him he was a dick for leaving us again. It wasn’t pretty.”

Sam knew that his brother was being truthful about it not being pretty, but that was the only thing he was being truthful about. He shook his head sadly. Today was not the day to try and force Dean to address his feelings. The man clearly needed time to process, to grieve. Sam stood up and patted his brother on his shoulder. When Dean finally looked up, he gave Sam another pained smile.

“I’m here if you need me, okay?” Sam offered.
At Dean’s nod, he moved to leave him to his solitude, his pain. Finding out the other side of the story could wait.
Chapter Notes

Frankie here: So, in order to upload the entire fic before Season 12 premieres, we will actually be updating OMT three times a week from this point forward. Every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. We’re working on the final chapter as we speak. :)

Thank you again for all of the kudos and comments and we hope you continue to enjoy our story!

Chapter 17

June 23, 5:31 PM

Castiel: Hello Sam, I hope you're doing well.

Sam: Heya cas! I'm doing pretty good, mom and I have been spending a lot of time together it's pretty awesome. How are you doing?

Castiel: I'm happy to hear that. I'm doing better, I think. I spent some time on a mountain in the Himalaya, doing nothing but waiting for the pain to subside. It didn't work very well, so now I'm trying to distract myself. I'm performing minor miracles at hospitals around the country. It feels nice to be useful again.

How is Dean?

Castiel: How is Dean?

Sam: Now
to be useful again.
Castiel: How is Dean?

Castiel didn’t know why he had asked that. He had debated just talking to Sam and not asking about the hunter’s well-being. He didn’t want to know. If Dean was happy, it would probably just hurt him again. On the other hand, he didn’t want Dean to suffer because of Castiel’s mistake.

Even worse was the prospect of Dean feeling sad or missing him. Castiel hated himself for being concerned with that. It was pathetic. Especially after the last few days where he had started to feel a little better about everything that had happened between them.

It had been one week since he and Sam had last talked and he thought a lot about Sam’s words. The younger Winchester had told him that time will help him get over the loss he felt, that there would be a time when he could live with what happened and maybe even see Dean again without wanting to die.

Sam had also tried to give him hope, that there was maybe someone out there for the angel, who could love him. Not that Castiel thought he could, or would, ever feel for another human being the way he did about Dean.

He was deep in thought when another message broke through his musings.

June 23, 5:47 PM
Sam: Sorry cas driving atm give me a sec and I'll properly respond
Sam: Finally stopped and cas that's awesome! What kind of miracles? That's so fucking cool. And Dean is Dean, you know? He's giving dad a run for his money for being a dick LOL
Cas: What is Dean doing? I worry about him and I can't stop thinking about him. I tried but it's very difficult. And yes, minor miracles. I healed a young girl from the cancer that was growing back. The doctors will think their treatment was successful so I think no one will notice.
Cas: I read stories to the children while I heal them, it prevents the staff from questioning my presence.
Cas: It's nice talking to the children, they are very kind
Sam: Dude cas that's so awesome. I'm seriously honored to be your friend.
Sam: And Dean is being a grumpy asshole. Any time any of us are being all smiley he gets pissed that we aren't doing more to hunt monsters but damnit we're all kind of tired and don't need to go on daily hunts anymore. Not that there’s been many cases lately...
Cas: Has he mentioned me?
Sam: Are you kidding? It's Dean he's acting like he's fine and nothing is bothering him so all he does is when he notices me texting he asks who I'm talking to, he always looks pissed when I say it's anyone but you
Sam: But no he hasn't actively mentioned you

Cas: I guess I shouldn't be hurt by that

Sam: It's okay to feel hurt by that Cas. Dean is an asshole sometimes and has the emotional cognizance of a baby rat

Cas: Rats are actually very social and emotional animals.

Sam: Then the emotional cognizance of a toaster. Whatever, I can't tell you to not feel hurt by it but the thing is he does miss you even if he's acting like he doesn't. The fact that he's downing a bottle of whiskey a night says he's not okay. Even Charlie said something to him and he snapped at her
Sam: He NEVER snaps at Charlie

Cas: I'm sad to hear that. I didn't want him to feel bad... I wish I could do something about it. But I wouldn't be of much use to him. And probably wouldn't be much use to myself... I feel bad that you all have to suffer the consequences of my mistake.

Sam: Cas, I'm only gonna tell you this once. You are not responsible for Dean's behavior. You have nothing to be sorry for. You fell in love with your best friend and he didn't feel the same way, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't have told him. And how he's acting now is all on him, it is not, and will never be, your fault. The only thing you're guilty of is falling for the dumbass
Sam: I love my brother and I always will but neither of us are known for making emotionally appropriate choices

Cas: I guess neither am I, Sam.
Cas: I just wonder if it was stupid to leave Dean like that

Sam: That's hard to say. On the one hand I think it's good for you to try to get your emotions in order, but on the other hand I miss you

Cas: I miss you too. I feel lonely out here.
Cas: I hope I'm able to come home soon

Sam: I hope so too. In the meantime why don't you try to make some friends with the people where you're at?

Cas: I will try that. Thank you, Sam. Would you please tell Dean that I'm okay?

Sam: You got it. Hope to hear from you soon!
Sam: Oh, and mom says hi.

Sam pocketed his cell phone and returned his attention to the task at hand. They had needed groceries, so Sam and Mary volunteered to go get them. As they wandered the supermarket, his mom pushing the cart while he trailed alongside her, he couldn't help but wonder if he should talk to her about what was going on between Cas and Dean.
She was not an idiot, he was sure she noticed with Cas’s being gone just how badly it was affecting her oldest son. It wasn’t his place to tell anyone what happened between them, but he was starting to feel the ramifications of keeping such a secret. Sam hated seeing his brother so, well… depressed. No matter how he tried to play it off, Dean was not okay.

Sam was in a sort of daze when his mom asked, “Are you alright? Castiel is doing well, right?”

Sam shrugged, unsure of how to answer her. He let out a sigh, “Honestly? Not really…”

Mary placed a package of cornflakes in the cart before she sighed deeply, “It’s because of Dean, right? Did they have a fight?”

“I… I don’t know if I should tell you. It’s kind of not my place to tell, but damnit. I’m really worried.” Sam chewed his bottom lip in contemplation.

Mary moved the shopping cart off to the side and moved to sit at the little bench near the pharmacy, inviting Sam to sit beside her with a little wave. “I don’t know what happened, but I’m worried, too. If you know something… maybe we could help Dean?”

Sam moved to sit next to her. He knew she was right and, at the very least, maybe she could be a good sounding board for when he got pissed at his brother for being so pig-headed. “Remember when I told you that I was pretty sure Cas and Dean had feelings for each other?”

“Of course…” Mary said slowly.

“Well, I was half right. Cas confessed to Dean that he loved him and Dean… well, he didn’t react well to the news…”

Mary raised her eyebrows, clearly surprised to hear that, “What did he do?”

Sam shrugged, “I don’t know the details, but I do know that Dean told Cas he didn’t feel the same about him. Which came as a shock to me.”

“I don’t believe that. I see how he looks at Castiel. It’s the same way John looked at me… No, there
has to be a reason why he said that. I don’t believe for one second that this is a one-sided thing.”

“Join the club. But Cas has a lot of issues with social cues, he’s going to take at face value what Dean says to him, and if Dean tells him he doesn’t love him, well, as you can see what happened.” Sam let out a sigh before he continued, “It’s really fucked him up, Mom.”

“Do you think… I don’t know, that maybe Dean has a problem with…” Mary looked away from Sam, watching how people passed them by without a second glance before she continued, “The fact that Castiel is a man?”

Sam chewed his lip again, slightly hesitant. He wasn’t sure how much of Dean’s past he should divulge. No matter how sneaky his brother thought he was, Sam wasn’t stupid. He knew that Dean was attracted to men, it just lingered as an unspoken topic because that was how Dean wanted it. And Sam usually beared the brunt of his brother’s anger if he tried to make the man talk about things like feelings.

At his mother’s imploring look, Sam acquiesced, “I definitely think it’s because Castiel is a guy. I’m pretty sure if Cas was in a female vessel, they would have had a house, white picket fence, and 2.5 kids by now.

“Dean… he doesn’t know I know, but he’s never been straight, no matter how much he attempts to convince himself he is. And that’s the problem, I think Dean truly does think that being attracted to men doesn’t make him gay, just, I don’t know, kinky or something? He’s been with men, I caught him a couple of times, not that he knows that. But I think, in his brain, having sex with a dude doesn’t make him gay or bi or whatever, but falling in love with a guy? Yeah, that’s a no-no, that would mean he actually is gay or whatever.”

Mary crinkled her forehead, “That’s…” She seemed to think about a fitting word for it. “That’s stupid. I mean, I didn’t exactly grow up in the most tolerant time and society, especially considering my dad had a lot to say about ‘those’ type of men… but I… I never understood that… We have to talk to him… or maybe I should… What do you think?”

Sam shook his head, “I promised Cas that I wouldn’t talk to Dean about this. I mean, I try to subtly bring it up, try to get him to maybe talk first, but it never works. He’s spent too many years perfecting his hetero mask, I think it’s kind of second nature for him now.”

“However he wants to label himself, it doesn’t change the fact that he isn’t happy. He would be if he would give Cas and him a chance. At the end it’s as simple as that.”
Sam let out a mirthless chuckle and clicked his tongue, “It’s not that simple. Even if the big dolt could get his act together and accept that what he feels for Cas is not all that platonic, you forgot about the quintessential Winchester guilt that’s pretty much in our DNA. Neither of us want to drag someone else into our shitstorm of a life. I don’t think there’s anything we can do, but Dean needs to snap out of it. He’s a danger on hunts the way he’s been.”

“I don’t understand… Castiel is already in Dean’s life and he already is kind of a hunter. Wouldn’t that be the best premise for a relationship? I mean, if that is his concern that shouldn’t apply to Castiel.”

“But only if Cas was a chick. See what I mean? It’s a vicious circle.”

“So, we give them a bit of time. You try to subtly talk to him, and when nothing helps, I try the ‘Mom-knows-best’ angle?”

Sam shrugged, “I guess it couldn’t hurt.”
Frankie here: If you pay attention, there may be an homage to a broadway musical in this chapter. ;)

June 29, 2:12 PM

Cas: Hello Sam, how are you :-)

Sam: I’m doing great cas! How have you been?

Cas: I’m doing much better.

Sam: That's awesome! Still performing miracles? Have you made any friends?

Cas: Actually I have made a new friend. That's why I feel so much better. He's a doctor for the children at the hospital I'm “working” in.

Sam: He invited me for coffee today. And we talked a lot. I've never talked so much with another human being before except with you and... Dean

Cas: That's really cool, so do you just hang out with him at the hospital or...

Sam: That's great! What's he like?

Cas: I'm doing great cas! How have you been?
Sam: That's great! What's he like?

Cas: He's a wonderful man, very altruistic. He works too much, but just because he really loves his job. The children here love him very much. They call him Dr. Alex instead of Doctor Corvin like the nurses do.

Sam: That's really cool, so do you just hang out with him at the hospital or...

Cas: He invited me for coffee today. And we talked a lot. I've never talked so much with another human being before except with you and... Dean

Sam reclined his feet up on the table in the library. It had been a quieter day. Dean drank himself into an oblivion the night before, so he was currently holed up in hangover town, clutching to his sheets to steady the world spinning, Sam assumed. Serves the idiot right. What had spurred the ‘let’s see how much whiskey I can drink before I go into kidney failure’ break down for Dean had been Sam’s attempt at keeping his promise to their mom and trying to get his brother to talk.

Charlie and Mary were out on a simple salt and burn a few towns over, Bobby was visiting Jody for the weekend and he’d taken Claire with him. For once, since Cas had left, Sam had some alone time with his brother. It was probably his best bet if he wanted to get Dean to open up.

*The Night Before*

Dean was in the kitchen, preparing some half-assed attempt at, well, Sam wouldn’t call it *food*. That was another indication that Dean was way more upset about Cas being gone than he was letting on. Since they had gotten a kitchen, Dean took every opportunity to spend hours preparing and cooking meals for all of them. The fact that his brother was hovering near the microwave for a hot pocket was pretty damn depressing.

“Dean, can I talk to you?”

The older man turned around, holding his pathetic dinner on a small plate. He smiled, but it didn’t quite reach his eyes. “Sure, shoot.”

Sam moved to follow his brother to the small dining table next to the stove. He pulled out the chair across from Dean and sat down. Sam thought about how he wanted to approach a dialogue regarding sexuality with his brother that didn’t end in damaged property. Dean watched him expectantly. Sam exhaled slowly, “So, I have this friend, and he’s not really good with emotions…”

Sam was interrupted by a sharp bark of laughter from his brother. Before he could ask what was so
funny, Dean said, “Really? This ain’t no soap opera, midday sitcom-rerun, Sammy. You’re either talking about yourself, or me, so cut the, ‘I have this friend’ crap and spit it out.”

He shrugged, Dean asked for it, “Are you gay? Or Bi?”

Dean dropped his hot pocket onto the table, his mouth still agape with just how unexpected that question was. He blinked a few times before finally asking, “What?”

Sam pressed on, “Cuz it’s okay if you are. I mean, it’s not a big deal, this day and age people are so much more accepting and…”

“Sammy!” Dean bellowed. His voice dangerously low. Sam watched as his brother’s chest expanded with air, his breath deep and long, a slow exhale, and finally, “I’m not gay.”

Sam gave an acquiescing shrug, “Okay, maybe not gay, but there’s bisexual, pansexual, omnisexual, and like, I don’t know, half a dozen other different sexualities that basically mean that over fifty percent of the population falls onto a spectrum that doesn’t include full-blown heterosexuals and…”

“Dude! I have no idea what you’re saying, but I’m not gay!”

“Yeah, but it’d be great if you were. I mean, if I was gay, I’d totally brag about it, shout it out loud, whatever, you know? If I was… I’m not, though. Not that it’s not great that you’re not gay, but like, if you were gay…”

Sam jumped. This time he was interrupted by his brother’s fist being slammed onto the table, causing the plate to fly up and crash to the floor, splintering into a thousand tiny shards of ceramic. He hadn’t been scared of his brother in a very long time.

“This conversation is over,” Dean spat, before getting up, slamming his chair into the table, then grabbing a bottle of liquor on his way out of the kitchen.

Well, that went great.

Dean was a lost cause, but Cas still had hope. In fact, it looked like Cas had gotten himself a date.
Sam smiled as he returned his attention back to the text conversation they were having.

**June 29, 2:18 PM**

Sam: A coffee date? Alright cas!

Castiel: You think that was a date?? Like he has a romantic interest in me??

Sam: LOL dude sometimes I forget you aren't human. People don't take people they want to get to know platonically out for coffee. Not usually anyway. What did you guys talk about?

Castiel: I have difficulties recognizing when someone is interested in me. We talked about the children mostly, but then he told me about his garden and we talked about bees. He wants to keep bees in the future but it’s strange… I touched his hand at some point and I know he’s deathly allergic to them. Maybe he doesn’t know…. Sam, I really like him. Alex... I... I don't know what to do. I'm afraid to make another mistake.

Sam: Cas, alright bear with me here. Did you happen to bring up that you like bees first?

Castiel: Yes, why?

Sam: Okay. And he told you he liked them, too, but you sensed he’s allergic? Did you happen to notice a weird looking pen type of thing in any of his pockets? With an orange cap?

Castiel: Yes, how did you know?

Sam: So that’s an epipen. The thing is, an epipen is for severe allergic reactions. People who usually carry them around with them do it as a precaution in case they get exposed to their allergy and they go into anaphylactic shock. Do you see where I'm going with this?

Castiel: No, not really. I’m confused. Are you saying he's aware of his allergy? Why would he want to keep bees in his garden when they could kill him? That’s dangerous! I should talk him out of it.

Sam: Cas. He lied to you about the bees.

Castiel: But why?

Sam: Because dude, you get stupid excited and happy when you talk about bees

Castiel: I don't see how this is related

Sam: LOL man. You were happy and excited, it would have been a huge downer for you if he told you he was deathly allergic right? Like right now you feel really bad for him right?

Castiel: LOL to you too. And yes I'm sad that he is allergic... I'm thinking about changing that without him noticing.

Sam: Cas, well, you can do that if you want, but what I'm getting at is this. The dude lied about his allergy cuz he didn't want to make you sad. One more question: did he pay for your drink?

Castiel: Oh... that's very nice of him... Yes, he did pay for my coffee

Castiel: Does that mean anything???

Sam: Okay, do you trust me?
Sam: And yes it does mean something.

Castiel: Unconditionally

Sam: Thanks buddy. That goes both ways. Okay, next time you see him, pull him aside, and if he smiles at you, you kiss him.

Castiel: Um... what? Are you sure?
Castiel: That seems rather... direct

Sam: Positive. He'll like it. Trust me.

Castiel: Okay... If you say so... I'll try that

Sam: Great! Let me know how it goes!

Castiel: I will :-) Thanks, Sam!

Sam: Anytime! Alright I gotta go

Castiel: Please say hello to everyone from me... Dean too.

Sam: I will! Talk soon!

Castiel was nervous. It wasn’t that he didn’t trust Sam’s judgement, he knew that the younger Winchester never had a problem finding someone in his life. He probably had more experience with long-term relationships than even Dean.

Dean always seemed to be interested in “one-night stands” only, a phrase Castiel had learned meant that it had nothing to do with romance or feelings. Castiel knew he wanted the opposite of that.

And as much as it hurt him, he slowly came to realize that he would never get that with Dean. With Alex, he might have a chance at finally experiencing those things. So, he tried to trust Sam’s advice as he patiently waited for Alex’s shift to end.

Castiel tapped his fingers together, a weirdly nervous habit he picked up from... well, he wasn’t really certain. He placed his hands behind his back to still them, leaning against the colorful brick wall that made the children’s hospital stand out dramatically among the browns and golds of the fields that surrounded it.

To take his mind off of what he was about to do, he focused his attention on all of the topiary animals that lined a large rotunda, circling a roundabout to the main hospital entrance. He was standing near one of the staff exits off to the side, the one closest to the oncology ward where Alex would be leaving from. Castiel’s favorite was the topiary of a mother and baby elephant in an embrace. He marveled at what a truly magical sight these children would encounter while coming to the medical center. It was a wonderful way to distract from the generally negative reasons for coming
“Hey, Castiel,” Alex greeted him and ended Castiel’s train of thought abruptly. He looked up and smiled at the doctor, who mirrored his smile instantly. Castiel hoped that was a good sign, but he was still insecure about it. It could still be meant as just a friendly smile. And that, sadly, wouldn’t be the first time he misinterpreted human interactions.

Castiel tried to shake away the gloomy thoughts, not willing to let them ruin his moment with Alex, “Hello, Alex.”

The doctor walked up to him and hugged him, something he had done before and Castiel loved that Alex was so openly affectionate towards him. The first time it happened, it had been confusing. Castiel wasn’t used to this form of greeting, he always presumed that a hug was something special that occurred only rarely between two men, and only if a life or death situation was somehow involved.

When they pulled apart from the hug, Alex smiled. A beatific smile that reached his bottle green eyes; another physical trait Castiel appeared to have an attraction to, thanks, in part, to Dean. He shook his head of those thoughts, instead, focusing on the handsome man in front of him.

Alex looked at Castiel like he was the only being in existence, it caused a shiver of excitement to course down his spine. “Not that I’m not glad to see you, but I thought we were going to meet at the gallery for art hop?” The question was curious, not angry or accusatory. It was a nice change.

“I know. I hope it’s okay that I wanted to walk with you. I like spending time with you.”

He was rewarded with another megawatt smile, “I like spending time with you, too, Castiel.”

It felt like the right moment. Like the moment Sam had been talking about. Castiel felt his heart jump as he made the decision to go forward with his life and to not look back. He hoped he was doing the right thing, that this would make him happy.

Alex made him feel good about himself and all he wanted to do was to repay the man for his kindness. He returned the doctor’s smile with a shy one before he carefully touched Alex’s shoulder and slid his hand to his neck. He heard Alex gasp, his eyes widened, but he wasn’t pulling back. Castiel hoped that was a good sign. He leaned forward, closing his eyes as their lips met in a tender kiss.
Castiel couldn’t help it. He didn’t want to, but his thoughts instantly went to the memory of Dean kissing him. To that night in the bunker, when they had played that strange game that had led to their first kiss. He remembered Dean’s soft lips, his taste, the urgency and the incredible pull between them to get closer.

The last thing Castiel wanted was to compare the two kisses. Not that it didn’t feel nice to kiss Alex. He loved how the doctor was cradling Castiel’s face, returning the kiss while still a bit hesitant and careful; soft nips before his tongue found its way into Castiel’s mouth. It wasn’t the same. It was nice, but so different. Castiel hoped that this was because he still had to get to know Alex better, that some feelings had yet to be developed.

He forced himself to stop thinking about Dean. Dean didn’t want him. He had to accept that. Alex wanted him, so this was his way to be happy again. He could do this.

He licked into Alex’s mouth with more determination, trying to show him how much he wanted this, trying to convince himself that he could do it.

He could feel the change, how the kiss suddenly felt more heated. Castiel tried to control his urge to press Alex against the hospital wall when he felt the man’s hand falling down from his face pushing slightly against his shoulder.

Castiel let himself be pushed back slightly and they shared a surprised look as they tried to catch their breath. “Wow…” Alex murmured, “That was... unexpected.”

“Unexpected in a good way?” Castiel asked carefully.

Alex nodded quickly, “Oh, yes. I’ve wanted to do that since I first saw you reading to Lydia…” He grinned, “But I never dared to hope that you were interested in me like that.”

Castiel returned his smile, “I am. I’m very interested in you.”

Alex’s grin seemed to widen, “Maybe we should discuss this further, somewhere else. Somewhere we won’t get interrupted by my patients.”
Chapter 19

Chapter Notes

Frankie here: Okay, be forewarned, an abhorrent word is utilized in this chapter in reference to our tag of “mentions of past racism”. Warning you now in case it is a trigger for anyone, it is not spoken in a manner other than informative of a past encounter with racism.

Chapter 19

[Chat conversation image]
Cas: Sam! It worked!

something nice but casual. A clean tee and some jeans, NO TRENCHCOAT. Bring a bottle of wine, thank him. And then? Just have fun.

If he invites you to stay and watch something on Netflix, sit next to him on the couch. If he puts his arm behind you on the couch, that's an invite to cuddle. If you want to, then feel free. If you stay really late, he may invite you to crash on the couch. At that point that means he wants you to stay the night. If you want to, you can, you can also offer to share the bed if he goes for it.

then as for sex? That’s on the table if you want that too

I've already acquired a few new articles of clothing. I didn't want Alex to think I'm strange. He had already commented on my attire in the past. So that shouldn't be a problem. Thank you for all the useful advice. I may ask a few more questions if that is okay with you... I must confess I'm very nervous about tonight. Especially if it leads to sex... I'm not sure if I'm ready for that yet. Although I want to...

Feel free to ask! I'll try to help, I've never had sex with a guy so I might not know what that entails but other that that I'll help with any other questions.

Thank you Sam. I'm very happy to have you as a friend.

Anytime cas!

July 2, 3:31 PM

Cas: Sam! It worked!
Cas: You were right!

Sam: LOL long time no hear stranger! What worked?
Sam: Oh, dr. Alex right?
Sam: Awesome man!!
Sam: So he likes you as much as you like him?

Cas: Sorry for not writing sooner! And yes he likes me as much as I like him. :-D
Cas: I kissed him, just like you said

Sam: I was kidding about the long time, we talked three days ago. Anyway that's awesome! Are you gonna go out on a legit date?

Cas: What makes a date "legit"? He asked me if I can come over to his house tonight. He wants to cook something. That is a date, right? What should I do?
Cas: I don't want to mess things up.

Sam: Hell yeah that's a legit date! Okay, so when a guy invites someone he likes over and cooks for him or her, he's pretty serious. So, wear something nice but casual. A clean tee and some jeans, NO TRENCHCOAT. Bring a bottle of wine, thank him. And then? Just have fun.
Sam: If he invites you to stay and watch something on Netflix, sit next to him on the couch. If he puts his arm behind you on the couch, that's an invite to cuddle. If you want to, then feel free. If you stay really late, he may invite you to crash on the couch. At that point that means he wants you to stay the night. If you want to, you can, you can also offer to share the bed if he goes for it then as for sex? That's on the table if you want that too

Cas: I've already acquired a few new articles of clothing. I didn't want Alex to think I'm strange. He had already commented on my attire in the past. So that shouldn't be a problem. Thank you for all the useful advice. I may ask a few more questions if that is okay with you... I must confess I'm very nervous about tonight. Especially if this leads to sex... I'm not sure if I'm ready for that yet. Although I want to…

Sam: Feel free to ask! I'll try to help, I've never had sex with a guy so I might not know what that entails but other than that I'll help with any other questions.

Cas: Thank you Sam. I'm very happy to have you as a friend.

Sam: Anytime cas!

Sam smiled as he leaned back on the couch in the library. He really was happy for Cas. The guy had been through enough shit, he deserved some happiness. There was a part of him that felt partially responsible for the emotional mess his friend and brother were in.

Maybe if he and Charlie hadn’t pushed the two of them with their constant comments and idiotic high school games to bring them closer; maybe Dean would have continued to internalize his homosexual feelings and Cas would have stayed content with where their relationship stood. And maybe then they’d still be a family. Sam’s guilt-ridden internal reverie was interrupted when Charlie and Claire came in, in the middle of some kind of argument.
“I’m telling you, they’ve done the beta test for it now here, after it was done in Australia and Japan, and it’s going to be epic! Four more days!” Charlie exclaimed, her eyes lit up in her apparent excitement.

Claire rolled her eyes at the redhead as she argued, “No one cares about that old fogey game, making it a mobile app will be a waste of time and money…”

Charlie shook her head, “I’m tellin’ you, Pokemon Go is going to change the world.”

Claire snorted in derision at her before turning to look at Sam, “Why do you look so serious? Did something happen?”

Sam shook his head of his morose thoughts and smiled, “Actually, yes, but a good something.”

Claire and Charlie gave each other a questioning look before they framed Sam on the couch and looked at him expectantly. Charlie grinned, “Come on, don’t be a freakin’ tease.”

When Claire ruffled his hair as a means of attack, Sam brushed her off as he laughed. “Alright! Uncle! I’ll tell you!” The two women leaned against their elbows on the back of the couch, sharing identical looks of amusement. He was tempted to make them wait, but he was honestly excited to share the news with them. “Cas has a date.”

Claire’s eyes went wide, “What?”

“Like a date date? With another person? For real?” Charlie asked in an identical tone of disbelief.

Sam nodded, an incredibly pleased smile on his face.

“So, who is she?” Claire asked, looking unsure because she was probably still deciding if she was okay with that idea or not.

“Actually,” Sam paused for dramatic effect, “He’s a doctor at the hospital Cas has been volunteering at…” He leaned back, a smug smile on his face, in preparation for both of their responses.
Charlie was grinning like a Cheshire cat, “Good for him.” She turned to Claire seeing that her face had fallen a bit, “What’s up, sweetie? You okay?”

Claire shrugged, “I don’t know… When is he coming back?”

_Shit._ How the hell was he supposed to try and answer that question without revealing a secret Cas didn’t want let out? It’s one thing to confide in his mom, and while he trusted Claire and Charlie implicitly, it still wasn’t his secret to tell. Sam decided he should try to deflect, “I’m not sure, hopefully soon. Does it make you uncomfortable, thinking of Cas with another man?”

“What? No, of course not… It’s just… I thought he and Dean… I mean, we all saw how they kissed… Did they have a fight? I already asked Da… Cas about it, but he keeps… deflecting my questions.”

Sam looked at Charlie then, an imploring, pleading look. She didn’t know what happened, but she was always good at helping divert conversations. She gave him a quick, barely visible nod, “It was just a game, Claire. I’m sure everything is alright with them.”

Claire glared at Charlie, “Seriously? I’m not a child anymore. You can tell me.”

Charlie looked at Sam and gave him a half sided shrug, like she was saying, ‘I tried, but what can you do?’

Sam let out a sigh, “Claire, it’s not really my place…”

“Sam.” Claire looked at him with pleading eyes, “I just want to help. I swear if Dean said something stupid and made Cas leave, I’m kicking him in the nuts.”

“There’s no need to do that, I’m pretty sure he’s kicking himself in the nuts enough for everyone…” Sam added, hesitant to continue and hoping that would sate the young woman’s curiosity.

At that point, instead of siding with Sam, Charlie ganged up on him with Claire, “Damnit, now I have to know what you know.”
“I promised Cas I wouldn’t tell anyone…”

“We already know that something happened. I don’t think me guessing will help in that matter. If you don’t tell me, I’ll just ask Dean about it,” Claire stated dryly.

Sam let out a sigh of acquiescence, “Alright, but if I tell you, neither of you can bring it up to Cas, and especially not to Dean, deal?” Sam asked, knowing full well that even if they disagreed, he’d still end up telling them. When the hell did he get so bad at keeping secrets anyway? The two women nodded emphatically and he took a deep breath before yet again divulging Cas’s secret. “Cas, he uh… he kind of told Dean he was in love with him…”

Charlie formed the letter ‘O’ with her mouth in apparent and genuine surprise, before she crossed her arms with a thoughtful look, “And let me guess, Dean didn’t take it very well…”

Sam shook his head, “That’s putting it mildly…”

Charlie rolled her eyes, “I can’t believe it! How can he be so stupid? We all know that he’s crazy about Cas. Even Helen Keller could see that.”

Sam shrugged, “Exactly, but Helen Keller wasn’t brought up by a guy who sort of beat into her skull what it is to be a real man…” He looked at both of them before he sighed sadly, “That’s why Cas left. To heal his broken heart.”

“Shit,” Claire spat out, as she suddenly stood up and paced through the room. “That is so dumb! I’m gonna… arghh. Shit. I’m so angry with Dean right now. I want Cas to come back home. How… how could Dean do this?”

Charlie stood up and pulled Claire close, “Hey, it’s okay. I’m sure they’re gonna get their shit together. I mean, I really want to meddle and help them, because they both are too stupid to do it themselves. They don’t know it yet, but Sam, they need our help! We have to do something! Does Dean know that Cas has a date? Oh, man, he will be so jealous!”

“You can’t, Charlie, remember? You guys aren’t supposed to know!”
“Psh, we’re no amateurs! We can stealth-meddle. They won’t notice a thing. We could start by makin’ Dean really jealous. Maybe by telling him how much we support Cas’s choice of date…” She added thoughtfully.

Sam chuckled, a sad sound despite being a form of laughter, “As fun as it would be to fuck with Dean, honestly? He’s pretty fucked up over this. I don’t really think we should be rubbing salt into an open wound.”

“He has to get his head out of his ass somehow, don’t you think?” Claire added, completely siding with Charlie.

“Guys, I promise, that uppance will come, but, let’s give him a little more time to lick his wounds before we rub it in his face, okay?”

An incoming message sound disturbed their conversation and Sam checked his phone. Speak of the devil… or angel.

July 2, 3:53 PM

Cas: Sam? Can you look at my picture and tell me if what I'm wearing is okay?

Sam: Sure, send me a pic

Cas:
Sam: Lose the hat, other than that you look great. Nice shirt by the way. Do you even know who AC/DC is?

Cas: Okay, and yes, it's one of Dean's favorite rock bands.

Sam: Good job! Go get 'em, tiger

Sam handed his phone to Claire and Charlie and almost got his eardrums shattered by the shrieking and cooing at just how adorable Charlie found Cas’s image. Claire was outright laughing at the angel’s choice of head wear. He smiled as they shared in Cas’s new found happiness together.

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**July 2, 6:16 PM**

Castiel: Sam! I'm in a supermarket and there are so many bottles of wine! I don't know which one I should get!

Sam: LOL cas, it really doesn't matter man

Castiel: But what if he doesn't like red wine, or he hates white wine and I... I just don't know him very well, yet. I don't want him to hate me Sam!

Sam: Dude! Chill. Check out the dessert wines, get a moscato or something that's sparkling. Asti is cheap and pretty tasty
Sam: You know, for wine

Castiel: Okay, okay I found it! I really hope he likes it. Should I just give this to him when I'm at his house?

Sam: Yes, when he invites you in thank him and offer the bottle in thanks

Castiel: Okay! I'm so nervous.
Castiel: Why am I so nervous?
Castiel: I laid siege to hell
Castiel: I shouldn't be nervous

Sam: That's normal, buddy. It's cuz you like him. I've been to hell, I'm telling you, trying to impress someone you have feelings for is a thousand times scarier. Just be yourself, he already likes you, so there's no need to be nervous

Castiel: Okay. Thank you Sam. Wish me luck?

Sam: You won't need it. But good luck! Let me know if you end up doing the walk of shame

Castiel: Walk of shame?

Sam: LOL it's slang for getting laid. The walk of shame is when after spending the night with someone (sex) you have to leave the following morning in the same clothes you were wearing the night before.

Castiel: I'm used to wearing the same clothes.

Sam: I guess that's true. Anyway I hope you enjoy your night!

Castiel: Thank you, Sam, I hope that, too.
Castiel: I also hope you have a joyful night

Castiel pocketed his phone and looked down at his clothes and the wine bottle in his hand for maybe the hundredth time that day. Up until that point, time spent with Alex had been very enjoyable and Castiel had a feeling that things were going pretty well between them. Although the angel was insecure about his social skills, Alex never seemed to be bothered by it. He even told him he liked that about Castiel, when the angel had apologized for misunderstanding something the doctor had said.

But still, Castiel had only gone on a date two times in his life. Or to be more precise, one time it wasn’t a date, but a babysitting job and the other time was a fake date with Dean. Not the best record to feel secure about the upcoming evening.

What made him even more nervous was the prospect of having sex with Alex. He was still unsure if he really wanted to do that. At the same time he was angry with himself, because he knew he was holding himself back because of Dean. Castiel wanted to get over the hunter, but at the same time he didn’t. It was infuriating to have those contradicting feelings.
Castiel didn’t want to lose Dean as a friend. But the only way he would be able to see the hunter again was to get rid of his love for him. It was his only chance to save their friendship.

He inhaled deeply before he pressed the bell at Alex’s front door and tried to hide his nervousness behind a smile.

He didn’t need to wait long for Alex to open the door, the doctor gave him a radiating smile before he pulled him into a hug, “Hey, Castiel.”

“Hello, Alex. I brought something to drink. I hope that is okay,” Castiel handed Alex the wine bottle, happy that the doctor took it with a warm smile and a thank you.

He stepped aside to allow for Castiel to come inside. “Come in, make yourself at home,” the man offered as he made his way to the kitchen.

It was the first time that Castiel had been to Alex’s house. The open kitchen was adjoined to the living room that was flooded with warm light from large windows. Together, with the sand-colored walls, it painted a picture of a lovely home. It mirrored Alex’s essence; open, inviting, and warm.

Castiel smiled as he looked around the living room, taking in the photos of children from the hospital that were decorating the bookshelves. He noticed books about medicine, but also literature classics and an old bible.

Castiel bit his lower lip when he saw the book. He didn’t know if Alex was religious or not. If what was happening between them had any future, he would need to tell the man the truth about himself and he dreaded that conversation more than anything.

Alex lived in a world where supernatural beings were just myths, or make believe. He would ruin the man’s image of the world by revealing himself. Castiel wasn’t sure if he could really do that to Alex. But at the same time, he didn’t want to lie.

“You look so serious. Is everything okay?” Alex asked him as he handed Castiel a glass of the wine he had brought, and clinked their glasses together before he grinned, “To our dinner date.”
Castiel knew this human custom and nodded with a smile before he took a sip from the wine like Alex did. He was grateful that his grace wasn’t at full capacity at that moment and he could enjoy the taste of food. Sam had been right about the wine. He turned back to face the bookshelf again, “I was just admiring your collection of books.”

Alex noticed Castiel’s lingering look on the bible and nodded, “Is that a cautious way to ask if I’m religious?”

“You don’t have to answer that,” Castiel tried to amend, wondering if that had been a question he shouldn’t have asked.

“It’s okay. All part of the getting-to-know one another, right?” Alex gave him an encouraging smile, before he took the old bible from the shelf. “It belonged to my Dad. He was very religious… I’m not so much. I’m a doctor, I try to rely on my skills instead of praying. Although sometimes… I don’t know… Sometimes, I think there are miracles happening around me. Just today for example. You know Toby, right? The boy you’ve been reading the Hobbit to? His cancer is in complete remission.” Alex smiled at the angel with so much happiness that it nearly took Castiel’s breath away. “I mean, the chances that the treatment would work was at thirteen percent. But it did.”

Castiel already knew that because he had healed Toby’s cancer. He tried to look surprised at the news though, “I’m very happy to hear that. You’re an incredible doctor.”

Alex smiled shyly at the compliment and shrugged, “I don’t know…” He put the bible back onto the shelf, “I wanted to thank you…. What you do for the kids everyday. Visiting them, reading to them, giving them something to look forward to, I think it gives them hope. You’re incredible.”

Castiel wasn’t used to being complimented. It felt nice, but for some reason he had to look away from Alex as he tried to hide his smile.

Alex took Castiel’s glass from him and put it down on the cupboard next to them. Before Castiel could wonder about that action, Alex framed his face with his hands and kissed him. It was a tender kiss, gentle and warm, like everything about Alex.

“Do you want to help me in the kitchen?” He asked Castiel with a grin.

The angel nodded, still a bit dazed from the nice kiss, “I’m afraid I won’t be of much use. I’m not a good cook.”
“That’s okay, as long as you can follow instructions, nothing can go wrong,” Alex explained good naturedly when they trailed to the kitchen area where the doctor had already started to prepare their dinner.

“So, what about you? Are you religious? Or your parents? You’re named after an angel, right?”

For a moment Castiel didn’t know what to say. He hated to lie, but he couldn’t answer the question without doing so. He tried to be as vague as possible, “I’m not. My father was though, that’s where I got my name.”

Alex smiled as he nodded, “I was named for Alexander, the man compelled to bear the cross of Jesus. I’m not sure if that had been all that intentional, though.” He moved to the stove, where a large saucepan had steam pouring out. Alex grabbed a wooden spoon and began stirring the contents in the pot. “Would you mind slicing the chicken?” He asked as he turned around and pointed to a cutting board on the counter with a couple of large chicken breasts laid out on it.

The first thing that came to Castiel’s mind as he walked up to the counter, was how thankful he was that he was skilled with a knife. “Any preferences about the size?”

Alex approached Castiel, he gently grasped his hand, then trailed one of his fingers along the angel’s index digit. He smirked at the small gasp Castiel let out, “About the width of your finger.” He then pulled Castiel’s hand to his lips and pressed a gentle kiss to the back of his hand before returning to the sauce.

Castiel watched Alex for a moment, how he seasoned the sauce and was stirring it with a content smile, before he moved to carve the chicken into slices with a few precise and quick cuts. “Like that?”

Alex raised a surprised eyebrow at the quick pace Castiel had sliced the pieces, “I thought you said you weren’t much of a cook?” The question wasn’t accusatory, it sounded more amused than anything.

“I’m not. I’m just skilled with a knife,” Castiel bit his lip. That was probably the wrong thing to say. He tried to change the subject, “Can I try the sauce?”

Alex quirked a brow at him, his smile still friendly and amused. He moved to grab the wooden spoon
before approaching Castiel, holding it out to his lips the way Dean had done the night they found out Charlie was alive. “Don’t think you can evade that comment about your knife skills…” He said, his tone sweet and pleasant.

Castiel cursed himself for being so careless. At the same time he tried to get rid of the storm of feelings the memory of Dean had stirred in him as he nipped at the sauce to stall for time. “That’s delicious, Alex. You are an excellent cook.”

Alex’s eyes were shimmering with amusement, he nodded to Castiel then pointed to his own lip, “You have a little bit of the sauce here…” Castiel attempted to wipe away the errant liquid, but failed miserably. Alex chuckled and said, “Here…” He reached out and used his thumb to gently swipe against Castiel’s bottom lip. Alex then pulled his thumb to his own lips, sucking off the sauce. “Mmmm, tastes better from your lips.”

Castiel grabbed the spoon, smearing some of the sauce on Alex’s lips before he leaned in and kissed it from his mouth. When he pulled back again he gave the doctor a thoughtful look, “I think it’s even better from your lips.”

Alex chuckled before leaning in to press another soft kiss to Castiel’s lips. “You’re something else, you know that?”

Castiel hoped his expression didn’t betray the shock he was feeling when he heard Alex’s words. He wondered if Alex was getting suspicious that Castiel wasn’t human. Where had he gone wrong or did he react in a weird way that the doctor had come to such a conclusion? The strange part was that Alex wasn’t giving him suspicious looks, he was just smiling at him before he resumed cooking their dinner. Maybe it was just a phrase and Castiel was taking things literally again… He knew from a million different encounters with Dean and Sam that he was prone to that. He wondered what to say, the insecurity from before struck him again, full force. Even after so many years on earth, he still struggled to understand every social interaction. He really was something else. Alex couldn’t have been more correct with his statement.

Castiel gave him a smile that didn’t quite reach his eyes, “You’re right.”

Alex turned back around, “Oh?” He moved towards Castiel, almost in a predatory manner. He walked the angel back towards the counter and braced his hands on either side of Castiel on the countertop as he invaded his personal space. “How so?”

It was strange that sometimes it seemed to be socially acceptable to invade each other’s personal space. Yet another reminder of how different Castiel felt. He never understood that rule. Sometimes
Dean complained about it, but then a few minutes later he was the one standing close to Castiel. He theorized that it was only okay when Dean was the one who invaded his personal space, but it wasn’t okay when Castiel did it.

He slid his hands around Alex’s waist and pulled him closer, “It’s just… You already know that I’m not used to interacting much with other people. Sometimes I just feel, what’s the phrase? Like an alien out of water.”

Alex let out a soft laugh and shook his head, “It’s uh… it’s fish out of water.”

“My point exactly,” Castiel sighed deeply. He had been so sure that was the correct phrase.

“Hey,” Alex said, lifting his right hand to Castiel’s chin, “It’s cute, like you…”

He felt his cheeks heat with the fire of his blush. When Castiel began to feel the strange bugs flutter around his chest cavity again, the same way he would when he was around Dean, he felt a glimmer of hope. Maybe healing from the fractured emotions the hunter had left him with was possible after all. He leaned in and pressed a soft kiss to Alex’s lips. “I think you’re… cute, too.”

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Alex watched fondly as Castiel perused through his DVD shelf. It had been a few years since he had developed the level of crush that he currently had on the man who was quietly reading the DVD titles with a soft mumble. Damn, he was cute. He felt nervous and excited all at once, his nerves tingling with anticipation.

He was definitely physically attracted to Castiel. You’d have to be blind to not find the man sexually appealing. But it was more than that for Alex. Castiel was genuine, truly and irrevocably genuine. He wore his heart on his sleeve and yet still had a beautiful optimism that was particularly infectious.

Castiel gasped with excitement and pulled one of the DVD’s out. He was utterly charming, almost bouncing with glee as he held up the film and asked, “Can we watch this?”

Alex looked at what film it was and chuckled. ‘The Secret Life of Bees’. “You do know that film isn’t about bees, right?” He couldn’t help but smile at the utterly crestfallen look on the man’s face. He walked over to him and gently took the DVD from Castiel and placed it back on the shelf.
“Actually, there’s a documentary I’d like to watch on Netflix. I know a lot of people aren’t fans of documentaries, but if you’re up for it, I think you might enjoy it.”

Castiel smiled, “I’d love to.”

Alex moved to the couch, grabbing his remote and turning on the smart TV. As he flipped to the Netflix app, he patted the open space next to him on the couch, inviting Castiel to sit down. He scrolled through his queue and landed on the documentary: ‘The Loving Story’. “Do you know the history of the Lovings?” He was genuinely curious. Not very many white people knew the impact of Mildred and Richard Loving’s story on the history of America.

“They were a couple in 1958 and got married, which was illegal because they were two different races… Is that correct?”

Alex couldn’t hide how impressed he was and nodded, “It is. Have you seen it?”

“No, I haven’t,” Castiel stated simply without any further explanation.

Alex shrugged, “Good, I haven’t seen it yet either.” He turned his attention back to the television and selected play. He leaned back against the couch. They sat there for several minutes. He was only half paying attention to the documentary, more interested in watching Castiel stare in a mesmerized daze at what was happening on his screen.

Alex moved his right arm along the back of the couch, behind Castiel. It was a pretty tired, cliche of a move, but it still didn’t stop him from trying it. He was rewarded with a sweet smile from the man before he moved into the curve of Alex’s shoulder. Castiel leaned his head into Alex, before turning his attention back to the screen.

Alex smiled down at his head, before moving his hand down, gently laying against Castiel’s arm.

He sighed contentedly, they had sat like that for the entire movie. Alex had been gently caressing Castiel’s arm in between occasional stolen glances at the man’s gorgeous face, which was still concentrated raptly on the testimonials of the interviewees. When the credits began to roll, he looked down again, Castiel had a very worried expression on his face. “What’s wrong?”

“Do people still have problems with this? Could we be punished?”
Alex was taken aback. He wasn’t sure how to answer such an innocent sounding question. While legally they couldn’t be punished; an interracial couple, not to mention an interracial gay couple, could and did still face a lot of discrimination from a perpetual state of institutionalized racism and homophobia that, for some reason, still plagued their country. He sighed, “Not legally, but yes, people still have problems with interracial dating. On both sides. The first time I brought home a white guy, my mom asked me why I couldn’t find myself a nice, respectable, black man.” He chuckled fondly at the memory. At least his parents weren’t homophobic, despite their religious backgrounds.

“I don’t understand why the color of someone’s skin is in any way significant. In the end you are all human beings.”

Alex shrugged, “I don’t get it either. And people can be incredibly cruel. When I was in my early 20’s, I was dating this guy. He was white, from the south, and when he took me to go meet his family, his brother spit on him and called him a ‘nigger lover’ before he scratched up my car and left. Race continues to be a big deal to a lot of folk.”

“What happened then?” Castiel asked with a sad tone in his voice.

“‘Blood before baboons.’” Alex quoted as he recalled what his ex’s brother had said to them. “It’s not an easy choice to make, between family and a boyfriend.”

“I learned that family don’t end in blood. You can always find a new family.”

Alex smiled, a little amazed at the man in front of him. He leaned in and kissed Castiel. He was pretty sure he could easily fall in love with this man. *He was screwed.*
Because we fucking finished the fic today we're posting an extra update for you guys! We still have to edit and make graphics, but the story is officially written!
Cas: I'm doing the walk of shame, though I don't feel shame at all

Cas:

Messages Cas Details

😊 yes he asked me to stay. And I had sex with him. It was really good!

I feel good

I think I'm happy

Aww man cas that's really great! I'm happy you're happy

Thank you Sam. I wouldn't be this happy without your help and advice. You're a great friend.

Thanks cas. So are you

July 5, 4:23 AM

Cas: I'm doing the walk of shame, though I don't feel shame at all

Cas:
Sam: LMFAO hell yeah cas! You own that walk! You had sex with him? I'm happy for you! Wait, did you stay the whole weekend? I know it might be TMI but how was it? I'm not asking for like details, but I just want to know if it was good for you.

Cas: :-D yes he asked me to stay. And I had sex with him. It was really good!
Cas: I feel good
Cas: I think I'm happy

Sam: Aww man cas that's really great! I'm happy you're happy

Cas: Thank you Sam. I wouldn't be this happy without your help and advice. You're a great friend.

Sam: Thanks cas. So are you

Sam smiled at his phone before he pocketed it and noticed that Dean was giving him a funny look. They were on a hunt in California and had just gotten back to their motel room after a long drive, interviewing the witnesses, and investigating the crime scene. It was probably just a simple salt and burn, but it felt good to be working again.

Dean had needed it especially. Sam hated how his brother went on quietly self-destructing himself over what happened with Cas. The distraction would do him good, and would hopefully keep his mind off of the angel.

The last thing Sam wanted to do was let Dean know what was going on in Cas’s life at that moment. He knew he would eventually have to tell him, but for now it was probably best to keep him in the dark. He had a pretty good feeling that Dean wouldn’t take the news very well.

But fuck, Cas was his friend, too. And as much as he hated seeing them suffer because Dean just wouldn’t talk like a normal person, he wanted Cas to find some happiness. If Dean, for some unknown reason, couldn’t be with him; Cas, at least, deserved a chance to move on to something good. Although Sam wished nothing more than for his brother to find the same happiness in his life, something he knew could happen with Cas, he just couldn’t force his brother. Dean always had to work through his issues alone.

His phone made a beeping noise for another message and Sam instantly looked at it with a smile. Cas had never texted so much. He could read his excitement and happiness through the lines of the messages and, somehow, seeing it made him happy, too.

**July 5, 4:26 AM**

Cas: I'll meet Alex again after his work is over today. He wants to go to the beach with me.

Sam: Dude, he's seeing you again? That's great news!

Cas: Yes, he said he will miss me all day and can't wait to see me again. :-D
Cas: He texts me a lot
Cas: And he also likes emoticons

“What’s up, smiley? Who you textin’?” Dean asked, an amused grin on his face, but it still didn’t reach his eyes.

“No one,” Sam mumbled as he answered Cas’s last text message.

July 5, 4:27 AM

Sam: He really likes you cas.

Dean rolled his eyes, “What are you, five? You’re clearly texting someone. Is it Eileen?” He waggled his eyebrows suggestively.

“No, it’s not and I’m not five. It’s just none of your business,” he answered, distracted by reading Cas’s replies and answering them.

July 5, 4:28 AM

Cas: I like him too. He’s very nice to me.

Sam: You deserve it man
Sam: He sounds like a great guy, I hope I can meet him soon

Dean approached Sam, standing in front of him, he quirked his brow as he folded his arms against his chest. “Is it Cas?” His tone was low, almost angry.

“Which part of ‘none of your business’ wasn’t clear, Dean?” Sam glared at his brother, refusing to be intimidated by his tone. Dean couldn’t know. He wasn’t anywhere near ready for that. “Didn’t you want to take a shower?”

“What’s your deal, dude? I thought we were passed keeping secrets.” He threw in Sam’s face. Nice. He's trying to guilt him.

“About life threatening, world ending stuff, yes. But not about personal things like romance and
friendship. This isn’t about you.”

“Secrets are secrets, Sammy…”

“Go take your shower! You’re unbearable at the moment.”

Dean flipped him off and stormed into the bathroom, making it a point to slam the door closed.

*Now who’s five?* And just to affirm his brother’s maturity level, or lack thereof, he could hear Dean singing very loudly, and very badly, ‘Heat of the Moment.’ *Dick.*

Sam shook his head and read Cas’s new text message.

**July 5, 4:32 AM**

Cas: Do you think... I should tell him about me? I'm afraid to do so.

That was a loaded question. He could understand why Cas was hesitant to tell his new boyfriend about what he was. That could go wrong in so many ways. On the other hand, the longer he waited to tell the guy, the worse it would be if he ever found out. If Cas really wanted to build a relationship with this doctor, honesty and communication should be the base for that. But he didn’t know if Cas was even thinking about a future with the doctor. It had only been a few weeks and he didn’t believe that Cas was completely over Dean.

**July 5, 4:34 AM**

Sam: Maybe give it a little longer, see if you really could see yourself spending his life with him

Cas: I don't like lying to people

Sam: Basically if he says he loves you, you can tell him

Sam: I know, buddy but things are new and normal people don't react well to finding out the supernatural is real

Sam: Wait until he tells you he loves you

Sam: It probably won't be long

Cas: Somehow... I don't know... somehow the thought makes me sad and happy at the same time. I don't understand.

Sam: It makes you sad because you're scared, it makes you happy because you're excited. It's totally
normal especially after heart break

Cas: I still wish sometimes that I would have heard these words from Dean. But I will try to move on
Cas: I don't want to stay in the past

Sam: Exactly, you can't stay in the past, you have to move forward and part of that is doing what you can to move on. You don't want to get hurt like that again but if you're already this happy I'm pretty sure you might have lucked out with this guy.

Cas: He's also very handsome
Cas: :-D

Sam: I'm sure that doesn't hurt!
Sam: Do you have a pic of him?

Cas: Yes, I do
Cas:

Sam: Damn cas! Even I have to say that is one good looking guy
Sam: In the end as long as he treats you well that's all I care about

Cas: Thank you, he does. He's a wonderful human being.

Sam: Awesome cas. Well enjoy the beach and I hope I hear from you soon!

Cas: Thank you again. You will!
Sam pocketed his cell phone in his jacket, which he then threw on his bed before sitting at the table to read over the files they had gotten from the police. It had been a long night and all he wanted to do was shower and finally sleep. His head started to hurt with all of the drama that had been in his life lately. He massaged his temples and threw the file back on the table.

How long was Dean’s freaking shower? He bet his brother was using up all of the hot water just to spite him.

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Dean wiped down the mirror in the bathroom, the steam from the hot water creating a cloud of heat in the small room. He smirked in satisfaction as he wrote in the condensation ‘enjoy your lukewarm shower’. He wrapped a towel around his waist and finally emerged from the bathroom in a puff of steam. “All yours!” He called out, falsely pleasant.

Sam rolled his eyes and ignored his brother as he made his way into the bathroom. Dean chuckled when he heard a, “Dick!” from behind the closed door. That’s what Sammy got for keeping secrets.

Dean shrugged on a pair of clean boxers and a t-shirt when he heard a weird buzzing noise on Sam’s bed. The closer he drew to the bed, the louder it got. He realized the sound was coming from his brother’s jacket and he pulled the source of the noise out of a pocket. Some random 800 number was calling his brother’s phone, probably a telemarketer. Fucking vultures.

He stared at the phone for a few minutes. He really shouldn’t. But damnit, his curiosity got the better of him. Dean sat down on his own bed and unlocked Sammy’s phone. They knew each other’s pass codes as a precaution if either of them disappeared and it could be used for investigating.

He selected the green messages app on the home screen and the top text was from Cas. Dean didn’t want to invade either of their privacy, but he hadn’t talked to Cas in so long and he really missed his friend. It couldn’t hurt to confirm the angel really was doing okay. He scrolled up until he encountered a picture Cas had sent Sam.

He was wearing an AC/DC t-shirt and sunglasses, looking cooler than Dean had ever seen him. He hated how hot he found the angel in that moment. The brief sweep of attraction dissipated when he read the words of the preceding text.

*I’m doing the walk of shame.*
How the fuck did Cas know what the walk of shame was? And who the fuck did he shame with? Fuck politeness, Dean scrolled down and kept reading the texts. At first he felt his heart constrict in panic. Sam knew. He knew. No wonder he kept asking such weird questions, the asshole knew what happened between them.

The panic morphed into anger, into a fury as he kept reading the text messages. The fury bubbled up his chest and was causing him to visibly shake. He felt betrayed, which was pretty fucking stupid, but how the hell could Cas claim he had to leave because he was so fucking heartbroken over him, just to end up in the bed of some pretty boy, what? Three weeks later?

Dean knew he should stop reading, but once you open Pandora’s box, you’re fucked, so he might as well keep going. He scoffed when he read how happy this perfect dude was making Cas. It wasn’t fair. If all Cas needed was to get laid to get over Dean, he didn’t have to fucking abandon them to do that.

*I still wish sometimes that I would have heard these words from Dean.*

*Fuck.* All of the anger, the bitterness, the unadulterated pain he felt at the loss of his best friend, it came to a screeching halt as he read that text. And read it again. And again. Dean stared at the message, the utter loss he felt in that moment overwhelmed him. *I wish I could have said those words, too.* As the realization of what that thought meant struck him, Dean closed out of Sam’s texts, locked his phone, and hastily shoved it back into the pocket of his brother’s jacket.

He turned the lights out, crawled into his bed, and let the fucking tears fall. *Fuck.* He fucked up so fucking bad and now Cas was moving on. He was finding happiness with some perfect pretty dude and Dean would end up forgotten, as usual. How could he fuck up so badly? Dean shook his head. The second this hunt was over, he was going to drown himself in as much whiskey as he could legally buy. *Fuck everything.*

When Sam emerged from the bathroom to a pitch black room, he muttered, “You’re a dick, dude.”

Dean let out a half-hearted chuckle, he was going to have to Leonardo DiCaprio the shit out of this to not make his brother suspicious. “You deserved it,” He replied, hoping that Sam didn’t catch the way his voice broke.
Chapter 21

Hey cas! So I was talking to Jody and we all miss you. We haven't seen you in over a month now, so she wants to have a dinner this Friday at her place for you and dr. Alex so we can meet him. I don't know how far you are from Sioux Falls, but do you think you guys could make it?

I'll have to ask him but I don't think that will be a problem. I would love to see you all again.

Will Dean be there, too?

Well, yeah. Would that be too much for you?

Honestly I don't know. I would really like to see him. I miss him.

I know he misses you too

He does?

Of course he does. He won't say it but you can see it in his eyes. He's not the same without you here.

I never wanted to hurt him. I wish I would have never said anything.

I didn't say that to make you feel bad. I just wanted you to know that whatever happened between you, whatever is going on with Dean, he's as affected by this as you are. And can you honestly say you wish you never said anything? If you hadn't you would have never met Alex! Silver linings!

I suppose that is one way to look at it.

Alex just confirmed that we can go on Friday. I'm looking forward to seeing you again. Thank you for inviting us. Alex says Hi.

Awesome! Tell him I say hi back and I look forward to meeting him.
July 19, 4:52 PM

Sam: Hey cas! So I was talking to Jody and we all miss you. We haven’t seen you in over a month now, so she wants to have a dinner this Friday at her place for you and dr. Alex so we can meet him. I don't know how far you are from Sioux Falls, but do you think you guys could make it?

Castiel: I'll have to ask him but I don't think that will be a problem. I would love to see you all again.

Castiel: Will Dean be there, too?

Sam: Well, yeah. Would that be too much for you?

Castiel: Honestly I don't know. I would really like to see him. I miss him.

Sam: I know he misses you too

Castiel: He does?

Sam: Of course he does. He won’t say it but you can see it in his eyes. He's not the same without you here.

Castiel: I never wanted to hurt him. I wish I would have never said anything.

Sam: I didn’t say that to make you feel bad. I just wanted you to know that whatever happened between you, whatever is going on with Dean, he’s as affected by this as you are. And can you honestly say you wish you never said anything? If you hadn’t you would have never met Alex! Silver linings!

Castiel: I suppose that is one way to look at it.

Castiel: Alex just confirmed that we can go on Friday. I’m looking forward to seeing you again. Thank you for inviting us. Alex says Hi.

Sam: Awesome! Tell him I say hi back and I look forward to meeting him

Castiel smiled at Alex, who had just made coffee for both of them in his kitchen. “Sam says, ‘Hi back’ and that he is looking forward to meeting you.”

“I can’t wait to meet your friends, Castiel. You are still sometimes a mystery to me, you know that?”

Castiel answered with a quick, rueful smile. He didn’t want to be a mystery to Alex, but there was so much about his life that he couldn’t talk about and since he didn’t want to lie to Alex, he had to be very vague about certain topics.

What he dreaded most, however, didn’t have anything to do with Alex and how he would react to the news of being with an angel. He knew he had to tell the man some day, but that was something he could worry about later. The dinner at Sheriff Mills’s house, that was something he was worried about.
Dean. He would see him again for the first time since everything had happened. He hadn’t spoken with the hunter in, what felt like, ages. He was worried how Dean would react. Most of all, he was worried about how he, himself, would react.

Castiel had tried his hardest to move on, but who was he kidding? He knew his feelings for the hunter were still there, despite how happy he was with Alex.

But he was tired of running away. He wanted to see Claire and Sam again. He wanted to see Charlie and Mary again, too. He wanted to thank Jody for taking Claire into her home and looking after her. Giving her something akin to a normal life again.

He also wanted to see Dean again. He missed him. And it still hurt. But facing the fact that Dean didn’t feel the same for him and accepting it, well, it was all a part of his plan to move on.

And Castiel was nothing but determined to do that.

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Sam was sitting on his bed in the bunker, he’d spent the last twenty minutes deliberating with himself about how to tell Dean they were all meeting up with Jody in a few days to meet Cas and his new boyfriend. Dean wasn’t going to take it well, no matter how he told him, so Sam decided on the safest means of informing; text message.

**July 19, 5:21 PM**

Bitch: Look, I know you and Cas don't talk much lately so I wanted to give you the update, since I've just texted with him.

Dean: Is he okay? He's not hurt right?

Bitch: He's more than okay. He has met someone and it sounds like he's truly happy. I've told you that he was visiting these hospitals to heal kids? Anyway, he met a doctor there and they've started dating.

Bitch: And it sounds really serious
Bitch: Like Cas has a boyfriend now

Dean: What?

Bitch: Yes! Isn't that awesome?
Bitch: I'm so happy for him
Bitch: He sounded so sad every time I spoke to him

Dean had been secretly hoping that the guy Cas did the walk of shame for a few weeks back was just a fling, a one off. He never dreamed it would turn into a relationship. And it must have been pretty damn serious if Sammy decided it was time to tell him about it. Dean scoffed at how happy his brother was, he was half tempted to throw his phone onto the pavement of the gas station. Instead he tapped out a curt response.

**July 19, 5:24 PM**

Dean: I get it! Cas is all rainbows and shit with a boyfriend! You can stop telling me shit

Sam: What?

Dean: He sure got over his heart break fast

Sam: What heart break, Dean?

Dean: He was like heart broken that's why he needed to find himself

Sam: So why aren't you happy for him? If some dick broke Cas's heart, surely he deserves some happiness in his life?

Sam: I mean he's your friend. Shouldn't you be happy for him?

Sam tried to not feel pleased with himself over the fact that he was inadvertently calling Dean out on his dickish behavior. Mostly he was concerned with Dean’s reaction. It was just a text message, so he couldn’t really gauge tone, but it almost seemed like his brother was jealous.

**July 19, 5:29 PM**

Dean: Hey man! You don't know what this dudes reason was you don't know he's a dick!

Bitch: If he broke Cas's heart, he is a dick

Bitch: It's Cas!

Dean: And why should I be happy that he jumped into the first dude he meets bed like five minutes of being supposedly so heart broken he had to leave???

Dean: He could have stayed here and met someone!

Bitch: Dude! What's your fucking problem? I thought you were friends with Cas? How can you not be happy for him that he's over this douchebag? The guy obviously didn't deserve him.

Dean laughed, a bitter and annoyed sound. He knew what his brother was doing. Sammy knew what happened between them. Clearly he was just trying to get away with calling Dean a dick to his face. He was so done with this.
July 19, 5:31 PM

Dean: Fuck you

Sam: Wow
Sam: Dean?
Sam: Anything you wanna tell me?

Dean: What the fuck is that supposed to mean?

Sam: Tell me why you are so angry

Dean: I'm not angry you're just an asshole

Sam: The only one acting like an asshole is you! I'm telling you good news about Cas and I'm sorry Dean. I wrongly assumed you would be happy for him. It's like you're not even friends anymore! Are you two even talking?
Sam: Do you even know what he's been through in the past month?

Dean: I don't wanna talk about it
Dean: Stop it Sammy
Dean: Wait how do you know what he's been through?

Sam: You're gonna lose him, Dean. Is that what you want?
Sam: Because he texted me a lot.

Dean: If he wants to leave there's dick I can do about it. He doesn't wanna be here. If he wants to run away with Dr. Perfect I'm not his fucking keeper

Sam: I actually told him to meet more people

Dean: You what??

Sam: He felt lonely and he missed being here. He told me he wanted nothing more than to come back, but for some reason he couldn't. I told him to meet new people so he wouldn't feel so lonely. Of course I've told him we miss him too. But he didn't tell me his reasons for staying away so I just told him that we hope he'll sort this out soon and come back to us. He was really sad, I've never seen him so broken, I was actually afraid he would do something to himself. That's why I wanted him to distract himself with something. Did you know he spent a few days on a mountain in the freaking Himalaya just by himself doing nothing?? That's not healthy, man.

Dean: WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME HE WAS THAT BAD????!!!

Sam: Look, I'm sorry okay? Cas told me not to tell you. He didn't want you to worry.

Dean: Fuck that! You tell me if he's sounding like he's about to hurt himself!
Dean: You don't keep that shit to yourself!

Dean was giving Sam whiplash with how hard his emotions were swerving. Sam shook his head at his phone, what the hell was up with his brother? He was acting like he was the heartbroken one.
Bitch: Why should I have told you this Dean? You just said it yourself, that you're not his keeper. He's my friend as much as he's yours. What would it have mattered if I had told you? You couldn't have done anything about it anyway. You're not even talking to him. Cas talked to me. He wanted my help.
Bitch: And I was there for him

Dean: Whatever. He can do what he wants it's not like he’s rubbing it in our faces or some shit.

Bitch: Well, about that.
Bitch: So Jody and I organized a family dinner at her home for Cas and his boyfriend. With all of us together. He really misses us and it would be a great opportunity to show him our support. They'll be there in two days.

Dean: And you’re telling me this because?

Bitch: I thought you’d want to know, since we’re driving up to Jody’s on Friday, as a heads up.

Dean: We? There’s no we in this you decided to go doesn’t mean I have to

Bitch: Are you kidding me? Stop being such an asshole. I thought you wanted to see Cas, too! Also, this is a great opportunity to make sure Alex is a good guy. I mean I already did a background check the first time Cas talked about him, but you can never be too sure. I don’t want Cas to get hurt, so I want to check this guy out.

Dean: A bullshit dinner party involving a group of hunters and some sap who doesn’t know dick. Sounds like the dinner scene from beetlejuice. I’m not really into Harry Belafonte. Think I’ll pass

Bitch: So you don’t want to make sure Cas is alright?

Dean: He’s a fucking adult I’m not his parent

Bitch: No, but you’re his friend. I thought you were even his best friend. So did that change?
Bitch: Something I should know about?

Dean: Don’t pull the Dr. Phil shit on me dude. Just because I don’t feel like going to some stupid family dinner to meet some stranger doesn’t mean there’s more to it than that

Bitch: Suit yourself. Cas will be devastated not to see you again. He told me that he missed you a lot and wanted to see you. But I can’t force you to come.
Bitch: Jody and Bobby might force you.

Dean: He said he missed me?

Bitch: Yes! Of course he does. He doesn’t stop asking about you.

Dean: Fine. What time are we leaving on Friday?

Dean glared at the device in his hand before pocketing it to return his attention to the gas pump. He pulled the nozzle out of Baby’s tank and dropped it unceremoniously onto the holder clip. Dean leaned his back against her door and sighed. He didn’t want to meet the douchebag Cas was dating, but damn, he missed the angel. He really fucking missed him.
The drive to Sioux Falls was pretty unremarkable. Charlie and Sam were in the backseat of Baby, probably conspiring something the way they kept whispering, and his mom just watched the scenery pass by through the window, seemingly content to enjoy the quiet. Dean was dreading this dinner. He already had it in his head that whoever this Dr. Perfect was, was nowhere near good enough for Cas.

Cas deserved to have happiness, he just wasn’t sure that this guy could give that to him. Cas was probably just with the guy because it was convenient. That or the so-called feelings he had for Dean were all a lie. He swallowed down the bitter taste that thought left in his mouth. Fuck it, if he was so easy to get over, then so be it. That didn’t mean he had to make nice with his friend’s new, whatever the hell he was. Dean refused to accept the term ‘boyfriend’ in his head.

When they pulled up in front of Jody’s house, he saw a 2014 silver Lexus IS in the driveway and instantly felt on edge. So, the dude was a doctor and had the money for a fucking Lexus. Dean already hated the guy.

The four of them approached the door, Dean standing behind the other three. Claire answered the door, a smile on her face as she opened it for everyone to step inside. As Dean shrugged off his coat and hung it on the hanger in the corner, he asked, “So who’s the pretentious douchebag driving a Lexus?”

In that moment Cas and this doctor guy appeared in the entryway. Cas looked damn good. He was wearing a pair of jeans and a nice polo shirt that matched his eyes. Dean’s eyes zeroed in on the fact that Cas was holding this dude’s hand. The man Cas was fucking attached to was a decent enough looking guy, but Cas could do better.

The guy stepped forward, a sincere smile on his face, “That would be me.” He extended his hand out to Dean, “It’s a pleasure to finally meet Castiel’s friends, I’m Alex.”

Dean quirked his brow and stared at Alex’s hand for a few moments. He adjusted the silver ring on his finger, making sure the largest part of it was inside his palm so he could test to see if this doctor guy was human. Finally accepting the handshake, Dean had to quell the disappointment he felt when there was no pain or sizzling. “Dean.” Is all he offered.

Alex exchanged a quick, questioning glance with Cas and Dean could see how Cas slightly shook
his head. So, they already had the non-verbal communication thing down. Great. Whatever. It wasn’t all that impressive. Dean had been able to do that with Cas since the first time they met. And fuck, why was he so nervous? It was just Cas, goddamn it.

His friend smiled at him, almost shyly, “Hello, Dean.”

Dean gave Cas a half-hearted smile, the greeting resonating in his head. It had been far too long since he heard those words. “Heya, Cas.” He was totally unable to hide the fondness in his tone. Dean moved forward to hug Cas and then thought better of it, he rubbed the back of his neck, attempting to hide the awkward body movement, “You, uh… You look good.”

Cas smiled outright at him, “Thank you… Alex helped me purchase some new clothing.”

Dean nodded, trying to mask just how utterly annoyed that comment made him feel. He and Sam had been trying to convince Cas for years to get some new clothes, a few fucking weeks with this guy and Cas was suddenly all for it? He shrugged coolly, “Well, I liked your old clothes, too.”

Before Cas could respond, Sam and Charlie bombarded their moment by introducing themselves to the doctor and fawning over Cas and his sparkly new arm candy. Dean rolled his eyes and left to find the nearest bottle of booze. This was going to be a long night.

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They were sitting around Jody’s dining table, everyone having individual conversations with each other. Dean didn’t talk to anyone, he just watched the interactions between Cas and this Alex guy. How Cas leaned into him when Alex complimented him, his cheeks flush and a fucking beautiful smile on his face. It wasn’t right, Cas wasn’t supposed to smile like that for other people.

Dean took a sip of his beer and turned to the doctor, “So, what are you a doctor of, you are a doctor, right?”

Alex chuckled at the question, he fucking chuckled, “Yes, I am. I work as a pediatric oncologist in Omaha at the Children's Hospital and Medical Center. That’s where I met Castiel.”

Dean had to bite his lip, this guy and his all being perfect and calling Cas by his full name and shit. He really hated the guy. Alex fucking worked with kids, probably saved their lives. Fuck him. Cas,
Sam, and he had probably saved way more people than this guy, but everyone at the table was looking at him like he was fucking Superman. “Oncology is cancer, right?”

“Yes it is, but we also treat cases of kids with a primary immunodeficiency. Often those children develop cancer, too, and we have to treat them differently than the rest.”

“That must be quite difficult, working with children with these terrible diseases,” Mary said in an awed sounding tone.

“Children are actually braver than most adults. And I also get a lot of help with those kids. Castiel is amazing with them. For the past few weeks, every time I do my rounds all I hear is, ‘Castiel this, Castiel that’. He has a real fan club.” Alex turned and smiled fondly at Cas before raising their joined hands to his lips to press a kiss to the angel’s knuckles. Cas smiled sweetly at the doctor and Dean saw red.

Charlie chuckled, “I’m not surprised at all!”

Everyone shared a laugh, mumbling different appreciative comments for Cas. Dean kept his focus on the doctor. It was taking everything in him to not leap across the table and rip the guy’s heart out and stab it with a fork; maybe then the doctor would get a tiny glimpse of the pain their fucking PDA was causing him. “So, what made you choose cancer, do you get off on watching kids die or something?”

“Dean!” Jody and Mary cried out in simultaneous gasps of shock.

“Seriously, Dean, what the hell?” Sam interjected.

Before Dean could respond, Alex raised his hand up, “It’s okay, I’ll answer his question.” The doctor made eye contact with Dean as he continued, his face stern and serious while still remaining sincere, “I chose oncology because my sister died of leukemia when she was nine. I was seven at the time and I decided then that I would do everything I could to fight this awful disease.”

For a moment it was quiet at the table. The noise of Castiel’s chair being dragged back as he stood up was the only sound disturbing it. “Dean, step outside with me for a moment. We need to talk.”

Cas clearly wasn’t asking. Dean nodded to the angel and followed him without question. He knew
he fucked up, but he’d be lying if he said he wasn’t grateful for the opportunity for some alone time with Cas.

Once they were outside, they walked side by side in silence for a while. The night was a bit chilly for the season, but that was nothing compared to the ice cold aura Castiel was emitting. When they reached a tree line, a good distance away from Jody’s house, Castiel turned around and glared at Dean, “Why are you behaving this way?”

Dean crossed his arms over his chest, a defensive and closed off response, “I’m not behaving any different than I always do.” His tone was petulant.

“I’m pretty sure your brother and our friends don’t share this notion. Neither do I. You are being exceptionally hostile towards Alex and I want to know why.”

“Awww, I’m sorry, did I hurt your boyfriend’s feelings?” Dean scowled, his tone sarcastic and sharp.

Castiel gave him a sad look, “No, you hurt mine.”

The hunter let out a sigh, “Look, Cas. I just…” He faltered for a moment, appearing to construct his next words very carefully, “What do we really know about this guy? Yeah, he’s nice looking and a doctor, but in my experience, humans have always been way more fucked up than creatures. I wasn’t tryin’ to hurt your feelings, I just want to make sure this guy is on the up and up.”

Castiel squinted his eyes, wondering what Dean meant by the ‘up and up’ comment. For a moment he thought about asking Dean, but decided against it. Dean was often annoyed with questions like that and the last thing Castiel wanted to do was annoy the hunter. He probably had meant that he wanted to make sure that Alex was okay. Did that mean he was worried? “Dean, are you worried about me?”

Castiel wasn’t prepared for the anger in Dean’s response, “Of course I am! You disappear and the next time we get to see you, you’re dangling off the arm of some smarmy doctor, how can I not be worried?”
“You know why I had to leave. It wasn’t like I didn’t keep in contact, so you wouldn’t need to worry. Didn’t Sam tell you that I’m okay? And also… have you forgotten that I’m an angel? I can defend myself should someone attack me.”

Dean scoffed, “Yeah, yeah, big, bad angel who couldn’t fucking handle dealing with our issue, so he ran away.” The look in the hunter’s eyes after he said that seemed regretful, like he hadn’t meant to say any of it.

It hurt. Castiel hated that Dean always managed to do that with so few words. The man still had power over him, he probably always would. Castiel looked away from him, biting his lower lip to keep his confusion and anger bottled up. This wasn’t how he had planned his reunion with the hunter. He didn’t want to have any ill feelings between them. “I didn’t run away. I’m just trying to move on. I can’t do that when I’m constantly near you.”

“You seem to have moved on pretty damn quick, it’s good to know I’m that easy to get over.”

Dean’s tone was angry, but there was sadness there, which was confusing. Shouldn’t that make the hunter happy?

Castiel frowned, the anger in him slowly gaining the upper hand, “First of all, I said ‘I’m trying’ and second; I thought you would be happy. We could be friends again without you needing to feel awkward about my love declaration. Isn’t that what you wanted? That I forget about my feelings for you?”

“You’re playing house with some guy, as far as I can tell, you’ve moved on. And you made it perfectly fucking clear that what I want doesn’t matter in regards to your love declaration. I wanted you to not leave, whatever else fucking happened, that was all I wanted!” Dean turned his back to him then, clearly upset.

For a moment Castiel didn’t know what to say or how to even feel. His first instinct was to yell at Dean, for the absurdity that he really believed Castiel had already moved on. That he believed that this wasn’t killing Castiel inside, every word spoken in anger instead of what his heart was truly feeling in the moment. The pull towards the hunter.

Castiel felt ashamed. He was here with Alex and still all of his thoughts were dominated by the hunter. The only thing he wanted to do was grab Dean and kiss him, although he knew he wasn’t allowed to. Dean didn’t want him. He had made that clear. He just wanted to be friends. And although the hunter was open to intimate encounters, it had nothing to do with feelings.

And that wasn’t enough. Castiel needed more. But Dean wouldn’t allow it.
Castiel shouldn’t be with Dean. He wasn’t to be trusted alone with him. He had to go back. “You don’t believe me… I suppose after everything, I probably deserve it.” His voice was broken and quiet, but it didn’t matter.

Castiel turned around and started to walk back in the direction of the house. He was stopped by a hand gently grasping his shoulder. He allowed Dean to turn him back around and what he came face to face with surprised him.

Dean’s eyes were watery, red-rimmed, as though he was on the verge of tears. The hunter looked at him, for what felt like an eternity, before he finally took a deep breath. “Cas, you do deserve this. You deserve every bit of happiness you can grab ahold of. And if this Alex guy makes you happy, then…” He paused before finally saying, “I just want you to come home.”

Castiel felt his heart beating faster, a breathless, “Dean…” fell from his lips as he pulled the hunter into a tight hug. He buried his face into Dean’s throat, taking in the warmth and the grounding smell of his friend. He felt Dean’s pulse against his skin, trying to ignore how loud their hearts were beating. It felt so good to be close again. Like he had lived the last few weeks without something he desperately needed to survive.

He felt Dean’s arms surrounding him, pulling him even closer to the hunter’s body. For a moment it was like Dean was feeling the same desperation.

Castiel pulled away, a little overwhelmed from all of the emotions he was feeling within the hunter’s embrace. He looked up and felt his heart skip a beat at the smile Dean gave him. Dean cupped Castiel’s face, tenderly stroking his cheek with his thumb. The hunter’s eyes flicked to his lips and back up again, “Fuck, I missed you.”

He wanted this to be real. His eyes were burning and he swallowed dryly, “I miss you… I still… I love you, Dean.”

Castiel blinked. He realized the desperation had gotten the better of him. He had needed to say the words. He wanted to hear them from Dean. He needed to hear them.

The moment they hugged Castiel had realized that he could never let Dean go. He had to say goodbye. Dean would never say those words back to him and he would end up hurt again. A hurt he would need to make this cut in his life. To let go. He had to. This would have to be goodbye.
Dean wasn’t saying anything, but he wasn’t pulling away. He continued to caress Castiel’s face and then the hunter was leaning in. He was going to try to kiss him. Castiel needed to leave, he needed to get away from the hunter. He pulled away, “Please, don’t.”

In that instance, Dean’s face went from open and caring, to closed and angry. He scoffed, “Fine.”

Castiel took in a deep breath to steel himself, “I won’t stop hurting myself as long as I feel this way about you. I can’t trust myself when I’m around you. You may be okay with my feelings and can ignore them, but I can’t. I need more. I just can’t… I’m sorry.”

Castiel pulled away, looking in the clear night sky above them for a moment, before glancing back at the hunter, “Goodbye, Dean.”

If it hadn’t been for his superhuman hearing, he might have never heard the quiet and broken, “Bye, Cas.”
So, because we are officially DONE with One Missed Text. We’re posting an update every day. This whole fic will be uploaded over the next eight days! Thank you again to everyone who has read, left kudos, and/or comments. We hope you continue to enjoy this story! And please keep in mind: Destiel is Endgame.

Chapter 22

Hey babe, I have to stay a couple extra hours. Vivian has a flat tire on her car, I'm the only attending until she gets in. I should be home by 9 at the latest. There's a key under the mat. Feel free to let yourself in and make yourself at home.

Okay, I miss you already. Thank you for another beautiful day at the beach. I thought about it all day.

I miss you, too. Me too, especially how long you could hold your breath under water ;)

What are you up to today?

I'm at the park next to the hospital, taking Lydia out for a stroll.

Is she going to have a checkup soon?
August 21, 6:50 PM

Alex: Hey babe, I have to stay a couple extra hours. Vivian has a flat tire on her car, I'm the only attending until she gets in. I should be home by 9 at the latest. There's a key under the mat. Feel free to let yourself in and make yourself at home.

Castiel: Okay, I miss you already. Thank you for another beautiful day at the beach. I thought about it all day.

Alex: I miss you, too. Me too, especially how long you could hold your breath under water ;) Alex: What are you up to today?

Castiel: I'm at the park next to the hospital, taking Lydia out for a stroll. Castiel: Is she going to have a checkup soon?

Alex: God how did I get so lucky? Alex: Yes and don't tell her yet, but her biopsy and LP results came back clear! I get to tell her and her parents in the morning she's going home for good this time. Alex: She's a little walking miracle. Children with that stage of AML don't usually live through the year.

Castiel: I'm happy to hear that. I already thought she looked better today.

It wasn’t a lie. He was happy to hear that Lydia would be healthy soon and that she indeed looked better today. But it wasn’t news to Castiel because he had destroyed the remaining cancer cells in her body.
It usually brought him joy to heal children, but in this case he was even happier. He wondered why that was, before he realized that the reason behind his joy was Alex. He loved to see how happy Alex was, everytime he received the good news, how his smile was more carefree and his step a little lighter.

Castiel felt happier through Alex’s happiness.

He didn’t know what to make out of this realization, but dearly hoped it was a good sign. When he received another message from the doctor, he had to smile.

**August 21, 6:53 PM**

Alex: It's not often we get to give good news unfortunately.

Castiel: She even wanted to leave her wheelchair to hunt down a squirrel
Castiel: Maybe she has a guardian angel

Alex: Hahaha. She’s already up to trouble. And I think she might!
Alex: She has an angel and I have a great boyfriend

Castiel: You make me very happy. I'm glad I've met you.
Castiel: Was that okay to say?
Castiel: I'm sorry if I'm awkward sometimes

Alex: Of course it was! Why wouldn't it be?
Alex: You make me very happy, too, by the way.

Castiel: It's just... I have a friend... had a friend... I don't know. I think he didn't like it very much when I was too direct.

Alex: This friend wouldn’t happen to be Dean, would it? Your relationship seemed a little, well, coarse. Were you just friend friends or is he your ex?
Alex: And direct is good. If you weren't direct I may have never had the balls to ask you out on a real date.

Castiel: Well, to be honest I asked Sam for help. And he gave me very good advice. Yes, I meant Dean… He’s… he’s not usually like that… When you met him. And we were just friends. I don’t know.
Castiel: It's complicated

Alex: Do you love him?

Castiel: I did... I probably still do. I’m trying to move on… I’m sorry, I didn’t want to tell you. I didn't know I was so obvious about it.

Alex: It's not that you're obvious, but I've been there. I’ve loved someone who didn’t love me back and had my heart broken in the past. I can tell when it's happened to someone else.
Castiel: How did you get over it?

Alex: You never really get over it, but it gets better. It gets easier. What really helped me was I met this really great guy.

Castiel: You did? Who?

Alex: Well he's got these beautiful blue eyes, messy hair that just seems to be in a perpetual state of bed head. His eyes crinkle in the cutest way when he smiles. He's got the biggest heart and a love for bees, and trenchcoats in the summer time.

Castiel: Oh, you meant me!

Castiel: :-D

Alex: Castiel, I'm sorry you were hurt and I... Alex: I want you to be happy, but I need you to be honest with me, can you do that?

Castiel: Of course

Alex: Is what we have something that can go the long haul for you? Like if Dean suddenly realized he had feelings for you, is there a possibility I could lose you? Alex: Because I have to be honest and it might scare you but, I am THIS close to falling in love with you Alex: God you must think I'm crazy.

Castiel gasped. He looked around to see if anyone noticed. Thankfully, Lydia was playing on the swing set and the only other person at the park was tuned out on her headphones, listening to music while reading a book.

*Alex was falling in love with him?*

His heart soared but felt laden down under a heavy iron weight all at once. How could something like that make him feel happy and sad all at the same time? In that moment, his thoughts turned to Dean.

No matter how often he replayed what happened at Jody’s a month ago, a repetitive loop that he used to fuel his determination to get over the hunter. It didn't seem to matter. He still felt inexplicably drawn to Dean, no matter how often the man had hurt him.

But Alex. Sweet, kind, emotionally available Alex. This man was opening doors, showing Castiel facets of emotion that he never would have thought possible. He smiled then, the pesky bugs in his chest making it a little difficult to breathe.

Dean was a huge part of his past, but maybe, if he let himself, if he succumbed to whatever power this connection with Alex was evoking; maybe, just maybe the kind Doctor could be his future.
Resolved with a new strength, Castiel tapped out a reply.

**August 21, 6:59 PM**

Castiel: No, I don’t think you’re crazy. I’m sorry that it took me a while to respond. I’m just... trying to get this feeling under control... like bees flying in my chest and stomach....  
Castiel: I want to be with you. Dean made it pretty clear to me that he doesn't feel the same about me.  
Castiel: I don't want to look back.

Alex: They're called butterflies, what's fluttering around in your stomach. I get them every time I think of you, Castiel. I know it's fast, I know it must seem crazy, but I'm so glad you say that because I'm ready to ditch our pasts and look at a possible future together.  
Alex: I know Dean is your friend, but he’s an idiot.

Castiel: Well whoever hurt you, sure was an idiot too.  
Castiel: You're a wonderful human being. And you make me very happy, Alex.  
Castiel: I want a future with you.  
Castiel: It would be my privilege.

Alex: And any man that turns down the chance to be with you has to be a lunatic. You are the most caring, thoughtful, beautiful man I have ever met.  
Alex: Castiel having a future with you would be far more than a privilege. It would be my idea of heaven.

Castiel: Before we discuss this any further.... there is something I have to tell you. But not like this. In person. Something about me. I want to be honest with you. I want you to know who I really am.

Alex: Castiel, you could tell me you're the ghost of Queen Elizabeth and I would still love you.  
Alex: Shit. Was that too fast? I'm sorry if I've made you uncomfortable

Castiel: You are not making me uncomfortable. Quite the opposite. I'm just so nervous.  
Castiel: I can't wait to meet you tonight. I really need to get this off my chest

Alex: Good, because I lied…

Castiel: What?

Alex: I'm not actually sorry I told you that I love you. I have never felt like this for anyone before. Sometimes when it's right, it's right, and I see a future with you. A future with us living in a quaint little cottage. Our adopted children being lulled to sleep in your arms with your beautiful voice, me cleaning the dishes and and falling even more in love with you every day. Until we grow old and I have to spoon feed you with one hand while the other holds your hand with our wedding band.  
Alex: That's what I see for us. One day. So I'm not sorry that I love you and I'm not sorry I told you.  
Alex: Life's too short to not take chances.

Castiel: Please... I just hope you will feel the same about me after we've talked tonight. I want to be honest with you. Although I wish I could have all of this with you too... there are things that aren't possible for me. I can't explain through a text message. I have to see you for this. I want to show you something...

Alex: Okay, show me when I get home. Enjoy your time with Lydia and I'll see you in a few hours,
babe.

Castiel: See you later

Castiel stared at his phone, feeling panic rising in his chest. This was the moment he had dreaded. He knew he had to tell Alex about himself. It wasn’t fair and honest to keep the fact that he was an angel from him. If they were to have any kind of a future together, Alex had to know all of the facts.

But what if Alex rejects him? He would be alone again and being alone was something Castiel couldn’t bear since he had lost Dean. Alex was so good to him, it felt like the scars on his heart were healing with every moment they spent together.

He didn’t know what to do. He needed someone he could talk to, someone who would understand. His fingers automatically sought out Sam in his address book. Like every time, he hesitated for a moment at Dean’s name to stare at it and, like always, the four letters taunted him. Showing him how close, yet so far away, the hunter was from him.

He shook his head of those thoughts and feelings before he started to text Sam.

**August 21, 7:07 PM**

Castiel: Sam, I need your advice!

Sam: Sure cas, what's up?

Castiel: The ceiling is up? No, yes, I don't know.
Castiel: Alex told me he loves me and he wants to spend his life with me. I'm going to tell him tonight Sam
Castiel: I have to

Sam: Why are you angels so literal?
Sam: Holy shit!

Castiel: I'm so afraid he will leave me

Sam: Wow, Cas. That was kind of fast.
Sam: Do you love him too?

Castiel: I think I do. He makes me happy. I know it's all very fast, but... I'm happy. He's so good to me.
Castiel: I don't know what to do?
Castiel: I mean
Castiel: How do I tell him?
Castiel: He wants to grow old with me....
Castiel: I can't give him that
Castiel: I can't give him a normal life

Sam: I'm so happy for you. Make sure he treats you right, cuz if he doesn't, I'll kill him. Not even a joke.
Sam: Fuck wow cas
Sam: You'll lose him if you don't tell him too though. Tell him. Sit him down and tell him and if he doesn't believe you, then prove you're an angel

Castiel: What if he's scared of me

Sam: If he truly loves you, he won't care about a normal life as long as you're by his side

Castiel: I don't think I can handle his rejection

Sam: And he won't be scared

Castiel: You think?

Sam: I can't promise he won't reject you, Cas. But after all the shit Dean put you through, don't you think it's worth taking the chance?
Sam: And you handled Dean's rejection, you can do it

Castiel: I can't go through this again.
Castiel: Would it be very wrong of me to erase his memory if things go bad?

Sam: Yes cas, don't do that

Castiel: Why?

Sam: You have lived through so much, you can make it through this
Sam: And did you like it when Naomi fucked with your memories?

Castiel: No, you're right...
Castiel: I'm just scared

Sam: Is he worth taking the risk for?

Castiel: Yes!

Sam: There's your answer.

Castiel: I don't know what I would do without you Sam. You're a good friend.
Castiel: How are you, I feel bad for not asking earlier…

Sam: Don't worry about it. And you're a good friend, too. And I'm fine. Go talk to your guy and I'll check in with you later to see how it went, okay?

Castiel: Okay, thank you, Sam!

Sam: Anytime

Although Sam’s words had strengthened his resolve, Castiel was still nervous. The time for Alex to come home appeared to pass by slower than usual, further validating Einstein’s theory of relativity; but it also meant his grace was weak. The slowness of time and his impatience with it was an illusion
he knew well, it happened every time his grace wasn’t at its strongest.

He passed the time by flying around the world, he just couldn’t stand still. His mind was tortured by dozens of questions and scenarios. Things that could or could not happen. His mind tried to calculate every risk and every outcome, the only problem was that it couldn’t calculate feelings. He couldn’t use strategies like he was used to when he was planning an encounter on the battlefield. This wasn’t a battle. This was his life.

The worst part was, his heart was split. Thinking about the worst possible outcome; that Alex would reject him when he found out, it didn’t leave him with a feeling of devastation. At least, not in the same way it had when Dean rejected him.

Castiel hoped the only reason for the lessened fear of devastation was because he had known and loved Dean for such a long time, whereas he had only met and started dating Alex within the last two months. He didn’t even want to think about what any alternative reasons could be.

He had made his decision to be with Alex. He and Dean had said their goodbyes. It was over. Castiel hoped that his heart would eventually catch up with his mind and that his torturous state of metaphorically being torn apart would end soon.

Castiel flew back to Alex’s garden, sitting down on the small stone bench to wait out the last few minutes before the doctor came home. It was peaceful. He enjoyed watching the butterflies dancing around him as he tried to meditate himself into a calm state of mind. It worked until he heard Alex’s voice greet him, “There you are.”

“Hello, Alex,” Castiel smiled, trying to hide his nervousness.

Alex leaned down and pressed a chaste kiss to Castiel’s lips, “Hey, handsome. What are you doing outside?”

“I tried to find some serenity in your garden. Watching the animals and the plants always has a calming effect on me.” Castiel took Alex’s hands in his, “I told you I had something to tell you. We should go inside and... you should sit.”

Alex nodded his understanding. Castiel could feel the worry emanating from the doctor. He gave Alex’s hand a comforting squeeze. Once they were inside, and after Alex had changed out of his scrubs, they sat down on the loveseat.
“What’s on your mind, baby?” He asked, a sweet smile on his face.

“I told you there is something you don’t know about me. Something very fundamental... And there is no easy way to say it. I thought a lot about it and my worst fear is to frighten you with this. But I want what is happening between us to last and I believe in honesty...” Castiel took in a deep breath, very aware of Alex’s worried expression. He wondered what he could say to lessen the shock of revealing himself as an angel.

“Whatever happens I want you to keep in mind that I mean no harm. I’m still me, all you see, all you know, is me. That won’t change.”

Alex cupped Castiel’s face and pressed another kiss to his lips. “I’m not going to lie, you’re kinda scaring me here, but there hasn’t been anything about you that I haven’t been completely smitten with, so I’m not worried and you shouldn’t be either.”

Castiel nodded slowly, steeling himself for his next words, “I’m an angel of the Lord.”

Alex scratched his head, he appeared confused, “Is that code for something?”

“No, it’s my species. I’m not human.”

He leaned forward, pressing his hand to Castiel’s forehead, “You’re not feverish, baby, I know you don’t normally drink, but are... Are you drunk?”

In that moment Castiel realized that Alex wasn’t going to believe him. Of course he wouldn’t. Even Dean had told him that there was no such thing as angels when they first met, and Dean was a hunter. Alex knew nothing about the supernatural world. He was a man of science. He needed proof.

Castiel smiled for a moment, “No, I’m not. I can show you.”

He stood up from the sofa and walked to the middle of the room so he would have enough space to show Alex the shadows of his wings. He didn’t need much grace to change the lightwaves of his surroundings, matching them to the length of his own light to make the shadows of his wings visible to the human eye. It felt freeing to finally come out of hiding, to show Alex what he really was. He
stretched his wings far into the room, causing the lights to flicker where his wings collided with the electrical pathways.

Alex sat there, staring dumbfoundedly at the shadows that were now enveloping the majority of his living room. He didn’t seem scared, just unsure. “Uh…”

Castiel changed the lightwaves around him back into their natural flow to let the shadows disappear.

“How did you do that?” Alex finally asked.

“It’s a simple matter of redirecting the lightwaves and length to match the one of my celestial form. I can’t show you my real wings. They would, sadly, harm your eyes.” Castiel hoped Alex wouldn’t be disappointed by that.

“No, uh…” Alex faltered, still incredibly confused, “I meant, how did you do that trick? It was some sort of trick with the lights, right?”

Castiel tilted his head. It seemed Alex needed a bit more proof than Dean had, “I assure you that it wasn’t a trick. I could take you somewhere to show you that my wings are real. Only if you want to.”

The doctor shrugged, still appearing skeptical and uncertain, “Baby, I don’t think you should be driving…”

“I won’t be driving,” Castiel smiled and reached for his hand. He stretched his wings into their full length and brought them directly onto a bridge in Alabama. A place that had significance in the history of the civil rights movement and Castiel was sure would be appreciated by Alex and his love for history.

Alex shook his head, appearing utterly dumbfounded. He looked at their surroundings and back to Castiel, “Are… Are we…”

“We’re on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama.”
Castiel held his breath as he waited for Alex to respond, in whatever way, although he braced himself for a negative reaction. The doctor walked to the side of the bridge and peered over the edge, before turning back to the angel. “Castiel. You aren’t named after the angel… You are the angel?”

Castiel nodded slowly, trying to figure out what was going through Alex’s mind. He was clearly in shock, but he didn’t seemed frightened. “Do you want me to take you home?”

Alex nodded kind of dumbly and Castiel tried to reassure him with a smile before he reached for his hand again and brought them back. He pulled Alex to the sofa so he could sit down. He knew that, in most cases, humans needed time and maybe a drink to work through things like that, “Would you like a drink from your fridge?”

“A beer, please?” He asked, fiddling with the hem of his shirt.

Castiel nodded and waved his hand to relocate the beer from the fridge into his hand, before he sat down next to Alex to offer it to him. “I know you probably need time to process this. I just want to assure you that nothing has changed. I’m still the same person you know, it just so happens that I’m not a human being. I’m sure you have questions…”

Alex took a long draw from his beer before leaning back against his couch. After a couple of beats, he finally asked, “Does this mean God and the devil are real? Heaven and hell? Everything?”

Castiel glanced out of the window for a moment. He hated this part. He wished he could have revealed himself without all of the baggage that entailed, “Yes, but not like your bible tells you. A lot of things are different. Father isn’t around anymore. Lucifer is… that’s not important. There are a lot of things in this world you don’t know about and people like my friends, Sam and… Dean; they do everything they can so that people like you will never be harmed or find out.”

Alex shook his head, he ruffled a hand through his hair, “Shit. Am I going to hell for having sex with you? I mean, it was totally worth it, but now that I know that’s a possibility…”

Castiel couldn’t help but chuckle at that, “You won’t. First of all, I won’t let anything bad happen to you, and second of all; my Father is entirely uninterested in matters of sexuality.”

He took the doctor’s hand, squeezing it, “I’m not something untouchable and I feel the same things you do. I don’t want you to get the wrong impression. Like I said, I’m still the same person. Just with more history and powers that you didn’t know of. There are things I can do and things I can’t do and
if you still want me… there are things you have to know. I can’t grow old with you. There is also the risk of you getting dragged into parts of my life that are dangerous. I will do my best to keep those things away from you and to protect you, but as an angel I have responsibilities. I lead a dangerous life.”

For a moment Alex just looked at him. Castiel could see that he was trying to take everything in and he wondered if this was the moment where Alex would decide if he could live with all the proverbial baggage, or not.

The doctor blinked, opened his mouth, but no words came out. He took another sip from his bottle before his head sharply snapped up again. “Wait a minute… did you heal Lydia? Have you been healing our kids?” Alex asked, shock evident in his voice.

Castiel had a feeling that that topic would come up. He hoped Alex would understand his explanation, “I helped, but you did most of the work. I just nudged the healing process in the right direction.”

“So, does that mean you can heal all of our kids?”

Castiel could see the hope in Alex’s eyes. He hated to disappoint him, “I’m allowed to perform minor miracles, but I don’t decide who lives or dies. There are more powerful beings like death and fate who control those things. They uphold a balance in the world. If I interfere, it will have consequences. I can, however, help with illnesses that aren’t destined to be fatal. I can also strengthen the body to fight an illness. That’s why I told you that you are a good doctor. You are providing the base, so your patient and I can do the rest.”

“I see…” Alex murmured, before he took another large gulp from his beer.

Castiel felt his heart sink, “I would understand if you don’t want to be with me anymore.”

“What?!” Alex looked up in shock, “No, no, no, Castiel.” The doctor put his bottle on the table and grabbed Castiel’s hands. “I still want you. My feelings haven’t changed. It’s just a lot to take in. My father always told me about God and angels… I told you I’m not a religious man. I’m a man of science. My whole view of this world has been wrong.”

Castiel shook his head, “Not wrong, Alex. Just incomplete. Everything you learned is still valid and true. Although it may not look like it, you have influence on the things that happen in your life and of
others. You heal those children. Just think of me as some kind of new medication with an extra special kick. Nothing you know is a lie just because my Father and angels exist.”

Alex looked at him with wide eyes, taking in a few elaborate breaths before he shook his head slightly. “You really are an angel.”

Castiel gave him a warm smile, “Yes.”

“Wow…. I knew you were special…. But I never would have thought…”

Castiel squeezed his hand and smiled at him. When Alex returned his smile, he felt as though his heart was suddenly lighter. Relief.

Alex hadn’t rejected him. It was the first time, since he had lost Dean, that he felt a true spark of happiness.
Chapter 23

August 24, 3:42 PM

Dean: Did you get an eta yet?

Cas: I don’t understand why you’re asking me about estimated times of arrival, Dean.

Dean: Shit sorry I texted the wrong person

Cas: It’s okay.

Dean stared down at his phone, feeling only *slightly* like a dumb teenage boy for pulling the “accidental” text bullshit to talk to his crush. It had taken him weeks to build up the courage to finally text Cas, and he pulled this childish crap? He was surprised the angel even bothered to respond.

It had been over a month since the bullshit dinner to meet Cas’s trophy husband. Over a month since Cas made his choice. Over a month since Dean almost did something utterly, profoundly stupid, like
tell the angel he loved him back. He had been ready to completely lose himself to the feelings he had, his father’s words be damned.

When Cas said he still loved Dean, it shook him to his core. The relief he felt at hearing those words, hearing them and not reading them; the hope that bubbled up in his chest, he finally thought the words he’d been suppressing since that fateful night of Cas’s confession. *Fuck.* He loved Cas back.

Dean loved everything about the goofy bastard. From his almost child like innocence, to his fierce demeanor when he was angry. He loved the way Cas found joy in some of the most simple things, like a stupid fucking internet meme, or bees pollinating a flower. He loved that Cas was so goddamn selfless, even if it pissed him off sometimes. He loved when Cas smiled, it didn’t happen often enough, but when it did, Dean realized he *breathed* for those moments.

Dean wasn’t big on words, he wasn’t big on talking about his feelings, so instead of telling Cas he was stupidly and unfailingly in love with him, he moved in for a kiss. A kiss that was pushed away, causing his heart to shatter into a million fucking pieces. Cas chose Alex in that moment and Dean couldn’t blame him. All of the emotional turmoil he put his friend through, of course he chose the safe bet. The nice guy with a normal life. Why wouldn’t he?

His dad had been right all along. Falling in love with a guy ruined him.

He didn’t know what he wanted to say to Cas, but his heart felt lighter knowing he would, at least, reply to his texts still. Maybe he could try to mend their friendship.

**August 24, 3:50 PM**

Dean: So how are you?

Cas: I’m okay. How are you?

Dean: I’m okay. Is everything going okay with the doctor?

Cas: More than okay. He wants to spend his life with me and last night I finally felt brave enough to tell him the truth about me. He accepts me for who I am. *He wants to spend his life with me.*

Those words flashed in stark contrast against the gray text bubble. The pulsing of the flashes were mocking him, rubbing in the fact that Cas was, *oh, so clearly,* moving on. Dean had lost. Lost his best friend. Lost his chance. Fucking lost the, possibly, love of his life. All because of his bullshit
hangups and the words of his father echoing in the caverns of his mind.

Cas told Dr. Perfect he was an angel and, of fucking course, the guy reacted well. He’s fucking perfect. And how could he not fall in love with the angel? Dean learned the hard way that Cas was a pretty easy guy to fall irreversibly in love with.

Dean swallowed down the fucking pain and jealousy, the innate desire to reply in some petty, bitter manner. He took a deep breath and tapped out a reply that wasn’t sincere, but it was honest.

**August 24, 3:57 PM**

Dean: That’s great cas. You deserve it

Castiel: Thank you, Dean.
Castiel: I miss you. I miss talking to you.

Dean: Don’t worry too much about that you’ll stop missing me soon enough.

Castiel: I don’t believe that’s possible.

Dean: Hey you didn’t think it would be possible to get over me and you did so…

Castiel: I will probably never get over you. I just accepted my loss.

Dean: You didn't lose me. You gave up. Big difference

Castiel: What are you saying? That I suddenly had a chance?

Dean: Doesn't matter now. You made your choice

Castiel: What choice? It was never a choice! You made it pretty clear that you didn’t feel the same way.

Dean: I never told you didn’t I only ever told you couldn’t

Castiel: I don’t understand. Are you saying… What are you saying?

Dean: I’m saying that I never said I didn’t

Castiel couldn’t believe his eyes as he read Dean’s text message. It was a strange moment where he didn’t know what to feel. He remembered the moment he had swallowed all of those souls years ago, how the million voices screamed inside of him. He tried to concentrate on one voice inside of him, one emotion. There were so many. Disbelief, confusion, relief, hurt, pain, regret, anger. Oh… anger, that was a strong one. Why now? Why did Dean have to say that now?

Through all of the exchange he had felt Dean’s pain, his longing. Feelings he was used to from the
hunter when he prayed to him; and to which he never had any context to. Now he started to understand and instead of feeling happy about it, that Dean might feel the same, it only left him angry. That was the thing. It was still, ‘he might feel the same’. Dean was being vague about his feelings, dangling little slithers of hope, like he had always done with Castiel.

He was done with it. Even if Dean felt the same, he still rejected him with his ‘couldn’t’ crap. Alex didn’t. Alex had told him that he loved him. Castiel had a chance of happiness with the doctor.

And whatever feelings Dean might have had for him, it didn’t change the fact that Dean still didn’t want him. Not all of him.

It felt like an eternity before he could formulate the question that was burning in his heart.

**August 24, 4:10 PM**

Cas: Why are you telling me this when there is no hope for us?

Dean: I’m not telling you anything cas I’m just stating facts. Facts you never bothered to get from me because you fucking left

Cas: We had a painfully long conversation after I confessed my feelings to you and it never occurred to you to tell me that you feel the same??

Dean: Who said I feel the same?

Cas: Fuck you.

Dean stared, kind of shocked, at Cas texting, ‘Fuck you’. He knew he was being a petulant asshole, but he never thought it would evoke that sort of response from the angel. He wanted nothing more than to tell the angel he was sorry, he didn’t mean it, that he loved him and needed him to come home. Hell, he might have if Cas hadn’t told him how happy he was with the doctor.

But he couldn’t, *because* Cas had a real shot at happiness with Dr. Perfect and Dean would be damned if he ruined the life of another person he cared about. Whatever pain he was feeling was going on the back burner, Cas needed to come first this time.

The only way Cas would take the shot was if he cut Dean from his life, and the only way he would cut Dean from his life was if he acted like the true asshole he knew he could be. He let out a sigh and whispered to the empty room, “I’m sorry, Cas.”
Dean: You know what? I'm done with this. We probably can't come back from this so you might as well move out permanently.

Castiel: Wouldn’t be the first time you threw me out.

Dean: That's unfair and you know it cas.

Castiel: I'm done with you hurting me.

Dean: Well you hurt me too not that you care

Castiel: How can you even think that? You’re one of the only things I care about. You should know that. I shouldn’t say this. And I hate myself for being so weak. I know it’s pathetic but it’s true.

Dean: That’s not even a little bit true you would have never abandoned me if you cared about me at all.

Dean: And stop this pity party for one bullshit you aren’t weak you never have been and you have never been pathetic so stop it

Castiel: So it isn’t pathetic to still have hope, even though you have told me over and over again that you don’t feel the same and that you “couldn’t”, whatever that means? I don’t know why I’m still doing this to myself. Alex wants me, he loves me. He says it and he shows it. You never did and you probably never will. So do me a favor and leave me alone.

Dean: That's right. Run away

Castiel: No, I won’t let you think you’ve won. Tell me what you want from me, Dean. Just fucking tell me!

Dean: I want you to go find that perfect doctor and I want you to love him like you deserve cas. I'll leave you alone now.

Castiel threw his cell phone on the bed Alex and he had been sharing for a while now. He was done with Dean. That conversation had been the last bit of evidence he needed to actually believe that Dean would never want him like Alex did.

He should have felt relief when the last spark of hope died. To finally have clarity. But he didn’t. He still felt Dean’s pain, his bitterness and anger, anger towards himself. He tried to shut it out, building up barriers so he couldn’t feel and hear Dean’s prayers anymore.

Castiel had to cut himself free from the hunter. It was the only way to stop being hurt by him.

He looked around in the warm and comforting bedroom of Alex’s home. This was his future now. Alex accepted him, he loved him, even after he had told him that he is an angel.
Alex was perfect in every way.

Castiel tried to ignore the bitter voice inside of his head, asking a question that he didn’t want to hear.

*Why wasn’t it enough?*

…… :::: :::: ….

Dean stared at his phone, a dull numbness paralyzing his limbs. Cas had a real shot at happiness with Dr. Perfect and he knew the best thing he could do for his friend was to push him away, get him to make the right choice. But goddamn, it hurt.

More than the anger, the bitterness, more than any of that, he felt overwhelming pain. He looked to the corner of the room where the bear Cas had won him at the fair sat. Dean stood up, approached the toy, pulled out his revolver, and shot it in the heart.

The stuffing flew everywhere. The ringing in his ears was painful, he shouldn't have fired a gun in such a small space. Still, he couldn't bring himself to care.

Dean had to get out of there. He grabbed his duffel bag and started throwing random clothes and toiletries into it when Sam and his mom stormed in.

“What the hell is going on, Dean?” His brother cried out, holding his own gun at the ready. He surveyed the situation and at seeing no actual danger, lowered his gun.

At Dean’s lack of response Mary approached her oldest son, “Baby? What happened?”

Dean let out a bitter laugh as he shook his head, “Ask Cas.” He slung the duffel bag over his shoulder and pushed passed his family.

Sam grabbed Dean's arm, “What are…”

Dean yanked himself from his brother's grip, “Don't follow me.” He grabbed the keys to Baby and
stormed out.

Thankfully they had the sense to not follow him.

Chapter End Notes

Frankie here: Uhhhh, let us preface this note with an apology, since I have a feeling a few of our dedicated readers are going to get really pissed at us. Destiel IS endgame. Please keep that in mind. But we are cruel, capricious gods and we’re going to put the boys through hell before they get there. Sorry again!

Also: No teddy bears were harmed in the making of this fic.
**Chapter 24**

Chapter Notes

Frankie here: READ ME FIRST! There is some STRAIGHT UP NSFW content in this chapter, to include a seriously NSFW graphic! You have been warned! Lest you get written up for porn on the work computer, like I did. xD!

Also, we have our tags listed for a reason, I know some of them are silly, but remember, they are all technically true. ;)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

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**August 27, 4:57 PM**

Sam: Hey cas how are you doing? Did everything go okay with dr. Alex?

Cas: I still can't believe it. But yes.

Sam: Is that a good thing?

Cas: He loves me

Cas: Despite who I am

Sam: That's so awesome cas. And not despite dude, because of

Cas: I'm happy, Sam

Sam: Hey cas how are you doing? Did everything go okay with dr. Alex?

Cas: I still can't believe it. But yes.

Sam: Is that a good thing?

Cas: He loves me

Cas: Despite who I am
Sam: That's so awesome cas. And not despite dude, because of

Cas: I'm happy, Sam

Sam hated to do this to Cas, but he needed his help. Dean had been gone for three days now and they hadn’t heard from him. He was ignoring their texts and calls, disabled his GPS, had completely gone off the grid. He wondered what had happened between them. Dean had told him to ask Cas before he left, but Sam was reluctant to ask his friend about it. Cas seemed so happy, he didn’t want to taint that.

But Sam knew that Cas was the only one who might have a shot at bringing Dean back. He was the only one who might get through to Dean.

**August 27, 5:02 PM**

Sam: Fuck I hate to do this to you, but things aren't fine here
Sam: Damnit I feel even worse for saying anything
Sam: Just forget I said that okay?

Castiel: What? What is happening? Tell me Sam!

Sam: It's Dean. He hasn't been home in three days
Sam: I wouldn't have bothered you but he won't answer any of our texts or calls
Sam: He disabled the gps on his phone

Castiel: Why didn't you tell me earlier?

Sam: I was hoping he'd go on a bender and come home and then you were so worried about Alex and I couldn't bring myself to put that on you AND telling Dr. Alex the truth about you

Castiel: Sam, you know how important you are to me. You’re my family. You always come first for me.
Castiel: What can I do?

Sam: I know it's asking a lot but you might be the only one he'll respond to. Can you text him? Tell him to come home? Mom is not handling it well

Castiel: I'm not sure if he would respond to me but I will try of course.

Sam: Thanks Cas. Let us know if he responds? If you can get his location out of him, that would be even better

Castiel: I'll contact you as soon as I know anything

Sam: Thanks Cas

Castiel rubbed his hand over his face in frustration, causing Alex to look up from his book. “Everything alright?”
Castiel shook his head, “Sam needs my help. Dean hasn’t come home and he asked me to find him.”

“That sounds serious. I hope he’s alright,” Alex replied and he sounded genuinely concerned. It was one of Alex’s many character traits that Castiel really liked about the doctor. Alex had no reason to like Dean, but he was still genuinely concerned about him.

Castiel gave his boyfriend a worried look, “I have to go.”

“Of course. I hope you find him,” Alex stood up from his chair and walked up to Castiel, pulling him in for a hug. “I’ll see you later, babe.” He winked at him and kissed the tip of Castiel’s nose.

Castiel smiled at him before he flew off to a remote mountain in Canada, trying to concentrate on Dean. Even if the hunter was praying to him, it would be impossible to find him with his wardings. Castiel decided to temporarily take the barriers to Dean’s prayers down.

He braced himself for feelings of longing, anger, something from the hunter, but there was nothing. That was only slightly concerning, there could be a dozen explanations for why he wasn’t sensing anything from Dean. Perhaps the hunter shut himself down from him after their last exchange.

Castiel had been so angry, so terribly angry. Hurt and angry. Dean would start out kind, inquisitive, then turn irrational and angry with every exchange they had had since Castiel had confessed his feelings for the man. It was not only confusing, but frustrating. But more than any other emotion, Castiel felt a profound sadness, for what was lost between them. After everything they had been through, to part on such bad terms was never how Castiel wanted it to end.

Well, if he was perfectly honest, he had never dreamed what he had with Dean would end.

Castiel took a deep breath and composed a text message to the hunter, hoping that would garner a powerful emotional spike towards him that would enable him to locate Dean.

**August 27, 5:16 PM**

Cas: You probably don’t want to talk to me, but I’ll try it anyway. I’m worried about you. Can you please text me and tell me if you’re okay?

Dean: You don’t fucking care. Go be with Dr. Perfect.
Cas: Why did you run away, Dean? Your mother and Sam are worried about you. And even though you don't believe it... I care. A lot. Too much. That's why I left, remember?

Dean: Don't play that card! Clearly you weren't that invested. Already buying a small b&b in Vermont with Dr. Perfect. Feel free to tell them I'll be home when I fucking feel like it.

Cas: I told you how I feel. I still feel the same way, despite my best efforts. I probably won't ever get over my feelings for you for the rest of my life. I will never stop loving you. I just accepted the fact that you don't feel the same. I don't know why you're angry with me, for I thought that was exactly what you wanted. You told me to find happiness with Alex.

Cas: Just tell me please
Cas: Could we still be friends?
Cas: Or have I lost you completely now?

Dean: Don't do that. Don't fucking tell me you still love me. You LEFT. You fucking left cuz apparently being near me was too much and all it took was for you to suck the dick of the first guy who wags it in front of your face to move on!

Cas: I left because you didn't want me! You don't love me! What did you expect of me? That I smile and pretend that I'm okay? It hurts! It still does! I get that you don't care about my feelings in this, you made that pretty clear. But if you think your insults are hurting me then I have to disappoint you, Dean. You already hurt me in every way possible and there is nothing left for you to hurt anymore.

What do you want, Dean? Tell me, what do you really want?

Three days ago, after his last exchange with the angel, Dean ended up in some fleabag motel an hour away from the bunker. The only reason he stopped was the sight of a dive bar, cash only, across the street from the dumpy place he’d called home for the last three days. The only thing that was going to numb the constricting pain in his chest and lungs was going to be grandpa’s cough medicine, and a shit ton of it.

When Dean had walked into the building, he immediately sat down at the bar and barked for a double whiskey, straight. The bartender, a slim brunette woman, in her early 40’s he would have guessed, quirked a brow at him and poured the drink without question.

After his third double shot, the bartender asked, her voice raspy from years of smoking, “What’s her name?”

Dean didn’t even bother to try and deny it, play dumb, whatever. Never taking his eyes off of the drink, he mumbled, “Cas.”

She nodded in understanding, pouring an extra shot and sliding it to him, “Here, on the house.”

Dean looked up then, “Can’t be good for business if you buy a drink for every sad sack who comes
in here with a broken heart…”

The woman laughed, “Well, maybe you seemed particularly sad. Wanna talk about it?” Her tone was light, but entirely sincere.

He let out a bitter chuckle, “I didn’t realize this is the kind of place where everybody knows your name…”

The bartender shrugged, “Your call. Talk, don’t talk, I get paid the same.”

Dean nodded to her and lifted his shot glass up in a salute, “Valid.” He took a deep breath after drinking the whiskey. It was pretty rough, well stuff, but it was getting smoother the more drunk he got. As she started wiping the bar down with a dirty rag, Dean sighed, “I’m an asshole.”

She chuckled again, “Cheating?”

He scoffed, “I wish it was that simple…”

Dean had proceeded to unleash the gory details of everything that happened between him and Cas, purposely keeping out gender identifiers while the bartender listened. She didn’t give him advice, just let him talk through everything. It had been kind of nice, but it wasn’t making him feel better.

So, here he was, three days later, nursing a cheap bottle of hooch, lazily stroking his cock on the dirty sheets of the skeevy bed in his motel room. Imagining Cas, his lips, his eyes, his fucking beautiful face. Dean was shaken from his lust filled reverie by the angel texting him. His heart leapt at first, but he then remembered he needed to keep his distance, Cas needed to stay with the safe, nice, perfect doctor. Cas deserved a hell of a lot better than a broken hunter. He focussed on all of the pain and the bitterness he felt about losing Cas and used it to unleash everything he had been thinking as he continued to fight with the man he loved.

But as their argument continued and his anger mingled in with the lust he was feeling, he fucking couldn’t stop himself from what he did next, from the utter exhilaration of it.

**August 27, 5:24 PM**

Dean: You want to know what I want? You want to know what I fucking want?
Dean: I want to bend you over the nearest fucking surface and shove my cock so deep into your ass you can't walk straight for a week

Dean:

Dean: I want to stop PRETENDING it's your pretty lips wrapped around my cock instead of my hand and ACTUALLY feel them

Castiel: Why are you doing this to me? Do you really hate me so much that you have to mock me?

Dean: Not mocking you. Can’t you see how goddamn serious I am right now come on cas. Fuck all these feelings fuck all that bullshit. Why do we have to overthink everything. Tell me you don’t want me too and I'll stop texting you

Castiel stared at his phone, dumbfounded. At the picture Dean had the audacity to send him, to provoke him, to tempt him. And how was he supposed to respond to that last text? Dean knew damn well that he wanted the hunter, that was the problem!

Dean claimed that he wasn’t mocking him, but how was that possible? To tell Castiel he couldn’t feel the same for him and in the same breath attempt to seduce him, knowing how he felt for the hunter. If that isn’t a form of mockery, then it’s simply a vicious thing to do as someone who does not reciprocate your feelings.

Castiel had never seen Dean naked, despite several accidental invasions of the man’s privacy, and the image was sending Castiel’s brain into a reeling, short circuiting, malfunction of some sort. The hunter’s natural form was what renaissance painters weeped over.

Castiel had never been so conflicted, torn between a base, animalistic urge; and the emotional turmoil he found himself in. He needed to confront Dean, no more games.
August 27, 5:35 PM

Castiel: Where are you, Dean?

Dean: The S&H motel in Belleville room 10

Castiel didn’t think it was a good idea, but his body had already made up its mind. He was in the air and on his way to Dean without making a conscious decision about it.

It had always been like that. Dean was like the sun and Castiel was Icarus, flying to him because he was irresistible. Castiel knew of the danger. He knew if Dean wanted to, he could burn him to ashes. But he couldn't stay away.

He could justify it in his mind, he could tell himself that he was doing it for Sam. But he was lying to himself. Castiel wanted to be with Dean, he needed to see him. He was a fool thinking that staying away from him would change his feelings, would make everything less painful.

But pain wasn't his strongest emotion at that moment. Castiel was angry. He still couldn't believe Dean would send him such a picture. Like he was offering himself. The man was clearly mocking Castiel’s feelings, despite what he told him to the contrary. Dean should know better than to play with Castiel’s emotions like that. Dean should know by now that he didn’t share the man’s view on sexual intercourse without the potential for love. Why was the hunter being so cruel?

Although Castiel had seen the photo of Dean in an aroused state, it still came as a shock, landing in the motel room to find the hunter sprawled out naked on the bed. An invitation. As if Dean knew that he would show up. The sight took his breath away, a perfect chest and shoulders, painted with freckles, like a star chart that conquered the man’s smooth skin.

Dean’s lips fell open in a shallow gasp, his green eyes changed from hooded to predatory. Neither of them said a word and Castiel felt overwhelmed with an anxious tension, like he was trapped under Dean’s gaze. The hunter slowly stood up from the bed and crossed the room as he closed the short distance between them.

Dean didn’t stop. He walked Castiel backwards until the back of his legs collided with the desk behind him. Dean’s lips hovered over Castiel’s and he could feel the hunter’s hot breath on his dry lips.

“Dean…” Castiel hated that his voice cracked. He hadn’t intended to come here for sex. He had only
wanted to get Dean home. Castiel couldn’t do this. He had to think of Alex. He had to think of his own heart.

Suddenly one of Dean’s hands was on his neck, his fingers tangling their way into his hair as the hunter roughly pulled Castiel closer. He could feel every inch of Dean's body pressed against him, it was like being on fire.

Dean's lips grazed his for a moment, carefully, but a moment of hesitation, before he firmly pressed them against his own. When he let out a soft gasp, Dean slipped his tongue into his mouth, licking with a fervor, a hunger that apparently could only be satiated by Castiel’s lips.

Castiel couldn't suppress the moan that escaped him when he tasted Dean again. It was overwhelming and he felt like he was drowning. Dean was a tidal wave washing over him, an unstoppable force that left Castiel powerless. Did this mean that Dean loved him back? No, he had made it perfectly clear, over and over again, that he did not love Castiel.

He couldn't do this. He had to stop before he did something he would regret.

Castiel tried to push against Dean, to back away from the kiss, but it only resulted in Dean mouthing and licking his way down Castiel’s throat. "Dean..." he wanted to tell him to stop, but the words crumbled. Like his determination. His body wanted to surrender, his mind soon followed as Dean fell to his knees in front of him, mouthing against his already hard and leaking erection through the fabric of his clothes.

The hunter's fingers opened the button and zipper of Castiel’s pants with quick determination. It caused every nerve ending to tingle with anticipation. It was too much, too fast, too rough. Nothing how Castiel had wanted their first time to be. He felt paralyzed as Dean roughly yanked down his pants, freeing his erection. The hunter grinned before swallowing Castiel’s sex down to the base.

Castiel stared down at Dean, an image that would forever be seared into his mind. Dean's broad shoulders, scattered with freckles, his strong hands gripping Castiel’s hips, almost painfully. His lips around him, taking him in. Castiel was lost. Lost to all of the sensations and highs Dean was evoking with his lips and tongue.

The sensations, the utter pleasure he was feeling was almost enough to make him forget about all of the pain he had been through. The heartache. The loss. It was when Castiel thought of Alex that his senses came back to him. He pushed Dean away, fumbling to pull his pants back up as he moved to the other side of the room.
“The hell, Cas?!” Dean cried out as he wiped the spit from his chin. He stood up and walked towards the angel, eyes fiery with lust and determination.

Castiel shook his head, staring down as he frantically tried to do up his zipper, “I didn’t come here for this.”

Dean scoffed, “Like hell you didn’t.” He walked up to Castiel and placed his hand over the angel’s shaking ones. He gently grasped Castiel’s right wrist and pulled his hand hard against his own erection, “You know you want it.”

Castiel pulled his hand back as though it had been burned. “I’m warning you, Dean.”

The hunter scoffed and folded his arms against his chest. “This is stupid. You and I both know why you came here, but you’re too chicken shit to do anything about it. So, leave. If you aren’t here to fuck, I’m not interested in anything you have to say.” Dean turned away from Castiel as though he intended to go to the head of the bed. Before he walked passed, he lingered at Castiel’s side and whispered into his ear, “You already cheated, just so you know.”

At that Castiel felt overcome with rage. It bubbled in his bloodstream before it morphed into this unfathomable wave of lust. He growled and shoved Dean up against the dresser.

The hunter’s eyes flew open in surprise, before his face returned to its cool mask. “What are you gonna do, huh?” Dean challenged.

“Shut up!” Castiel barked before he dropped to his knees. He pushed Dean’s hips back, forcing the hunter flush up against the dresser. Grasping the man’s erection, he guided it to his mouth. Castiel sucked Dean down, internally smirking at the pained moan of pleasure the hunter made when he scraped his teeth along the length of his sex.

“Fuck,” Dean hissed and he snaked his left hand into the angel’s hair, gripping tight as he started to thrust into Castiel’s mouth.

Castiel held onto Dean’s hips as the man fucked into his mouth, eliciting the most sinful sounding grunts and moans from the hunter. Gag reflexes were likely a human concern, because he easily relaxed his throat as Dean’s thrusts became more erratic.
It was obscene how hard Castiel got from servicing Dean. His own erection pressed painfully against
the restriction of his pants. He was entirely lost in the moment, nothing in his head but the feeling of
Dean’s cock in his mouth and the tight grip the man had on his hair.

Dean used his grip on Castiel’s hair to pull him off of his dick. He didn’t even have time to process
why he was stopped before the hunter yanked him up on his feet. Their faces were so close, Castiel
could feel Dean’s hot breath against his lips. In that moment, Dean had never looked more beautiful.
His face was red with lust and pleasure, his freckles particularly dark against the colored tone. Castiel
felt a rush of helplessness, a sinking sensation, he knew that his yielding in that moment had sealed
his fate.

Dean grabbed his tie and pulled him forward, kissing Castiel. It was soft at first, the most tenderness
Dean had shown him since they had gotten onto this rollercoaster of lust and anger. With a gradation
of intensity, Dean’s unrelenting mouth parted Castiel’s shaking lips as he deepened the kiss. The
angel’s nerve endings tingled and tremored. He had never, in his life, experienced a kiss so intense
that the passion could evoke such sensations; desire, dizziness, an almost animalistic ferocity.

“Less clothes, more naked.” Dean growled as he turned his head down and ripped open Castiel’s
button up shirt, causing the buttons to fly in different directions across the room. His backwards tie
hanging pathetically around the open collar.

Castiel loosened the tie and brusquely pulled it over his head, throwing it to the side. As he shrugged
off his coat and ruined shirt, Dean focused on his pants. The hunter’s hands were steady and
determined, gently undoing his pants before unceremoniously yanking them down to his ankles for
the second time. Castiel stepped out of them and toed his shoes off before grasping Dean by the
shoulder to pull him into another kiss.

When the hunter finally pulled away, he held the angel’s gaze, an intensity flickering in those lust-
filled green orbs. Castiel let out a quiet gasp, a wide-eyed stare as they both attempted to catch their
breath. Dean grasped him by the shoulder to turn him around. When the heat of Dean’s body behind
him suddenly disappeared, Castiel turned his head to see what the hunter was doing. He was
grabbing lubrication.

Dean returned, trailing hot kisses on Castiel’s shoulders as his hands fumbled with the Astroglide.
Castiel shuddered when he was gently bent over the dresser, bracing himself. Dean slicked up his
digits and slid his index finger in, shortly after followed a second, then a third finger, scissoring him
open almost frantically. Castiel bit back a moan when Dean hooked a finger and grazed his prostate.
He almost growled when Dean removed his fingers to cover his hard cock with the gel before
pressing himself against Castiel’s frame.
Castiel gasped as Dean slid inside of him. The thick length felt impossibly huge, it was almost painful despite having been properly prepared. When the hunter’s cock grazed his prostate, Castiel felt the tingling of pleasure melt with the pain. He moaned softly as Dean pressed deep inside, the feel of the man’s abdomen mashed against his back. Castiel gripped the back of the dresser. After a few shallow and slow thrusts, giving the angel a chance to adjust to the pressure of his length, Dean finally buried fully into him, thrusting madly. Short and slightly jagged nails, from years of biting, dug into his hips as Dean pushed deeper and harder, driving Castiel into the dresser.

Castiel let out a cry from both pleasure and pain as Dean’s movements quickened. He leaned forward over the angel’s body and placed one hand on the dresser beside him, the other gripped painfully deep in Castiel’s side. Dean lowered his head to bite into the angel’s shoulder, never losing his rhythm. Castiel reached blindly behind himself to circle Dean’s neck, aching to bring his face to his own. Their lips met again in that awkward angle for a brief moment.

Dean adjusted his position mid thrust, connecting with Castiel’s prostate again. He let out another cry of pleasure as the hunter kept hitting that spot. Castiel pressed his palms into the dresser as his own cock throbbed with the onslaught of imminent orgasm. He tugged on his painfully hard erection as the sensations of Dean inside of him and the rough jerk tipped Castiel over the edge.

His tightening around Dean’s cock caused the man to swear loudly. He came inside of Castiel and collapsed against his back. After both of their breathing returned to normal, Dean slowly pulled out, causing Castiel to wince. Dean pressed a soft kiss to where an angry red bite mark was forming on the Castiel’s shoulder blade. Clearly exhausted, the hunter moved to the bed and lay down on his back. One hand rested against his forehead while the other hung dangerously near his slowly softening erection.

Castiel didn’t know what to do. He was still bent forward against the dresser as he realized what he had done. He had let Dean fuck him up against a dresser in a frenzied and lust-filled claiming, like some sort of woman of ill-repute. Castiel felt a great shame as he thought about everything he had thrown away with a great man, for a quick and brutal fuck with a man who didn’t love him, didn’t even care about him at all. Castiel was shaken from his guilt ridden reverie by a soft groan.

He finally turned to face the hunter, unsure if he could handle looking the man in the face. Dean appeared satiated and almost serene. He gave Castiel a soft smile and pointed to the empty space next to him. All he offered was a soft, “Stay?”

So he did.

... :::: :::: ...

...
Dean had fallen asleep seconds after Castiel had joined him on the bed. For a long moment Castiel just watched the man lying next to him, the sound of his calm breathing the only sound in the room.

Castiel felt empty. His anger had drained away with the lust he had felt, just moments ago. Now, everything was gone. The storm was over and he was left with the destruction it had left behind.

He thought of Alex. How he had betrayed this wonderful, kind man, but for a fleeting moment with Dean. A moment that didn't even mean the same for the hunter as it did for Castiel.

He expected to feel pain with that train of thought, especially when he let himself think about Alex again. But he didn't feel it. He felt empty. There was nothing in him, like every emotion had been stunned into silence. Castiel looked down at his hands, turning them, inspecting them like something alien. He let them fall back onto his naked body only to move them away again. He couldn't stand the feeling of his hands against his own skin. He felt sick. That was better, better to feel sick than nothing.

He tried to breathe, but he couldn't. The lack of air just made him feel more numb inside. Cold, distant… like he used to be… Before he had touched the soul of the righteous man. Before he was lost. He tried to hold on to the silence inside of him, staying far away from the emotions that would probably kill him. He had to leave.

Castiel sat up on the bed, careful to not wake Dean. The hunter turned over on the sheets and away from him. Castiel’s eyes fell on the dresser, the place Dean had bent him over and taken him.

All of this had been a terrible mistake. He hated every second he was in this room. He still felt like he couldn't breathe. He had to go. He gingerly got up from the bed, dressed himself, and let his wings take him to his favorite mountain. A peaceful place where he knew he would find solitude, where he could try to put his thoughts and emotions in order.

Castiel lay back into the snow, letting the freezing wet slush melt into his clothes as he stared into the bright grey sky. He allowed himself to feel the cold sensation biting at his skin. He needed to feel something, anything.

His body started shivering and his wet clothes clung to his skin, like the dried semen that he still hadn’t removed. The grey clouds over his head started to get blurry before he realized it was from his own tears. He felt disgusted with himself, for what he had done.
Castiel could have stopped it. He *should* have stopped it. He was stronger than Dean. But his physical strength was no match for the hunter’s emotional pull on him. He allowed Dean to do it. And Castiel had enjoyed it. All he wanted was to do it again. That thought made him even more disgusted with himself.

He thought about his time with Alex. He had been so different to Dean, gentle and kind. He had treated Castiel like he was fragile, even though he was anything but. Castiel hadn't corrected him, hadn't shown him how strong he really was. It actually felt nice to feel like he was being taken care of, secure and protected in Alex’s arms. They hadn’t had sex, Alex had made love to him. Castiel knew the difference. Especially now. Alex had given him something that Dean would never be able to give him.

And although Castiel knew all of that, the connection he had with Dean, their short and rough union. It had felt better and more exhilarating than anything he had ever experienced in his lifetime.

Castiel knew it was because he loved Dean. He had never *stopped* loving him.

He wished the circumstances were different. That he could love Alex like that. That he could give such a kind and wonderful man all of the happiness he deserved. He knew what he had to do. Castiel had to tell him the truth. Alex deserved someone better. Someone who wouldn't hurt him like he was about to.

Castiel thought back to the conversation he had with Sam. About how it wasn’t okay to remove Alex’s memories. But he felt he did not have any other choice but to do exactly that. He knew Alex had been hurt before. He couldn't bring himself to cause the man even more pain. It just wasn't fair. Alex wasn't the one who made a mistake, there was no way he should have to suffer because Castiel had been selfish.

And stupid.

Castiel sighed and looked up into the sky. Snowflakes started to fall and Castiel decided to lay there a little longer. Long enough to be covered in snow by the time the sun came up.
Chapter End Notes

Also, HOLY CRAP Any's fucking art.
Chapter 25

August 28, 4:15 AM

Dean: Cas where did you go?

Cas: I had to go back to Alex. I have to tell him.

Dean: Tell him what?

Cas: That I made a mistake. I can't believe I did this to him.

Dean: So last night was a mistake?

Cas: I'm in a relationship with someone else. I shouldn't have done that! Alex was so good to me and I repaid his kindness with cheating on him.

Cas: I never wanted to hurt him

When Dean had woken up naked and alone on top of the sheets, he knew instantly Cas had left him. Again. The first thing he did was scramble for his cell in order to text the angel. He had a feeling that what happened last night might have freaked the guy out, but when he crawled into the bed after Dean asked him to stay, he assumed that maybe things were going to be okay between them. Last night had been… well, it had been amazing. The best sex he’d ever had, which was saying something.
Dean had still been angry from the last time they texted. Angry with himself for being a coward and not realizing he was in love with Cas sooner. Angry at Cas for doing what he told him to and choosing Dr. Perfect. Angry that they missed their chance. But more than anything, he was tired. He was tired of being angry, tired of being in pain. Dean finally knew what it meant, everything he was feeling. His sense of loss and sadness when Cas left the first time, the unfounded jealousy he felt any time he thought about Cas with Dr. Perfect, the hope that expanded his chest when Cas texted him yesterday. He was in love with a goddamn angel of the lord, and probably had been for a long time.

And then Cas showed up, in his motel room, and all Dean wanted to do was drown everything out, the feelings, the thoughts. He kissed Cas then, focusing on the desire he felt in that moment. A moment that was everything he could have ever dreamed; a reunion, a reconciliation. Whatever happened, Dean knew they were going to be okay.

And then he saw the word, “mistake” flashing in the gray text bubble. Last night had been a mistake according to Cas. A mistake. It wasn’t going to be okay, nothing was ever going to be okay. Dean stared at the phone, eyes glassy with unshed tears. He bit his lip and forced his eyes to stay open in order to dry out. He wasn’t going to fucking cry. Not over Cas.

When Cas kept texting, how upset he was about hurting Alex, Dean’s sadness quickly morphed into something akin to anger. Fine. If Cas thought it was a mistake, if he really was over Dean and happy with the doctor, then so be it. In that moment as he typed out a response, he knew the best way to hurt Cas back.

**August 28, 4:19 AM**

Dean: You've only been with the guy a couple months and besides if last night was such a mistake, then this'll make you feel better, it was just sex. It didn't mean anything so your conscience is clear

Cas: It didn't mean anything to you?
Cas: Of course it didn't. I'm so stupid.
Cas: It's not like you hadn't told me that before

Dean: Sex is sex cas. And that's all it ever is so run back to dr. Perfect if you want
Dean: Oh wait!
Dean: You already did!

Cas: Would you please tell Sam something from me?

Dean: Why can't you tell him yourself?

Cas: Because I don't want him to talk me out of the things I'm going to do now.

Dean: What the hell are you going to do?

Cas: So would you please give him a message
Dean: Not until you tell me what you plan on doing!

Cas: Tell him that I'm sorry. Please. He was right that I shouldn't do what I'm about to do with Alex, but I won't let him suffer because of my mistake. And when I'm done... you won't hear from me again.

Dean: Why am I not surprised? This is your MO keeping secrets and disappearing. You tell me you love me and because I can't say it back you fuck off. I give as much of myself as I can to you and it's a mistake. You know what? If you can't repress your feelings like a normal person and suck it up to stay with your family and help us gank the bad shit in this world then you're more selfish than I realized

Cas: You don't have to be annoyed by my selfishness any longer, Dean.

Dean: Are you serious right now? Enough with the pity party!
Dean: You think you've got the monopoly on human suffering? You don't
Dean: Bad shit happens and you move on
Dean: It's what you do
Dean: I've forgiven you for so much shit cas
Dean: Can't you suck it up and forgive me
Dean: Just get over it and get over yourself and come home. I'll leave you alone if that's what you want but at the end of the day we need you. Whether you want to hear that or not
Dean: Sam needs you Claire needs you fuck the world needs you and if you'd rather have a pity party for one on some mountain I can't stop you but I'm sick of this emotional bullshit
Dean: So do what you gotta do. Tell dr perfect or don't tell him I don't care but move on and come home

Cas: I know you don't understand this, Dean. I've lost everything. And I had a chance at being happy again and I destroyed it with this mistake, naively hoping that there would be a chance for us. I'm selfish, yes! But so are you! You don't care about me, you just need me as a tool, like everyone else does! Like every other person who used me for their purpose. And I'm done! I'm not coming back to you. You hurt me in every way possible and I'm done letting you pull my strings. Stop lying to yourself and me that you would need me in any other way than as a weapon. Because you obviously don't care about me as family

Dean: Fuck you cas. Don't even try to act like you know what I'm feeling. You don't think I've lost? You don't think I've suffered and hurt? YOU CHOSE TO LEAVE! You just expect me to be okay with that? You want the truth? Here's the truth
Dean: I give a damn about seven things in my life. Just seven. Mom Sammy Bobby charlie Jody Claire and you. And before Bobby charlie and mom came back that list was four. Sammy Jody Claire and you. YOU. So fuck you for thinking I don't care. I'm sorry for ever making you think and feel like I only need you for a weapon cuz that's not true and it never has been. I need you because you make me laugh even at some of the darkest points in my life. I need you because you help me in the kitchen and save my brother from crazy Brits. I need you because when we're alone together it doesn't feel like we have to fill the silence with small talk because I'm comfortable around you. I would give my life for yours and if you can't see that then you're blind

Cas: Then stop hurting me. Don't try to have sex with me. I want more than just sex. If you want me to come back you have to give me space. Don't flirt with me and don't touch me ever again.
Cas: I need clear rules for us to make this work

Dean: Fine. Am I allowed to talk to you at all?

Cas: Depends. If you're going to be an assbutt to me, I'll punch you into a wall
Dean: Fair enough. I'll walk on eggshells. Are there topics I can't discuss?

Cas: Alex
Cas: And last night.

Dean: Right. So no dr perfect and no "mistake" talk. Anything else?

Cas: DEAN! I’m serious.

Dean: Fine. No touching no sarcasm no talking about off limit topics. Anything else?

Cas: Just one last warning. I've told you I'm not very stable at the moment. I know you don't want to hear about it and you think I'm weak for letting my emotions influence me this much. Not everyone can suppress their emotions like you. I don't expect you to understand this. Just... leave me alone when you see I'm sad and don't talk to me. I can't handle another fight between us. Next time I won't come back from it.

Dean didn't want to know what Cas meant by that. His heart clenched as he recalled the quiet confession from his friend a few years ago. He knew Cas wasn’t as alright as he tried to pretend. *Fuck.* He was terrified of the thought that the angel might hurt himself. He couldn’t bring himself to acknowledge the comment, if he did he wasn’t entirely sure he could handle the response.

**August 28, 4:27 AM**

Dean: Got it. Can I ask when you'll come home or is that off limits too?

Castiel: As soon as I'm done with...
Castiel: Shit
Castiel: I don't know

Dean: Got a time frame for "shit"

Castiel: I just don't know how much time I need to...
Castiel: Get over this, what I'm about to do.
Castiel: This hurts so much and I can't even breathe at the moment
Castiel: I'm sorry, I...
Castiel: I don't know Dean can you live with that?

Dean: Cas I just want you to come home.

Castiel: I know... Don't tell Sam what I asked of you earlier. I will do it myself... He may be kicking me out after that anyway.

Dean: Sammy doesn't have a say in this
Dean: I'm older so I'm in charge lol

Castiel: Why would you say that to me??
Castiel: I thought we talked about this!

Dean: Wait cas what? What did I say?

Castiel: You said LOL!!!
Dean: Yeah and?
Dean: Am I not allowed to joke with you?

Castiel: So this is just a joke for you?

Dean: What? I don't understand why you're pissed now
Dean: I was making a joke about the older sibling being in charge
Dean: I don't understand why you're mad

Castiel: If you were just making a joke about Sam, why are you texting "lol" to me?

Dean: Cas what do you think lol means?

Castiel: It means "Lots of Love" Claire taught me all of the abbreviations

Dean: Fucking of course she did. Lol does not mean lots of love. It means laughing out loud

Castiel: o.o

Dean: Hate to break this to you but Claire was messing with you

Castiel: That suddenly makes a lot of sense

Dean: I bet

Castiel: I always wondered why Sam was sending me so much love

Dean: Dude I know you're still mad at me but that's really fucking funny. I know you probably don't want to hear it but thanks for that.

Castiel: For a moment it felt like... how we were.
Castiel: I have to go now Dean.

Dean: Can I tell you that I hope we can go back to the that as time goes by?

Castiel: I want to say I hope so, too. But I have contradicting emotions on that topic.
Castiel: But still this felt nice.
Castiel: It's maybe a start

Dean: I missed this.

Castiel: Me too.

Dean: I'll see you soon?

Castiel: I hope so

Dean: That gives me hope too

Castiel slowly stood up, the snow fell from his clothes and his hair. He cleaned up his appearance to be presentable again, but still needed a few moments to collect himself.

He had never felt such profound pain before and it took all of his strength to spread his wings and
It was early in the morning, two hours before Alex had to go to work. The birds in the garden already started singing their songs, too cheerful for Castiel to bear at that moment. He started to feel his grace pulsing inside of him, already trying to fix what was wrong with him. But it was no physical wound, it was just his heart breaking. Nothing his grace could fix.

Angels aren’t supposed to feel. They are supposed to function. Perfect soldiers, no emotions, no regret, no heart, no fear. He understood why now.

It was explained to all of them, with every time an angel had felt doubt or fear. They were told that questioning the order resulted in chaos. But they never explained that emotions could feel like dying, could cause you to give up.

It was no use. He knew he was delaying the inevitable. Castiel tried to remind himself what it felt like to not feel. It didn’t work. He was long passed the security of being a common angel. Too much had happened and when he changed, he didn’t fight it. He had welcomed the feelings.

Another thing on his long list of regrets.

He was quiet when he entered the house, walking straight into Alex’s bedroom. The doctor was still asleep, lying there peacefully with a smile on his face. Probably dreaming of something nice.

Castiel sat down on the bed next him, stroking over his Alex’s cheek to wake him up gently.

The doctor stirred, his smile widening when he laid his eyes on Castiel, “Hey, baby.” He looked around, “What time is it?”

“Five am. I’m sorry for waking you up.”

“I can't think of a better sight to wake up to.” He sat up and tried to press a kiss to Castiel’s cheek, but was held back. He could see the confusion in Alex’s eyes for a moment before it turned into worry.
“Are you alright?”

Castiel shook his head slowly, “No, I’m not. I have to talk to you.”

Alex rubbed the last traces of sleep out of his eyes. Castiel waited until the doctor looked at him again, an expectant and concerned gaze.

“I can’t be with you,” Castiel stated quietly.

Alex shook his head in apparent confusion, “I… I don’t understand.” He moved to grasp Castiel’s hand and when the angel pulled away again, he let out a sigh. “What happened with Dean?”

“It’s not about him. It’s because of me. I… You asked me once if I would want to be with him if he wanted me. And I thought that wasn’t an option because Dean would never want me. But Dean’s and my relationship is… complicated.” Castiel scoffed, “That’s putting it mildly, and I understand now that I can’t get over my feelings for him. Despite him not wanting me, I can’t stop wanting him. I… I have no words for how sorry I am for doing this to you. You make me happy…” Castiel felt tears forming, but he bit them back, “And he hurts me. But still…”

Alex nodded, his face solemn and serious and departed of the happiness from when he first woke up. He took a deep breath, clearly contemplating his next words. Finally he said, “Castiel, baby, I get it. It’s hard to get over someone, especially if that someone is your first love, but I want you to know, I’m okay with it. I’m okay with working with you on this. I can be damn patient when I need to be and I’m telling you, you’re worth the wait. We don’t have to end things, we can work through this together, because I love you and I don’t intend on giving you up without a fight.”

Castiel shook his head, “I don’t deserve this. I don’t want to hurt you, but I already have and I would do it again. I don’t want to do that. I just can’t say no to him.”

Alex moved to sit on his knees, he grasped Castiel’s hands and held onto them, refusing to let the angel push him away this time, “You could never hurt me, I love you and I’m telling you, I understand. I do. You deserve to be happy, you deserve everything you could ever hope for. You’re an amazing, wonderful, handsome…”

“Stop!” Castiel cried out. He took a deep breath and shied away from the doctor’s pleading stare, “Please stop. You don’t understand… Dean…. Dean and I had sex last night.”
Alex dropped Castiel’s hands, he sat back against his heels, searching Castiel’s face. His brow furrowed, confusion and an unfathomable sadness glimmering in his eyes, “You… You cheated?”

“Yes.”

“I…” He paused as a tear fell down his cheek. He wiped it away, taking a calming breath before he continued, “I don’t care.” Alex grasped Castiel’s right hand and pulled it to his lips, pressing a kiss to his knuckles, then his palm, his fingers, “We can get passed this. We can…”

Castiel felt the tears, he had tried desperately to hold back, start to fall. He would never stop hurting Alex. They would never get passed this. Alex couldn’t see it, but he deserved someone who loved him with all of his heart. And Castiel knew that, no matter how much time would pass, he would never be that person. “I can’t do this to you. Hurting you.. it’s killing me.”

“Baby, please. Please, can’t we at least try? Don’t we owe it to ourselves to take the chance? I love you, Castiel.”

Those three words hurt more than if the doctor had gotten angry and started screaming at him, calling him every insult he could think of. Alex still loved him, Alex wanted to give him a second chance. And it was oh, so tempting. Castiel wanted nothing more than to fall back into Alex’s arms, he wanted to believe his words, that they could make it through this. But he knew it was a lie. He was lying to himself and more importantly, he would be lying to Alex.

Although Sam had told him not to do it, he didn’t see any other way. Alex would never understand, would never give up on them. It was his fault that the doctor was feeling this way. It was his fault for hurting him. Castiel knew a way to make it better, to give Alex a chance for the life he deserved. Without pain. He would be open to finding someone new without being burdened by the pain and the hurt Castiel had caused him.

“You are a wonderful human being, Alex. You made me happy and I love you for that. I never wanted to hurt you. I hope you can forgive me for this.”

“Then don’t, you don’t have to hurt me, Castiel. Kiss me. Kiss me and tell me that this, what we have, that it’s not worth it. That we aren’t worth a shot.”

This was his goodbye. He gave Alex a sad smile as he reached out for his cheek, holding him tenderly before he leaned down to kiss him softly. Alex grabbed his shirt, trying to hold on, probably
knowing deep down, that this was goodbye.

“I’m sorry,” Cas mumbled against his lips before he let his grace flow through his hand to wipe Alex’s memory completely of his existence. He wouldn’t remember having met him, he wouldn’t remember that he had loved him. For a bitter moment, Castiel wished he could do it to himself.

The doctor fell unconscious in his arms. Castiel lowered Alex’s head back down onto the silk pillow, before gently pulling the covers over him. His gaze lingered on the man for one last moment before he spread his wings to fly, no specific destination in mind.

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The next morning Castiel visited the hospital again. Not only to say goodbye to the children he had grown to love, but also because he had a plan.

He loved Alex. Not like he loved Dean, but still… He wanted to make Alex happy. Castiel knew that he would never be able to make the doctor happy and that was when an idea came to him.

It wasn’t easy. When he had finally found the specific angel he was looking for, Ophaniel, an angel in charge of the Cherubim faction of the lower order of angels; he was not very willing to help Castiel after everything that had happened. After a few well placed threats with his angel blade, he finally procured the location of a specific cupid. A cupid he had helped once and from whom he hoped he could ask a favor.

He tethered the cupid to a remote village in the alps after he had finished a job, ensuring the angel could not flee while he implored his aid. The cupid hadn’t changed much, he was still all smiley and positive, coming in for a hug, but Castiel had stopped him with a low, threatening growl.

Castiel was pleasantly surprised that the angel was moved by his story and, although it went against regulations, he was willing to help Castiel.

While Castiel was saying his goodbye to the kids, the cupid was looking for an acceptable and available partner for Alex. Not everyone was destined to find love and Castiel had learned from the Cupid that this had been the case for Alex. Well, not anymore.

When Castiel walked through the halls of the hospital, the cupid caught up with him, invisible to
everyone but Castiel. “I found someone,” he explained cheerfully. “A nurse, he just started working here and he has no soulmate. If you wait exactly here you will see it happen.”

Castiel nodded, he sat down in one of the chairs of the waiting room that faced the nurse’s station and anxiously stared down in the direction of Alex’s office. The doctor appeared from his office with a smile on his lips. Castiel would be lying to himself if he said it didn’t feel like a stab in his heart.

But he was doing the right thing here. He knew it.

Alex stopped walking when he made eye contact with Castiel. He smiled at the angel, “Can I help you?” There was no recognition in his eyes.

“I was just saying goodbye to the children I read books to.”

Something akin to confusion flitted over Alex face, “Oh, you must be Castiel? One of my nurses asked me about you, but I didn’t know who you were. Have we met?”

“We may have passed each other on the floor. This is my last day here, I’m leaving today, but it was… nice to meet you. I’ve heard you are a wonderful physician.”

“Thank you. I’ve heard you helped the kids here a lot, too. It’s a shame we didn’t meet earlier.”

Castiel nodded and Alex gave him one last smile before he turned around and, literally, ran into a nurse. The nurse, a good looking young man with a kind soul, apologized nervously as he picked up the charts he had been holding from the floor. He stammered something about it being his first day and already making a terrible impression.

Alex smiled at the nurse as he bent down and helped him pick up the charts, trying to reassure the younger man that everything was okay.

Castiel could see the moment Cupid’s arrow hit them, how they both looked at each other for the first time, pausing their conversation to take each other in. Alex handed the nurse one of the charts, “How about we go and have a coffee together? Maybe that would be a better introduction.” He grinned at the nurse, who returned the smile shyly.
They walked down the hall together as they continued their conversation, Alex never once looked back at Castiel.

“Are you happy now, Castiel?” The cupid asked carefully as he sat down next to him.

Castiel didn’t answer.
September 17, 2:37 PM

Claire: Dean said u were coming home eventually is that true?

Castiel: Is my plan for the future some time

Claire: U sound weird, ru ok?

Castiel: No im tryin tp get inhebri ina. drunk

Claire: Ur drunk??

Castiel: Didn’t ijust say that?

Claire: I have no idea what u said at all. Y ru drunk?

Castiel: Your sentences loook funnu

Claire: Look idk what’s going on w/u but I’m worried. I know u aren’t ok but u have family here. We miss u.

Castiel: I miss you too claire I never told you but I wish you were ym daughter I love you very much
Castiel stared at his phone in confusion when it started to ring, Claire’s image popped up on the screen. It took him far too long to recall how to answer a phone call. When he finally did the first thing he heard was,

“I love you, too, you fucking asshole! Get your ass back home!”

“Hello, Claire.” Why was it so difficult to speak? His tongue felt heavy as he tried to collect his thoughts, “I probably shouldn’t fly right now…”

“Where are you? I’ll steal Baby and pick you up.”

“Australia… I don’t believe you can drive here.”

“No, I can’t drive to Australia. How damn drunk are you?”

“Very… I’m just gonna… sit down for a while.”

“That’s probably a good idea. Cas?”

“Yes, Claire?”

“Why are you drunk? Is it cuz you’re in love with Hasselhoff?”

Castiel let out a deep sigh, too tired to even attempt to deny the assumption, or even question how she possibly knew. “Yes. And I broke up with Alex a few weeks ago. I wiped his memory and found him someone new.”

“Shit. That’s… That sucks.”

“Understatement.”
“For what it’s worth, I’m sorry. Do you want me to punch Dean? I’ll do it.”

“I appresh... Thank you, but it’s not Dean’s fault. He didn’t force me to break up with Alex.”

“No, but he hurt you and that deserves at least one good punch.”

“Claire... I can’t say he didn’t but... I can’t force him to love me. It’s not his fault.”

“You really are in love with him, aren’t you?”

“Deeply.” Castiel knew that his voice sounded way too sad. He didn’t want to worry Claire more than he probably already did.

“Cas?”

“Yes?”

“I love you, Dad. Please come home safe.”

For a moment, Castiel couldn’t say anything. There was so much he had lost in the past few weeks that Claire’s word took him by surprise. Suddenly there was something back in his life, that filled his heart with an unexpected force of hope and love.

“Claire... thank you. I will.”

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Dean was sitting in the library, looking up any cases nearby on Sam’s laptop. After his night with Cas all of those weeks ago, Dean sobered up; literally and figuratively. He was still hurt, he was still upset that Cas thought it was a mistake, but he had hope again. Hope that maybe things could go back to the way they were before - well, before everything.
That morning, after he had his text fight with Cas, he came home and did something pretty out of character; he apologized to his family for his bullshit and actually meant it. Dean couldn’t let a little thing like the fact that he was in love with his best friend, who happened to be an angel of the lord, completely obliterate him. John was a dick and Dean wasn’t going to let a dead man’s words haunt him for the rest of his life.

Dean knew he blew his chance with Cas, but he was going to do everything he could to make it up to the angel. He wanted, he needed his best friend back. And when Cas felt ready to come home, he was going to do everything in his power to get his best friend back.

He took a sip of his coffee and sighed at the laptop. Another false start. There was a weird lack of supernatural shit going on, which usually wasn’t a good thing. The calm before the storm. Shit was probably going to go down and soon.

“What?”

Dean looked up and smiled at Claire, although his smile disappeared when he saw the angry look on her face, “Claire, is everythi-” His sentence was interrupted by her hand slapping him hard across the face. He was too shocked to say anything.

“How the hell could you do this to him? Did you know he is drunk off his ass in stupid Australia! All because of you!”

Dean shook his head in confusion, “What?”

“I just spoke to him. I’ve never seen him so devastated before. I didn’t even know he could get drunk. He said he can’t even fly anymore. How is he supposed to come home now?”

“Claire, I…”

“What? What could you possibly have to say for yourself? You inconsiderate asshole!” She kicked Dean’s chair to emphasize her point.

Dean sighed, “Look, I can explain…”
“You better! I want him to come back!”

“You think I don’t?” His tone was more sad than accusatory or defensive.

“I don’t know! Did you know that da… Cas even left this doctor guy? What the hell happened?”

Dean honed in on that last statement, he knew he should be concerned with the currently irate teen screaming at him, but he couldn’t help the small smile that overtook his lips, “He did?”

It earned him another slap across the face. Claire glared at him, “Are you fucking serious?”

“Look, Claire…”

“Don’t ‘Claire’ me! What the hell is wrong with you? I thought you liked him? How can you smile when he is so devastated? It’s all your fault! He loves you and you couldn’t give a fuck about him, could you? And I thought you and him… I thought… Fuck you, Dean!”

“Hey!” Dean’s voice boomed, it was the first time he had ever, truly gotten angry with the teen, and she visibly flinched. He took a deep breath to calm down, “Don’t you dare attempt to assume you know, even a little bit, how I feel! What I feel, you don’t know dick, little girl!”

A defiant look was back on her face when he called her ‘little girl’. “Then tell me.”

“I’m not telling you shit.”

“Why. Because you’re scared? Of what, Dean? It’s not like you can make it any worse. What is your endgame here? Running scared, hurting people, until you lose everyone?”

Dean could feel his anger start to overwhelm him as he stared steadfastly into stormy blue eyes, eyes just like Cas’s. “Don’t you get it? Don’t you fucking get it? I know I fucked up, alright? I’ve fucked up beyond repair and I have to live with myself for the rest of my pathetic, godforsaken life knowing that the only person who loved me for me, who loved me despite all of the horrible shit I have done in my life, is… The only person who truly fucking loved me now hates me because I am a fucking coward. I can’t escape it. I will go to my grave regretting this moment of my life above all of them!”
He turned his back to her then, biting his lip in a vain attempt to stop the tears that were threatening to drown him in his sorrow.

Claire dramatically threw her hands in the air, “I can’t believe this! It’s like living in an episode of, ‘Days Of Our Lives’ or something! Dean, I just talked to him! He still loves you! Whatever happened between you, he loves you. Are you really saying that he’s drowning himself in alcohol because you never told him? He thinks you don’t love him back. But… you do… don’t you?” Her anger wavered as she asked that question, all traces of it gone, only breathless surprise as she realized what she was saying was true.

“It doesn’t matter anymore, Claire. I fucked up, it doesn’t matter if I do, I hurt him too much and one of the stipulations of Cas moving back home is that I cannot ever touch him or be physically close to him again.” Dean shook his head and turned to face her, his eyes red-rimmed, the tracks of his tears a stark contrast against his freckled skin.

Claire squinted her eyes and it reminded him so much of Cas in that moment, the significance of just how much he lost weighed heavily on his heart that it physically hurt. She folded her arms across her chest, “You are aware that he probably said that because he wants to protect himself, right? He doesn’t know you feel the same. He probably thinks you’re just toying with him.”

“He knows, Claire. He knows.” Dean sighed, he may not have said the words outright, but he’d hinted pretty hard.

“Well, newsflash, Hasselhoff. He doesn’t. I talked to him and he clearly said that you didn’t love him back.”

Dean was taken aback. After everything, how could Cas think he didn’t feel the same way? He knew he gave mixed signals, but he thought, at the very least, after their last encounter Cas had to have known. Had to have felt the love there. “I… I am an inconsiderate asshole, aren’t I?”

Claire raised an eyebrow, “Um, duh! How about you call him? And maybe you can talk, you know, like grown ups?”

Dean nodded and approached her, she eyed him warily and squeaked when he pulled her into a hug, “Thanks for slapping some sense into me, kiddo.”
Dean decided he should probably have privacy for the phone call, just in case it didn't end well. He sat on his bed and stared at Cas’s name in his contacts list for a solid three minutes before he tapped on the ‘call’ option. He swore he could hear his heart pounding as it rang once, twice, three times, and finally he heard Cas’s deep gravelly voice,

“Hello, Dean.”

Cas slurred the word, ‘hello.’ Claire wasn't kidding, he was drunk. “Hey, Cas.” He was at a loss for what to say. Finally, Dean decided to go with something generic, “Uh, how's it goin’?”

“Did you know that forty-two is the degree of angle needed to make a rainbow appear?”

Dean couldn’t help but laugh, he shook his head in disbelief. Damn. He really did love the guy. “Uh, okay? That's… Cool, I guess. But I meant how are you?”

“I'm okay.”

He didn’t sound okay. “Claire said you can’t fly?”

“I can fly, I just shouldn’t. I’m inebr... ine… why is this word always eluding me? I’m drunk.”

Dean dreaded asking the next question, but he was also insatiably curious, “Why are you drunk?”

“I’ve contemplated that question since I arrived to this beach. I thought about my life, the universe, and everything... but it turns out the answer to that isn't forty-two. Do you know what it is? Don't answer that. It's a rhetorical question... The simple answer is that my life, the universe, and everything... sucks.”

Dean didn’t know what to say. If everything Claire told him was true, no wonder the angel felt like that. A sort of hopelessness that overwhelms you, he sure as hell knew what that felt like. Dean sighed, “For what it’s worth, I’m sorry… For everything.”
For a while Cas didn’t say anything. Dean heard him breathing, so he knew he was still on the line, “Thank you, Dean.” His voice was quiet when he continued, “Sam told me not to do it… and I understand why… but I just couldn’t leave him like that… I wiped Alex’s memory. He doesn’t remember me anymore. You know like you had me do for you and Lisa. I… I even found him someone new. Someone he could be happy with. But I still feel… Why do I still feel so…”

“Shitty?”

“Yes, that’s an accurate description.”

“You really loved the guy, didn’t you?” Dean instantly regretted asking that question. He didn’t want to know the answer.

“He’s a good man and he deserved better than me. Someone who was capable of loving him with all that they have, someone whose love would be enough.”

“Cas, there’s no one better than you.” Dean’s voice was soft, yet firm. He had never been more honest than in that moment.

“I cheated on him, and I hurt him. And I would have done it again and again. How does that make me a good person? And he didn’t understand. He wanted to work through it, he forgave me. Can you believe that? How could he forgive me when I can’t? It was all my fault. I shouldn’t have been with him as long as my heart wasn’t free. But I won’t make that mistake again. I’m better off alone.”

“You made a mistake. Hell, we all make mistakes, that doesn’t make you a bad person.” He sighed. Cas was pretty broken and now, after everything Dean had put him through, he was also gun shy. Dean couldn’t tell him. It wouldn’t be fair. They had missed their chance because he was a fucking idiot and he just needed to accept that. But that didn’t mean they couldn’t be friends again. “When do you think you’ll come back? Everyone misses you.”

“I’ll come back… I think… I mean, s’not like the sand around me is giving good answers… Um, Dean?”

“Yeah?”

“Don’t move…” Cas’s next words were slurred and mumbled, “Need a fixed point in space and time
“Cas, what?” Dean called out, he couldn’t hear anything and he looked down at his phone. The call had been disconnected. Suddenly he heard the familiar sound of wings fluttering and felt the wind of Cas’s arrival. Dean fell back against his bed as Cas, literally, crashed into him, landing unceremoniously on top of him.

The angel was quite clearly inebriated, because he started to laugh. It was loud and one of the best sounds Dean had ever heard. Cas’s amusement was contagious, so much so that Dean started to laugh, too. What a ridiculous scene, the fact that he literally had a slapstick moment straight out of ‘The Three Stooges’. Damn. It felt good to laugh again. As their laughing finally began to subside, Dean looked up and locked eyes with the angel. He had to refrain from lifting his hand to Cas’s face. All he wanted in that moment was to lean up and kiss him, but he couldn’t. Instead, he smiled fondly, “Welcome home.”

“I don’t believe that is a good thing, Dean. On the other hand…” Cas tilted his head, “It could have been worse… I brushed a forest on my way. Your room could be full of squirrels and shrubbery now. I really shouldn’t drink and fly.” Cas sighed deeply and dropped his face onto Dean’s shoulder. He mumbled something almost inaudible that sounded suspiciously like, “I could sleep for a week.”

Dean was fucking thrilled, his heart hammering against his chest at Cas basically cuddling into him. He was terrified to even breathe, just in case the magic of that moment was broken. But he had to breathe, he also had to slide his arm around the angel’s frame, gently holding him in place while he rubbed Cas’s lower back. “I bet,” he breathed out, unable to mask his smile.

Cas made a humming noise, it sounded like he was purring and agreeing to Dean at the same time, “You’re comfortable.”

Dean chuckled, feeling a streak of bravery he snaked his other hand into Cas’s hair, tenderly caressing his head, “Of all the things I’ve been called, that’s a new one…”
Cas inhaled deeply against Dean’s throat, his nose and stubble brushing over Dean’s skin as he nuzzled his face closer against him, “S’true.”

Clearly, Dean had died when Cas crashed into him and he was in heaven. That was the only explanation for why they were cuddling on his bed after everything they had been through. Not one to look a gift horse in the mouth, Dean embraced the opportunity and moved his hand to Cas’s face, continuing his tender caress on the angel’s cheek. When Cas lifted his head to look at Dean, he gave the angel a shy smile. He couldn’t help but feel amazement, looking into those beautiful blue eyes again. Dean was in awe of everything in that moment. “I missed you.”

For a moment Cas smiled back, his eyes slightly unfocused, before Dean felt the angel completely tense up. Cas’s smile dropped and he stared at Dean in shock as realization struck. Cas pushed himself up and scooted away from Dean before getting up from the bed to walk to the door of Dean’s room. He grasped the doorknob and slowly shook his head, “I’m sorry… I should go and greet the others....”

“Cas, wait…” But Dean was too late, the angel had already left. He sat on his bed, staring kind of dumbly at the door.

*When would he stop fucking up?*

.... :::: :::: ....

Castiel tried to clean the alcohol from his body again, but he didn’t have enough power to do so.

He was angry, which led to him punching the wall in the hall and leaving a satisfying dent in it. How could he be so stupid? He had to stay away from Dean if him coming back to live in the bunker should work. He obviously couldn’t trust Dean to keep his fingers to himself, so it was up to Castiel to keep the distance between them.

The problem was, he couldn’t trust himself around the hunter either. It was like before he had left. Dean still had this irresistible, magnetic pull on him and a huge part of him just wanted to give in. He knew he would only hurt himself in the process and maybe the next time… He would lose everyone else, too. His whole family. He had to be careful.

“Cas?!”
Castiel turned around, surprised by the girly shriek from behind him. He was even more surprised when he was enveloped in a fierce hug.

“Hello, Claire. I made it back.”

She punched his shoulder, “Obviously and about time! I hope you never leave me alone again with these douche nozzles.”

“It couldn’t have been that bad. Mary and Charlie are still here, right?” He asked, concerned.

“Yes, but still. Dean was horrible to be around.”

“He can be a handful,” Castiel nodded and Claire snorted at that comment.

“The others are in the library. They’ll all be happy to have you back.”

Claire dragged Castiel behind her by his sleeve and he couldn’t stop the smile forming on his lips. It was nice to be back. To see his friends again. And Claire, who had grown to be much more to him than just his vessel’s daughter. He couldn’t be more happy that she felt the same way, accepting him as a father that she obviously needed and missed.

Charlie hugged Castiel with the same enthusiasm Claire had shown him, whereas Mary was more gentle, even stroking over his cheek, smiling at him as she welcomed him back. Sam opted for a quick one armed hug, patting his shoulder. “Damn good to have you back, Cas!”

“Thank you,” Castiel smiled. It warmed his heart to be welcomed like that. For a moment, he even forgot about his unfortunate landing.

…. :::: :::: ….

It had been a couple of hours since Castiel had returned, and Mary could already see a profound difference in her oldest son’s behavior. He seemed a lot less angry, a lot less on edge. There was still
tension there, it was clear that the elephant in the room between Dean and Castiel had not been addressed and likely wouldn’t in the near future. She just wanted her boys happy, so she was already more than grateful for the angel’s return.

Mary was in the kitchen, preparing sandwiches for everyone. Her family. Her family. All of whom were currently in the library enjoying each other’s company. She knew that everything was going to be okay.

She looked up when she heard the kitchen door open, seeing Castiel poke his head through the entryway. Mary waved for him to come in, “Hello, Castiel.” She gave him a warm smile.

“Hello, Mary. I just wanted to see if you needed help.”

“I don’t need help, but I wouldn’t mind your company…” She offered. It had been far too long since she had gotten to have one of her conversations with the angel. Mary had really missed all of the lessons in domesticity that Castiel had requested of her. Neither Sam nor Dean had been particularly familiar with things like baking pies, sewing, and proper gardening. Castiel had been incredibly curious and she was more than happy to oblige. It had been nice, in between hunts, to feel like a mother again.

Castiel returned her smile and sidled up next to her at the counter, “Did you find the time to get used to life here on earth? I can imagine the transition from all your time in Heaven to here must have been strange for you.”

She chuckled, “You’re always frank, aren’t you, Castiel?” Her smile was genuine, she was really quite fond of the angel.

He tilted his head, “I apologize. I didn’t realize my question was frank. I’m just concerned about your well-being.”

Mary waved him off, “There is no need to apologize. I appreciate your concern. And I’m doing much better now that all of my family is back home.”

“Dean has been back home for several weeks now, correct?” Castiel asked, sounding unsure.

She turned to him and held her hand on her hip, clicking her tongue in disappointment, “You
understand I was talking about you coming home, don’t you?”

The surprise on Castiel’s face was answer enough. It was remarkable to see how the surprise turned into a shy and thankful smile. The angel looked down at his feet, “I… Thank you, Mary…”

She chuckled and bumped her hip into him in a playful manner as she returned her attention back to the sandwiches. “How are you coping with everything?”

She heard him take in a deep breath, “Not well…”

Mary paused, her hand holding the butter knife over the jar of mayonnaise. She turned to look at Castiel, who’s head was still steadfastly downward, “Is it my son?”

He looked up in surprise, “What did he tell you?”

“He didn’t tell me anything, I see the way you look at him. I looked at John the same way.” She gave him a soft smile.

“Oh…” His expression turned incredibly sad, “Well, nothing will come of it. It doesn’t matter. Dean and I are just friends.”

Mary shook her head, “Honey, if there’s one thing I know, it’s that whatever you two are to each other, it is so much more than ‘just friends’.”

Cas gave her an unreadable expression, “It’s… it’s complicated.”

“And you’ll work it out, don’t you worry.” Mary started plating up the sandwiches and handed Castiel two plates while she grabbed one. “Let’s go feed them and you and I will come back here and talk some more, okay?”

Castiel nodded and they made their way out of the kitchen towards the library. As they reached the entryway, there was a booming knock at the door. Mary placed her plate on one of Cas’s, “I’ll grab the door.”
Mary ascended the staircase and opened the door to reveal a slim blonde woman, about her height, dressed in a very fancy power suit, sunglasses obscuring her eyes. “Can I help you?” she asked, able to keep the suspicion from her voice thanks to being raised as a hunter.

For a moment the woman seemed stunned at seeing her, “Mary Winchester?” Curious. A British accent. You didn’t come across that in Kansas very often.

Mary narrowed her eyes at the woman, “Who are you?” Her tone wasn’t curious, it was demanding. Mary knew that whoever this woman was, she was not to be trusted. Before the woman could respond, they were interrupted by Castiel,

“Is everything okay, Ma…” Castiel eyed the woman and when Mary saw the look of recognition, her theory became law. This was the woman responsible for the capture of her son and the imprisonment of both of her children. Castiel reached out in a protective stance in front of Mary, but she ducked his arm.

Mary yanked the woman by the delicate scarf tied around her neck and slammed her up against the door. She used her free hand to pull a six inch blade from her boot then held it at the woman’s neck, “Give me one reason I shouldn’t let you bleed all over my welcome mat right now.” Mary tightened her grip around the scarf and yanked the woman forward before slamming her head against the door again with a little more force.

“The earth is at utmost danger and millions of people will die if you don’t let me speak with Sam and Dean Winchester.”

“You don’t have much to bargain with, so don’t make demands with me, dear. I’m sure my friend here could steal your memories and I could slit your throat, without ever regretting a moment of it, so why don’t you try to be nice?”

“Of course you could do all that. I’m alone and unarmed. But the fate of the world would be on your conscience. So go ahead,” The British woman replied coldly.

Mary tsk’d at her, shaking her head. “You don’t need to be alive for us to learn what you know, so please, continue being a bitch. See how far that will get you.” She pressed the blade into the woman’s neck, hard enough to puncture the skin, but not deep enough to cause any damage… yet.
“You will be too late by then. It has already started. Let me speak with them. You may not believe me and it doesn’t matter, but I am not the enemy here. Do you think your sons could have escaped our cell if I hadn’t let them go? We have a lot resources and powers, things you couldn’t even dream of. I let them go so they could prevent what is coming.”

Mary loosened her grip on the scarf before yanking her hand away in disgust from the woman, slowly lowering her blade while still keeping it at the ready. “You have five minutes.” Mary nodded to the woman to step inside, “And it wouldn’t have killed you to say ‘please.’”

“Please,” the blonde woman said in a civil tone, holding her hands up to show Mary that she wasn’t a threat.

“There, now was that so hard?”

.... **** ....

Dean was cleaning off his silver blade of the British woman’s blood. When Cas and his mom practically dragged her into the library, Dean and Sam had whipped out their guns and approached them. Mary had implored her sons to put their guns away to let the woman explain herself, but the two brothers refused to listen to a damn thing until she had gone through the usual series of tests; holy water, salt, silver.

Dean had pressed the knife into the woman’s arm with a little more force than was necessary, the sound of her hissing in pain was music to his ears. She better have a good story if she wanted to leave the bunker alive, although he secretly hoped she didn’t. Dean wanted nothing more than to slice the throat of the bitch who kidnapped his brother.

He rejoined Sammy, Cas, and Mary in the war room and barked, “So? Start talkin’.”

“There are those who came from great suffering and they have purified their garments and whitened them in the blood of The Lamb. It’s the start of a prophecy. I had the order to kidnap Sam Winchester for a blood ritual. Our order needs him for a worldwide cataclysmal event to cleanse the world from all sinners and maleficent forces. And we are almost done. We collected enough energy to start the chain and nothing will stop it, if you won’t help me.”

“And we should just believe you because...” Dean asked, his tone sardonic.
“Look, I came alone. I’m telling you everything. Do you really think you could have escaped our bunker if I hadn’t let you escape?” She sounded desperate, something that made her British accent stand out even more.

“You were clearly on their team, you have to understand it’s a little suspicious that you’ve come to us to help stop them,” Sam argued.

“It’s true. We’re preceptors, beholders, chroniclers of all that man does not understand. For years I thought I was doing the right thing. Keeping evil at bay. I believed the spell was only going to destroy monsters but... It will also kill millions of innocent human beings. Children… ‘Those who are of sin’. It’s an old testament definition of sins that includes: unbaptized children, the divorced, homosexuals, adulterers, unwed parents, and even people who did some petty shoplifting once. You do the math, what do you think the world will look after they’re done?”

Cas narrowed his eyes at the woman, “What is this blood ritual?”

“When you rescued Sam Winchester there was a binding spell on him. You must have broken the connection, otherwise he would be dead by now. Our order collected the energy from his soul, Lucifer’s vessel, to start a chain reaction. They only need to sacrifice a Fenrir to finish the incantation...”

“You said ‘Incantation’. Incantation of what?” Cas interrupted her, obviously getting impatient with her avoision of answering his question.

For a moment the British woman paused, she looked down to the floor, “Jörmungandr.”

At Cas’s gasp, Dean beared down on the woman, “What the hell is that?”

“It’s the Midgard Serpent. The bringer of Ragnarök, the end of the world,” Sam explained.

“Is it an actual serpent? Like, are these nutjobs attempting to pull a ‘Chamber of Secrets’ on the world?” Charlie asked.

At Dean’s confused expression, Sam shrugged, “I only know what I’ve read about it in Norse mythology. We know a few things that are true. We met a few of the old gods that got killed by Lucifer... We also know that Gabriel lived a huge part of his life as Loki. But I don’t know how
many stories about the Midgard Serpent are true. I don’t believe it’s a huge snake that is as big as the world. Cas?”

Sam gave Cas a questioning look, clearly hoping the angel would confirm his assessment. Cas didn’t look very hopeful, “In its true form it’s very likely a huge snake. From what I’ve heard it’s sealed away on another plane of existence.”

Dean shook his head, “What does that have to do with a chamber?”

Cas looked at him with an incredulous expression, “Seriously, Dean? Even I understood that was a Harry Potter reference.”

Dean sighed in aggravation, ignored the angel as well as the amused smirk from Charlie, and turned his attention back to the British woman, “Are you guys trying to summon a giant snake from another plane to cleanse the world? Am I understanding you correctly?”

The woman shook her head, “Not trying. They are doing it as we speak. The incantation will be finished on the seventh witch sabbat, which is in a few days. If we don’t stop them, they will succeed.”

“Where will the ritual be held?” Mary asked.

“Pocatello, Idaho. The one place on earth that will survive the predicted flood. 531 miles from the nearest coast. 4,448 feet above sea level. A seismic oasis.”

Sam grabbed a map from one of the shelves, “It’s about 900 miles from here, which is about a fourteen hour drive.”

Dean nodded, “Alright, lady. What are we up against? We lookin’ at a few bookworms or a fleet of psychopaths wanting to reign in another apocalypse?”

She appeared contemplative for a moment before she answered his question, “You’re looking at a total of four opponents. Two fenrir handlers and the two scholars who will be activating the incantation. Five, technically, if you count the wolf.”
“That seems… Reckless. Why wouldn’t they want more people, if only for protection?” Mary eyed the woman suspiciously, clearly disbelieving her number.

“You are presuming that hunters and others are aware of our plans. Until I arrived today to tell you what was going on, did any of you have even the slightest clue that a, supposedly long dead, branch of the Men of Letters had the means of enacting an old Norse curse that would essentially end the world? If several of us came to your country to open the doorway to that plane, that would have been much more suspicious than a handful of us. If you don’t believe me, if our plans were known, don’t you think the angels would have heard something?” She turned to look pointedly at Cas.

He looked up at Dean and merely shook his head, indicating that he hadn’t heard anything. That was good enough for Dean, “Okay, Mom, you and Charlie get as much information from her as you can about what we’re getting ourselves into.” He turned to Sam and Cas, “You two, come with me.”

Dean, Sam, and Cas were in the storage room grabbing enough weapons to take out a couple of wolves and a few idiotic humans. He grabbed a salt rifle, deciding he wasn’t going to take a risk like they did when they rescued Sam.

Sam was filling up a flask with holy water when he asked, “Do you think we should believe her?”

Dean shrugged, “Not even a little bit, that’s why we’re taking her with us, for leverage if shit goes down.” He looked at Cas, who was busy lining up a series of blades across a horizontal sheath strapped to his chest, “Cas, how’s your mojo?”

“Low,” he murmured, not looking up from his task.

“Okay,” Dean walked up to him, “Let’s use our bond to give you a boost.” He ignored the questioning look from his brother as he reached out for Cas’s hand. The angel flinched away from the hunter as though he were about to be burned.

“It’s okay. I can still fly. We don’t need to–”

Dean reached for Cas’s hand again, “Dude, don’t be…” When the angel stepped away and narrowed his eyes at him in annoyance, Dean sighed, “What’s your deal? Talk to me.”
Cas turned to Sam with a pleading look, causing Dean to turn around to his brother, “Could give us a minute, Sammy?”

Sam looked like he wanted to argue, but clearly thought better of it as he nodded and quietly stepped outside of the room.

“You understand how dangerous this could be if you’re not at one hundred percent, right?” Dean’s tone was firm, yet laced with concern.

“You don’t have special powers, but you throw yourself into danger all the time. I’m still faster and stronger than a normal human being.”

“But you aren’t a human being, that’s the point. In theory, I could go into situations unarmed cuz I know how to fight, don’t make it a good idea. I take everything I can with me to protect myself, so why wouldn’t you? Cuz trust me, if I could strap on some wings for this fight, I sure as hell would…”

“I…” Cas bit his lower lip and looked down at the floor, “I don’t want to use the bond with you.”

Dean sighed. Now he understood. The touching thing. He didn’t want to make Cas uncomfortable, but at the same time, he didn’t want to see Cas possibly get hurt… Or worse. “Cas, please. Just this once, ignore everything that’s happened for a few minutes and use the bond. If you don’t want to use it for your own protection, use it for ours? We need you.” Dean knew it was a low blow, but they didn’t have time for messing around.

He could see the effect those words had on his friend, the hurt and the anger. “Fine,” he spat out after a few moments.

Cas grabbed Dean’s hand, rather roughly, and pulled him forward. Dean unbuttoned his flannel shirt with his other hand and tried to ignore the fact that he was basically stripping in front of the angel. He pulled open the shirt and revealed his shoulder. Cas still looked pissed as he pressed his forehead to Dean’s and didn’t even ask if he was ready before gripping his shoulder, harder than he ever had before.

Instantly Dean was surrounded by the swirling colors and dizziness. The colors weren’t dancing this time; they were storming, floods of red and blue overwhelming his surroundings. As an image of
himself fluttered around Dean’s face, it seized backwards and was struck by a red lightning bolt. More and more images of his own face were slowly being burned to ash and falling into a deep blue wave of sadness. The sadness was strangling Dean, he’d never felt anything like it. He gasped for air, attempting to clutch for any type of lifeline he could get his hands on.

When Dean was certain he would drown in the emotions, he was back in front of Cas, shaking his head in confusion as the angel let him go and stepped away from him.

Cas returned to strapping more blades to his sheath. Once Dean was able to catch his breath, he asked, “What the hell was that?”

“What was what?” He retorted tersely.

“I’ve never almost drowned before, is everything okay? Are you powered up?” Dean was genuinely concerned for his friend.

“Yes, I am. Can we go now?” Cas glared at him and Dean was a little taken aback.

He didn’t understand why Cas was so angry. Was it because he made him compromise their agreement? “Look, I’m sorry we violated the agreement to not touch, but be reasonable here, man. It was a necessary evil. I promise I won’t ask you to do it again.”

For a moment Cas just looked at him, his expression cold and stony, something Dean hadn’t seen on his face for years, “It’s not about that.”

“Then what is it?” Dean stepped closer to Cas, “Let’s hash it out before we throw ourselves to the wolves.”

“We shouldn’t waste our time. It’s not important.”

“It is important if we’re going to be out there fighting shit and you’re so pissed at me you fuck up and don’t pay attention.”

Cas roughly pushed Dean up and against the wall, holding him by his shirt. His voice was low and
threatening, “I may be angry at you, but don’t you dare accuse me of compromising my judgment in a fight.”

“You’re so pissed you just slammed me against the wall, how the hell is your judgment not a factor right now?” Dean spat, he was so done with the bullshit. They all needed to be one hundred percent focused and it wasn’t going to happen if every little thing he said caused the angel to throw him against walls. Dean pushed the angel away, and was surprised Cas let him do it. He was much stronger, he could have easily disregarded him.

Instead of answering, Cas turned around, his voice lacked any emotion, “Get ready. I’ll wait by the car.”

Dean grabbed Cas by his shoulder and turned the angel back to face him, “Stop it! Just tell me what I did so I can fix it and we can go into this fight without you wanting to deck me at every turn!”

“I assure you, I don’t want to ‘deck’ you. And it’s nothing that can be fixed. I don’t even know what you want from me. We were united just a few minutes ago. You know how I feel. Would you please stop dragging our conversation back to this? I don’t want to talk about it!”

“Fine!” Dean huffed, he angrily grabbed the duffel bag he filled and right before he left, turned back to Cas, got in his face and said, “This is not the time or place, but we’re going to eventually talk about it, and you know damn well that means something because it’s me, here, I don’t do ‘talking’ and ‘feelings’.” And before the angel could reply, Dean stormed out of the storage room, his heart beating a million miles a minute.
Chapter 27

Claire

Can I borrow ur car?

For what purpose?

Since u and hasselhoff benched us I was gonna go 2 a concert

With whom?

OMG really? A friend. Can I borrow ur car or not?

Now

A male friend or a female friend?

What does it matter?

I thought you wanted to borrow my car? Answer the question.

I could just lie so I don’t see the point

I know you wouldn’t.

Now

It’s a guy friend, not a BF and not romantic if that’s what ur worried about

Is he aware of that too?

OMG ur so annoying

I would worry. I just want you to be safe

Like u guys R being safe going 2 battle these freaks w/o any backup. Don’t lecture me on safety if u can’t practice what u preach

Please Claire. I would worry and I would be distracted.

Like u won’t be worried about hasselhoff

I can have an eye on Dean here. But I can’t watch over you. So I’m more worried about you. I know you can look after yourself and I trust you not to make stupid mistakes.

Now
September 18, 7:23 AM

Claire: Can I borrow ur car?

Castiel: For what purpose?

Claire: Since u and hasselhoff benched us I was gonna go 2 a concert

Castiel: With whom?

Claire: OMG really? A friend. Can I borrow ur car or not?

Castiel: A male friend or a female friend?

Claire: What does it matter?

Castiel: I thought you wanted to borrow my car? Answer the question.

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Castiel: I know you wouldn’t.

Claire: It’s a guy friend, not a BF and not romantic if that’s what ur worried about

Castiel: Is he aware of that too?

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Claire: Like u guys R being safe going 2 battle these freaks w/o any backup. Don’t lecture me on safety if u can’t practice what u preach
Castiel: Please Claire. I would worry and I would be distracted.

Claire: Like u won’t be worried about hasselhoff

Castiel: I can have an eye on Dean here. But I can’t watch over you. So I’m more worried about you. I know you can look after yourself and I trust you not to make stupid mistakes.

Castiel: You can have the car. Just warn the guy I will hunt him down if he tries anything.

Claire: LOL will do captain kill
Claire: Thx u be safe 2. ILY

Cas: LOL ;-)

Castiel tucked his phone back into his coat, grateful for the brief minutes of distraction. The drive to Pocatello was long and tedious, and since he had his wings back, the old feeling of confinement in cars was back in place. He hated every minute of it.

His gaze had lingered on the world that swished by, trying to distract his thoughts from the tension he was feeling in the vehicle, without any luck. He noticed he wasn’t really watching, he was trying to numb his mind and his beating heart.

_I’ve never almost drowned before, is everything okay?_ 

Dean’s words echoed in his mind. He felt antsy, his wings twitching because he wanted to fly. He needed to feel eternity under his wings, space and time. Why did he even ride with them?

How could Dean ask him if he was okay when he was so obviously _not_? The hunter must have felt what he was feeling in their moment of union. He must have felt his sadness, his love, his hurt, all of the pain it entailed. A wound that, Castiel was certain, would never heal.

He wasn’t sure if staying with Dean would work out. He hoped it could because he had missed seeing his family. He had missed seeing Claire and was overjoyed that she was permanently staying at the bunker now, seeing as she was going to transfer to a local community college in the spring.

But his fight with Dean made him wonder if he was ready yet to return home. If something like a few words from the hunter could cause him to lose control like that, was it really wise for him to stay there?

The worst part was, he knew that Dean was trying his best to keep him as a friend. But somehow that didn’t help at all. It was tearing him apart. One part of him didn’t want to lose the hunter and his
friendship, the other part wanted so much more than that; and that thought hurt every time he was reminded that all they could be was friends. Just friends.

He hated himself for being so weak, being distracted by all of this, controlled by his emotions. Dean had been right. His judgement was clouded and although he tried to appear calm, he was anything but. He never before wished that he could reverse himself to the state he was once in, when he had rescued Dean from Hell. When emotions were still burning low, guarded in a cage that was honed by hard training and discipline. He missed feeling nothing. He would certainly be of more use as a mere tool. Fast and unforgiving.

Castiel tried to remember what it felt like to not question his every step and move. Being without doubt. Maybe there was a way to get back to that state.

After this was over, perhaps he could find a place for training. Somewhere to get rid of all of the emotions inside of him. Maybe he could go hunting for monsters, cleansing himself from pain by inflicting it upon the evil that plagued this plane.

They came to a stop near an abandoned field that led into a forest. Dean put the car in park and turned to face Lady Toni Bevell, “We’re about half a mile from the site, you said they’re already there setting everything up, right?”

“Yes,” she answered tersely. Castiel watched the woman next to him with a frown. She appeared tense, even a bit frightened.

“I could scout ahead, Dean,” Castiel suggested, trying to get out of the car as soon as possible. He needed to be on the move.

“Maybe we should stick together until we know exactly what we’re workin’ with…” Dean suggested, clearly uncomfortable with the idea of Castiel going off on his own.

Castiel rolled his eyes, “If this is about our fight earlier… I can handle it, Dean.”

The hunter frowned, glanced at his brother and gave him a silent nod, before turning back to Castiel, “Can we talk for a sec, outside?”

He rolled his eyes again before he huffed and teleported out of the car, enjoying the moment he was
finally free of the confined space. He walked a few steps towards the forest line, waiting for Dean to catch up to him.

Dean slammed the driver’s side door as he approached Castiel by the line of the trees. He called out, “We need to hash this out right now, Cas.”

“Stop treating me like a child. You know scouting out the place would be tactically wise. I don’t want us to walk into this situation blindly.”

“Dude!” Dean practically got into his face as he continued, “I’m not treating you like a child, it’s because we don’t know what we’re going into that stickin’ together makes the most sense. You’re overreacting to every suggestion I make because you can’t fucking wait to get away from me. Don’t think I didn’t notice how quick you were to get into the back seat, when you usually want shotgun. I’m not stupid, and I get that we have shit that needs to be addressed, but until we have the time for that, I’m gonna need you to get your head outta your ass and focus on the goal here.”

Castiel closed his eyes and counted to three very slowly. He didn’t want to lose his cool again, give Dean further ammunition to question his abilities in this fight, “Dean, can you forget about these things between us for a moment and think? My grace is fully powered up. I can make myself invisible and I’m very fast. The risk would be minimal. The risk would be higher if we go into a situation unknown to us. Let us take advantage of the fact that I can scout ahead, undetected.”

“Alright,” Dean said as he crossed his arms over his chest. He took a deep breath before saying, “I’ll give you that, I admit that maybe I was worried for your safety, cuz, like a dumbass, I care about your well-being. But you’ve gotta admit that you’re being kind of weird around me…” He stared at Castiel expectantly.

“I appreciate your worry, but it’s unnecessary… I admit, it’s straining for me to be in your company, but I think that is to be expected with everything that has happened between us. But I assure you, it won’t affect my focus on the task at hand. I will be careful.”

Dean let out a sigh, “I’m sorry, Cas. I really am.”

Castiel looked at the muddy grass underneath his feet, feeling the sadness and longing from Dean nudging at the corner of his mind. Castiel wondered if he should ever tell Dean that the hunter tended to unconsciously pray to him. He would probably be embarrassed by that fact. “Me too, Dean.”
He looked up at the sky and unfolded his wings, “I’ll be back shortly, say five minutes?”

Castiel didn’t wait for Dean’s reply as he took off and hid his presence from this world. He crossed the forest, sensing a weird energy coming from a structure below him. It was a wooden construct, looking like a temple built in haste. It wasn’t the source of the energy though, that was concealed below the construct.

He contemplated taking a closer look when he sensed sigils protecting the temple. Not only for angels, but it was warded against demons as well. Castiel took note of the positions of the sigils as he tried to count the men patrolling the area around the structure. He only counted four men. There would probably be more inside.

It wouldn’t take much effort for him to take the men out on the outside, but inside the temple he would be of no help if Sam or Dean didn’t get rid of the sigils. At least now they knew that the Men of Letters woman had been telling the truth about the wardings and that the structure wasn’t heavily guarded. He still didn’t know if she had told the truth about what lie in wait within the temple.

He landed next to the Impala and was about to reveal himself when his gaze fell on the hunter and how he stood there, leaning against the car’s trunk. Sam was keeping him company, probably because he saw the same look on Dean’s face that had made Castiel stop and watch for a moment before revealing himself. Dean looked on edge, worry lines deeply etched into his facial expression.

Castiel’s fingers twitched with the need to caress them away from his face, with the need to touch him again. The memory of kissing those lips, lips that were now pressed into a thin line… It was too much.

He stepped a few feet away, about to reveal himself, when Dean’s words made him stop again. “I don’t know, Sammy. I’m pretty sure I fucked up beyond fixin’ this time…”

Castiel frowned. Had they been talking about him? He knew it was wrong to listen in on their conversation, but he couldn’t help himself. He watched how Sam shook his head slowly and grabbed Dean’s shoulder in comfort, “I don’t believe that. It’s Cas. You and him are a package deal. You’re just having a rough time at the moment. But I’m sure you will both find your way back to each other.”

Dean shook his head, “You should have seen the way he looked at me after we used our bond, it was… I don’t know... But he’s done with me, not that I blame him after all the shit I put him through…”
“He’s hurt, but it’s Cas. He’s strong. He’ll get over it. I know he’s far from believing it himself, but I know… I mean, we’ve all been there, right? It sucks, but I don’t believe for a second that he’s done with you. You’ve been through so much crap together and it just made your friendship stronger. You won’t lose him, Dean.”

Castiel’s heart warmed at Sam’s words. That his friend believed him to be strong enough to get over this… something he almost couldn’t fathom. He took comfort in Sam’s unwavering faith in him, hoping that at one point in his future, he would also have this faith in himself again.

“I wanna believe you, Sammy, god I do. I just… This pain? It’s worse than what happened with Lisa and Ben. I’ll do whatever he needs me to do, and if he needs to leave again, it’ll kill me, but I’m done being selfish. Whatever Cas needs…” Dean let out a sigh, seemingly unable to make eye contact with his brother.

Castiel was stunned. A million thoughts and emotions battled inside of him as he tried to understand Dean’s words. What pain? Why was he comparing this situation to Ben and Lisa? And what did he mean by, ‘whatever Cas needs’? He almost let out a sarcastic laugh over those words. Dean knew what Castiel needed, but he surely wasn’t going to give that to him.

Castiel couldn’t stand it any longer. Dean wasn’t the one in pain here. How could he compare his pain to anything Castiel felt? He wasn’t the one in love, a love that fell unrequited.

He appeared, flapping his wings so forcefully, Dean was pushed against the trunk of his car.

“Apologies,” The angel made sure it didn’t sound apologetic.

Dean rubbed the hip that had been slammed into the car, then gave a pointed look to his brother, “S’alright, Cas. Uh… What did you find out?”

Castiel refused to look at Dean, explaining his findings to Sam instead, “The woman was correct about the wardings. I couldn’t have brought us into the structure. Four men are guarding the area around our target. I could take them out quietly, but I can’t follow you into the building as long as it is warded.”

Castiel grabbed Sam’s hand and pulled a pen from his coat scribbling the sigil into the taller man’s palm, “This is the sigil you have to destroy. There should be four of them on each wall.”
Dean looked between Castiel and Sam, his eyes narrowed slightly. In that moment the angel felt a wave of jealousy from Dean, which was confusing. The hunter made it a point to ask, “Are they the same sigils from the tunnel in London?”

That was the moment when Castiel recalled he had done the same thing with Dean, scribbling a sigil on his palm before they entered the underground station. It had been an intimate moment.

Castiel frowned as he looked at the hunter. Surely Dean must be aware that he had no desire to add to his pain by touching the hunter, and that choosing Sam to show him the sigil wasn’t born out of a wish for intimacy but necessity? “Yes, they are.”

“Okay…” Dean sounded hesitant, his mouth opened and closed like a guppy; as if he wanted to say something then decided against it. He took a breath and finally said, “I guess we should get to it?”

…. :::: :::: ….

Dean, Sam, Cas, and the Lady, as Dean had dubbed her in his mind; started their half-mile trek through the forest to the clearing where the temple was. The walk was quiet, not just out of necessity for stealth, but because the tension was so thick you could cut it with a knife.

When Cas came back from his recon, the angel had been particularly icy towards him. And he called bullshit on the ‘accidental’ slamming of him into Baby. Cas was never that clumsy when flying, unless he was drunk or gravely injured. Dean had to keep his wits about him, they had a job to do, and then he could confront the angel about his freakin’ bipolar behavior.

When they reached the edge of the trees that led to the clearing, Dean nodded to Sam to head left and for Cas to head right, while he was going to sneak around through the trees to come at the four henchmen from behind. He turned to the Lady, handed her a blade, and whispered, “You stay here, okay? If shit goes south, get the hell out of here.”

She nodded dumbly as she took the weapon and the three of them were off. As Dean made his way through the trees, he noticed one of the men had his back turned to him; alone and completely susceptible to an attack. Dean grinned, this was the shit he lived for and would serve as a great distraction from all of the crap going on between him and Cas.

He was able to creep up behind the burly man, but stepped on a branch. The crunch it made was
deafeningly loud in the quiet of the clearing. Hulk turned around and chuckled when he saw Dean, a grin of yellowed crooked teeth making him look far more like Sloth from the Goonies than a random Men of Letters nerd.

He charged Dean then, letting out some sort of howl as he barreled into the hunter, causing him to fly backwards against one of the nearby trees. When his head collided with the wood, blackness curled in on his vision for a moment. He shook his head as the tiny sparks of white dots started to dissipate in enough time for Dean to duck the man’s beefy hand, causing it to slam into the trunk. The man grunted in pain when a sickening crunch echoed, he had obviously broken a couple of knuckles with that move.

Dean was clearly not stronger than this guy, but he was faster. He was able to dart behind the man and grab him by the collar of his shirt. Before anything else could happen, Dean pulled a blade from his back pocket and surreptitiously sliced along Hulk’s jugular. The man gurgled as blood bubbled out of the wound and he collapsed to the ground.

Dean wiped the blade on his jeans and moved toward the front of the temple. When he saw Cas and Sam standing there, he let out a sigh of relief. Their blood spattered clothing indicated that all of the guards had been taken care of. Sam had already started destroying the protection sigils that decorated the walls and pillars. Dean took the side that appeared to have not been touched yet and got to work. After he was pretty certain they’d gotten all of them, Dean turned to Cas, “Did we get them all?”

Cas squinted his eyes for a moment, looking like he was deep in thought, before he looked up at Dean. He nodded with a cold look, before he turned his angel blade around in his hand in a swift motion.

Dean ignored the painful flutter of his heart at the cold shoulder he was getting and turned to Sam. The brothers nodded to each other, silently communicating the next plan of action. Dean went first, carefully opening the door to the temple, keeping a gun at the ready as he poked his head through to clear the room. Satisfied with his once over he nodded at Sam and Cas to follow him inside.

The temple was just one big room, bland beige walls littered in decorative tapestries in a rotund shape. At the middle of the room was a large stone altar with several straps poking through, clearly for attaching humans, or human like creatures, for sacrifice; if the large metal basin beneath it was any indication.

Dean felt the hairs on the back of his neck rise. This place was too empty, he knew the Lady had told them only four guards, but something felt wrong. It felt off. They made it to the center of the room, Dean tugged on one of the leather straps on the altar and turned to Sam, “This is set up for two, didn’t the Lady say they were only sacrificing one wolf?”
A scream and a bright light caused the two brothers to whirl around in shock, weapons ready in their hands. The Lady held up a bloody hand from where she had painted a banishing sigil on the wall at the door.

That was when Dean felt a gun dig into his back, before his own gun was forcefully ripped from his hand. A fucking trap. Cas was gone and Sam was standing with his gun pointed at the Lady, darting worried glances at his brother.

All he heard was a menacing chuckle from behind him before a particularly deep voice called out to Sam, “Put your gun down, son, or I’ll plug a bullet into dear older brother’s heart.”

Dean scoffed and turned his face to look over his shoulder at the Guy Ritchie film reject, “That’s my least vulnerable spot.”

“Or you lower your weapon and I won’t shoot your colleague,” Sam hissed in the direction of the guy behind Dean.

“Go ahead, shoot the cunt,” The guy laughed.

The Lady glared at the man, “We had a deal, for god’s sake. I brought them here, I did everything you asked of me. Where is Master Tiberius?”

In that moment, several other men came out of nowhere, their guns cocked and ready. Sam lowered his weapon and raised his hands up in surrender. One of the tall thin guys, a creepy man with bug eyes that were magnified by bottle thick lenses; grabbed the Lady and yanked her forward by her elbow, a gun pressed to her head.

One of the walls diagonal from the altar started creaking as it slowly opened, something straight out of one of those black and white horror flicks. Dean had to refrain from rolling his eyes as an older man stepped out, wire-framed glasses, hair white, and a sort of sneer on his dignified face. He was wearing a three piece suit with actual freakin’ tails. Why were they suddenly in an episode of Sherlock?

His voice was equally fitting, almost gentle and calm when he addressed the Lady in a pretty snooty sounding British accent, “My dearest Lady Bevell, excuse the rough manners of these men. Of course we had an agreement and, as you can see, I’m here to honor it.” He snapped his fingers and
out of the room where he had come from, a gorilla of a man appeared, his fingers gripped tightly on
the shoulders of a young boy. The kid had to be no older than four, whimpering and terrified as the
goon roughly yanked him forward.

“There is just one thing. There is a certain doubt that has been clouding my mind lately. You see, we
have your son here, but what assures me that you will not betray us again once he is back in your
loving arms?”

The Lady looked at the guy, eyes widened with fear, “Please, I would do anything. You know that. I
will take him and leave on the first flight back to London.”

The gorilla of a man shook the child as he yanked him closer to his side, causing the boy to cry out in
pain before he started to sob.

Dean darted forward for the kid, “Hey! What’s your damage, Colossus?!” Dean was yanked back by
four hands and held in place. He was fucking furious. Furious at the buffoon currently using a baby
as a punching bag, and furious with the Lady for not confiding in them that she was, clearly, being
blackmailed. They could have helped her.

The man in the suit gave them a bored look before he addressed his men, “Take the Winchesters to
the dungeon until we’re ready to perform the ritual.” He then pointed at the two men near the door,
“You two, go out and raise the barriers. We don’t know when their angel companion will be back.”
Before finally turning to the Lady with a false smile, “And we should go somewhere more private to
discuss my terms.” He motioned for her to follow him back into the room where he came from,
nodding to his gorilla to follow with the kid.

“Yo! Moriarty! What the hell are you gonna do with us?” Dean demanded.

The man gave him a smirk and looked down at Dean like a grown up reprimanding a child, “Do you
really believe this to be James Bond film? In which I’ll stand here and tell you of my plan? You’re
just an ingredient to me, nothing more. I haven’t the slightest interest in exchanging more words with
you than that.” He waved a dismissive hand and the five thugs around him and Sam dragged them
out of the room through another hidden passageway.

Dean struggled against the men as he was dragged down a long, dark corridor, his brother being
dragged behind him. He knew they shouldn’t have trusted that lady, but he couldn’t really blame her.
She was obviously trying to save her kid, he didn’t really have a place to judge people for doing
crazy shit in order to save the life of a loved one.
In that moment he thought of Cas. He hoped his angel was okay. *Fuck.* He was probably going to die soon and he wouldn’t have ever gotten to tell Cas how he felt about him. That he was so fucking sorry for not saying it sooner. He spent his whole life terrified of those words and now all he wanted was to shout it at the top of his lungs. If he was loud enough, maybe Cas would hear him.

Dean growled as he was shoved bodily into a dank, moldy cell, almost colliding with the wall. He turned to attack when Sam was shoved into him. The loud iron door slammed shut with a thunderous clap. One of the goons opened the latch near the bottom of the door,

“Don’t get too cozy!”

He could hear their buffoonish laughter even as they disappeared out of the tunnel.

“Fuck!” Dean cried out. He punched the wall and groaned at the sickening crunch as a sharp pain burned into his knuckles, bloody scratches breaking the skin. He held his hand against his chest as he turned his back to the wall and slid to the floor. Dean was going to die. He was going to *die* and he was never going to get to say goodbye to the angel he loved.

Dean felt something poke into his hip and he realized he still had his cellphone. He hurriedly pulled the device from his pocket and let out a breath of relief. Maybe he could still say goodbye.
We're almost there, guys! Thank you again for bearing with us in the direction we take this story. Hopefully you enjoy it.

Chapter 28

September 18, 8:27 AM

Dean: I know this is a douchey way to do this but I can’t keep it quiet especially if Sammy and I don’t make it out of here alive. If we don’t I just need you to know how sorry I am for everything. I’m so sorry cas. You are the best thing that’s ever happened to me and you make me want to be better be stronger be the kind of man you deserve. I never have been and every time I told you I didn’t love you was a fucking lie. I’ve loved you for so fucking long I was a coward and too fucking scared to accept it to embrace it. I’m so sorry I never got to tell you to

[Not Delivered]
Dean wanted to yell when the red flashing notification glared with an exclamation mark of failure. Just like him, a goddamn failure. He started to laugh. It was weird, the situation wasn’t funny, nothing was fucking funny, but Dean couldn’t stop the laughter, a panicked and hysterical sound he had no control over.

Sam looked at him, concern clearly evident on his face, he grasped his brother’s shoulders and started to shake him, “Snap out of it, Dean!”

But he couldn’t, the sounds were out of his control, and then the laughter morphed into something like a gasp as he felt the tears roll down his face. Dean wiped his eyes angrily, sober enough to stop the damn whirlwind of emotions that were threatening to overwhelm him.

Sam was still eyeing him, his eyes flickering as he searched his brother’s face, “Dean? Are you okay?”

Dean took a deep breath, before quietly admitting, “We’re gonna die, Sammy. We’re gonna die and I never got to tell that idiot I love him back…”
It had been probably thirty minutes since Dean and Sam had been thrown into the cell, when four of the goons came to retrieve them. Once back inside the main room, Dean noticed there were several pieces of tubing and needles laid out on the table next to the altar. The goons slammed him and Sammy against the cold stone slab, before tightening the leather straps over their hands, ankles, and waists.

When one of the goons leaned up to fix the strap over Dean’s neck, he spit in the guy’s face. It earned him a hard punch to the gut. It was totally worth it.

In that moment, the Lady was dragged into the room by the gorilla who had been terrorizing her son. He barked, “You heard the boss, set them up and we’ll let you and your boy leave.”

She nodded, her eyes red-rimmed and terrified. Toni approached the table and started disinfecting the needles. Dean scoffed, “If those things are going in us, isn’t that kind of pointless?”

The woman looked up at Dean, she shrugged, “I’m sure you wouldn’t believe that I wish no harm to come to you or your brother?”

Dean let out a bark of laughter, “You kiddin’ me?”

Toni attached the needle to the tubing, before tying a rubber tourniquet to both of Dean’s arms, procuring veins for her to plunge the needles into. “You have to understand, when I let you both go, I betrayed my brethren. I thought I would have enough time to take my son and escape, but…” A tear rolled down her face, “He’s my son, I couldn’t let them kill him.”

Sam interjected, “You could have just told us, we would have helped rescue him.”

Toni let out a bitter laugh, “I don’t know you from Adam, I did what I had to. To save my son.”

Dean let out a hiss at the stinging of pain when one of the needles found a vein. He turned to her, “You didn’t need a wolf for this incantation, did you? You guys needed us.” It wasn’t a question.
She nodded solemnly, “The blood and soul force of the righteous man who broke the first seal, and the blood and soul force of the man who broke the final seal are the requirements for summoning the Midgard Serpent.” The Lady took a deep breath before adding, “I am truly sorry for this regrettable situation.”

Castiel groaned when he regained consciousness. Everything hurt and blood dripped from his mouth. He angrily wiped it from his lips before he slowly got up and looked around. He didn’t know where he was, still feeling disorientated by the after effects of the banishing sigil, but that was something he could change in a second. He concentrated on the area of Idaho and hurled himself back up into the air, returning to the place he had been banished from.

The only problem was that this place wasn’t just warded against him again, there was also a barrier of magic that hadn’t been there before. For a moment he watched more guards patrolling the area and came to the grim realization that he couldn’t save Sam and Dean without help.

In a second he flew back to the bunker, landing in the library right in front of Bobby and Mary. “I need your help!”

“Castiel! What happened?” Mary cried out as she ran to his side, gently grasping his arm.

“It was a trap. I was banished and they warded the location again. Not only with sigils, but also with a magical barrier.”

Mary nodded and grabbed her cell, without wasting a second, she put the device to her ear, “Rowena! Can you meet us at the bunker? It’s an emergency!”

Castiel was incredibly surprised to hear the Scottish witch respond,

“I’ll be there shortly, dearie. Should I grab Fergus?”

Although Castiel didn’t know how Mary had ended up befriending the witch, he was grateful she had. Rowena would probably be their only chance to save Dean and Sam. She would be able to destroy the barrier.
“Yes, see you soon!” Mary stuffed her phone in the pocket of her jeans and turned back to Castiel, “What do we need to grab?”

“I don’t know how many men we have to face, but we should take Jody and Charlie with us just to be sure. There are wardings that keep me from entering the building. There is also a magical barrier that won’t allow anyone to enter the grounds. I can take us right in front of it. If Rowena will join us, she could take the barrier down, hopefully, in time to save them. Time is of the essence here.”

“And that is why I took Mary’s call quite seriously…” Rowena stated, a smirk on her face.

“What have heckel and jeckel gotten themselves into now?” Crowley asked from behind her in an exasperated tone.

Castiel raised an eyebrow, “Crowley? What are you doing here?”

“Well, Mummy Dearest thought it might be fun to get the band back together, you know, pull off another world saving coup.” The demon rolled his eyes at Castiel.

Castiel nodded slowly, “Thank you, honestly… We’re going to need every one we can get.”

“Then sign us up!” Claire said as she and Charlie came into the library.

Castiel turned around and tilted his head at the sight of Claire, “I thought you were on your way to a concert.”

The teen shook her head, “Concerts aren’t until evening time usually, I just wanted to ask before I left, but this sounds like a much better way to spend my time…”

“I’m not taking you with us, Claire,” Castiel stated before he turned back to the others.

“Why not?”
Castiel sighed, “I know you want to become a hunter, but you are not ready. I need experienced people at my side and… I won’t be able to concentrate if I take you with us. So, please, don’t ask this of me.”

Claire snorted in derision before grasping Castiel by the shoulder to turn him to face her, “First of all, I am a hunter. I might not be as experienced as the rest of you, but I can help. I can help and I need to help. They’re as much a part of my family as you and if you think for one second I’m cool with just hanging out and waiting, you’ve got another thing coming. This is what I’m training for and honestly, don’t you think I’d be better off with all of you than waiting like a sitting duck alone here?” She folded her arms against her chest, defiant and unmoving.

“You will help the most if you stay here in the safety of the bunker. I’m sorry, Claire, but I can’t risk taking you with me. I know you will probably hate me for this, but I’d rather have that, as opposed to possibly losing you in this battle; or losing someone else because my mind isn’t focused on the task.” He gave a warm smile that was regarded with a cold gaze, “Also, Dean and Sam would kill me if I brought you with us before they finished your training.”

“You literally just said you need as many people as you can get to help. Benching me is stupid and guess what? If you guys don’t succeed, if this stupid serpent thing gets cut loose on the world, then I’m as good as dead anyway. Don’t you think I deserve to be with my family if that happens?”

“Enough!” Castiel interrupted her, “This isn’t up for discussion, Claire. You won’t be coming with us. I just informed you of my reasons.”

Claire laughed, a short bark of laughter that belied her annoyance, “You tryin’ to pull the parental bullshit on me? Guess again. If you leave me here, I’ll take your car and drive my happy ass to where you guys are, I don’t care. And then I’ll be going in by myself. You can choose to leave me here, but you have no control over what I decide to do when you leave. I am not a defenseless child, I’ve seen more shit than most people my age, and I’ve hunted said shit.”

Castiel gave her a sad look, “I know you have.” He touched her forehead and she fell unconscious into his arms.

“I’ll just take her to her room,” Castiel informed the others as he lifted Claire up, bridal style. “Take everything you may need. We will leave immediately.”

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Dean stared kind of dazedly at his surroundings, the blood loss was slow, but it was affecting him. He and Sammy had probably lost about a pint of blood, enough to cause them some light headedness, but not harmful… yet. Looking over at his brother, he gave him a soft smile, the kind of smile that would be comforting if the reality of dying wasn’t literally being drained from their veins.

Strangely enough, he had found comfort in seeing the Lady and her son being shoved out of the temple, free to leave after she had started siphoning their blood. At least the Winchesters had been able to save a kid’s life with their inadvertent sacrifice.

As Dean watched the Sherlockian villain and his minions set up all of the hoodoo crap that was going to be used in the incantation, his thoughts turned to Cas. It was probably better he didn’t tell the angel he was in love with him. This whole dying thing would suck a helluva lot more if he had gotten a brief glimpse of happiness. If he had gotten to have those ridiculous moments of domesticity, shit straight out of an old black and white TV show. Leave it to Beaver, I Love Lucy, Dick Van Dyke.

Dean started to chuckle at the image of himself coming home in a three piece suit, holding a briefcase, pressing a kiss to Cas’s cheek as the angel held out a pie, a frilly ass apron around his waist. Weird, even in his blood loss related delirium, Cas was still in his trenchcoat...

Dean shook his head, it really was better he didn’t tell Cas. Better for Cas to lose him while he hated him. If you’re angry with someone, it probably makes their death easier to deal with. Dean assumed, he’d never lost people he didn’t like. He chuckled again, this time with bitter undertones. No, he only ever lost people he gave a damn about.

Cas would be able to actually move on. He felt grateful then; grateful for the lack of cell reception preventing Dean from doing something that would have made their deaths so much worse for the angel. The lost possibility of love. And he was gonna need Cas to be there for their mom. What a fucked up situation all around. To be granted life again, only to lose your kids? Someone up above had a twisted sense of humor. He’d blame Gabriel if the dude was still alive.

Dean closed his eyes and rested his head against the stone slab. He turned to prayer, not for rescue, not for respite, but in the hopes that maybe he could say one more thing to Castiel. I’m so fucking sorry, Cas.

When Dean’s soft prayer echoed in Castiel’s head, his blood ran cold. Dean was dying. He could feel a profound sorrow as well as an eerie sense of calm. The kind of calm felt when one has
accepted their fate.

No matter how angry he was with the hunter, how hurt, how heartbroken; he could not imagine having to say goodbye. Not yet.

Castiel turned to watch Rowena, the witch narrowed her eyes at the barrier, holding her hands up to feel the magic at work.

“Can you break it?” He asked, feeling tense with the need to rush into the building to rescue Dean and Sam.

Rowena scoffed, “This is pretty shoddy magic, it should take me about…” She flicked her wrists and hissed a few words in Latin. A shuddering of color pulsed around the clearing and temple as it fizzled out. She smirked, “Thirty seconds.”

Castiel nodded thankfully at the witch and looked back to the others who fell in position around the temple, ready to storm it. Charlie and Rowena were tasked with removing the sigils, whereas Mary, Jody, and Bobby would be signaled to storm the temple to take out as many of the henchmen as they could; but first Crowley and Castiel needed to take out the guards positioned outside.

Castiel readied his angel blade, arching an eyebrow when Crowley did the same. Now was not the time to ask where Crowley had acquired one. Crowley took off north and Castiel took the south side, using his wings to get behind the guards, stabbing his blade through their necks. Eliminating any opportunity for them to alarm the other men. He killed them one by one with deadly precision.

He came to a stop when Crowley appeared in front of him, dropping a bloody corpse at Castiel’s feet, “I got six. What about you?”

Castiel rolled his eyes and turned to the woods to give a signal for the others to storm the temple, Crowley and Castiel had provided them a new entrance on the backside of the structure.

“It’s not a competition, Crowley,” Castiel growled as he raised his hand towards the wall, the same time Crowley did. It wasn’t easy to destroy. Castiel knew he couldn’t have done it alone, with all of the sigils still carved into the woodwork, but that didn’t mean he had to be nice to the demon.

“Sure it is,” Crowley grinned as the wall exploded into rubble and dust. Bobby and Mary were the
first ones to enter with their shotguns ready, Jody right behind them.

Castiel hoped Charlie and Rowena would finish their task soon, so that Crowley and Castiel could follow them inside. He watched in fascination as all of the sigils began to shimmer with a glowing white light, Charlie walked up to them with an excited grin, “Watch this!”

She dug her blade into one of the sigils and as it cracked, every single sigil cracked at the same time. Charlie smiled, clearly proud. Castiel nodded to her and without wasting another moment, the four of them stepped inside of the temple.

It was a bloodbath. Mary, Jody, and Bobby were fighting combatant after combatant. There were dozens of them. Crowley, Rowena, and Charlie delved into the fray, taking on several large men. But they were all human, thankfully. Castiel closed his eyes and honed in on the altar.

He could feel the two brothers’ life forces ebbing away. They were strung up on the large stone slab, being bled out via intravenous tubing into the large steel basin. An older man was standing over them, holding a book as he started the incantation. Castiel could physically feel the shuddering of the plane they were in. The man was opening the gate to the vale, the plane where the midgard snake had been trapped.

Castiel entrusted the hunters, the witch, and the demon to finish off the remainder of the guards, so he teleported in front of the insane man attempting to release the serpent. He appeared before him and flung the man into the wall behind him.

A sharp crack from a head colliding with wood echoed in the makeshift temple. The man cackled as he wiped the blood from his mouth. Winded from a combination of a severe head injury and, likely, age; he panted, “You’re too late.”

Castiel could feel the man was speaking the truth. He felt the crack that had been forced between the worlds. His gaze fell on Crowley and the demon’s shocked expression only underlined the fear in his heart.

Castiel hit the guy again, knocking him completely unconscious, he sensed a temporal hemorrhage, the man would die within the hour. He ran to Dean as Mary ran to Sam, each of them ripping the needles from the hunters’ veins one by one, “Dean? Dean! Can you hear me?” He cupped the man’s face in his hands, gently shaking him awake.
The hunter was pale, too pale, but when his eyes fluttered open, he managed to give Castiel a tired
smile. “My knight in shining trenchcoat…” He murmured.

Castiel returned the soft smile and placed his hands on Dean’s and Sam’s foreheads, healing them of
the blood loss. It worked, but he frowned when he realized their life forces were still fading. The
spell was too strong, the hunters were still dying.

In that moment, all of the humans cringed and grabbed their ears as a loud, unearthly hissing noise
echoed through the temple.

“We have to do something!” Crowley shouted at his mother, “If that beast comes through…”

Rowena cringed as she removed her hands from her ears and performed some kind of spell, it
quieted the din of the hiss, now permitting all of the humans to take their hands off of their ears. She
approached Castiel, “This is dark magic. The only thing that has any hope of destroying it, the only
hope of stopping it, is a sacrifice of light.”

Castiel needed a moment to understand, “My grace… Would that stop this? Would that save Dean?”

The witch nodded, “That should do the trick. But understand that it will burn the grace from your
body. You might not survive it.”

“It doesn’t matter. Just do it,” If it could save Dean. If it could save everyone… He couldn’t think of a
better thing to die for.

The walls began shaking, pieces of debris cracking off and falling around them. They were running
out of time. Rowena approached Castiel and placed a hand at his throat as she whispered her own
incantation, invoking the spirit of reciprocity.

Castiel looked at Dean for one last time. The hunter was barely conscious, but he would live. That
was all that mattered. He closed his eyes, feeling Rowena’s magic worming its way inside of his
vessel and into his light. It burned and it hurt as the magic pulled at his insides, wrapping its tendrils
around his grace, tearing at it. Castiel welcomed the pain, it was something he could concentrate on.
He didn’t scream when his grace was separated from him, but a silent tear fell from his eye before
everything went black.
Dean felt a warm glow engulf him as a blinding light peered red and yellow through his closed lids. He opened his eyes and the light dissipated. When he looked up, his blood ran cold at what he saw. Cas was on the ground, Rowena and Charlie at his side, he wasn’t moving. *No. This wasn’t happening.*

He got up and was surprised to realize he didn’t feel weak at all. Dean practically dove towards the angel, kneeling at Cas’s side as he pulled his head to his lap. Cradling Cas’s face, “No, no. Come on, wake up.” Dean felt panicked, he shook the angel, “Wake up, damnit!”

“Dean…” Mary said as she approached her son, placing a comforting hand on his shoulder, “Baby, he’s…”

“No he isn’t! He’s survived worse!” Dean returned his attention to the man in his arms, not giving a damn about the tears that were now falling, “Come on, please wake up, please!” He pulled Cas up, cradling him in his lap as he swayed.

When he felt a cough erupt from Cas’s chest, Dean swore his heart stopped. Relief washed over him as he wiped his eyes. Dean helped the angel sit up on his own, still refusing to let go of the tender grip on his face. “Cas?”

“Dean?” His voice was rough and low, “That was unpleasant.”

He shook his head in disbelief, letting out a relieved chuckle, “I bet.” Dean grasped Cas’s hand and leaned his forehead against the angel’s, “Come on, do your Vulcan mind meld and let’s get the hell outta here…”

Cas turned his head away from him, “I can’t.”

“Sure you can!” Dean offered. Now was not the time for the angel to still have his hangups about touching.

“I’m not an angel anymore, Dean. My grace is gone,” Cas explained in a calm voice.
Dean gasped, “I don’t understand…”

Cas braced himself against the floor to get up again, his legs wobbling like a newborn fawn as he stood up. Dean felt his heart break for his friend in that moment, wishing nothing more than being able to use their bond to fix him, to make him better. Cas took a deep breath as he explained, “It was necessary to close the rift. The Midgard serpent was about to break through.”

Dean wanted to ask more questions, but he was interrupted by Charlie diving into Cas’s arms, practically squeezing the remaining life out of the guy. Surviving the almost end of the world, again, only to be killed by a geek.

Dean chuckled fondly and pulled Charlie off of Cas, “Let him breathe, Red.”

Cas nodded dryly, “Not that I have long to live anyway. When we get home Claire will certainly end me.”

Crowley cleared his throat, “As touching as this little reunion is, I’m in desperate need of a cup of tea.” He snapped his fingers and everyone was zapped back to the bunker.

Dean shook his head of the dizziness demon travel left him with. “Wait! What about Baby?”

The demon rolled his eyes at the hunter, but it was his mom who interjected, “Bobby and I will bring her back, I want you boys to rest.” Mary turned to Rowena and Crowley, “Would you mind taking us back?”

“Not at all,” Rowena smiled. An honest to god smile.

As the four of them disappeared again, Dean turned to Sam, “What the hell was that?”
September 21, 3:42 PM

Dean: I know this is a douchey way to do this but I can’t keep it quiet especially if Sammy and I don’t make it out of here alive. If we don’t I just need you to know how sorry I am for everything. I’m so sorry cas. You are the best thing that’s ever happened to me and you make me want to be better be stronger be the kind of man you deserve. I never have been and every time I told you I didn’t love you was a fucking lie. I’ve loved you for so fucking long I was a coward and too fucking scared to accept it to embrace it. I’m so sorry I never got to tell you to your face that I love you and I want you to have an amazing life and I hope one day you can forgive me. I love you cas. I do love you back and I can love you back and at least there’s one good thing that comes out of today. I’ll have loved you until I died. Here’s lookin’ at you, kid.
Dean stared down at the device in his hand. The message never went through. His finger hovered over the red exclamation mark, being prompted to, ‘Try Again’ to send the message. It had been three days since their encounter with the British nutjobs. Three days since Dean frantically tapped out the message to Cas because he thought he was going to die. Three days since they had returned to the bunker and Cas was still giving him the cold shoulder. Still refusing to look at or talk to Dean other than general pleasantries.
He so desperately wanted to send the text, just take the risk and hit try again. But he knew he wouldn’t. Now was a time for healing, not for ripping open old wounds. Dean held down on the message, selected ‘More’ and when the little trashcan icon appeared, he tapped on it. His damn phone was mocking him, asking him if he wanted to delete the message. Of course he didn’t want to delete the message, he needed to. With a heavy sigh, Dean tapped ‘Delete Message’.

There. Like it never happened.

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Claire had slapped Castiel’s face really hard when they came back to the bunker three days ago. Something he wouldn’t have felt as an angel, but now that he was human again, he swore he could still feel the burning sting of the slap on his cheek. She had been confused by his reaction, only then noticing that something was wrong with him. Her anger had been instantly replaced by worry when she learned Castiel wasn’t an angel anymore. Something he was thankful for, because he hated the thought of Claire being angry with him.

He hadn’t left his room for a while, trying to stay away from Dean as long as he felt like he had been run over by a train.
He missed his wings. He had been almost used to the fact that he would never fly again before. But having lost them again, especially now when he wished for nothing more than to fly away, it was almost unbearable.

At least he couldn’t feel Dean’s constant longing anymore. That had been something that was hard to ignore and even harder to understand. He had promised himself that he would stop trying to understand the hunter. It seemed like every time he tried, he had totally misunderstood the situation.

Castiel rolled his stiff shoulders, remaining in a sitting position on the bed. His television had been running for hours now, but he wasn’t watching anything. He just tried to numb his thoughts with the background noise.

There was one question that wouldn’t leave his mind be. What should he do now that he was human?

Castiel was unsure what his place in this world was now. Claire was basically an adult, she wouldn’t need him for much longer. What would he do if she left the bunker? Could he still stay here? And for what purpose?

Castiel didn’t believe that he could just be friends again with Dean. Not when he thought of kissing him every time he saw him, and certainly not when he was reminded that it would never happen again and how much that rejection still hurt. Every time he saw Dean, he felt the pain like he had the first time. Now that he was human, the feeling was magnified tenfold.

He let himself fall forward onto his bed sheets, palming the covers over his face. Why was everything so complicated?

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Dean was sitting in the library, looking over some research on a hunt, because he couldn’t stand sitting around doing nothing. He needed a distraction from the fact that the man he was in love with was two doors away and he couldn’t do a damn thing about it. He needed a distraction from the fact that the man he was in love with couldn’t even stand the sight of him.

Dean moved to the table and pulled up the local news on Sam’s laptop when he heard an amused,
“I thought you and the ex-angel would be out on a vacation to unicorn island celebrating saving the world again? But you are just all work, no play. How disappointing.”

Dean let out a sigh, “What do you want, Crowley?”

“I come bearing news. We had a deal that I could borrow your angel for a small task to regain my throne. Since your boy toy is out of batteries, I researched a bit and found something very interesting to help him, and myself for that matter. A loophole you might say, regarding this fascinating bond you share.”

At that Dean looked up at the king of hell, regarding the man, attempting to figure out if he was being serious. “A loophole? What kind of loophole?”

“The kind that gives him his grace back. At least a part of it.” Crowley pointed to his own shoulder and quirked his brow at him.

Dean was stunned. He had seen how miserable Cas was over the loss of his grace. This news was… Fucking spectacular. He jumped up and clapped his hands together in excitement. “I’ll deny it if you tell anyone I did this,” He stated, causing Crowley to stare at him in confusion. Before the demon could respond, Dean pulled him into a hug. He pulled away and clapped Crowley on his back, “I’m gonna grab Cas.”

He ignored the look of bemused annoyance on the demon’s face as he left the room.

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Castiel didn’t feel like getting up from the wonderful position of his face beneath the covers, hidden from the world, even when Dean more or less stumbled into his room. He had lifted his head for a quick moment to look at who dared to intrude without knocking, before he rolled his eyes at the hunter and fell back into the sheets again.

Dean sidled up next to Castiel and shook him, “Cas! Get up!”

“No. Go away.” The sheet muffled the sound of voice, but he was sure that Dean would understand
him.

He felt the bed dip as the hunter practically crawled onto the side. Dean braced his hands on Castiel’s shoulders and gently shook him again before pulling the sheet down, excitement evident on his features from the goofy grin he had upon his visage, “Crowley has a way to get your grace back, get your ass up!” Dean’s grin turned into a genuine smile. A smile that was utterly breathtaking, making the man’s bottle green eyes shimmer.

“What do you mean? My grace is gone. I felt it burn away,” Castiel stated, his tone confused and stilted, trying to ignore how close Dean was.

The hunter patted his own shoulder, “Not all of it…”

Castiel’s eyes widened with realization. Of course. Dean had carried a part of his grace inside of him since Castiel rescued him from hell and rebuilt his body, “And Crowley has found a way to return it to me? If this is in any way dangerous for you, I don’t want it.”

Dean sighed, “I don’t know, but it’s worth a shot. Come on, get out of bed.” He got up from the bed and stood in the doorway, looking at Castiel expectantly. “Are you comin’?”

Castiel sighed and followed Dean, “Of course.”

“Crowley,” Castiel greeted with a nod, “I heard you’ve found a way to get the remainder of my grace back. Before you say anything, I won’t allow it if Dean’s life is endangered in any way.”

The demon rolled his eyes, “It’s a simple transference spell. Almost similar to how you would use your bond to juice up, the same idea. Through physical connection, we’ll be able to transfer the remainder of your grace from Dean’s soul to you.”

Castiel frowned, “Why are you doing this?”

“Can’t I do something nice for an old friend?”
Castiel shot him a sceptical look, causing the demon to shrug in response, “We still had a deal. You playing the Kevin Costner to my Whitney Houston while I regain my rightful position, remember?”

“Of course,” Castiel rolled his eyes, “How could I forget? I will help as promised… so what do we have to do?”

Crowley approached the table in the library, pulled a book out of his coat and laid it out. He flipped to a page and pointed at the book as he stepped away, “Here it is, if the peanut gallery would like to look it over and make sure it seems legitimate?” He offered with a quirk of his lips.

Sam, Charlie, Mary, and Bobby all approached the table, whereas Claire and Dean stood off to the side. Apparently they were fine with whatever the plan was.

Mary turned to the demon, “This seems simple, there will be no negative effects for either of them?”

Crowley shrugged, “I can’t say for certain, my guess - they’ll probably get a headache and some nausea.”

“If more than that happens to Dean, I’ll feed you to your hellhounds,” Castiel stated, matter-of-factly.

“Ah, Castiel, always the flirt. Don’t worry, I won’t disturb a hair on the squirrel’s perfectly styled head.”

Dean approached the demon, “I’m on board, what do I gotta do?”

Crowley motioned for them to stand in front of each other and Castiel felt his heartbeat quickening as he looked up into Dean’s eyes. His mouth went dry as he noticed the intense look the hunter was giving him. He wondered what was going on in Dean’s head.

Crowley came up to them, he grabbed Dean’s and Castiel’s hands, forcing them together, “You’re going to be in the same position you would be when using the bond to heal Castiel. Hold each other’s hand, press your foreheads together, and you’ll...” He turned to the former angel, “Need to touch Dean’s shoulder. When I say the words of the spell, the transference will begin.”
Castiel gulped, he hadn’t touched Dean since the last time they used their bond. It was stirring up all of the memories of everything they had been through, yet he couldn’t help but long for the contact. He hated himself for it and he felt the anger burning inside of his chest. Anger for every time Dean had rejected him, played with him, was within reach and had pulled away again. How he had kissed him, had held and touched him, only to say that all of it, that every feeling he had, was meaningless and that they could never be together. How he played the part of being hurt, even though he had been the one who hurt Castiel.

It was almost too much. He felt torn apart with the wish to push Dean away from him and the wish to pull him close because he still needed him. Needed him like he, now, needed air to breathe.

He reluctantly laid his hand on Dean’s shoulder, noticing the flicker of hurt in Dean’s eyes. A quiet voice deep within him enjoyed seeing the flash of hurt.

Dean gently pressed his forehead against Castiel’s, giving him a hesitant smile as he whispered, “I’m glad I can do this for you.”

Castiel didn’t know how to respond. It was so tempting to smile back, to slip into the illusion that everything could get better between them. He bit his lip, so much it hurt, to keep himself from saying anything.

Crowley started to recite words in Latin, words Castiel paid no attention to. He hoped this would soon be over so that he could get away from the hunter. He felt a curious tug at the edge of his mind before he suddenly felt like he was drowning in colors and emotions that weren’t his own.

Although these emotions mirrored his own exactly, he somehow knew they were Dean’s. He just didn’t understand… He was enveloped in the warmth of purple, feeling a deep love that left him breathless as streaks of soft baby blue and darker blue smudged through it, showing Cas images of his own face. When the images morphed into flashes of the ferris wheel, he got hit by a wave of beautiful, sunflower yellow; happiness. The yellow became tinted into a dark blue that almost turned black when the images became Dean, alone in his bedroom, curled up with the blue teddy bear. The swell of pain attacked Castiel like a knife, stabbing his heart repeatedly. The images changed again, to flashes of Castiel happily smiling at Alex as the color green mixed into the dark blue shades; jealousy.

The colors crashed over him like a hurricane, threatening to whip him away and tear him to shreds when suddenly everything went calm around him. A calm Castiel knew all too well, the type of calm you feel when you know you are about to die. The purple color surrounded him again, blotched by black and blue streaks. A feeling of desperation that came with images of Dean writing a text...
message, a message that was surrounded by hope and affection, only to be crushed by the violent red color of failure and despair.

Castiel felt like he couldn’t breathe as his grace began to burn through their connection and into his chest, spreading out into every fiber of his being until it reached the tips of his wings. He knew he screamed as he unfolded them on his back.

And suddenly everything was silent and dark again. He fell to his knees, like someone had severed strings that were holding him up.

Castiel looked up at Dean in shock. Dean loved him. Exactly the same way he loved the hunter.

Dean bent down and grasped Castiel’s face in his hands, “Cas! Are you okay?” His green eyes searching and filled with concern.

Castiel tensed under the touch. No. No. No.

He pushed Dean away from him, causing the hunter to lose his balance and fall heavily on the floor. “The hell, Cas?!”

Castiel stood up, taking a few steps backwards, “You lied to me.”

Dean shook his head in apparent confusion as he got to his knees before finally standing, “What are you talking about?”

The shock slowly made way for the anger in Castiel’s chest, “You lied to me! All this time! I felt you, Dean! I felt your feelings for me! Don’t you dare deny it!”

Dean stood there kind of dumbly, frozen in place. After a deep breath, he stepped forward, “Look, Cas…”

“What?! What can you possibly say to justify what you did to me?”
“I… I don’t know. Look, can we talk about this somewhere else?” He eyed the audience of their entire family and Crowley.

“No. I’m done. Once and for all. I’m done with this. I’m done with you.”

Dean darted forward and gently grasped Castiel’s hands in his own, “No, please, please. Don’t do this. I’m sorry, I’m so fucking sorry. I was scared okay? I was fucking scared!” He pleaded.

Castiel shook Dean’s hands from his own, “I was scared, too, but I still didn’t lie about my feelings! If we hadn’t done this union I would have never gotten a glimpse of what is going on with you! How long would you have kept this from me? Forever? Did you have fun playing with the dumb, naive angel; did you want to see how far you could get before it broke me? Or did you just want to use me as a tool for your pleasure?”

At that Dean’s eyes turned fiery, “How could you even think that? How could you possibly think that? I would never use you like that. It killed me, it fucking killed me when you left, knowing I caused you that kind of pain. And when I realized… realized that I…”

Castiel rushed in front of him, able to refrain from slamming the hunter up against the wall, “Fuck you. You could have ended this with just three words. But you didn’t. I have asked you so many times, you could have ended it then. But you left me in pain. As I will leave you, now.”

Dean grabbed him by his arm, “You want three little words? You want to fucking hear them? I love you! Is that what you want? I fucking love you. I’ve been in love with you for fucking years and I was too fucking terrified to say it to your face, but I’m saying it now!” He took a deep breath and said one more time, much more quietly, “I love you, Cas.”

Castiel felt the moment his heart turned into stone. He turned around to face Crowley, ignoring Dean, “I owe you a favor. We should leave and see it done. I have nothing left here to say.”

Castiel spread his wings and took off in the direction of Crowley’s villa. He didn’t look back once. Not even when the pained cries of Dean calling out his name echoed through his mind in a desperate prayer.

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Dean stood there, staring at the space Cas had just left. He let out a mirthless chuckle and turned around, bombarded with the concerned faces of his family. “Are you guys satisfied? Are you happy now that I finally told him? Well, I hope you are!” He scoffed at himself as much as them, “I fucking knew this would happen.”

Sam approached his brother, reaching out a hand in order to attempt to comfort him, “Dean, I…”

He pulled away from Sam, “Don’t you fucking touch me.”

Charlie moved next, slowly approaching the hunter, she looked like she wanted to hug him. Dean sidestepped her, “Don’t any of you fucking touch me!” He backed away from them all.

“Baby, talk to us…” Mary offered as she stepped forward and gently held Sam’s hand in her own.

“What could I possibly say? What would you like me to say? All of you… all of you kept pushing this, kept pushing me to admit my feelings, to fucking man up. I did. I did and look what it got me! I lost my best friend for fucking good. I lost the man I love because of my goddamn feelings and…” He shook his head, “I’m not doing this. Leave me alone.”

Dean ignored the cries of his name as he grabbed the keys to Baby and left the bunker.

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Dean got behind the wheel and put her in gear, thankful for the natural ability to drive without much thought. He plugged in his favorite Zeppelin cassette and drove on autopilot as his mind kept replaying what had just happened, on a vicious loop of pain and loss. Dean drove north until he couldn’t recognize where he was anymore. He pulled over to the side of the road and put Baby in park before staring dazedly at the dashboard.

Dean slammed his hands into her steering wheel, “Fuck!” He stepped out of the car and fell to his knees. As the tears slid down his face, he held his hands together in prayer.

“Cas, please. Please, I’m begging you here. Can we just talk? Just come back and talk to me. You don’t have to stay, but I need you to just… At least hear me out. You can decide after whether you want to stay, please…”
When the angel did not appear, Dean continued his prayer, this time not giving a damn if all of the other angels could hear him, “I told you I couldn’t love you back because at the time, I believed it. I believed that what I was feeling for you was, I don’t know… Friendship? Brotherly affection? I don’t know, but I convinced myself that was what I was feeling because I was fucking terrified of what it meant if it was more than that. Loving you, fuck, Cas. Loving you has been the greatest and worst thing that has ever happened to me. Worst because you’ve made me come face to face with years of repressed shit, which is confusing and terrifying.”

Dean sighed as he continued, “And the best because loving you has made me a better man. Loving you has made me realize that I am capable of real love and for that I will always be grateful to you. I love you, Castiel. I love you and I am so sorry I couldn’t tell you sooner. My biggest regret will always be not telling you when you first confessed your love for me.”

Dean sat there waiting for the angel to appear, for what felt like hours. Cas never came.

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Dean arrived back to the bunker in the middle of the night. He was so grateful that everyone was asleep when he tentatively stepped in through the front door. All of the lights were out, no one was waiting up for him.

He quietly crept to his bedroom, waiting to turn the light on until he closed the door behind him. When Dean looked up, the giant blue teddy bear Cas had won him was sitting on his bed, a heart shaped red patch sewn over where he had shot it. As he stepped closer, he noticed a handwritten note left on the bear’s right foot.

*Dean,*

*I knew you’d want him back. The funny thing is, despite being shot in the heart, a teddy bear heart that has been through some extensive damage I might add, he was still able to have it repaired. That kind of thought gives me hope, I’m just sorry I can’t sew a patch over your broken heart.*

*I love you,*

*Mom.*
Dean held the note in his hand as he sat down on the bed. In that moment everything that had happened that day came flashing in a morbid slow-motion play-by-play of grief in his mind. He grabbed the bear and pressed his face into the stomach as he let out a scream, muffled by stuffing and blue fur.

Dean kicked off his shoes, crawled into his bed, and held onto the damn teddy bear like the lifeline it was in that moment. He whispered into the bear’s ear, “I love you, Cas.”

Chapter End Notes

WE ARE SO SORRY. PLEASE DON’T HATE US. THERE WILL BE A HAPPY ENDING, WE SWEAR TO CHUCK.
Chapter 30

Crowley couldn’t be more satisfied as he looked at the havoc the angel had wreaked down upon the throne room. A pissed off angel on a leash was apparently very effective against a little army of rebellious demons.

The King of Hell strode over the empty corpses to his throne and sat down on it with a contented sigh, his hands caressing the arm rests, “Now the world is in order again.”

Castiel didn’t say anything, he just frowned at the dead demons on the floor.

“Feeling better?” Crowley asked pointing to the corpses at his feet.

“Slightly,” Castiel confessed and it sounded almost surprised.

Crowley smirked, “A nice killing spree has that effect. So tell me, my dear Castiel, what is it you’re planning to do next?”

Castiel shook his head slowly, “I honestly don’t know.”

Crowley sighed with exaggerated frustration, “I don’t get you. You had the squirrel in tears.
confessing his feelings and then you just leave him? Isn’t that what you’ve always wanted? Him as your boyfriend?” The King of Hell chuckled, “I honestly can’t believe I just said that without it being a joke.”

“I’m glad my personal life amuses you,” Castiel stated dryly.

“Au contraire, mon ami. It hurts my heart to see both of my dear friends in pain like this.” He gestured to his heart to underline his statement.

Castiel gave him a pointed look, “We’re not friends.”

Crowley shrugged, “Temporary allies, then. Close enough.” He stood up from his throne with a thoughtful look, “You can’t go back to Heaven, you probably won’t go back to the bunker and, let’s be real, you suck at functioning in the outside world.” Crowley held up his hand when Castiel was about to interrupt him, “Don’t get me wrong, that’s not a bad thing. You’re a soldier. You’re not meant for that happy, white picket fence, lovey-dovey life. Your only purpose is to fight. Merely a tool for others, using you to enjoy what life gives to them. Not everyone is cut out for having a real life with happiness.”

“Why are you saying this?” Castiel asked with a frown.

Crowley smirked, “Because if you really wanted happiness, you wouldn’t be here with me. You would fight for a life with love. You would go and kiss your squirrel and be happy… But you’re here, so I could offer you a job as my–”

Crowley didn’t get to finish his sentence. Castiel was already gone. The King of Hell smirked and sat down on his throne with a very satisfied grin.

Some things would never change. How good his throne felt and how easy it was to manipulate Castiel.

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Dean was leaning over the propped open hood of Baby, returning the dipstick after checking the oil level from giving her a tune up. He wiped his filthy hands on a rag and leaned up to pull the hood back down. Dean had needed this, some physically laborious, dirty work to occupy his mind.
He stared at Cas’s Lincoln Continental parked a few spaces away in the bunker’s garage, and while the thought of Cas hurt something awful, the damn angel never took care of that ridiculous car. Well, if it was theirs for good now, he might as well check the oil and brake fluids.

When Dean propped the hood up, the engine was utterly filthy. Under any other circumstance, he would call or text Cas and bitch him out for not taking better care of her, but he couldn’t now, and that loss was stifling. He took a few deep breaths, so immersed in thought that he never heard the door of the garage open.

“Need any help?”

It was Bobby. Dean looked up and gave a half-hearted smile to the man who had taught him everything important when it came to cars. “Sure, grab a couple of jacks, I’m pretty sure the oil on this beast hasn’t been changed since the 70’s…”

The older hunter grabbed the jacks and a filter before sidling up next to Dean, looking down at the filthy engine. He whistled, “I’m surprised this thing even runs…”

“Right?” Dean chuckled. He grabbed the jacks from Bobby and went to work.

Once the car was propped up on the jacks and the car had been run for a few minutes to warm up the oil, Dean grabbed the metal basin he used for draining Baby’s oil and placed it underneath the Lincoln.

“How you doin’, son?”

“M’fine,” Dean didn’t even look up, answering in automaton mode.

Bobby gently clapped his hand on Dean’s shoulder, causing the younger hunter to look up. “That’s not what I was askin’.”

Dean shrugged, “I’m as okay as I’m ever gonna be, Bobby.”
The older hunter eyed him for a few moments, either unsure of what to say or trying to figure out if he was lying, Dean wasn’t sure. “You know I’m damn proud of ya’?”

That took Dean aback, he scoffed, “How is that even possible?”

Bobby regarded Dean, his expression serious and calculating, before finally answering, “Because it takes a lotta balls to tell someone how you feel about them, especially if there’s risk of losin’ ‘em. And then to see your worst fear become reality, most folk would hightail it outta reality, through booze, drugs, sex, you name it. I don’t think I’ve ever seen you so sober, son. You’re in a crap situation and you’re handlin’ it like the man I’ve always known you to be…”

Dean chuckled, a mirthless sound, “I woulda figured me being in love with a guy would have made you question my manliness…”

He grabbed Dean by his shoulder and forced the younger man to face him full on, “Now you listen to me, boy. Whatever thoughts John put in your head about what it is to be a man, you forget them right now. You are more of a real man than John Winchester ever was and that ain’t got nothin’ to do with who you love, you get me?”

Dean nodded kind of dumbly, unsure of how to respond, but thankfully his cellphone went off with a text message notification. He had to refrain from gasping. It was Cas.

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**September 26, 12:32 PM**

Cas: We have to talk.
Cas: Can we meet somewhere outside of the bunker?

Dean: Sure wanna meet at that diner just on the outskirts of town?

Cas: Okay. Just text me when you are there.

Dean: K I should be there in 30 minutes

Dean asked Bobby to finish up the Lincoln, grabbed the keys to Baby, and was on his way to the diner where they had their first flirting lesson. He wasn’t sure why he suggested that place, but the hope in his chest belied his reasons why. Hopefully Cas texting him asking to talk was a good sign.
When he pulled into the parking lot, he put her in park, pulled out his phone, and just stared at it for a few minutes. Dean was so goddamn nervous and hated the hope he was feeling in that moment, because if this was going to be a final goodbye, he’d rather just not.

With a deep breath, Dean tapped out his text.

**September 26, 1:07 PM**

Dean: Here

While he waited, Dean stepped outside of the car, leaning against the driver’s side door. He could feel the typical replacement of air and heard the flutter of wings behind him that was usually accompanied by an angel arriving.

“Hello, Dean,” Cas’s voice lacked any emotion and it was impossible for him to gauge what mood the angel was in.

Dean turned around, staring at the angel, who was standing on the other side of Baby. He nodded and moved to stand by her trunk, hoping Cas would follow suit. He thankfully did. As the two of them leaned against Baby, Dean kept his eyes downcast before finally asking, “You wanted to talk?”

“Yes. I wanted to ask you something,” His voice still sounded monotone.

Dean looked up then, searching the angel’s face for any kind of emotion, any kind of clue as to where this conversation was going. No such luck. He shrugged, “Shoot…”

Cas squinted his eyes a bit, “What do you want from me? How do you picture your future in regards to me?”

He thought for a moment, unsure of how to answer the question. “What are we talkin’ about here, like a perfect world, where I can have whatever future I want?”

Cas just nodded.
Dean parroted the nod, a silent affirmation of understanding. He had spent so many years repressing his wants and desires, his hopes, because that was just what you did. Their line of work had a short shelf life and the odds of getting any semblance of an apple pie life was a damn joke. But in a perfect world?

Dean took a deep breath before finally saying, “A future for me isn’t one if you aren’t in it, Cas. I don’t know, in a perfect world, I’d be comin’ home from a hunt to you, maybe sitting in the library doing research, maybe watchin’ whatever godawful TV show you’ve become addicted to, maybe making food. I don’t know, but you’d greet me with a fucking smile, a kiss, something disgustingly domestic. Maybe a future where we go on hunts together and because we got our heads out of our asses, we’re an even better team than before because we kicked our relationship up a notch. Does the thought of having you by my side terrify me? Absolutely. All I keep thinking is: shit! This is just another way for our enemies to try to torture me, but if I’m honest, you’ve been a liability for my emotions for a long time, long before I told you I love you.”

Dean let out a sigh before he continued, “So, what do I want? I want this to stop being so goddamn hard. I want to grab your hand and hold it without feeling scared that you’ll push me away. I want to kiss you for real, not under some bullshit guise. I want…” He looked into Cas’s eyes then, “I want you. Plain and simple.”

Cas’s facade had cracked with every word of Dean’s little speech. Emotions returned to his eyes as he unsuccessfully tried to blink them away. When he opened his mouth, his voice was quiet and insecure, “You said in a perfect world… What about ours?”

“Shit, Cas…” Dean chuckled, “Don’t you get it? If you’re in my life, it is a perfect world.”

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It felt like waking up from a bad dream. Not a feeling he had experienced very often in his time as a human, but often enough to remember it. Feeling like you are trapped between both worlds. The bad dream is still clinging to you with unrelenting claws, your heart beats fast and you try to catch your breath. The moment the realization hits; that you’re safe, that everything is over and a new day is about to begin, and you can finally breathe.

Dean’s eyes spoke of hope, honest and clear. Telling him that everything was good and and would be okay, pulling him in, into the warmth and light, and away from the nightmare.

The voices in his head, nagging thoughts of fear and doubt, asking if all of this was real or just a figment of his imagination. Could this be true, after all this time? It was everything he wanted, right
before him and within reach.

He was still afraid, but he didn’t want to run away anymore. He wanted this. He wanted Dean. And he wanted to fight for this chance.

He carefully raised his hands to frame Dean’s face, “I have a condition.”

The hunter’s breath hitched, a sound that belied the hope the man was feeling, “Anything.”

“We have to keep talking to one another. I know we both… ‘suck’ at that. Running away or lying doesn’t work… I can’t go through something like this again. So, talking.”

Dean gently grasped Castiel’s wrists, keeping the angel’s hands in place framed on his face, “Cas, if I get to kiss you, I’ll become the next Dr. Phil if I have to.”

“I prefer you as Dean just with--”

Dean kissed him and suddenly everything in Castiel’s mind was blissfully quiet. Dean’s mouth was unrelenting, a soft kiss that morphed into something dizzying, causing Castiel to sway. As the gradation of the kiss magnified in intensity, his hands fell to the hunter’s shirt and gripped tightly, trying to pull him in closer. Utterly immersed in the dizzying sensation, a thought suddenly occurred to Castiel. He pulled away slightly, “Does this mean you agree to my cond--”

He was interrupted by another kiss, a more forceful one. He could feel Dean’s smile against his lips as the man deepened the kiss. Castiel sighed and succumbed to the sensations and flutter of emotions as he finally got lost in the embrace of the human he had loved for years.

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Dean was on cloud nine. He was driving Baby back to the bunker, Cas by his side, literally as well as figuratively. He kept stealing furtive glances at the amazing angel he was immutably in love with. When Cas caught the last stolen glance, Dean was rewarded with a beatific smile. He crawled his hand over the seat to Cas’s and gently grasped it, before intertwining their fingers.
“I don’t think I’ve ever seen you smile this much, Dean.” He commented casually, his tone an almost awed sound.

As though it were kismet, the radio station he had on started playing Foreigner. Instead of acknowledging Cas’s comment, he turned the volume up before grasping the angel’s hand again. Dean gave him a dopey grin and started singing along with the song,

“I wanna know what love is! I want you to show me!”

Cas laughed and shook his head, “You are one strange human.”

“You love me,” Dean retaliated, his eyes twinkling with amusement.

Cas nodded, another genuine smile, “I do…”

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After Dean parked Baby in the garage, he and Cas approached the entry door and he stopped. The angel gave him a bemused stare, concern etched into his features at Dean not walking any further. Before Cas could ask what was wrong, he gave him another big, dopey grin and grabbed the angel’s hand, intertwining their fingers.

“Ready to mindfuck everyone?” Dean’s grin turned positively feral.

“I’m ready to see everyone again, yes… Not sure about ‘mindfucking’,’” Cas spoke that last word very slowly, as if he wasn’t sure what it meant.

He chuckled, “Mindfucking is messing with them. We could have a lot of fun with it. In fact, we could have a fake fight and then start making out with each other in front of everyone, that would really confuse them!” Dean felt like a kid in a candy store, the happiness he felt was making him giddy.

“I don’t know about you, but I have had enough of us fighting, fake or not. I wouldn’t say no to the ‘making out’ part, though,” To underline his words Cas suddenly pushed Dean against the door and
kissed him like he was starving for his lips.

He groaned as Cas deepened the kiss and slipped his leg between Dean’s, causing him to see fucking stars. Aggressive Cas was definitely his favorite Cas. He snaked one hand into the angel’s hair, while the other gripped the lapel of his trenchcoat. When the pressure of the angel’s leg made Dean harder than chinese algebra, he pulled away to start trailing hot kisses down Cas’s neck. He sucked at a pressure point of the angel’s neck, pressing a soft bite and pulling back with a cocky smirk at the sight of a hickey already starting to form. He’d officially claimed Cas as his.

He knew it was probably a bad idea to have sex standing against the garage door, but he couldn’t bring himself to give a damn. When Dean dove in for another kiss, they were knocked forward by someone opening the door to come into the garage. Thankfully, their combined weight prevented them from literally toppling over, but it was enough to break the magic of the moment.

Sammy walked through the door, when he saw Cas, his eyes lit up and he moved forward to hug the angel. Cas gave Dean a panicked look and backed away from the younger hunter. Dean didn’t understand at first, until the angel stared downwards. In that moment he couldn’t help himself, he laughed outright. Cas was scared to hug Sam because he had a boner.

Thankfully Sammy seemed to be completely oblivious to what he had interrupted… and on that note – his brother really had the worst timing in history of ever. Dean couldn’t even count the amount of times he had been cockblocked by Sam.

“What are you doin’ back, Cas?” His tone excited, further indicating his utter obliviousness to the situation.

Cas smiled and Dean hoped he could see that smile more often, “Dean and I talked and I will stay at the bunker from now on.”

“That’s great! I can’t even begin to say how relieved I am! We left your room just as it was, in case you came back.”

Dean stepped up to Cas, grasped the angel’s hand pointedly, and said, “Uh, actually, that won’t be necessary…”

For a moment Sam looked confused and tense, “What, why?”
Dean rolled his eyes at his younger brother. Clearly, he was going to have to spell it out for him. For a kid that was smart enough for Stanford, he sure could be stupid sometimes. Dean smiled at Cas, who returned the smile, before he leaned forward and pressed a soft kiss to the angel’s lips.

He had anticipated a lot of reactions from his brother; awkward eye diversion, feigned disgust, an eye roll, hell, maybe even a high five. He had been nowhere near prepared for the reaction he got. Sam’s eyes widened with realization before he clapped his hand over his mouth to cover up something that sounded suspiciously like a girlish squeal. Cas looked concerned. Dean laughed.

“You okay there, dude?” His brow was quirked up in pure amusement at his brother’s behavior.

“You… Cas? Oh, shit! FINALLY! I’m more than… Oh, man, I have to tell Charlie and Mom! And Bobby. Or you do! Oh, and Claire! And man! This is great news!”

Dean and Cas shared an amused look; Dean had never seen Sam failing at speaking complete sentences like that. Dean finally realized why Sam had long hair; deep down, his brother was an over-excited, Japanese school girl.

Before either of them could respond to Sam’s excited tirade, the taller hunter bodily dragged them into the bunker. He pushed them into the middle of the library before crying out, “Code Destiel! This is NOT a drill!”

Cas looked at Dean in confusion, “What is happening, Dean?”

Fuck. How could he forget about the stupid ass Supernatural fandom? He shook his head in annoyance, but, if he was being honest, he wasn’t truly annoyed. He was too damn happy to give a damn about that. Dean shook his head, “I’ll explain later.”

The first lunatic who came barreling into the library was Charlie. She looked at Cas and Dean holding hands and legitimately squealed, “Holy Hermione! Okay, okay, but first of all I have a very important question for you two! Who kissed who first?”

Dean smirked at her, “Which time?”

“When you confessed your undying love for each other!”
Cas regarded her with a thoughtful glance, “Technically, when he did that, I left and killed a few hundred demons.”

Dean laughed at the chagrined expression on her face. He leaned in close to Cas and whispered, “I fucking love you.”

Cas grinned back at him, “I love you, too, Dean.”

For a moment they got lost in each other’s eyes, Charlie had to wave her hands to get their attention, “Okay, so you met and you talked and then? Who kissed who? Don’t be such a Voldemort, Dean! Tell me!”

He looked down at the angel, a smirk on his face, “Think we should tell her? Or maybe we should just keep ‘em guessin’...”

“DEAN?!” Charlie hopped up and down in front of him, “It’s IMPORTANT!”

“What’s important?” Mary asked as she walked into the library, followed by Bobby and Claire.

Claire’s eyes lit up when she saw Cas and she ran up to him. Cas opened his arms to her, assuming she was coming in for a hug, but instead, she punched his shoulder really hard, “Could you please stop vanishing all the time? It’s annoying!”

“Hey, Miley! Don’t damage the boyfriend,” Dean chastised with a chuckle, waiting for the fallout with eager anticipation.

Claire turned around to face him with surprised eyes, “What?”

Cas gave Dean a confused look, “Dean, I’m an angel again, she can't damage me with her hands...”

Claire rolled her eyes, “He knows, you doof.”
Dean leaned in and pressed a kiss to Cas’s cheek, “Don’t listen to her, she’s a teenager. They’re prone to lying and sarcasm.”

“Ewww, could you please not do that while I’m standing right here? Wait a sec… When you talked, who kissed who for the first time?”

Dean pursed his lips in annoyance at her and Charlie, “And on that note, we’re gonna go to my room now.” He laughed at the confused expression on Cas’s face as he started to drag the angel out of the library.

“No!” Claire and Charlie yelled in unison.

“Answer the question, Hasselhoff. You owe us for dealing with your mood swings for the past few weeks!”

Cas squinted his eyes at them in suspicion, “Why is this so important?”

Charlie and Claire exchanged an apprehensive look.

Dean let out a groan, “You fuckers bet on our love life?”

“...Maybe?” Charlie responded carefully.

“Well, then, you’re definitely not going to find out.” He turned back to Cas, “Come on, let’s get outta here.”

Sam was giving him an almost panicked look, “Wait, Dean, um… First of all, come on, you know you would have done the same thing. Second… it’s a lot of money in the pool. And third, you are not going to your room because… I mean, I’m right across from you…”

“How much money?” Cas asked, causing Dean to be taken aback.

Sam looked away as he scratched his foot over the wooden floor, “Um… 723 dollars and ninety
cents.”

Dean waved his hands at them in confusion, “Hold up, who the fuck bet ninety cents?”

Bobby cleared his throat, “Technically it was twenty seven dollars and ninety cents. It was all I had on me…”

“Did all of you put into the pool?” Dean asked, his tone incredulous, but damnit, he was still smiling.

Mary bit her lower lip, “Yes… and Jody… and Rowena… and Crowley.”

Dean laughed, a sound of bemusement and awe. He shook his head before sighing in acquiescence, “Well, if your money was on Cas to kiss first…” He paused intentionally at the excited smiles on some of their faces and smirked, “Then you better pay up, cuz you fuckers lost.”

Mary sighed and shared a defeated look with Bobby. Sam made a whooping noise, whereas Claire and Charlie high fived each other.

Cas looked at Dean with a sudden startled realization, “Now I know why Crowley told me I should go and kiss you!”

“Of fucking course he did.” Dean rolled his eyes. He turned back to the rest of his family, the fuckers, and chuckled before saying, “And with that, I’m going to go have loud sex with my boyfriend now.”

The look of shock on all of their faces was totally worth it.

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To say that Castiel was eager to be alone with Dean was an understatement. Although he had enjoyed seeing his friends and family again, he needed time with Dean. They needed time.

It was still hard to believe that he could have Dean now. That all of the pain and the waiting had
finally ended, and they could be together.

There was only one thing bothering him. The last time they had sex was still hanging over Castiel’s head like a dark shadow.

Dean appeared to notice the apprehensive look on Castiel’s face and gently grasped his shoulder, “You okay?”

Castiel nodded slowly, “Just… can we go slow? I want to enjoy every minute of this.”

Dean pressed in close to the angel, giving him a soft smile as he backed him against the door, “We can go as slow as you want.” To emphasize his point, he leaned in slowly and pressed a tender kiss to Castiel’s lips.
The only problem with that was, every time Dean kissed him it felt like a fire was lit inside of his chest and he had to remind himself that he was the one wanting to take things slow. But every fiber in his being wanted to push Dean onto the bed and rip off his clothes.

Castiel growled and deepened the kiss, his hands gripped Dean’s waist and pushed him backwards toward his bed. For a moment he pulled back to look at Dean, “We can still go slow after we’re naked in bed, right?”

The hunter chuckled fondly, “We’re gonna have to, it’s been a long time since I’ve had anal sex…”

To say that Castiel was surprised by Dean’s admission was a vast understatement. He had assumed the hunter would be uncomfortable with that, but learning that he wanted Castiel inside of him fueled
his desire for the hunter even more.

Castiel rubbed his thumb over Dean’s cheek, “I won’t hurt you.”

Dean pulled his jacket off and threw it at the chair across the room, onto the large teddy bear, then focused his attention on peeling Castiel’s trenchcoat off of his frame. Dean smiled, “Nah, that fifty shades shit is, at least, third date kind of stuff…” He winked.

Castiel had no idea what Dean meant by that, but he knew he would probably find out sooner or later. That was something he was looking forward to the most. Exploring all of the things that couples did, because they were together now. He smiled as happiness filled his heart, before he loosened the knot of his tie and pulled it off of his shirt collar, letting it fall on the ground. His fingers found the buttons of Dean’s shirt and unbuttoned them quickly, eager to feel Dean’s skin underneath his fingers.

He kissed Dean again, after he pushed the open shirt from his shoulders, he framed the hunter’s face with his hands. Letting his hands glide down Dean’s throat to his shoulders, he pulled away slightly to let his gaze wander over the man’s naked chest. Castiel couldn’t wait to kiss every inch of the hunter’s beautiful, freckled skin.

He quickly removed his own shirt, just opening the first few buttons before he pulled it over his head and off. As soon as his hands were free again he grabbed Dean and pulled him close. Feeling Dean’s naked chest touching his, feeling his rapid heartbeat against his own – it was like finally arriving to a place he always longed to go… like arriving home.

Castiel followed the lines of Dean’s tattoo with his fingers, biting his lower lip as he watched his own hand trailing down the man’s chest and over the hard lines of his stomach, until they fell to his jeans.

He looked up into Dean’s green eyes, taking in his elaborate breathing and lust filled gaze as he popped open the button of his jeans and slowly opened the zipper. Dean gasped and licked over his lips, making them wet and inviting. Castiel rubbed his thumb over Dean’s lower lip before he kissed him again. Soft and tender at first, but deepening the kiss when his other hand reached into Dean’s boxer briefs.

He could feel Dean’s hard erection under his fingers, the tip of it already wet with precum. Castiel licked over Dean’s tongue, enjoying how the hunter moaned into his open mouth, before he grabbed the waistband of his jeans to slowly pull them down along with his lover’s underwear. Dean toed out of his shoes and helped Castiel get his jeans off completely, all the while having never stopped
kissing each other.

Castiel raked his fingers through Dean’s short hair before he kissed down his throat and licked over the hunter’s pulse point. He felt the man’s hand on his belt buckle, opening it with unsteady fingers. Castiel wasn’t sure why he liked the idea of ruining the hunter’s, usually, steady hands; just like he didn’t understand why seeing the red mark that had formed on Dean’s skin made him feel so proud.

He was surprised when Dean went down on his knees in front of him, opening Castiel’s pants and freeing his erection from his boxershorts. Dean leaned forward and kissed his thigh, fingers caressing carefully over his erection. Castiel bit his lips and stilled the man’s ministrations to remove his own shoes and socks, before he got rid of the rest of his clothes.

Dean smirked up at the angel, still on his knees, he pushed Castiel backwards to sit on the edge of the bed. He scraped his nails gently against the angel’s thighs as he pressed himself between his legs. Castiel let out a shaky exhale as Dean grasped his erection again, guiding it to his wet lips. The hunter swiped his tongue up along the length of Castiel’s sex, eliciting a pleasured groan. His eyes rolled into the back of his head when he was suddenly enveloped in the incredible heat of his lover’s mouth.

Then an unwelcome and loud banging noise echoed in the room, someone was knocking on Dean’s door.

“Guys?” It was Sam.

Dean pulled off with a growl, opening the drawer of his bedside table to pull out a gun. He stood up and cocked it, “I’m gonna fucking kill him.”

“Not if I smite him first,” Castiel growled, squinting his eyes at the door. “Tell him to go away!”

Dean grabbed his robe off of the dresser and haphazardly wrapped it around himself, while indicating for Castiel to get beneath the covers of his bed. Once he was in the bed, Dean swung his door open, holding his brother at gunpoint, “This better be fucking good, Sammy.”

The younger hunter’s eyes widened and he raised his hands up in surrender, “Dude!”

“Uh uh, get to the point, or leave. You have five seconds.”
“Do you have the noise canceling headphones?”

Dean groaned and walked back to the bedside table drawer, pulling out a pair of headphones and throwing them at his brother.

“Thanks!” Sam smiled, still lingering in the doorway.

“Dude! Get the hint! Leave!” Dean barked at Sam, his tone threatening.

Sam nodded, his cheeks tinged red in embarrassment as he shut the door.

Dean locked the door and shrugged his robe off before smiling at the sight of Castiel wrapped up in his bed sheets. He quirked his lips up in a smile, “Where were we?”

“Not at the door, so come back to bed,” Castiel growled impatiently.

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Dean’s cock twitched at the commanding tone in Cas’s voice. The angel demanding he get back to bed was, hands down, one of the hottest things he’d ever heard in his life. He chuckled before tipping his head in a half-assed salute, “Yes, sir!”

Dean crawled beneath his sheets and sidled up next to the angel, their faces a mere few centimeters apart. Dean’s eyes flicked over his lover’s face in appreciation, feeling weirdly shy in that moment. He cupped Cas’s cheek before leaning forward to tenderly kiss his lips. Dean whispered, “I can’t believe this is real.”

“I know what you mean,” Cas blinked and looked thoughtful for a moment, “It felt like it’s taken an eternity to get to this moment. Now that it’s finally here…” He smiled and leaned over to return the soft kiss, “It’s overwhelming.”

Dean knew what Cas meant, he was waiting for the other shoe to drop. Maybe this was all a dream
and he’d wake up alone and cuddled up next to the damn teddy bear… Again. He shook his head of the negative thoughts and grasped the angel’s hand, holding their intertwined fingers up, before pulling Cas’s hand to his lips, “If you want to wait…” He offered.

Cas raised his eyebrows, “No!”

Castiel hated that he sounded so eager, but seeing Dean’s chuckle was worth the embarrassment. He grinned shyly before he reached for Dean’s face and caressed his cheek, pulling him closer for a few light kisses.

“I want you,” he confessed quietly against the hunter’s lips. “And I don’t want to wait another second.”

Dean made an appreciative sound before pulling Castiel’s hand flush against his chest, “How bad do you want me?”

Castiel didn’t answer Dean’s question with words, but with action. He pushed Dean down on the bed and kissed him, licking deep inside the hunter’s mouth to claim him. He braced his weight on both of his forearms as he settled himself on top of the man, grinding their erections together a few times before he pushed himself up to look at Dean.

He looked breathtaking under him. Dean’s lips were apart and wet, a red tinge graced his cheeks, making his freckles stand out more prominently. “You’re mine,” he whispered, before he started to leave a trail of kisses down Dean’s throat and to his chest.

He loved the low moans that escaped Dean’s lips when he licked over his chest, circling his nipple before he gently sucked it. Castiel slowly slid down the bed until his mouth could reach Dean’s stomach and hips, giving the same treatment to the skin there as he had on his chest.

Dean groaned when Castiel’s trail ended with his tongue tasting the precum from the tip of his erection. He licked along the long and hard shaft, sucking in the head before slipping his finger down between Dean’s legs, caressing his inner thigh with soft touches.

He felt Dean’s fingers find their way into his hair as he licked lower, pushing his bent legs apart so
that he could get better access. Castiel used his fingers to massage Dean’s thigh for a moment before he slowly let them glide over the sensitive skin, spreading his ass cheeks apart.

Dean took in a sharp inhale, the hunter’s grip tightening on Castiel’s hair, as he licked at the sensitive skin of his lover’s rim. Dean tensed under him, the sensation probably as new to him as it was for Castiel to give him this sort of pleasure.

Castiel looked up for a moment, “Try to relax.”

Dean let out a nervous chuckle, “I… I’m not all that experienced in….” He let his sentence trail off. It was endearing to see the, usually, cocky hunter appear so timid.

Castiel smiled reassuringly, “You trust me, don’t you?”

“With my life,” He answered, his voice firm.

Castiel felt his smile grow wider with the happiness Dean’s words evoked in his heart, before he answered with a mirrored firm voice, “I won’t hurt you.”

Dean leaned up to caress his face, “I know you won’t, Baby.”

For a moment Castiel leaned into Dean’s palm, nuzzling his cheek against it with a contented smile before he grinned and got back to his position between the man’s legs. Now that he knew that this was the first time Dean would experience this, he wanted to make it as pleasurable as possible. He wanted to make Dean crazy with want, he wanted to hear Dean beg for him.

He felt his own erection pulsing at just the thought of it, biting his lip to concentrate on the mission ahead. Castiel started with careful licks, teasing Dean’s rim and circling it with his tongue. The hunter’s fingers in his hair were a perfect guide to learn what he liked, as the grip on his hair got tighter.

When he felt Dean’s muscles relaxing under his fingers that were kneading his ass, he flattened his tongue against his lover’s pucker and licked over it tantalizingly slowly.
The hunter bucked up in pleasure, his voice choked as he called out, “Cas!”

Castiel smiled against Dean’s skin, enjoying what his ministrations were doing to the hunter. He twirled his tongue around his entrance before he carefully pushed inside, eliciting a deep groan.

He took his time licking Dean and playfully tapping his tongue against his rim, enjoying how Dean lost his, usually, calm control under him. He needed to hold the hunter down with one hand when he started to push against him, his groans and gasps slowly turning to outright moans.

“Cas...” Dean panted, hips thrusting upward when his tongue breached his lover’s hole again. His hands wandered from Castiel’s hair to the bed sheets, clenching them as he appeared to lose complete control, “Fuck, yes, fuck!”

Castiel took the breathless pleading for what it was and starting probing his tongue in languid circles within his lover’s anus, penetrating in and out, a little faster, with more pressure.

“Oh, fuck!” Dean cried out, “I’m... I’m gonna fucking lose it... I need... I need your cock...” He begged.

Castiel knelt back on the bed to look at Dean. It was amazing how just a few words from Dean’s lips could make every thought in his mind disappear. He laid his hands on Dean’s stomach and caressed him, letting them glide to Dean’s hips to pull him closer.

Dean leaned over and opened the bedside drawer to their right, he pulled out a small white bottle and tossed it to Castiel. It was pretty unremarkable aside from the large blue letters ‘KY’ on the front label. “Do you know how to prep?” The question came out a little breathy.

Castiel nodded and opened the bottle, squeezing a generous amount of cool liquid on his fingers. He rubbed it between them to warm it up, before he gently circled Dean’s entrance. Castiel could feel Dean begin to lose his inhibitions under his careful and teasing touches, before he slowly pushed one slick finger into him. The thought that Dean was letting him in, as he relaxed around his finger, was incredibly arousing.

Castiel kept his gaze firmly on Dean’s, looking for any signs of discomfort from the hunter, but Dean seemed to like what he was doing. He looked beautiful, his breathing unsteady and fast, a dreamy smile gracing his lips as Dean looked back at him. He quirked his brow, “This ain’t my first rodeo, Cas. Come on, I’m goin’ nuts here.” His tone sweet, if not a little imploring.
Castiel couldn’t help but smile, “You asked so nicely before. I’m sure you can do it again.” To underline his words, he pushed another finger against him, not hard enough to breach the ring of muscle, but to clearly show his intentions.

Dean groaned as he thrust his hips downward, attempting to get Castiel’s finger in deeper, “You…” At the lack of satisfaction he practically growled, “Pretty please with a fucking cherry on top?”

Castiel chuckled lightly over his lover’s disgruntled tone before he pushed a second finger in. He was rewarded with a loud groan and a breathy, “Fuck, yes.”

The hunter sucked in his breath when Castiel’s fingers pushed deeper inside of him. He knew that he had found the right spot when Dean gasped loudly and his hips suddenly jerked towards his fingers.

“Good?” Castiel asked with a grin.

Instead of getting an answer, Dean leaned up enough to keep Castiel’s hand in place, while being able to pull him down by his neck into a passionate kiss. He gripped the back of the hunter’s neck with his free hand to keep balance, while they lost themselves in each other’s lips. When he finally let go, Dean fell back against the pillow with a moan when Castiel began to scissor his fingers inside his lover’s entrance.

Castiel kissed Dean's kneecap, watching how the man writhed under him, as he continued to work him open, before adding a third finger. It was hard to hold himself back, when Castiel became more and more impatient with lust. He couldn’t wait to be inside of the hunter, to be united with his lover in the most intimate way. But he wanted to make this good for Dean, so he relentlessly teased his lover’s prostate, wanting to make him crazy with need.

Dean let out another groan, more of a whimper really, as the man bucked against his fingers. The hunter’s fists were clenched in the bedsheets as he growled, “If you don’t fuck me, I’m gonna lose my mind.”

He couldn’t suppress the growl falling from his lips as he removed his fingers from Dean to open the bottle again. Spreading the lubrication on his own erection showed him how close to the edge he already was, just from preparing Dean. Castiel gripped Dean’s hips to pull him closer, before he pushed his erection slowly inside of his lover.
He had to bite his lower lip. It felt overwhelming, hot and tight. Castiel closed his eyes and took a few deep breaths to calm himself before he pushed deeper, until he was fully inside of Dean.

As he was enveloped in the intense heat of his lover, Castiel began to slowly thrust; measured, calculated, in order to not hurt Dean, allowing him time to adjust to his length. Castiel also wanted to keep his own lust under control.

It was amazing to see Dean like this. So open, every emotion so clearly written on his face.

Dean gripped his shoulder as his panting came out in time with Castiel’s slow thrusts. When the hunter gently bucked his hips, to meet the thrusts in a tantalizing circular motion, Castiel gasped. The grip on his shoulder tightened when Dean let out a wanton moan. Castiel couldn’t think of having ever heard such a beautiful sound in the entirety of his existence.

Castiel needed Dean to be closer and his lips to be within reach. He needed to be able to kiss the moans from the hunter’s lips. He braced his knees against the bed as he bent over his lover in a cupping embrace. Dean’s eyes widened in surprise as he was bodily lifted forward against Castiel, he had probably forgotten just how strong he was. Never breaking contact, he brought the hunter up, bringing them face to face as Castiel sank back against his own calves.

The new position created the most delicious angle, striking the little bundle of nerves within his lover incessantly, causing Dean to cry out. He could feel Dean’s precum wet and hot against his stomach, the hunter’s hard erection now pressed between their bodies.

Castiel caressed Dean’s cheek with one hand before he kissed him. Just a few nips before his hands wandered down Dean’s body to his waist, leaving a trail of goosebumps with light, feathered touches. He gripped Dean’s waist to get better leverage as he started to resume thrusting into him with a steady pace.

Eliciting breathy moans and filthy begging from his lover, he quickened his pace, kissing and licking against Dean’s throat and shoulder as he used his strength to pull the hunter up and down against him.

Dean cupped his face, eyes locked with Castiel’s as they were plunged deeper and deeper down the rabbit hole of ecstasy. “Cas?”

The sensations of everything, the feeling of Dean tight and hot around his sex, the breathy moans
and pleas, the tenderness and love he felt, it was tipping Castiel over the proverbial edge and he could only nod at his lover, for fear that words would destroy the magic.

Dean leaned forward, licking up along Castiel’s neckline to the tip of his earlobe, before whispering, “How hellbent are you on this ‘slow’ thing?”

Castiel bit Dean’s shoulder to muffle his moan. Dean was making it incredibly hard to keep himself from losing his control. Something, Castiel was sure, Dean knew very well and was using to tease him. “Why?” He more or less moaned the question against his lover’s hot skin, but he was sure Dean understood.

“Cuz…” He breathed out, a deep moan escaping before he continued, “I’m pretty sure…” Dean moved his head back, locking eyes with Castiel again, “I’ve never needed to be fucked hard and fast the way I do right now.”

Castiel gasped and kissed Dean's lips before he nodded and tightened his grip around him. He hoisted the hunter up against his body, as he made his way off of the bed and to the next wall, pushing Dean against it, kissing him deep before he thrusted into him hard and fast. Exactly how Dean needed it.

Dean wrapped his legs around Castiel’s waist, his arms around his shoulders to hold on, although Castiel was holding him up so firmly that the hunter didn't need to brace himself.

“Fuck, Cas! Harder,” Dean begged.

Castiel pounded into him faster and deeper, biting his lip to keep himself from coming. He knew it was futile. The feeling of being inside of Dean, thrusting into him, hearing him moaning and begging drove him insane and to the edge.

“Dean, uh… I…” He kissed his lover again, “I can’t…”

It felt like he was losing his mind with want and need. Castiel repositioned one of his arms so he only needed one to hold Dean up, the other found its way into his lover’s short hair. He gasped, kissed Dean’s lips hard, before he pulled back slightly to look at him, “Dean…”

In between his lover’s pants and moans, Dean managed a soft, “You can come in me…”
Castiel gasped against his lips as Dean’s words pushed him over the edge. He thrust deep and hard into him a few more times before he felt himself climax into his lover with a loud moan.

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Dean cried out in pleasure as he felt Cas lose control. His lover kept him held against the wall as he rode out the waves of his orgasm, he could feel the angel’s cock pulse inside of him. It was, hands down, the best fucking feeling in the world.

Once Cas caught his breath, he looked down, noticing Dean’s painfully hard erection. Spurred to action, Dean had to bite back the yelp of surprise when Cas carried him, softening erection still inside his ass, and walked them back to the bed. He lay Dean down and dropped to his waist, immediately taking his erection into his mouth.

Dean saw stars, the fucking pleasure and heat; for a freakin’ angel who didn’t have much experience, Cas sure knew what the hell he was doing. Dean was close, between the hard fucking against the wall and the insane heat of the best blowjob he had ever had, he wasn’t going to last.

Cas started to hum a little as he took Dean down to the base. He began to thrust and Cas stilled his hips a little. Dean let out a frustrated whine until he felt his lover’s fingers tease at his entrance. His eyes rolled to the back of his head when Cas slipped a digit in, hooking it at the right angle to hit that fucking spot. “Fuck, Cas, I’m gonna come…” He warned, expecting the angel to pull off.

When Cas began to bob his head a little faster, gripping Dean’s hips to keep him in place, he finally succumbed to his own orgasm. Dean gripped Cas’s hair as he rode out the waves of pleasure, coating his lover’s throat.

Cas pulled off as Dean’s erection began to soften. He wiped his chin with the back of his hand and looked up at Dean, “What I did… was that okay?”

Dean chuckled as he sat up, pulling the angel forward against him, causing them to fall onto the bed in a mess of tangled limbs. He looked up at Cas and smiled, “I think you lied about being a virgin, dude.”

“I haven’t been a virgin for a long time now.”
Shaking his head in amusement, Dean let out a soft chuckle, “I was implying that you know what the hell you’re doing in the sex department. I’ve never had better sex, Cas. Seriously.”

Cas’s smile was radiating and just for that, that admission had been worth it. The angel glanced up at him shyly, “It was the same for me. It was incredible.”

Dean waggled his eyebrows, “Wanna go again?”

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Cas was asleep in bed, actually sleeping. Dean chuckled to himself as he questioned whether the angel was exhausted because of his mojo being drained, or if it was from the sex marathon they had that night. He secretly hoped it was the latter, it was never too early for an ego boost. As he sat up in the bed, staring down at the angel, he felt his heart swell with happiness. Dean reached out and tenderly caressed his lover’s cheek, causing Cas to smile in sleep. It was weird to think of a guy as beautiful, but that’s what Cas was, fucking beautiful.

Dean quietly crept out of their bed and went to the kitchen for some much needed coffee. It was a little passed six in the morning, so he hadn’t been expecting anyone to be up.

“Mornin’, Sammy,” He mumbled as he went straight for the mugs and started pouring himself a fresh cup of coffee.

Sam was sitting at the counter, glued to his phone while nursing his own cup. He looked up at Dean and grinned, “Mornin’, sinner.” He chuckled.

Dean rolled his eyes, but he was smiling, “And damn proud of it.” He puffed out his chest with pride to further accentuate his truth.

His brother laughed and they shared a smile as Dean sat down beside him. They sat in companionable silence for several minutes until Sam looked up, as though a lightbulb turned on in his head, “Hey, remember when you bit my head off when I asked if you were gay?”

How could he forget? He had wanted to punch Sam in his questioning face that day. Dean couldn’t
help but laugh then, mostly at himself for having panicked the way he did. It’s amazing how a little self-hate and internalized homophobia could almost ruin your life. Thank fuck that was over.

“Yeah?”

“Well, you said you weren’t gay, or bi, or whatever. So, does this whole thing, I mean… Are you gay, or bi, or whatever?”

Dean gave a slight nod to indicate his understanding the question. He wasn’t entirely sure how to answer. He wanted to say something along the lines of, ‘Cassexual’, but that was damn stupid. On the one hand, he still found women attractive, but the truth of the matter was he’d also found men attractive. Especially Cas. The answer was probably bisexual, but he smirked and answered, “Let’s say: whatever.”

Sam rolled his eyes and Dean gave him a bright smile. At that his brother then gave him a pout, “Does that mean Mom and I can’t join PFLAG?”

“What the fuck is PFLAG?”

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Four Months Later

Castiel couldn’t stop pacing up and down in Dean’s bedroom, which had become their bedroom four beautiful months ago. He came to a sudden stop when Dean threw a pillow at him.

“Dude! Chill!”

Castiel threw the pillow back, right in Dean’s face. It didn’t help much with his tenseness, but it was a start. Seeing Dean’s exaggerated expression almost made him smile. Almost, because he was worried about Claire. Why wasn’t Dean worried, too?

She was going out with this boy, that may or may not have feelings for her and she may or may not felt the same – she had been very vague on describing her relationship with this boy. It was very frustrating at times to get Claire to talk. Her stubbornness in that made Castiel think that she would almost be the offspring between himself and Dean, were they able to procreate.
“I’m going to follow them.” He decided out loud.

Dean jumped up from the bed, “Whoa, whoa, whoa!” He gently grabbed Castiel’s arm, “You can’t spy on them!”

“Of course I can. I’ll just make myself invisible. She won’t notice me.”

Dean rolled his eyes, “I know you can, I’m saying you shouldn’t.”

Castiel tilted his head, “Why? I promised Jimmy I would look after his family. I failed him enough already in doing this for him. I’m not going to let anything happen to Claire. She isn’t just my responsibility anymore, Dean. I love her, like she is my own. No...” He shook his head slightly, correcting his words, “She is my daughter. I want to protect her. Why shouldn’t I?”

His boyfriend let out a sigh, giving him a fond smile that bespoke of the pure sympathy he had come to receive from this man on a regular basis since their relationship shifted. “Okay, baby. But you’re taking me with you and we’re only going to stay for a few minutes, to make sure she’s okay...”

He wasn’t giving Dean a chance to say more on the matter, gripping his shoulder to take the hunter with him to a large dirt field separated into sections by short wooden fences, each section full of parked cars. There were enormous white screens at the front of each section as well, playing a film from a large tower with four different projectors. He turned to Dean with a curious look.

Dean smiled, “And you thought our first date was right out of a chick flick?”

Castiel didn’t understand what Dean meant by that, but it didn’t matter. He had to find his car that Claire had borrowed for her date. It didn’t take him long to spot it, “There’s my car.”

He reached behind him to grab Dean’s hand and dragged the man along on his way passed all of the different cars. Castiel noticed, with a frown, that most of the occupants weren’t watching the film, but were busy kissing and groping each other.

He hoped he wouldn’t have to witness Claire doing the same with this boy. A boy, he hasn’t even met. He also didn’t know what he would do if he were to witness such a thing.
The thought made him stop abruptly, causing Dean to run into him with a grunt. He turned around to his boyfriend, noticing him rubbing his nose, “What do we do if we find them kissing?”

Dean shrugged, “Leave them alone?” He offered unhelpfully.

“But I don’t even know who he is! What if he isn’t a kind boy and he doesn’t treat her well? What if he’s a werewolf, or a vampire, or possessed by a demon?”

“Dude, she’s not stupid. She’s been hunting on her own the last two months, she can handle it. And if he isn’t kind to her, she’ll kick him in the junk. And then when she comes home and tells us he was an asshole, we’ll find him and ‘Dexter’ his ass.”

Castiel thought about that option for a moment. Dean had some valid arguments and, since his boyfriend had educated him on the more finer series on Hulu, which had been explained as non-optional education, he could also understand what Dean meant by the, ‘Dexter his ass’ comment.

Castiel understood that Dean was asking him to trust in Claire’s abilities. It wasn’t that Castiel didn’t trust her, he knew how much she had learned and he was incredibly proud of her, but there was a part of his heart that always saw that little girl, standing on the stairs outside of her home, asking for her father.

He sighed deeply, “We’ll make it a slow and painful death.”

Dean smirked, “Is there any other kind?”

Someone cleared their throat behind them. Castiel exchanged a shocked look with Dean as he slowly turned around, seeing Claire with a tub of popcorn in her hand, standing next to a boy her age, who looked very pale.

“Claire! What a coincidence,” Cas said very slowly. Dean rolled his eyes.

Claire gave them both a blank look, “Seriously? You are a terrible liar. And you?” She regarded Dean with reproach, “I expected better!”
“Hey! It wasn’t my idea, hell, I tried to talk him out of it!”

“Tried and failed,” Her gaze fell back to Castiel, who felt a twitch in his wings from the desire to grab Dean and flee from Claire’s murderous look. “Why are you doing this? I thought you trusted me?”

“Um...” The boy next to Claire cleared his throat, “Claire, who are these people?”

Claire sighed and rolled her eyes, “They’re my dads. Senior citizen Bieber over there is Dean, and the awkward, accountant action figure is Cas.”

Castiel looked to the ground to hide his smile. This had been the first time Claire had introduced Dean as her dad and he knew how Dean secretly wished to play that part in Claire’s life.

He glanced up sideways at Dean, meeting the hunter’s eyes to find a dumbfounded expression on his beautiful face. Without making a conscious decision about it, his hand found its way to Dean’s, intertwining their fingers.

Claire made a disgusted noise, “Ugh, even after all this time you are still disgustingly cute.” She shook her head, “What are you still doing here? Go home!”

“Whoa, whoa! Don’t we at least get to find out the name of your… Whatever he is…” Dean quirked his brow in true fatherly fashion.

The boy timidly looked between Dean and Claire before finally saying, “My name is Tom, Sir. And we are just friends.”

Claire shoved at the two men, pushing them in the opposite direction of her and Tom, “There. You know his name. Can you please go home now?” She asked through partially gritted teeth.

Castiel squinted his eyes thoughtfully, “Just friends… that’s a phrase I have heard, before.”
Luckily for Castiel, Dean pulled him away from Claire in time, preventing him from another ill-timed comment that probably would have cost him his life, if Claire’s look could have killed.

Dean let out a nervous chuckle, taking a protective stance in front of Castiel, “Uh, sorry for interrupting, we’re uh… We’re gonna go.”

Claire nodded grimly before she and Tom made their way to Castiel’s car.

Castiel looked after them for moment before he turned to Dean, “He seems nice. What do you think?”

Dean smiled kind of dazedly, “She called me ‘dad’…”

Castiel smiled back, “I know. She’s thought of you as a dad for a while now. So, what do you think of him?”

His boyfriend let out a dramatic sigh, “Well, now if he fucks up, I’m definitely gonna have to murder him…”

“I’ll help you get rid of the body,” Castiel added in a serious tone.

“Fuck, why does that turn me on?”

Castiel quirked his brow, “We’ll come back to that thought later. What do you think? Should I make us both invisible and we can hide in the backseat?”

Dean chuckled and shook his head, “Nah, let them find their own way to each other, alone.”

Castiel knew Dean was right, but it had been worth a shot to ask. He glanced in the direction of his car and their daughter for another long moment before he frowned, “Wait, you’re not just saying this because you want to get home and have sex with me, are you?”

Dean pulled him forward into an embrace, before caressing Castiel’s cheek with his hand. His green
eyes darted to Castiel’s lips, never straying he said, “Well, now I am…”

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_Six Months Later_

Dean was sitting in the uncomfortable chair in front of the small table in their dingy little motel room. He was flipping through Dad’s journal, on the phone with his mom. “The one thing all the vics had in common is they all recently had a son, within the last five months or so… Well, that and they were all the Colonel's Extra Crispy recipe…”

“So, you said the children were kidnapped and the parents burned, but there were no traces of fire in the room?”

“Yeah, pretty much, no babies and no traces of fire. Other than the bodies…”

For a while Dean could only hear the rustling of a book through the line before Mary answered, “The only monster I can find that can burn their victims like that is a dragon, but… stealing kids doesn’t fit their MO. There is a creature though…” More paper rustling, “Known from myths and Irish folklore for stealing children. Leprechauns.”

“So, we’re looking at some sort of half dragon - half leprechaun?” Dean smirked to himself, “One might say, a dragrechaun?” At the uncomfortable silence coming from the end of the line he said, “Come on, you know you wanna say it, Mom. A dragrechaun.”

He turned to Cas, who was sitting on the bed looking for information on his laptop. “Cas? Come on, a dragrechaun?”

Cas squinted his eyes at him, “It’s a tulpa, Dean.”

Damn, he loved when Cas did that. His face would scrunch up in a wondrous combination of confusion and annoyance. It was fucking awesome. He found himself purposely saying stupid shit in front of Cas, just so he could get that reaction. It was kind of stupid how in love with the angel he was.
Dean smiled, “Hey, Mom, let me call you back.” He hung up the phone and walked over to his boyfriend. Cas continued to look at him with squinted eyes, so Dean did the only logical thing.

He yanked the angel up by his suit jacket and kissed the breath out of him.

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_Eight Months Later_

Castiel was busy reading, *Slaughterhouse-Five* from Dean’s bookshelf when Sam sat down next to him in the library.

Sam smiled at him, but Castiel ignored him, already having learned that kind of smile usually meant trouble.

“Cas?” Sam asked finally, causing Castiel to slowly lower the book and face his friend.

“Yes, Sam?” His tone was only slightly annoyed, he really just wanted to continue reading the book because Dean had told him there would be a quiz later.

“You like bees, right?” Sam asked innocently.

Castiel squinted his eyes in suspicion, “You know that I love them, Sam. What about them?”

“Charlie and I want to take you to a bee convention. You know, as a gift for yours and Dean’s eight month anniversary.”

For a moment Castiel was shocked, “Is that a thing? Should I get something for Dean?”

Sam raised his hands up to calm him down, “Yes, but don’t worry about gifts. We just wanted to do something nice for you two. It’s like a mini vacation. But don’t tell Dean. It’s a surprise. Just pack your stuff and we will meet them there.”
Castiel smiled, “That’s very nice of you. Thank you.”

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“Take a left at Jefferson,” Charlie practically barked, never taking her eyes off of her phone as she navigated them to some random banquet hall in Topeka for a pie convention.

Dean thought it was weird there was a convention for pies, but after Charlie told him about the My Little Pony conventions for grown men, he really couldn’t question it.

As he glided Baby into the left turn lane he asked, “So, is it like a look but don’t touch kind of thing, or am I gonna be allowed to taste test all of these bad boys?”

Charlie shrugged, “Honestly, I don’t know, but don’t even pretend you wouldn’t have a blast at a freakin’ convention about pie.”

Dean nodded his acquiescence. She had a point, besides it was nice to spend some time with Charlie. Between hunts and the full time job of being a boyfriend, he didn’t often get time to hang out with his friends. He missed Cas, but it was nice to know he was out having fun with Sammy. Absence makes the heart grow fonder and all that shit.

The parking lot in front of the banquet hall was packed, it wasn’t a big lot, but still. Dean had apparently underestimated how important pie was to people. After they finally found a parking spot, Charlie and Dean made the short trek to the entrance of the hall.

Charlie checked them in, then handed Dean a lanyard and some pamphlets. He looked down and instantly felt his blood run cold. The laminated ‘pass’ had the Supernatural logo on it. That was when he looked up. There were dozens of people, all dressed in flannel or trenchcoats, holding plastic versions of an angel blade or ruby’s dagger.

Dean groaned, “Are you kidding me?”

“We are definitely not,” Sam laughed behind him, causing Dean to whirl around in surprise. His gaze instantly softened when he saw Cas, looking down at his lanyard with a sad frown.
“It’s not a convention for bees.”

Dean frowned then, too, turning his attention to his brother and the little sister he never wanted, “You dicks! It’s one thing to trick me about pie, but to fuck with Cas’s bee love? That’s pretty damn low.” Dean approached his boyfriend and grasped his shoulder in comfort, “I’m sorry, Cas. Our friends are asshats.”

Cas looked up at him with huge blue eyes, “I missed you. Happy eight month anniversary.”

Dean chuckled, “People don’t actually celebrate their eight month anniversaries, Cas.” He turned to his brother, “Did you tell him that was a thing?”

Sam looked away to Charlie, “Hey, Charlie. How was the drive?”

Dean rolled his eyes. Of course Sammy had told Cas that was a thing.

In that moment a random woman dressed as Castiel walked by and said to her companion, “I’m the one who gripped you tight and raised you from perdition…”

Cas’s head snapped up in confusion, “What?” He looked around at the area, taking in his surroundings for the first time. Dean watched how his frown got deeper, “Where are we, Dean?”

Dean rubbed his temples in annoyance, “Hell.”

“Awww. Don’t be such a klingon. It’s fun! This is fun,” Charlie grinned cheerfully.

He narrowed his eyes at her, “On what planet is everything that happened in our lives being glorified, ‘fun’?”

“You totally have the wrong view of this, Dean. Let me explain it to you with a simple example, okay? Just bear with me for a second and be open to it for a moment.” She flagged down two women, who were dressed as Dean and Cas.
Dean rolled his eyes and wished he could just take Cas and leave.

“Hey, can I ask you a couple of questions?” Charlie asked in a friendly tone.

The taller, overweight girl with light brown hair, dressed as Dean eyed Charlie and shrugged as she said, “Sure, shoot.”

“My friends here are first time convention go-ers. Could you explain to them what you love about the Supernatural books and why you come to these conventions?” Charlie grinned.

The thin, smaller girl dressed as Cas mirrored her grin. Dean thought it looked like the girl was trying to flirt with Charlie. “Sure. Well, first of all, I go to conventions to meet up with my friends and have fun. We all love the Supernatural books, everyone for his or her own reasons. But it’s something that unites us, making us into a family. I personally love the books because I learned from them, that family don’t end in blood. I don’t have a family, but I have friends that became my family and are important to me. They are my reason to live and to work hard. The books are very inspiring to me.” She glanced over to her friend, “They also are the reason I met my friend here. Without her, my life wouldn’t be as awesome as it is now.” She nudged her friend with her elbow and grinned.

Her friend returned the smile and chuckled, before turning her attention to all of them, “She’s right. Through this insane fandom I’ve met incredible people, like my unicorn here. And the thing is, we’re not glorifying the tragedies of the boys, we’re finding strength and value in being able to literally go through hell and come out on the other side in one piece. It’s so much more than a lot of gratuitous violence and sex. And through the lessons we are taught, we become stronger.”

Dean was a little taken aback. He’d never really thought of it like that, he assumed the fans were adrenaline junkies who were too scared to actually live. He’d never thought about the fact that their lives could have moral value. “Alright, but why the costumes? What’s the deal?”

The taller girl scoffed, “You’re in costume, too, judgy.”

Her friend nodded enthusiastically, “Best destiel cosplay ever!”

Cas tilted his head and gave Dean a confused look, “What’s ‘destiel’?”
How the fuck was he supposed to answer that question? Dean had hoped to keep Cas completely in
the dark about that, he wasn’t entirely sure the angel would be comfortable with the idea that
thousands of random men and women were fascinated by their freakin’ love life. “Uh, it’s—”

The larger girl interrupted him, “It’s the romantic pairing of Dean and the angel Castiel.”

“There is a name for our relationship, Dean?” Cas asked, clearly surprised.

Both girls looked at each other with huge eyes, before the smaller woman grinned, “Wow, you two
take this cosplaying thing to the next level.”

Dean chuckled, clearly he was in an episode of the goddamn Twilight Zone. Fuck it, he might as
well have fun with it. Dean turned to Cas, feigned a serious expression and said, “What’s going on,
Cas? Since when does Uriel put a leash on you?” He stepped closer to his angel, hoping Cas would
catch on.

For a moment Cas looked confused before he realized what Dean was doing. He gave a short-lived
smile just for Dean to show him he understood, before his voice turned low and serious, “My
superiors have begun to question my sympathies.”

“Your sympathies?” Dean asked, reaching out a hand to touch his boyfriend’s shoulder.

"I was getting too close to the humans in my charge.” Cas’s voice was impossibly low. He took a
step closer, his voice getting even quieter, “You.”

The tone in Cas’s voice and the look he gave Dean told him how much the angel meant those words.
That even all of those years ago, their intense relationship had been the foundation that built them up
to this exact moment.

Dean smirked before he leaned forward and pressed a kiss to his boyfriend’s lips. They flinched at
the echo of squealing that, he swore, probably shattered an ear drum. And not just from the two
fangirls they had wrangled, but sixteen or seventeen other women near their vicinity who happened
to catch them kiss. He was pretty sure Sammy was one of the squealers, too.

Dean shook his head in disbelief and when he locked eyes with Cas, the freakin’ love of his damn
life, he couldn’t help but smile. He mouthed the words, ‘I love you.’
Cas mirrored his smile as he mouthed, ‘I know’.

The angel had totally Han Solo-ed him. Dean had won the fucking boyfriend lottery.

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One Year Later

Cas: Dean, I'm on my way home. I took good care of your "baby"

Dean: Are you texting while driving her again?

Cas: I can't find the eye roll emoticon

Dean: Dude seriously? The one thing I ask no texting and driving Baby

Cas: So texting and driving is bad but performing fellatio on me while I'm driving is permissible? You're a hypocrite, Dean.

Dean: It's not the same there's studies and shit that show how dangerous it is to text and drive. Show me a study about getting road head!

Cas: There isn't a study because this is obviously more distracting than texting. And I repeat, texting isn't distracting for me. Your mouth on me on the other hand: VERY DISTRACTING!

Dean: You can keep your eyes on the road when I'm sucking you off you can't say the same when you're texting

Cas: First of all I just need a millisecond to read your text message and I text back without looking, that's why I didn't find the emoticon. Second of all, remember every time you were driving and looking at me when I was sitting next to you. How long you looked at me sometimes? And if I would stop texting you would get worried and text me until I respond. Don't deny it.

Dean: Shut up stop trying to call me out on shit
Dean: And besides you can't blame me for being distracted with you in the car why do you think I made you sit in the back seat?
Dean: So I guess no texting and no sexy angels while driving

Cas: Do you really want that?

Dean: Of course I don't want you to text while driving

Cas: I meant the "no sexy angel" part

Dean: Cas baby you know I'm not serious about that I fucking love it when you're next to me
Cas: :D :D 😄 😄 😄 😄

Dean: I gotta ask why the bees?

Cas: They carry my heart to you

Dean: I'm trying to figure out if you're more lame or more cute

Cas: Charlie says I'm adorable

Dean: Charlie also dresses like Harry Potter characters and writes fanfiction. She can't be trusted

Cas: I love the bees. The bee is my emoticon for being happy, Dean. And I'm happy.

Dean: Are you now

Cas: 🐝.backgroundColor=coral

Dean: So if two bees means you're happy what does the 43366 you just sent me mean

Cas: Happy beyond the scale

Dean: It's kind of crazy isn't it?

Cas: Fitting for our lives.

Dean: You can say that again

Cas: Fitting for our lives.

Dean: LOL

Cas: I love you, too

Dean: LMAO

Cas: What does that mean again?

Dean: Love My Angel Often
Dean, I'm on my way home. I took good care of your "baby"

Are you texting while driving her again?

I can't find the eye roll emoticon

Dude seriously? The one thing I ask no texting and driving Baby

So texting and driving is bad but performing fellatio on me while I'm driving is permissible? You're a hypocrite, Dean.

It's not the same there's studies and shit that

You can keep your eyes on the road when I'm sucking you off you can't say the same when you're texting

First of all I just need a millisecond to read your text message and I text back without looking, that's why I didn't find the emoticon. Second of all, remember every time you were driving and looking at me when I was sitting next to you. How long you looked at me sometimes? And if I would stop texting you would get worried and text me until I respond. Don't deny it.

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seat?

So I guess no texting and no sexy angels while driving

Do you really want that?

Of course I don't want you to text while driving

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Shut up stop trying to call me out on shit

And besides you can't blame me for being distracted with you in the car why do you think I made you sit in the back

Cas baby you know I'm not serious about that I fucking love it when you're next to me

I gotta ask why the
The End

Chapter End Notes
Frankie here:

First and foremost, we would both like to give a shout out to our habitual commenters. Your persistent comments on almost every damn chapter gave us LIFE. To have people leave positive comments on your fic is a great fucking feeling, but to have consistent positivity throughout the course of updates is particularly touching. No joke. So, in no particular order: Thank you so much tfw_cas, PawneePorpoise, Patsy, SianaCastielNovak, Hocapontas, LoverAwakened, iszabella, Awesomelypathetic, Jaden Xiang, Agrimony, LadyTuesday, CastielsLlama, Smidgenofthesea, MellQueenOfHell, MinaB, and Eyes_of_a_Tragedy. We hope you love the ending as much as we loved writing it.

I’d also like to thank all of the readers who stuck with us while we Ross and Rachel’d the shit out of Dean and Cas. Your kudos, comments, and general love and support makes me smile and I can’t possibly begin to thank you enough! We hope the journey was worth it!

On a more personal note, I’d like to thank my amazing writing partner, my friend, my goddamn unicorn: Any. It was love at first fic for me and I never would have dreamed I would have gotten the opportunity to befriend you, let alone get the honor of being your beta. AND just to add a fucking cherry to the top of your sundae of awesomeness, I got to play the Dean to your Cas on this amazing journey. Your writing is beautiful, your ideas are incredible, and above it all, you’re an epic human being. I love you and look forward to what our partnership will create in the future.

Any here:
I'm struggling with words now that we finally reached the finish line. I can't even begin to describe how amazing this writing experience was for me.

But first of all, I want to thank everyone who stayed with us through the angst and heartache we put you through, supporting us with kudos, comments and love. You guys are awesome.

My unending gratitude goes to you Frankie for being at my side on this, supporting and helping me with my struggles through the english language, teaching me a lot of new words and phrases and helping me keeping my british english in check. Writing with you was like writing with twenty fingers and one brain. And I still can't believe I found you, my brain twin, on the other side of the fucking planet! I'd never imagined that leaving a comment on your amazing fic would change my writing live so profoundly. I just loved how organic and easy our writing process was, how perfectly well we fitted together and I'm so very thankful that your motivation brought me back to paint again. I hope we can work on a lot more fics together in the future :D

I also want to thank google for google docs and hangouts... even when "goofle" ships wincest sometimes.

P.S. If you aren't an angel of the lord you shouldn't text and drive
P.P.S. And remember, Dean doesn’t think you should text and drive even if you ARE an angel of the lord.
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!