Family Ties
by Antarctic_Echoes

Summary

Yahweh tries to get Chloe out of Lucifer's life; angelic brethren proceed to make Lucifer's life miserable.

Sequel to "Two Brothers" -- takes place about a week later.

Notes

A really big THANK YOU to all of you wonderful readers out there who enjoyed "Two Brothers." Thanks also for all of your wonderful comments -- they really helped keep me inspired! I greatly appreciate all of you coming along on this journey with Lucifer and Chloe. I hope this installment doesn't disappoint!

A super-huge THANK YOU to my fantastic beta, ScooterThyme! You make my work shine! Thank goodness you catch all my "had" farms, lol! You are awesome! Thank you also for helping me with this installment's title, which had me tearing out my hair. You're the BEST!!
Disclaimer: Lucifer Morningstar, Chloe Decker, Trixie Decker, Mazikeen, Amenadiel, Dan Espinoza, Penelope Decker and Linda Martin are owned by Vertigo Comics, DC Comics, Neil Gaiman, Mike Carey, and everyone else involved with the Lucifer TV show and comic books. I own nothing and make no money on this. I merely am borrowing the characters for... uh... writing practice. (Lucifer's angelic brethren are my creation.)
This was not going well.

Lucifer stood in front of the mirror and frowned. He had changed his clothes three times already and just could not find anything that satisfied him. Tonight was his big dinner with Chloe, and he wanted it to be perfect. He had considered a tuxedo, then thought it was too formal. A suit would be good, he had decided. Casual, but not too casual, and the detective liked him in a suit, so... He stared at his reflection -- he had finally decided on a black William Fioravante vested suit with a maroon silk shirt, no tie.

Or should he wear a tie? He fretted over what Chloe might think of him. Would she like it? Would she not like it? Would she find him handsome? Sexy? Charming? Ugh. How did humans go through this and live to tell about it? He was the Devil -- he shouldn’t be stressing out over how he looked. Women and men just naturally fell all over him. It shouldn’t even matter if he went to dinner naked! Which, actually, was a very tempting thought....

But no. He’d have to go with clothes on. The detective preferred him in clothes when in public. She had seen him naked a couple of times and didn’t seem too impressed, so it was better to play it safe. Wait, maybe she wasn’t impressed by his angelic body? Another thing to worry about....

This was getting ridiculous. Here he was, a twitterpated loon, worrying over every tiny minor detail because he finally was going to take out the woman he loved. He loved her -- and she loved him! He still couldn’t believe it. What a miracle that was... that the Devil would actually fall in love with a human, and she would love him back. He couldn’t believe his luck. He wondered if his angelic brethren ever felt as fiercely joyful as he did this very moment.

He checked his watch -- there was just enough time to pick up the bouquet of flowers he ordered, then head to her house to pick her up. When he had asked her what she wanted to eat, she’d responded, “Surprise me.” He hoped that she liked French cuisine.

At 6:00, Lucifer pulled his Corvette up into her driveway and checked himself one last time in the mirror. Pathetic. The Devil shouldn’t worry about how he looked! He heaved a big sigh and hopped out of the car, flowers in hand. Walking up to the front door, he considered just opening it, but decided to be polite and knocked. Trixie answered.

“Lucifer!” she cried as she flung herself on him and gave him a big hug around the waist. He jumped at the contact; the little spawn’s unpredictable movements still made him nervous. He never knew what she was going to do next.

Trixie eyed the bouquet and nodded in approval. “You got her flowers. Good! How about
“Was I to get her chocolates, as well?” Lucifer asked, a little worried.

The little girl shrugged. “It would have made a better impression, but I guess it’s okay.” She grabbed his arm and hauled him inside. Lucifer looked for his date, but the detective was nowhere to be seen.

“Where’s your mother?” he asked Trixie.

“Oh, she’ll be right out. She’s just picking out shoes.” The little girl dragged him to the living room and put his bouquet of flowers on the coffee table. She pulled him down so that he was sitting next to her, and looked at his back. “Where are your wings?”

“Put away for now, child,” he said, his eyes still searching for Chloe.

“When are you going to bring them out?”

Lucifer looked at her then. “Well, I’m not supposed to show them off. You know, end of the world and all that?”

“I’d really like to see your wings. I think they’re cool,” Trixie said. “Can you bring them out now?”

“Absolutely not!” Lucifer cried. “After all the time I spent getting ready for tonight?”

“Maybe when you and Mommy get back? I really want to have a ride. Please, please, please, Lucifer?”

The little spawn was looking at him with those big, pleading eyes. Bloody hell. She knew he couldn’t say no when she looked at him like that.

He was just about to say yes when Chloe walked up to the pair of them and said, “Trixie, stop torturing Lucifer.”

“But Mommy....” Trixie pouted.

“Go to the kitchen and put these in water, will you please?” Chloe asked her as she handed the bouquet to Trixie. With a flounce, the little girl walked off.

Lucifer rose to his feet, his mouth suddenly dry at the sight of her. Chloe wore a beautiful red dress with a slit up one thigh, showing off her long legs. The front of the dress looked quite demure, but it was backless, which took his breath away.

“Sorry about that,” she said as she smiled at him. “Trixie does nothing but talk about your wings when we’re at home. I swear, I think she sees you as her personal toy.”

His eyes lit up with desire. “I can be your personal toy, if you like,” he said seductively as he reached for her and nuzzled her neck. She laughed and pushed him away playfully.

“Whoa, slow down there, tiger,” she said. “Trixie’s here. Romance, remember?”

He sighed and released her reluctantly. “Right.”

Chloe caressed his stubble-lined cheek, her eyes filled with promise. “Anticipation makes everything better, my dear Devil.”
Lucifer smiled, trying to reign in the desire that was wreaking havoc with his system. “Very well, Detective, but I’ll have you know that you’d make the finest torturer in all of Hell.”

She laughed at that. “Patience, Lucifer. Patience.”

Chloe walked off to get her purse, leaving Lucifer to call after her, “Patience is not the Devil’s strong suit!”

The babysitter came just then, a teenage girl who gave Lucifer such a look of lust that he took a step back. It was a little disturbing to see, but at least he knew his angelic charm was still working. Sometimes he wondered if he had any at all, when he was with the detective.

Chloe walked up to the girl and said, “You can order pizza for dinner -- I put twenty dollars on the kitchen counter. If you have any problems with Trixie, please call me, okay? We’ll be back around 11:00. Thanks, Ashley.” She called out, “Trixie, we’re leaving!”

“Mommy!” the little girl cried with a big smile on her face as she came running up. She looked at Lucifer, then back at her mother. “You both look great! You need pictures!”

“Ah,” Lucifer said as he pulled his phone out of his pocket. He took a couple of just him and the detective close up, then Chloe handed her phone to Ashley.

“Can you take a couple with all of us, and one with just Lucifer and me?” she asked the girl.

Lucifer stood proudly next to his family as the girl snapped the photos, feeling like he was on top of the world. The last one, of just him and Chloe was a close up. The couple looked at each other, grinning, just as the camera snapped.

Trixie gave Chloe a big hug, then Lucifer. “Have a great time!”

“Be good for Ashley, okay?” Chloe said. “Listen to what she says and go to bed at 9:00. We’ll be back at 11:00.”

“Okay, Mommy.” Trixie turned and gave a thumbs-up to Lucifer. “Good luck, Lucifer!”

“Right. Thank you, child,” he replied. He would need it, he thought to himself, before walking outside with Chloe.

“So are you ready for some fine dining, love?” Lucifer asked as he opened the car door for her. “And perhaps some dancing afterwards? Some... horizontal dancing?”

Chloe rolled her eyes, although she was smiling. “Lucifer, we have to be home by 11:00. Trixie, remember?”

“There’s plenty of time between now and 11:00,” he responded with a suggestive gleam in his eyes. “We can skip dinner and go straight to dessert....”

“Don’t you ever think about anything other than sex?”

Lucifer blinked at her, surprised. “Well of course not, Detective -- not when you’re around.”

That had Chloe shaking her head. “Romance, remember? I want to see how the Devil does romance,” she said as she took a seat. “Now, where are we going?”

“Ah.... That, my dear Detective, is a surprise,” he said as he climbed in and turned the engine over.
Lucifer’s brow furrowed as he tried to start the car. All he heard was a click. He blinked. Strange. He had just driven it....

“Bloody hell, I don’t believe it,” he muttered as he tried again, with no results.

“Is it the battery?” Chloe offered. “Or maybe your alternator died?”

“Can’t be.... I just had both replaced a month ago....”

“Well, let’s take my car and we’ll call AAA when we get home,” Chloe said as she got out of the car.

“No-no-no!” Lucifer said as he looked at her with distressed eyes. “This isn’t how it’s supposed to be tonight!”

“It’s okay, Lucifer,” Chloe said as she stood by her car. “Come on, I’ll drive.”

His eyes went from her, to his car, then back to her. “But-- but --“

“Hey.” She walked over to his side of the car with a smile and took his hand to lead him out. “It’s okay. Let’s not let this ruin our night, okay?”

Lucifer pouted. “It’s already ruined.”

Chloe kissed his cheek. “Far from it. Come, Lucifer.”

He got into her car sadly, wondering if they should cancel and start over on another night. He should be driving her, shouldn’t he? Wasn’t that how it was done? So much for his grand gesture of romance....

“So where are we going?” Chloe asked as she pulled out into the street.

He sighed unhappily. “Head toward downtown, would you, Detective?”

Before they knew it, they were on the freeway heading toward the cluster of high-rises in the distance. They drove in companionable silence, with Lucifer still wondering what had happened to his car. He stared out the window at the passing scenery, trying to make sense of it all. The car shouldn’t have died like that. He just had it serviced a month ago. It was so strange --

He caught sight of a figure on the shoulder of the road, unnoticed by everyone else. A robed figure, with large, brown wings. Lucifer’s eyes widened as he recognized the angel -- Camael. His father always sent that particular angel when he wanted to wreak havoc on earth. Lucifer had worked alongside him a few times when he was his father’s left hand, and hadn’t liked him. Camael enjoyed destruction a little too much.

Panic shot through Lucifer. Camael’s presence could only mean something bad was about to happen. He turned to Chloe with eyes wide with fear. “Detective --“

He never finished his sentence, for just then a big rig from the opposite traffic lane flew head-on into the concrete divider. Flipping as it made impact, it jumped the rail and landed on a car a few cars ahead of Chloe and Lucifer. Time seemed to slow down for both of them as the sound of screeching tires and crunching metal filled the air. The car ahead of them spun out of control and careened into another before smashing into the wreckage. Chloe swore as she swerved to try to avoid the accident,
but she rammed into the car ahead of them. Lucifer’s airbag deployed -- but Chloe’s did not. A second big rig behind them jack-knifed, sliding and hitting them from behind. Another hit from the side had them ricocheting off another car before the world finally stopped.

A deathly silence fell over the freeway. Lucifer blinked, trying to figure out what had happened. Blood was running down his face where he had hit the side window from the last impact. Pain racked his body -- his legs felt pinned, and his collarbone where the seatbelt had rested felt broken. Fear washed over him.

“Detective?” he said hoarsely. “Chloe?” No answer. He struggled to turn his head. She was hunched over the steering wheel, blood was flowing out of her head where she had struck it. Was she dead? He felt for her soul but he couldn’t tell if it had already left her. Dread filled him. “Chloe!”

“Hello, Luci.”

The fallen angel slowly turned toward the passenger window. Camael stood outside, slowing down time so that no one would see him.

“C-Cam,” Lucifer whispered.

The blonde angel looked him over with the cold eyes of a scientist inspecting a particularly interesting bug. “Why are you hurt? You shouldn’t even be injured.”

“T-this is your doing....” Lucifer said. “This accident.”

“Guilty as charged,” the angel said with a grin. “Every once in a while I outdo myself.”

“You -- you were the reason why my car wouldn’t start?”

“That’s right. We wanted the human injured, not dead.” Camael laughed. “Can you imagine if you had been in your convertible? She’d be deader than a doornail!”

Anger shot through Lucifer at Camael’s cold statement, and he swore vicious epithets at the angel before continuing. “Bloody hell, why? Why would you do this?”

Camael shook his head. “My place isn’t to ask why. Father ordered it -- it’s done. Quite fun, I must say. I enjoy these automobiles. Such lovely tools of destruction.” Camael took one look at the burning hatred in his brother’s eyes, and smirked. “Now, now, Luci, before you go all berserk on me, keep in mind that I’m blameless here. You best remember that if you’re thinking about exacting retribution -- not that you’re in any way, shape, or form to do so.” The angel straightened. “Goodbye, Brother.”

Time sped up and Lucifer could hear the sound of people rushing to the cars to help. The wail of sirens was faint, but getting louder. He turned to look at Chloe, fear screaming inside him. “Detective,” he called, willing her to wake up and respond. She didn’t. He reached out his good arm to touch her.

“Chloe, please open your eyes.... Please....!”
The freeway was in chaos. Lucifer wanted to kill everybody.

Why couldn’t they let him stay with Chloe?! The rescue workers pulled him out of the wreckage and then went to work on extracting her. Despite his protests as he struggled to stay with her, they carried him off. Setting him down far away in a triage area on the shoulder of the roadway, they went back to work on pulling survivors from the wrecked cars.

Lucifer knew there wouldn’t be any fatalities -- well, at least he hoped not. His father’s tenet was that no angel could kill a human being, so the accident shouldn’t have killed anyone. Camael had said they wanted Chloe injured and not dead, but he didn’t trust his dad or the Angel of Wrath. He sat up, despite the pain it caused his shoulder. His legs had only been pinned, so they were badly bruised but not crushed. Pulling himself to a standing position, he craned his neck to see where Chloe’s car was. A rescue worker tried to get him to lie down, but he shrugged him off with a frustrated wave before heading back to the accident site.

Another worker intercepted him, trying to stop him; Lucifer pushed him away, throwing the man a fair distance. More people blocked his path. Panic ran rampant through him as he tried to force his way through them. He had to find out what was going on. He had to see Chloe!

When he finally reached the wreckage, he could see that they had pulled her out. They had her in a C-spine collar and strapped to a backboard. The rescue workers tried to hold him back, but he pushed his way forward.

“Chloe -- can you hear me?” Lucifer asked frantically, but there was not even a flutter of her closed eyelids.

“Someone get him out of here!” one of the rescuers called, and more hands were tearing him away from her. He wanted to hit someone.

“You aren’t doing her any good,” a paramedic said, his hand on Lucifer’s chest as he pushed him back. “Let us do our job, okay?”

Another medic led him away, saying, “You need looking after yourself. Let’s take a look at that head and clavicle, shall we?”
He rode in one of the ambulances following the one that transported Chloe, fretting and panicking about what was happening to her. When they reached the emergency room, they had him in one area while they worked on her in another. A few times he tried to see her, but the doctor and nurses pushed him back down onto the bed so that they could examine him. It drove Lucifer mad.

A few hours later they released him with stitches in his forehead, and his arm in a sling for his collarbone. He immediately took a seat in the emergency room area, waiting to be called for Chloe. He still couldn’t believe what had happened. It was like a nightmare. He knew he had to call Trixie and Chloe’s mother, but he couldn’t rest until he saw Chloe first.

Lucifer finally heard his named called; he followed the nurse through the secured door and into the emergency room. She led him to an area where Chloe lay, hooked up to all sorts of machinery and an IV. A young doctor met him at her bedside and pulled the privacy curtain around them.

“She’s in bad shape, Mister Morningstar,” the doctor said. “Besides head trauma and the ruptured spleen which we’ve repaired, she’s had severe trauma to her neck and spine. Preliminary X-rays and CT-scan show the T7, T8, and T9 vertebrae are fractured, but the radiologist is recommending an MRI to look for further possible injuries.”

_No no nononono._ Lucifer felt faint. “She... she has a broken back?”

“It appears so, although an MRI will give us a definite answer.”

“Will she be able to walk?”

The doctor looked at the tall man with pity in his eyes. “Why don’t we cross that hurdle when we get to it? We’ll know the extent of her neurological injuries once she wakes up. We’ll be moving her to the ICU.”

“I want to stay with her,” Lucifer said.

“Of course. We’ll notify you where she’ll be after she gets back from the MRI. We’re waiting on radiology right now, so you can sit with her, until they’re ready for us.”

“Thank you, Doctor.”

Lucifer tried to sit down, missed the chair, and ended up on the floor. This couldn’t be happening. It just couldn’t be happening. They were wrong, of course. Stupid human doctors had to be wrong. He pulled himself ungracefully into the chair and held Chloe’s hand in a death grip.

“Detective -- Chloe-- please. Open your eyes. Tell me this isn’t happening. Come on, love, open your eyes....”

But Chloe remained unresponsive. There wasn’t even a squeeze from her hand to tell him that she was still in the realm of the living -- only the beeping machinery. Tears pricked the back of his eyes, but he willed them away. He had to be strong for the phone call he needed to make.
They came early the next morning, when Chloe had been moved to the ICU: Dan, Penelope, and Trixie.

Lucifer had been sitting next to Chloe, holding her hand, but stood when they came in. Trixie immediately ran to the tall man and hugged him before taking a seat next to her mother on the other side of the bed. Penelope followed a little more slowly, crying as she approached.

Dan strode right up to Lucifer and punched him in the face; the tall man landed in a sprawl on the floor. “This is your fault,” Dan yelled. “If she hadn’t been with you —” Nurses called security while he shoved Lucifer as the tall man got to his feet. “Why are you practically unharmed while she’s in a coma with a broken back? Why her and not you?! You should be laying there —”

Security came and pulled Dan off of Lucifer. They started to escort him away, but the detective waved them off. Tears were in his eyes as he raged at the fallen angel. “Damn you, Lucifer! Why couldn’t it be you?”

Penelope stepped in, grabbing Dan by the shoulders. “Dan, honey, it was an accident. An accident. Chloe and Lucifer were just in the wrong place in the wrong time. Calm down.”

“I-- I know, Penny. It’s just that...” Dan glared at Lucifer. “It’s not fair. Chloe doesn’t deserve this! I’m just so angry and he’s --“

“Dan. Look at me. Trixie doesn’t need this right now,” Penelope said. “Deep breaths, honey. Deep breaths. Let’s all just be here for Chloe, okay?”

Lucifer stood at the foot of the bed as Chloe’s family gathered around her, feeling unwelcome. Dan was right, of course. If she hadn’t been with him, she wouldn’t be in the ICU, fighting for her life. Very quietly, he left to sit out in the hall. Taking a seat on the bench outside, he leaned back against the wall and looked at the ceiling.

“You bloody bastard, why are you doing this?” he asked as he squeezed his eyes shut. “She’s an innocent. She doesn’t belong here, in hospital. Why the hell are you doing this?!”

He heard the door open and opened his eyes. Trixie peeked out at him, her eyes full of tears. With a cry, she threw herself at him and cried into his chest. Lucifer held her close with his good arm and rocked her as she wept. After what seemed like a long time, the little girl calmed down, snuffling into Lucifer’s shirt and sling.

“Please make her better, Lucifer!” Trixie begged. “Please!”

“I can’t, child,” Lucifer answered sadly. “I want to very badly, but... I can’t.”

“But -- but you’re an angel!”

“A fallen one, child -- and healing has never been my forte. I’m sorry.”

Trixie merely looked at him with big, disappointed eyes, then went back into the ICU. The little girl’s expression hurt Lucifer almost as much as the thought of an injured Chloe. Sighing, he rubbed his eyes with the heels of his palms and wished things were different.

Looking down at the bloodied clothes he still wore from the accident the night before, Lucifer
decided to go home and change. He had an Uber driver take him to Chloe’s house so that he could pick up his car, which now worked without issue. Of course. He wanted to rip Camael’s throat out.

Before he knew it, he was home, in his flat. Everything seemed very surreal. He couldn’t believe that the day before he was fretting over what to wear for his date, and now.... Now he didn’t know what would happen to the most important person in his life. He wandered out onto the balcony and stared up at the blue sky above.

“Dad, can you hear me?” he raged. “You cruel bastard, why are you doing this? Why did you order Camael to hurt her? Come down here, you bloody coward and answer me!” He fell to his knees, his white-hot anger turning into despair. “Damn you, Dad. Look, what do you want from me? I’ll do whatever you want. I’ll do anything! Just... just make her better. Please! Please! Dad!”

No response.

Lucifer continued to curse the heavens until he was hoarse. Then he changed his clothes and returned to the hospital so that he could sit by Chloe’s side.

Lucifer sat with Chloe every day, from the time visiting hours began until it ended. More often than not he would spend the night with her, resting in a recliner by her bedside. The nurses were impressed by his dedication. Holding her hand, he would reach out with his angelic powers daily to see if he could sense her soul. He could feel her, but couldn’t reach her at all. She was in some gray area that was neither dead nor alive.

He often spoke to her, telling her funny stories, or reminding her of cases they had worked on. Once in a while he would tell her about lighting the stars or other wonders of the universe. And he constantly pleaded with her to wake up and show him her beautiful eyes.

After a week in the ICU, they moved her to a private room in another wing. Penelope brought Trixie after school, and Dan came by after work. Lucifer usually left Chloe whenever they came, feeling awkward and unwelcome. After that first day, no one ever blamed him for the accident -- at least, not in his presence -- but Lucifer felt bad about it nonetheless. It was true that Camael had targeted Chloe because of him. That knowledge weighed heavily on his mind.

It didn’t help that Trixie, who was usually very forward in expressing her affection for Lucifer, was suddenly cold and aloof. He could feel her anger at his inability to help her mother, and it saddened him. Who would have thought a child could make him feel lower than the depths of Hell?

But he deserved her contempt, didn’t he? What good was an angel who couldn’t heal the one person he loved? It added to his guilt -- that wretched human emotion that he finally was able to identify, with the help of Doctor Linda. How did humans deal with guilt without impaling themselves? His inability to make things right ate at him.

Occasionally Maze and Amenadiel stopped by, which was always a welcome distraction. The demon had been unhappy when she’d first seen Lucifer.
“You look like sh--“

“Yes, I know what I look like, Maze,” Lucifer interrupted. “Do you have anything constructive to say?”

She was silent for a moment, then said, “Come home. You need rest. Amenadiel can sit with Decker for a while.”

The fallen angel shook his head. “No. It’s my fault she’s here. I’ll stay.” Maze and Amenadiel exchanged glances.

“Brother, you really should rest,” Amenadiel said. “At least for a few nights.”

Lucifer laughed without humor. “And do what? Sit around and wonder if the detective’s ever going to wake up? Curse Dad to Hell and back for doing this to her?”

“You don’t know for certain that Father --”

Lucifer’s dark eyes burned red with anger. “I know.” He sighed and rubbed his hand over his face as he struggled to control his rage. “Right. Look. I know you’re both trying to help, but please. Leave me alone. Go on and... and have sex in a supply closet somewhere, or something.”

Maze and Amenadiel had left then. On later visits, they just sat with Lucifer and tried to support him as best they could by bringing food and smuggling in alcohol. They knew he was suffering, but they didn’t know how to alleviate his pain.

Then, three weeks after the accident, Gabriel came to him.

It was just past 10:00 pm at night, after the nurses had come and gone, that Lucifer felt the air grow still as time slowed down. He glanced up. Gabriel stood there, watching him caress Chloe’s hand. Lucifer gave the angel a sardonic grin as anger flared within him, but it was more of a bearing of teeth than a smile.

“Well, if it isn’t dear old Dad’s spokes-hole,” Lucifer said as he looked at the slender, red-haired angel. “Come to gloat? You best do it fast, before I tear your head off.”

“Brother....” Gabriel blinked with surprise. He looked at the woman on the bed, then back at his brother. “You.... You have compassion for this human? You actually care about someone other than yourself?”

Lucifer didn’t dignify the questions with an answer. Fury rose in him and for a moment his eyes burned red. He took Chloe’s hand in both of his, gripping it tightly until his anger abated.

Gabriel cocked his head, surprised at Lucifer’s lack of response. “You’ve changed, Brother.”

Lucifer laughed harshly. “Really? As if you knew me at all.” He glared at the angel, eyes filled with rage. “You never bothered to get to know me, Gabe. You just shunned me and listened to Michael’s lies....”

“Michael doesn’t lie --“

“Don’t defend that bastard to me!” Lucifer roared. He squeezed his eyes shut, in an effort to get his temper under control. Taking a deep breath, he said in a deceptively calm voice, “Tell me what Dad wants to tell me and then go away.”
The angel cleared his throat nervously. “Well, Father wants to make you a deal.”

“A deal?” Lucifer’s eyebrows went up and he smiled viciously again. “That bastard wants to make a deal? *Three weeks* after he put the detective in a coma?!” Fire burned through him; Gabriel took a step backward as Lucifer rose to his feet. The fallen angel began to stalk his brother with dangerous intent. “Why don’t I show you what I think about a *deal?* ”

Gabriel continued to back up, pale with fright. “Wait, wait, wait, Lucifer. It’s not my fault I didn’t come earlier -- Dad said you needed to be taught humility.”

“*Humility?!* ”

“Wait! Please! Hear me out.”

“Why should I? Did he wait when he ordered Camael to hurt Chloe? Did he hear me out when I begged him to help her? *Did he?!* ” Lucifer’s voice had lost its dulcet tones and turned guttural, like a wild animal’s.

“Please!” the angel begged as he dropped to his knees. “Please, Brother! Don’t hurt me!”

Lucifer stood over him, chest heaving with anger. The thought of beating his brother to a pulp was tempting, but Gabriel was physically no match for him. He refused to become a bully and whatever else his siblings thought he was. Besides, Chloe would definitely not approve. The fight left him. After glaring up at the heavens in disgust, he walked back to resume his seat at Chloe’s side. Taking her hand in his, he kissed it gently before scowling at his brother.

“Give me Dad’s message,” he said.

Gabriel stood up on shaky legs. “Father said that if you leave the human’s life, he will allow her to recover.”

“Allow her to recover?” Lucifer felt the hot embers of rage start to burn bright once again. “Bloody bastard. I knew it. Then this coma was his doing, after all?”

“I don’t know anything about that. All I know is that he wants her out of your life.”

Lucifer chuckled but it wasn’t a pleasant sound. “So he wants to rip my heart out.” He started laughing hysterically; Gabriel swallowed hard and tried not to run away. Then suddenly the laughter stopped and Lucifer looked as satanic as his reputation made him out to be. He stood up and walked to his brother.

Gabriel backed away until he hit a wall. Lucifer towered over him, eyes red and burning.

“You tell Dad if he wants me to do that, then he better get Rafe down here *now.* I want her healed completely, since it’s his bloody fault that she’s in this condition in the first place.” The fallen angel leaned close to his brother’s face. “Tell him.”

The angel closed his eyes for a moment, communicating with his father, before opening his eyes. “Done. Raphael will be here.”

“I want proof that she will be all right. I’ll leave her life after I’m sure she’s well.”

Another pause. “Father agrees, but says as insurance, he will send Sachiel to remove the human’s memories.”
“Not taking any bloody chances, is he?” Lucifer snarled. Taking a deep breath, he struggled to regain control.

“Do you agree?” Gabriel asked.

The fire left his eyes as Lucifer straightened; sadness and resignation replaced it. “Tell the bloody bastard that he has himself a deal.”
Lucifer sat with Chloe as the night shift took over. The nurses spoiled him rotten -- they fell all over him whether he wanted them to or not -- and always made sure had had a recliner and blankets whenever he stayed overnight. He didn’t think he would need it tonight, though, since he didn’t plan on sleeping. If dear old Dad was going to hold up his side of the bargain, then Lucifer could expect his brother with his healing gift to arrive soon. Whether Dad would honor the deal, though... that was the question.

He sat beside Chloe and took her hand in his. He whispered softly, “Chloe, love, can you hear me? I’m going to get you well again. Rafe will be here and you’ll be back to old self in no time.” Lucifer opened up Chloe’s slack hand and pressed her palm to his cheek. He had hoped to have more time with her to build up memories, but now.... Now he had nothing. How was he going to live without her for the rest of eternity?

“Luci.”

Lucifer turned at the sound of the voice and saw his brother Raphael standing at the foot of the bed, watching him.

“Rafe. Took you long enough.”

“Haven’t changed, have you, Brother?” the chestnut-haired angel said. “Still an ass with a massive chip on your shoulder.”

“You should try it sometime. It’s far better than being an arrogant prick.”

Raphael let out a sound of disgust as he shook his head. “Sometimes I really hate you, Luci.”

“Feeling’s mutual, I assure you.” Lucifer stood up and shoved his hands in his pockets, taking a nonchalant pose.

The angel looked the dark-haired man up and down with his cold hazel eyes. “You scared the life out of Gabriel, you know.”

The fallen angel laughed harshly. “Gabe’s a bloody pillock, and you know it.”

Sensing that he wasn’t going to get anywhere with his brother, Raphael approached Chloe’s bedside. “Is this the human that needs healing?”

“Yes.”
The angel glanced at him. “So what’s so special about her? Lots of humans need help. Why her, Luci?”

Lucifer lifted his chin. “Does it really matter? Dad and I made a deal. This was part of it. Just do your job and heal her... completely. None of that half-measure shite.”

Raphael snorted. “I should just walk away and say to hell with you, Brother.”

“But you won’t.”

“No.... Because I’m a better angel than you.”

“Believe what you like.” Backing away to give his brother space, Lucifer watched as Raphael sat next to Chloe and lay his hands on her torso. A soft blue glow emanated from his hands and slowly engulfed her. It seemed to take a long time; the dark-haired man finally took a seat in the far corner of the room and waited.

After what felt like forever, the blue glow faded and Raphael stood, stretching his back. “It’s done,” he said. “She’s completely healed.”

“When will she wake up?”

The angel shrugged. “In a few hours, I’d guess.”

“Thanks” was on the tip of Lucifer’s tongue before he remembered that Raphael had come only on his father’s instructions, and it was his father’s fault that Chloe was in the state she was in. Biting back the word, he merely nodded.

Raphael just stared at him for a long moment. “That’s it? A nod is all I get for all my hard work? No thank you?” Muttering under his breath, “Still an ass,” the angel pushed past him and disappeared in a flurry of white wings at the open window.

Lucifer sat back down next to Chloe and brushed the hair from her forehead with a gentle touch. “You’re going to be all right, Detective. This will soon be like some forgotten dream.” Just as I will be, he added silently. Pain and loss shot through him, but he pushed them aside. Chloe was going to get better, and that was all that really mattered.

Everything was gray.

She couldn’t remember anything. Shouldn’t she remember something? It seemed like she had been in that gray fog for a very long time. There was no feeling, no sound, no... nothing.

Gradually she could hear... something. Beeping. How annoying -- it wouldn’t let her go back into the fog. And the grayness seemed to be lifting. Memories were coming back, as well. She remembered... seeing Lucifer in her house. Yes, that’s right. He was dressed in one of those beautiful, custom tailored suits that made her heart stop. They... they were going to go out. And
then... Nothing.

Sensation came next. Her throat felt parched -- water would be nice. Someone was holding her hand -- it felt warm and gave her a sense of peace. She slowly opened her eyes, which were dry and felt gritty. Focusing was a little difficult, but she blinked until she was finally able to see.

Lucifer looked down at her, smiling gently.

“Hello, Detective. Welcome back.”

“How....” Was that her voice? That thin, reedy sound? “How was our dinner? I... I don’t remember.”

The dark-haired man kissed the back of her hand and set it on her chest. Chloe felt the loss of his warmth keenly. “We never made it. You don’t remember?”

She tried to shake her head. “N-no. We were in my house, then... nothing.”

“There was an accident. You were injured.”

“I don’t remember.”

Lucifer caressed her cheek. “Right. Well, perhaps it’s best that you don’t.”

Chloe blinked as she looked around her. “I’m... in the hospital?”

“Yes.”

“How long...?”

“Three weeks.”

What?! She stared hard at Lucifer. “You’re joking, right?”

With eyes that were deadly serious, he shook his head. “I wish I was, Detective, believe me.”

Fear washed through her. “Trixie?”

“Your mother and Detective Douche are taking care of your little spawn. She is well.” He smiled gently. “But she missed her mother, as did I.”

Chloe expected to see Lucifer get the familiar, seductive look on his face, but he didn’t. In fact, he looked... sad. “What’s wrong?” she asked.

Lucifer blinked, feeling a little disconcerted. The detective could always read him like an open book, and it scared him at times -- like now, when he’d have to leave her life. He laughed self-consciously. “Oh, nothing to be concerned with, Detective,” he said in a lighthearted voice that was completely at odds with the expression in his eyes. “Just thinking of one or two things I’ll have to tend to in the future. Nothing for you to worry about.”

Chloe opened her mouth to pursue the subject further, but her companion stopped her by pressing the nurse’s call button. A young woman immediately popped her head in the door.

“Detective Decker is awake!” Lucifer called out in a happy voice. “Can you get the doctor, please?”
They called her the miracle patient.

None of the doctors could understand her complete recovery. They did tests and studied her like a bug under a microscope. CT scans, MRIs, the works. The vertebrae in her back were healed, and as far as anyone could tell, she had no nerve damage. Her legs moved just fine. She also didn’t appear to have any muscle atrophy, which really puzzled the doctors. Chloe did feel a little weak getting around, but she figured it was because she hadn’t eaten real food in three weeks.

Lucifer stayed with her throughout the morning, helping her when she needed it, and making trouble when the doctors got to be too overwhelming for her. If it hadn’t been for the fallen angel, she would have lost her mind. Chloe couldn’t understand why everyone was making such a fuss, and her brain was still too foggy to process everything they said to her. They were going to keep her for observation overnight -- that much she understood.

Penelope and Trixie came in the afternoon. They rushed up to her, laughing and crying at the same time. Chloe hugged them both and kissed Trixie’s head. Glancing up, she was surprised to see the room door swing shut as Lucifer left. It shocked her -- he hadn’t left her the entire time before her family’s arrival.

“Oh, Pumpkin, we thought you’d never wake up,” Penelope cried, hugging her daughter again. “And your back? It was broken....”

“Well, apparently it’s better now. I feel great.”

“I’m so glad you’re okay, Mommy,” Trixie said with a big smile. “You really scared us!”

Chloe smiled, but she was still distracted by Lucifer’s departure. “I’m glad I’m okay too, baby.” She turned to her mother. “Mom, why did Lucifer just leave?”

Penelope had the grace to look uncomfortable. “Well, honey, we... haven’t been too kind to him. It’s just that... well, after the accident, Dan said some things, and... and we all felt it wasn’t fair that Lucifer got off with hardly any injuries while you....” Her voice petered out.

“Oh, Mom, no.” Chloe groaned. “Please tell me you didn’t blame him for the accident.”

“Well, not after the first day, certainly!” Penelope said defensively. “We just... we....”

Chloe looked at Trixie, who was looking equally guilty. “Oh, baby, don’t tell me that you too --”

Her daughter looked down at the floor. “I asked him to make you better. He said he couldn’t.” Chloe could see the tears welling in Trixie’s eyes as she looked up. “But he should have, because he’s an ang--“

“No, Trixie,” Chloe interrupted. “Lucifer doesn’t lie. If he said he couldn’t, then he couldn’t.”

“Then how did you get better, Mommy?”

The blonde woman frowned, a bad feeling creeping over her. “That’s a very good question.” She
started to get out of bed. Penelope pushed her back down.

“You can’t get out of bed, Pumpkin! You just woke up from a three week coma!”

“I need to talk to Lucifer, Mom,” Chloe said as she forced her way to her feet. She grabbed the IV stand and started walking toward the door. “You both stay here, okay? I need to talk to him alone.”

She found him on the bench outside, leaning against the wall with his head tipped back and his eyes closed. He opened them when he heard the door open, and jumped to his feet as she walked out.

“Detective, you shouldn’t be out of bed!” he cried, trying to usher her back to her room.

She laughed a bit. “I’ve been lying down for three weeks, Lucifer. I think I can use the exercise.”

Grinning devilishly, Lucifer said, “Lovely! I’ll just walk behind you and admire your exposed --”

Chloe yelped and turned suddenly, causing Lucifer to chuckle. She felt the edges of the gown and realized she was well covered back there. “You’re such an ass,” she said, laughing. He just gave her a smug smile. She motioned to the bench. “Let’s sit here. I want to talk to you.”

Hovering until Chloe got situated, Lucifer took a seat beside her and slid a glance her way. “So what brings you out here, Detective?”

“You did. What’s going on?”

Lucifer looked at her innocently. “Whatever do you mean?”

“Why did you leave?”

All expression left his face, but his eyes were troubled. “I... I thought it best to wait out here during your family reunion.”

“You’re family, Lucifer.”

Squeezing his eyes shut, he shook his head. “No, Detective. I’m not.”

Chloe stared hard at him. “Lucifer, don’t be ridiculous. I love you. Doesn’t that count for something?”

Lucifer’s eyes flew open, bright with passion. “It counts for everything. But....”

“But?”

“The accident... it was....” He broke off as his gaze shifted to the floor.

The blonde woman sighed, sensing the blame that Lucifer was piling on his own head. It wasn’t completely unexpected, considering the way her family had treated him. “It’s not your fault. It was an accident. No one could have known what would have happened.”

Lucifer shook his head. “It was my fault. I should have known --“

“No one could have known,” Chloe repeated. “Stop blaming yourself. I certainly don’t blame you. You shouldn’t either.”

Without warning he pulled her into his arms and held her tightly. There was a hint of desperation in his embrace; it caught her off-guard, but she chalked it up to the excitement of the day. “What would
I do without you, Detective?” he whispered against her hair. “What will I do...?”

“Come back inside,” Chloe entreated. “But before that, tell me how I got better. You can’t deny that you had something to do with it.”

Lucifer released her slowly. He wasn’t sure how much to tell her. “My brother Rafe came to visit.” Well, that much was true. She didn’t have to know why -- it would just cast a pall over everything. “He healed you.”

Chloe blinked. “I thought your siblings didn’t like you...?”

“Oh they don’t, Detective. But... he did come and help.”

“Don’t you find that odd?” she asked, giving him a suspicious glance. Chloe’s police senses were telling her something was off.

“Mm,” Lucifer agreed.

“Did he want anything in return?”

“No, Rafe didn’t.” Dear old Dad who was the one who wanted something, but Lucifer wasn’t about to offer that information. Telling her that he would soon be gone from her life wasn’t an option. He just wanted to enjoy whatever time they had left. Lucifer suddenly smiled and said, “Enough of that, Detective. I’m just glad that you’re alive and well. Now, perhaps we can finish our date and have some mind-boggling sex!”

It distracted Chloe, as it was meant to. She rolled her eyes and said, “Really, Lucifer? I’ve been in a coma for three weeks!”

“Exactly!” he teased with a leer. “All the more reason to get down and do the nasty -- and in a hospital no less! Imagine what the nurses will say when your heart rate monitor starts spiking --“

“Aaaand I’m going back to my room,” Chloe said as she stood up. “Please don’t mention sex in front of Mom or Trixie when we go inside, okay?”

“What will you give me for my silence, Detective?” Lucifer asked with a grin and a cocked head as he also got to his feet.

She smiled teasingly. “How about a kiss?”

“Oh, I like this deal,” he said, his voice dropping into a seductive purr as he pulled her to him.

Leaning close, Chloe gave him a chaste peck on the cheek, then patted it. “Now behave yourself.”

Lucifer’s mouth dropped open. “That’s it?! But...!” he cried as she laughed at him. Had the detective just played him? He really should have seen that one coming. Love was making him really quite befuddled. Shaking his head, he followed Chloe into her room.

As soon as he entered, Trixie barreled into him and gave him a bear hug around the waist. It caught him completely by surprise; she hadn’t gone near him since the morning she asked him to heal her mother. Lucifer held his hands in the air to avoid touching the child and gave a panicked look at Chloe, but then realized that Trixie was crying.

“What’s this, little one?” he asked as he took her shoulders and held her away from him.

“I’m sorry, Lucifer! I’m really, really sorry!” she wailed before hugging him around the waist and
bawling into his white shirt. After giving another alarmed look at Chloe, he led the little girl outside to the bench. Sitting her down beside him, he asked, “Now what ails you, child?”

It took a few minutes for Trixie to say anything; she hiccupped as she tried to stop crying. “I’m so sorry, Lucifer.”

“Right. You said that. I’ll ask you again: what ails you, child?”

“You wouldn’t help Mommy and I thought you were lying but Mommy says you never lie and Daddy said you were the reason for the accident so I blamed you and I’m so sorry!” She started crying again.

Lucifer wasn’t sure what to do -- he had never been faced with something like this in his entire angelic life. Children -- especially crying children -- filled him with anxiety, but he knew he couldn’t bear to see Trixie so distraught. It made his heart hurt -- literally hurt. Her sudden dislike for him had been painful, but this was far worse. He’d never felt such a sensation and it pushed him into action. After a quick glance to make sure no one was watching, he awkwardly wrapped an arm around Trixie’s shoulders.

“Now, child, there’s no reason to be sorry,” he said. “We were all upset at what happened.”

“You helped Mommy after all, didn’t you though?”

“Well, my brother did. He’s good at healing people.”

“But he wouldn’t have come if you hadn’t asked him.”

The fallen angel nodded. “That’s true.”

“So you see? You made Mommy better after all, and I feel sad that I blamed you! You must be so mad at me!”

“Ah-ah-ah,” Lucifer interrupted when it appeared Trixie was going to start wailing again. “Right. None of that. I’m not angry, child. I never was -- well, not at you. You had good reason to be upset and I blame myself for what happened. Now don’t be sad.”

With the impulsiveness of the young, Trixie suddenly pulled Lucifer down and kissed him on the cheek. “I love you, Lucifer,” she said.

Back in Trixie’s good graces, a warmth filled Lucifer as joy coursed through him. What was it he felt? Human emotions were still new, and he really couldn’t identify this feeling inside him. Did he love the little spawn, as well? Thinking it over, he realized that he did indeed love her in a different way than her mother. That puzzled Lucifer, because he thought there was only one kind of love. He was learning all sorts of things. It was too bad he had discovered this just when he’d have to leave Trixie and her mother. Regret filled him.

“I... I....” he began, then broke off. Unable to say the words that would open him up to emotional vulnerability, he changed the subject. “I think we should run down to the cafeteria and see if they have some chocolate cake.”

They both stood up. Trixie looked up at him with big, hero-worshipping eyes, which filled Lucifer with happiness. He would miss the little ankle-biter, that was for sure. Trying hard not to think of the dark days ahead, Lucifer held out his hand to the little girl with a smile. It was the first time he had ever truly initiated contact with her. She took it, and they walked down the hall together -- Devil and child.
The homecoming the next day was a joyous one. The hospital finally released Chloe with a clean bill of health. For the occasion, Lucifer let himself forget that the time he had left with his family was limited, and happily drove Chloe and Trixie home in the new Toyota Camry that he had bought for them. Only wanting the best for the detective and her child, he had tried to get her a luxury vehicle, but the detective insisted on something economical that wouldn’t draw too much attention at work. Her car choice had been disappointing and they had argued about it, but finally Lucifer relented.

Penelope and Dan met them at the house. Lucifer wasn’t thrilled about Dan’s presence, but Chloe’s mother had insisted. Chloe was not pleased, either.

“Mom, I can’t believe you invited Dan,” she protested when she was finally able to pull her mother into a quiet corner of the house.

“Oh, come now, Chloe, you didn’t see how worried he was over you while you were in a coma,” Penelope countered.

“Mom, Dan and I are getting a divorce.”

Penelope got a condescending look in her eyes. “Now, now.... Dan says he wants to try again with you, and he is the father of my only grandchild.”

Chloe rolled her eyes. “Mom, please. I’m just not interested.”

“Lucifer is more your style, is that it?” Penelope said. “Look, I know he’s gorgeous and loaded, but Dan is... dependable. And he loves you. We talked a lot when you were in the hospital. You should give him another chance.”

“No, Mom. You have no idea what he’s done --“

“Penny, thanks for inviting me!” Dan said as he approached the pair. Leaning forward, he tried to give Chloe a kiss, but she evaded him. He frowned.

“Where’s Lucifer?” Chloe asked as she looked around.

Dan scoffed. “Playing with Trixie. I swear he’s like a twelve year old.”

Frowning at the contempt in the other man’s voice, Chloe said, “Dan, don’t talk about Lucifer like that.”
“Yeah, but look at him, Chloe! I mean, really? Playing with dolls with our daughter? That can’t be normal.”

“The fact that he actually plays with our daughter scores him big points in my book,” she replied, looking pointedly at Dan before Penelope interrupted the escalating argument.

“Dan,” the older woman said as she led him away, “why don’t you come and help me open the wine?”

Chloe watched the pair walk off before going to Trixie’s room. Sure enough, Lucifer was there. A grinning Trixie was beating her doll against Lucifer’s with a fury, which caused Chloe’s eyebrows to rise.

“Oh, hello, Detective! Care to join us?” Lucifer asked brightly as he caught sight of her.

“Apparently Molly McDowell has vanquished my ninja assassin.” He smiled uncomfortably and mouthed “Help!” when Trixie wasn’t looking. Chloe had to laugh.

“Trixie, I have to talk to Lucifer for a bit, okay?”

“Awww, but Mommy! This was just getting good!” the little girl cried.

“Sorry, baby.” Chloe beckoned to the tall man, who jumped up faster than she could blink.

“Lucifer?”

He came quickly and joined her in the living room. “Your little spawn is ruining my reputation,” he complained. “It would be different if we were -- oh, I don’t know, sparring with real knives and beating the hell out of each other, but dolls...! The Devil doesn’t play with dolls!”

She laughed at him. She just couldn’t help it. Lucifer looked so ruffled, and yet he still took the time to do what Trixie wanted. “You should just say no.”

“I try! Bloody hell, I really do! But I... I...” He looked at the floor. “I can’t.”

He looked so forlorn that she leaned up and kissed him on the cheek. Immediately brightening at the gesture, Lucifer reached out for Chloe, but she neatly sidestepped him. Taking his hand, she started leading him to the kitchen. “Come on. We need to confront my mother and Dan.”

“Must we?” Lucifer rubbed his stomach absently. “Looking at Detective Douche gives me a terrible case of IBS.”

Chloe just shook her head as she led him to the other pair. Dan’s face grew angry at the sight of Chloe next to the tall man, which immediately had Lucifer putting a possessive arm around her waist.

“Why do you waste your time with this guy?” Dan asked, taking a step forward threateningly.

“Because she wasted enough time with you,” Lucifer replied, a smug look on his face. Chloe exchanged glances with the two and sighed.

“Look, both of you, stop it. Dan, I want to be clear about this. Lucifer and I are dating.” At the woman’s words, Dan looked like he was going to throw up. Lucifer, on the hand, looked surprised at first, then inordinately pleased.

“Oh honey, you can’t be serious,” Penelope interrupted. “Dan is so much more... reliable than Lucifer.”
“I beg your pardon, Penelope, but I am the epitome of reliable,” the tall man said.

“It’s true, Mom, Lucifer has always had my back,” Chloe defended. Dan looked like he was going to have a conniption.

“He’s slept with everyone and everything in Los Angeles,” he snarled. “He’ll give you an STD.”

“Dan!” Chloe warned.

“Oh come on -- mentally he’s a twelve year old!” Dan shouted as he waved at the other man.

“I’m much more mature than you are, you sod!” Lucifer snapped back.

Without warning, Dan shoved Lucifer away from Chloe and punched him in the face. The tall man fell back onto the floor and glared at the man before him. Chloe could see the rage building in Lucifer and knew bad things were about to happen. Getting between the two, she yelled, “Stop!”

The fallen angel rose to his feet, looking more dangerous than ever, but Chloe’s hand on his chest stopped him from attacking. Wiping the blood from his mouth with the back of his hand, he growled, “I think you need to leave, Detective Douche.”

“Dan, you need to leave,” Chloe ordered.

“But he --“

“Now.”

Dan walked away, fury in every step, while Penelope looked at Chloe with sad eyes. “Oh, Pumpkin, I am so disappointed with you. Dan is only thinking of you --“

“Mom, one of these days you and I are going to have a long talk about Dan.”

Penelope shook her head and said, “I think I better go too. We’ll talk later, Chloe.” She leaned in to give her daughter a kiss, whispering, “I really think you’re making a mistake.”

“Good night, Mom.”

They both let out a big sigh of relief after Dan and Penelope had gone. Lucifer went to the kitchen sink to rinse the blood from his mouth, with Chloe following close behind.

“I’m sorry, Lucifer. I didn’t think it was going to get that ugly.”

“No matter, Detective.” He looked up with her, his eyes sparkling with mischief. “You said we’re dating.”

“Well, we did try to go on one date, so it wasn’t a complete lie.”

The tall man straightened and grinned down at her. “I think we should make it the truth and go out on another date. Tonight.”

Chloe’s eyebrows rose. “Tonight? Are you insane? We just got home!”

“Never a better time than the present,” Lucifer said, smiling. Reaching for her, he gave her a soft kiss and said in a seductive voice, “Come on, Detective. Give in to your desires -- you know you want to. And, speaking of which, why don’t you tell me what you really desire? Hmmm?” She started to laugh. Lucifer stopped nuzzling her neck and straightened. Well, that was an unexpected
reaction. “What?” he asked indignantly.

“Oh, it’s the ‘tell me your deepest, darkest desire’ routine -- you know that doesn’t work on me!”

“I beg your pardon -- it’s not a routine!”

She kept laughing. Lucifer reluctantly let her go. “Besides,” she continued, “I have Trixie tonight.”

“Right. Very well,” Lucifer grumbled. He sighed and considered bashing his head against a wall.

Truth be told, he desperately wanted to have some alone time with the detective. Lucifer could feel the clock ticking. His life with Chloe would be gone in an instant once Sachiel arrived, and he wanted some memories before that happened. Well, perhaps he could go on a date with the detective tomorrow. Surely Sachiel wouldn’t come that soon...?

He was sadly mistaken about that.

As he, Chloe and Trixie sat together on the couch watching “Brave” on the television that night, Lucifer saw the world suddenly slow down.

“No, no, no --” he cried as apprehension shot through him. He looked up to see a tall, statuesque angel with pitch black hair and dove gray wings standing in the entry.

“Hello, Lucifer,” Sachiel said.

The fallen angel went ash pale as he looked at his sister. “Hello, Sachi.”

She walked up to them, studying the tall man comfortably ensconced between the two humans. “Well, this is quite the domestic scene. Doesn’t quite fit you, Brother.”

Lucifer stood up, tension in every line of his body. “You’re early.”

“I believe I’m right on time -- the human appears well enough. Father did send me, you know.”

“Right. Like he couldn’t give me a few extra days,” he said bitterly.

Sachiel studied him with puzzled eyes. “You’re acting very oddly, Brother.”

The tall man laughed harshly. “Am I?”

The angel took stock of the two humans on the couch and nodded. “Father’s will shall be done. I’ll take their memories now.” She tried to walk toward them, but Lucifer blocked her.

“Sachi, couldn’t you find it in your heart to give me just a little more time...?”

She stared dispassionately at him. “I’m sorry, Brother. There is no more time. This was the deal, or have you forgotten?”

Lucifer shut his eyes. “No. I haven’t forgotten.” He let the angel push past him.

Sachiel laid a hand on Chloe’s forehead first, a soft pink glow emanating from her hands. The fallen angel watched on, his face a mask of grief. The tall angel’s eyes narrowed before she straightened.

“This is very odd.” Sachiel glanced at her brother. “What have you done?”

Lucifer blinked. “What have I done?”
“Yes. I can’t take her memories away.” Frowning, she paced a bit before returning to Chloe. She laid a hand on her forehead once again and lit the room with a pink radiance that was lighter than before. Then she moved to Trixie and repeated the process.

Sachiel backed away from the humans and approached Lucifer. “You really shouldn’t try to thwart Father like that, Brother -- it will just make him angry. I don’t know what you did, but I’ve managed to bypass it. I can’t take her memories away, but I’ve put a... blanket over them. She will remember very little about you. Almost all your time together is blocked out. She won’t even remember what you look like.”

Every word was like a knife in Lucifer’s heart. Gone. Everything he had shared with Chloe and her little one... gone in a heartbeat. His legs felt weak, like he was going to fall over, and he couldn’t think straight. Dizziness swept over him, causing a violent sensation of nausea. Swallowing hard, Lucifer struggled to pull himself together.

“I’ve done the same for the child,” the angel continued. “All of this will be like a dream. Does the woman have any photos of you?”

Lucifer nodded. “On her phone.”

His sister moved past him and picked up Chloe’s phone. She scrolled through and found the three photos from the date night. Her eyes went wide with surprise, and she glanced back up at her brother. “This is you?”

The fallen angel said nothing, only continued looking at Chloe and Trixie, frozen in time, staring at the television.

“You look happy, Brother,” she said.

“I was.”

“I am... sorry.” Sachiel deleted the photos from the device, as well as Lucifer’s phone number and various texts. She looked up at him. “It’s time to go.”

“Give... give me a moment,” Lucifer said as he approached Chloe and Trixie. He felt tears welling in his eyes. This was the price he had to pay to get her well. He knew it, and he would gladly do it again, but... he had hoped for a last minute reprieve. Taking Chloe’s unseeing face in his hands, he kissed her very gently on the lips.

“Goodbye, my dear detective,” he whispered. “Be happy.”

Then he moved to Trixie, and kissed her on the forehead. “Goodbye, my dear.”

Unshed tears made his eyes shine bright as he straightened and turned to his sister. “Right. We best be on our bloody way.”

Sachiel gave him a pitying glance. “I am sorry, Lucifer.”

“Right. Sure. Bloody hell, let’s just go.”

Lucifer left the house with his sister quickly, without a backward glance.
A super-huge thank you to my most excellent beta, ScooterThyme! Thanks for taking the time out of your busy schedule to help me -- you are the BEST!!!

"Heart and Soul" belongs to Hoagy Carmichael (music) and Frank Loesser (lyrics). I do not own the song and make no money off of it. I am only using it here for... uh... reference for my writing practice.

“I feel like all the color has gone out of the world.”

Lucifer lay on the couch at Doctor Linda’s office, and stared at the ceiling. It had been a little over a week since Sachiel had blanketed the memories of the detective and her spawn. Seven days and twelve hours. 180 hours. 10,800 minutes. 648,000 seconds, and counting.... Lucifer had felt every one of those seconds. He pressed his palms to his eyes.

Linda Martin frowned. This did not sound like Lucifer at all. “What’s caused you to feel like this, Lucifer?” she asked.

“What? Oh. The detective. We’re... not together anymore.” The tall man swung his feet to the floor and sat up.

Linda blinked. That was unexpected. “Can you tell me what happened?”

“Well, we... we broke up after the accident.”

“Why? Was it because she blamed you for it?”

Lucifer looked at the psychologist with surprise. “Oh no, she never did that. She actually defended me to her mother and daughter.” He smiled proudly as he thought of Chloe.

“Then why...?”

The tall man was quiet for a long while before saying, “Dear old Dad didn’t approve.” He let out a frustrated sigh and put his head in his hands. “Why can’t that cruel bastard leave me alone?! I swear that bloody sadist enjoys watching me suffer.”

Lucifer’s hands shook with rage. He really wanted to hit something. Doctor Linda had finally gotten her wall fixed, though, and he refused to punch another hole in it. Gripping his hands together tightly in his lap, he fought for control.

“Why should your father care about your relationship with the detective?” Linda asked.
“I... I’m not sure -- perhaps because she makes me happy? She does keep pulling me out of Hell, which he must not like at all.” He gave a harsh laugh. “He threatened her -- leaving her was the only way I could ensure that she would be well. And now... now I don’t know how to live without her.”

“Wait... your father threatened the detective, so you left her life?”

“Correct,” Lucifer said.

“Shouldn’t you discuss such a big decision with the detective?”

The tall man looked up at that. “There wasn’t time... and I’d do it again, if I had to. She and her little spawn must be safe.”

Linda studied the man in front of her. Lucifer had grown a lot since she had first started treating him -- he had become downright noble.

“Lucifer, the sacrifice you made shows that you are maturing. This is a good thing.”

“A good thing?!?” Lucifer yelled. “How can it be a good thing when I can’t even bloody function? I can’t think straight. I don’t eat. I try to have sex but I don’t want to sleep with anyone but her. All I feel is this pain in my chest and I want it to stop.”

“These are all normal symptoms of depression, Lucifer. It’s what we all suffer when we lose someone dear to us.”

“Depression? The Devil doesn’t get depressed! Bloody hell -- stupid, bloody awful feelings! Why am I having them?!”

“You loved her, and now she’s gone. These are emotions that you have to work through.”

“I don’t want emotions! I want it all to stop!” he roared, standing up. For a moment he paced erratically, before sitting back down again in a huff.

“Lucifer, you can’t just cut off your feelings like they’re an extra appendage you don’t want. Bottling up your emotions is not the answer. You have to face your loss.”

“No.”

“Ignoring your feelings will only cause them to come out later, but in a much worse way. It’s best to deal with this now.”

“No.”

“Lucifer --“

“No.” He took a deep breath and tried again. “Look, I know you think that dealing with these bloody emotions is a going to solve my problem, but I just want the pain to go away. Please make it stop.”

“Dealing with emotions will solve your problem. As for the pain, it’s heartbreak -- quite natural after a great loss. This is normal. I know it’s difficult, but you have to let Chloe go. Once you let her go, you can also move on.”

The tall man looked at Linda with agonized eyes. “I... I can’t let her go. How do I let her go?” Leaning against the backrest of the couch, he tilted his head up toward the ceiling. “Everything I do
reminds me of her. I see her in the bloody club. I see her in my bloody flat. She’s everywhere and she won’t leave me alone. How can I let her go if she won’t let me go?”

“You have to face the fact that she’s gone. This will pass, Lucifer, but it will take time.”

“Time.” He laughed harshly. “Time is the one thing I have in abundance, dear doctor.”

Linda said nothing; she just continued to study her patient.

Sighing heavily, Lucifer said, “Do you know, I think about calling her constantly? Would she speak to me, do you think? See me? And then I remember that I have to stay away. It’s driving me absolutely mad!” He leaned forward again and rested his head in his hands. “How do you humans deal with this constant... constant agony?”

Linda leaned forward. “Lucifer, are you really sure about this decision you made?”

“It was the right decision,” he said as he sat up again. His eyes darted around the room, looking everywhere but at her.

“Then make a clean break. It’s the best thing you can do for yourself. Keep yourself busy, and do not -- I repeat -- do not go see her.”

Lucifer looked at her then, his face a study in longing. “But I want to.”

Linda shook her head. “Trust me. Don’t. You’ll never get over her if you keep in contact with her. Clean break, Lucifer. Make it a clean break.”

That night, Lucifer dreamed of Chloe.

Being an angel meant that he really didn’t need to sleep, but after leaving Chloe, he slept often. He was always tired, and spending time at LUX did not seem to recharge his energy like it used to. After the exhausting session with Doctor Linda that day and working at LUX in the evening, he lay down on his bed and immediately fell into a deep sleep.

Chloe was in his flat, sitting at his piano. She looked beautiful. Radiant. His heart thumped painfully in his chest as he approached her slowly.

“Detective?” he said. “What are you doing here?”

She turned to him, her eyes full of sadness and accusation. “How could you do this to me, Lucifer?” she asked. “After everything we’ve been through, how could you do this?”

He stopped a foot away from her, afraid to touch her. “I had to,” he said sadly. “I... I’m sorry.”

Chloe started tapping out “Heart and Soul” with one finger on the piano.
“Heart and soul,” she sang with the tune.

“I fell in love with you

“Heart and soul...

“The way a fool would do

“Madly....”

She turned to him then, her eyes bright with unshed tears, and slowly faded away.

“Chloe!” Lucifer cried, reaching out to her as he bolted upright in bed. His eyes were frantic as he searched the room for her. A quick glance through the opening to the living room showed the piano sitting empty. The dream had been so real, as if she had actually been there.... It rattled him. Struggling to control his breathing, he tried to calm his pounding heart.

That awful feeling that Doctor Linda had labeled as guilt landed squarely on his head again. Damn, as if he hadn’t had enough from the car accident.... Now he had to contend with guilt from making Chloe lose her memories. He needed this like he needed a hole in the head.

Raking a shaking hand through his hair, he realized that he couldn’t do this. He just couldn’t live without her. He had to see her again, even if it was from far away. Living this empty life was killing him.

The next day Lucifer wandered over to Trixie’s school at the end of the school day. He knew it wasn’t wise, but he didn’t care. He felt dead without Chloe and her little one. He walked to the front of the entrance -- a tall, well-dressed figure fighting through a mass of small children -- and looked around. Trixie wasn’t to be seen, but that didn’t mean she wasn’t there. The mothers gave him admiring looks, but he was blind to them. There were only two people he wanted to see.

There -- there by the side entrance. After spotting them heading his way, he stood there, trying to look inconspicuous. His hungry eyes devoured the sight of Chloe and Trixie. The blonde detective was looking down at her daughter as they walked toward him, but he could still see her face. She had never appeared as beautiful in his eyes as she did at that very moment. His furiously beating heart called to her.

Chloe started to walk past him without even looking up, so Lucifer took a side step in front of her. Brushing against him, she glanced up with unseeing eyes and said, "Excuse me.” She wore no trace of any expression at all, which felt like a knife wound to Lucifer’s gut. The pair passed him, and he watched them walk away, his face pale and sad. Trixie glanced back at him without a hint of recognition and stared for a moment, before turning to her mother. That really hurt. Lucifer quickly walked away. He had to get out of there. This had been a mistake. A colossal mistake.

The pain in his chest had become much, much worse. It felt like... like someone had him in a vice and was squeezing the life out of him. And what was this burning in his eyes? Surely that was just from the usual Los Angeles smog. That was it. He had a sudden urge to run and just keep on running. Hopping in his convertible in one easy movement, he gunned the engine and tore out of the parking lot like a bat out of Hell.
Trixie pulled on her mother’s hand. “Mommy,” she said, halting her mother.

“Yeah, baby?” Chloe said, stopping and looking down at the little girl. Trixie had the same look on her face as she did when she was working on a difficult jigsaw puzzle. “What’s wrong?”

“The man we just passed.... He was looking at us.” Trixie pointed behind them.

Chloe straightened and looked back. All she could see was the distant figure of a tall man walking away at a quick pace. Something, almost like a cobweb, niggled her brain.

“Do you know him, Mommy?” Trixie asked.

“Uh...no....” Chloe squinted, trying to recall what was bothering her. Then it was gone, like it had never existed. She looked down at her daughter again. “Well, if you see him again, stay away, okay? There are lots of predators who hang around schools and such.”

Trixie nodded. “Okay, Mommy, but....”

“But?”

The little girl shrugged as she glanced back to where the man had been. “I don’t think he was a bad man. He had really sad eyes.”
The Assault

Chapter Notes

A big, huge thank you to my wonderful beta, ScooterThyme, who takes the time to beta my work even when busy! You make my work shine -- you're the best!!!

Lucifer got home late that evening, having gone for a drive along Pacific Coast Highway for a spell. The looks that Chloe and Beatrice had given him stayed the forefront of his mind for most of the day, making him feel sick to his stomach. He had hoped the bright sunshine and the sea air would help him feel better, but no. It had been a stupid decision to go see them -- he knew that now. Sachiel was nothing if not efficient in her work at removing memories.

With a big sigh, he let himself into the flat and turned on the lights. Shucking off his jacket, he threw it on the bar counter along with his phone and car keys. With brisk efficiency, he grabbed a glass and poured himself two fingers of whiskey. Downing it in one gulp, he started to pour another one when he heard the rustle of wings coming from the balcony. He slowly turned around.

Michael and Camael stood on the deck, both smiling.


“Well, if it isn’t Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum,” he spat with a wry smile. “I’m sorry, I never could tell you two apart. Now which one of you is Dumb and which one is Dumber?”

“Ever the smart ass,” Michael growled. “You should respect us.”

Sighing heavily, Lucifer asked, “Did dear old Dad send you?”

Camael laughed. “We don’t need Father’s approval for everything.”

“Right. Look, whatever you want, make it fast -- I’m busy.”

“Someone’s in a bad mood,” Camael said with a sneer.

“I still have a score to settle with you,” Lucifer snarled, pointing at him with the hand that held his whiskey glass. “You best not push me.”

“We’ve come for the Sword of Heaven,” Michael said as he took a step forward. “Hand it over and you won’t get hurt.”

Lucifer started to laugh harshly. “Hand it over? Just like that? What makes you think I’m just going to give the sword to the likes of you two?” He slammed his whiskey glass down onto the bar counter. “Oh no, gentlemen. You won’t get it that easily. Besides, I’m spoiling for a bloody good fight.” Rage filled the fallen angel -- rage from loss and grief. His eyes glowed a fierce red as he rolled up his sleeves to confront the pair.
“You think you can beat us?” Camael asked coldly, a smirk on his otherwise expressionless face.

Lucifer grinned wolfishly. “Why don’t we see?"

Not caring that it was reckless fighting two opponents at once, Lucifer approached the pair of angels with dangerous intent. They separated, each taking a side on the balcony. The fallen angel feinted toward Camael, then charged Michael, catching him around the waist. The big angel tried to twist away, but Lucifer held firm. Camael’s hand grabbed Lucifer from behind -- the angel ripped him off of his brother and threw him into the apartment.

Lucifer landed hard against a bookshelf, breaking it. Rising to his feet, he dusted himself off and jumped back into the fray, attacking the brown-winged angel and throwing him across the room. Michael tackled him, punching him viciously in the stomach. Rushing up, Camael grabbed Lucifer from behind, pinning his arms while the archangel proceeded to pummel the fallen brother. Lucifer kicked out, striking Michael away, and elbowed Camael hard. He smashed his fist in the Angel of Wrath’s face then turned to grab a charging Michael and throw him into the other attacker.

A laugh escaped him. It felt awfully good fighting the two angels who had made his and Chloe’s lives miserable. Pulling his foot back, he kicked Michael hard in the face, then picked up Camael and threw him into another bookshelf. Michael grabbed him from behind, pinning his arms. He threw his head back, headbutting his brother as he struggled to get free. And then suddenly Camael was in front of him, with a large, Heaven-forged knife.

In an instant the blade was buried to the hilt in his gut. For a moment, Lucifer felt nothing – he just stared in shock at the hilt, then back at his brother. The Angel of Wrath looked at him with indifferent eyes and smiled. With a fierce jerk, he ripped the knife out of his fallen brother.

Pain shot through Lucifer, not unlike when he had been shot by Malcolm. All the strength left his limbs, and he sagged to his knees as blood poured from his wound. Michael grabbed him by the hair and tipped his head up before smashing him in the face with his fist. The fallen angel crumpled to the floor.

“Tell us where the sword is,” Michael said, as he prodded Lucifer with his foot.

“I-I’ll never give it to you,” he spat. “Never.”

Camael kicked Lucifer’s wound viciously, wringing a cry from the dark haired man. Pulling himself in a ball, Lucifer squeezed his eyes shut as he tried to control the pain. He started to laugh, a wretched, wet sound as blood poured from his mouth. “Y-you’ll never get it.”

Swearing at the injured man’s stubbornness, Michael grabbed him by his shirt and hauled him close. “Tell me, you bastard. Tell me where it is.”

“No.”

Michael punched Lucifer once again, rendering the man unconscious. Leaving him on the floor, they ransacked the flat, but there was no sign of the sword. The two brutal angels exchanged disappointed glances.

“You think he’s going to live?” Michael asked the other angel.

“Not for long. He’s bleeding out,” Camael said simply. “What do you want to do about the sword?”

The archangel shrugged. “You know what? As long as he’s dead, I couldn’t care less.”
As the two angels walked to the balcony, Michael aimed one last kick at Lucifer’s gut. Laughing, they took off into the sky.

So this was how it all ended, Lucifer thought.

Staring up at the ceiling, he could feel himself slowly ebbing away. The pain from his stab wound racked his body, and he found it hard to think. The one thing that lay in the forefront of his mind was....

Chloe.

Taking a deep, shuddering breath, he propped himself up against the nearest piece of furniture, which happened to be the couch. He stared at the blood on his clothes. There was so much of it. Where was his phone? He had to get his phone. Did he leave it on the bar? He couldn’t think. Everything was in a strange haze.

Chloe. He needed Chloe.

He tried to get up but couldn’t, so he crawled his way across the room, leaving a stain of red across the floor. The world spun and he felt lightheaded. He couldn’t think. The haze was overwhelming as he made his way, but he finally reached the bar. Stretching up an arm, he was just able to grip the counter edge. After what felt like forever, he pulled himself to a standing position. The world tilted, and he almost went down again. The phone. He needed his phone.

He spotted it near the bottle of whiskey. Lucifer staggered over to it, using the counter as a crutch. With a shaking hand, he grabbed it just as his legs went out from under him. He fell in a crumpled pile at the base of the bar... but he had the phone. It was lying near his head, where he fell. Next to his face. Well, that’s exactly where he needed it.

It was getting harder to move. Lucifer blinked hard to focus. His hand shook as he tried to use the phone. He needed... he needed.... What did he need? He couldn’t think. The phone -- oh yes, the phone. With as much effort as he could muster, he tilted the phone so he could see it and pulled up the photo of Chloe and him on their date. It felt like it had been ages ago....

It was hard to zoom in on her face, but he managed it with one hand. Chloe looked happy in her red dress. The sight of her brought back so many memories.... Darkness lingered on the fringes of his consciousness, but he pushed it away. He just wanted to see her one last time. At least a part of her would be with him at the end.

“H-hello, Detective,” he managed to say to the photo. He laughed, but it came out as a cough and he spit the blood from his mouth. “Looks like I’ve gotten into quite a mess.

“I miss you,” Lucifer managed to say. “I miss your little one. I wish....”

It was getting too difficult to speak. He just lay on the floor, panting, his eyes never leaving the
photo. Every once in a while the phone would go dark, but he’d pull up enough energy to wake up the screen. He had to concentrate hard on keeping his gaze fixed on Chloe. When he finally couldn’t even muster enough energy to wake the screen, he closed his eyes.

The soft ding of the elevator arriving at the flat rang in the distance.

Who could it be? Lucifer let out a huffing breath that was the best he could do for a laugh. Not that it mattered -- it was too late. He was practically dead. Would he go to Hell, he wondered, or some other place? Certainly not Heaven -- he would have laughed, if he could have. Maybe he’d just... vanish?

Chloe... he thought. I love you. Will you remember me once I’m gone?

“Lucifer!”

A female voice -- not the detective’s. Maze. His faithful demon. He didn’t have enough energy to speak her name. He would miss her, but he knew she was in good hands with Amenadiel. There was no need to worry about her.

Lucifer cried out in pain as she turned him to his back and applied pressure to his knife wound. Bloody hell, it hurt. Perhaps he passed out for a time -- he wasn’t sure -- but the next voice he heard was Amenadiel’s.

“Come on, Luci, hang in there.” Then, as if to someone else, “Damn the suspension rules. I’m going to call Raphael.”

Chloe. Where was Chloe? He needed his phone. Just one last look....

He managed to open his eyes. Barely. His focus kept going in and out. Maze hovered over him, her face tight with distress. Don’t worry, he wanted to say. Just let me go. Opening his mouth to speak, Lucifer found he didn’t have enough energy to utter anything. A glance to his side showed him the phone close by, on the floor.

Chloe.

Maze followed his gaze and snatched up the phone. She woke it up and saw the photo. Very gently, she wrapped his hands around the device. “She’s with you, Lucifer. Stay with us. Raphael is on the way.”

Relaxing now that he had the phone, Lucifer shut his eyes. Time passed -- he didn’t know how much. Then the sound of wings.

“Oh, crap.”

That was Rafe. Hands touched him -- a little roughly -- at the knife wound. Then a cold, sharp pain ripped into him, and he cried out.

“Sorry, Luci, but you’re in really bad shape -- I don’t have time to be gentle.”

More pain racked his body as Raphael worked on him. Lucifer would have laughed if he could have. Poor Rafe, having to help someone he detested.

A thread of energy shot through him, giving him enough strength to open his eyes. Raphael was bent over him, his face lit from his hands’ blue glow as he worked on Lucifer’s injuries.
“Hello, Rafe,” he managed to say. “Come to finish what Michael and Camael started?”

“Shut up.”

Lucifer let out a chuckle that sounded more like wheezing. “It’s too late, you know. Just... let me go.”

Raphael gave him a hard look. “I’ve never lost a patient, Luci. I’m not about to start now.”

More pain. He cried out, and passed out again.

He wasn’t sure how long he was out, but it couldn’t have been long. When he opened his eyes, Raphael was still working on him. Lucifer felt a little better, until Raphael’s touch brought more agony. “Bloody hell, Rafe, can you make it any more painful?”

The angel glanced up at him. “It’s pretty bad. I’m doing my best.”

“If this is any indication of your bedside manner, no wonder everyone -- ow! -- hides from you.”

“Lucifer, you ass, shut it.”

Where was his phone? He couldn’t feel it in his hands anymore. He needed Chloe -- needed to be close to her. Maze came into his field of vision as she leaned over him and wiped the dried blood from his face with a wet towel.

“Phone?” he asked her. Lucifer felt her press the device into his hand. Closing his eyes, he drifted off into a strange haze -- not awake, but not unconscious either. He just listened to the conversation around him as his brother worked on him.

“What’s with the obsession with the phone?” Rafe.

“You wouldn’t understand.” That was Maze.

“Here, take a look.” Amenadiel.

Lucifer felt someone take the phone out of his hand.

“Why, this is the human he had me heal! This can’t be him...! He looks... happy with her.”

The phone was slid back into his hand.

“He’s changed, hasn’t he?” That was Rafe.

“Being here’s changed him,” Amenadiel said. “He can still be an ass, but... he’s better.”

“I thought he hated humans. Michael said Luci was disgusted by them.”

“You gotta be kidding.” Maze, again. “He’s fascinated by them -- and in love with one of them.”

Maze, Maze, Maze... he thought. Did you really have to tell Rafe that?

“Well, this has given me a lot to think about. I may have been wrong about him.” There was a long pause, and then Raphael said, “Look, I have to get back -- Father will be wondering where I am. Lucifer’s too badly injured to be healed in one sitting, so keep him still. I’ve taken care of the worst of it -- his body can take care of the rest. Tell him not to push it.”
“Thank you, Raphael.” That was Amenadiel. Lucifer heard the rustle of wings and knew his brother had left.

Knowing that a part of Chloe was close, and content with the phone in his hand, he finally let the darkness take him completely.
It took a long time for Lucifer to heal, but heal he did. Recuperating gave him plenty of time to think about Chloe and Trixie while his flat was getting repaired.

Lucifer knew that leaving their lives was the right thing to do. Well, his brain knew it, but his foolish heart didn’t. It kept hoping that Chloe would walk in the door one day, and they could resume their lives from before the accident. Bloody hell, he had never gotten to take her on their date. The grand, romantic date. That was one regret he’d never be able to resolve.

He stopped trying to see them. Oh, unconsciously his eyes would still search every area he was in whenever he walked down the streets or drove his car -- his heart kept hoping that he might catch a glimpse of either the detective or her child, if he was lucky -- but he stopped trying to actively seek them out. That had been tried once, with disastrous results. No, he had to learn to live without them.

But how? He couldn’t forget, no matter how hard he tried. At times he thought he would go insane.

Lucifer threw himself into work at LUX. He always made sure everyone in the club was well entertained, danced sultry dances with the club-goers, and treated many of them to drinks. He picked out songs that were fast and furious and sang them at his piano like a demon possessed. Everyone loved it and him, but Maze looked at him like he had lost his mind.

“What the hell is wrong with you?” She asked him three weeks after the assault, as she tended bar. “You’ve gotten really strange.”

Lucifer lifted an eyebrow at her as he downed a large glass of Bourbon, neat. “What makes you say that, Maze?”

“You’re... different.”

He snorted. “I thought you’d be happy that I’m back to my old ways.”

Maze shook her head. “This isn’t like your old ways. Before there was... excitement... joy when you partied. Now you seem... destructive. You’re moody, and you don’t really enjoy being here at LUX anymore. You haven’t been the same since you were attacked. No, wait -- before that. Since you parted ways with the detective.”

Lucifer felt a twinge of pain at the mention of Chloe, but pushed it away. He grabbed the bottle of bourbon and refilled his glass. “Nonsense, Maze! I am as I always was -- enjoying life to the fullest!”

“Oh? And when was the last time you had sex?”
Lucifer’s mouth worked soundlessly as he tried to come up with an answer. Finally, he settled with, “What does that have to do with anything?”

“I’m just saying, Lucifer. You’re not yourself.” She leaned forward, her teeth bared. “Forget the detective,” she hissed. “She’s not worth this. There are plenty of humans here. Take them. Take them all.”

Lucifer looked at his demon and smiled wryly. “My dear Maze, if you and Amenadiel were at odds and I told you to find yourself another angel, would you?”

Maze glared at him for a long moment, then dropped her gaze.

“I rest my case,” he said as he saluted her with his drink. Downing it in one gulp, he rose from the counter and headed for the elevator. Maze watched him for a moment, then returned to tending bar.

“Did you see Mr. Bradford run down the alley?” asked Chloe. She stood on the sidewalk, interviewing witnesses while her new partner, Louis Owens, did the same on the other side of the street. She wasn’t sure how she felt about Owens. He was alright, but it felt wrong working with him, somehow. She figured it was because Dan had been pushing to be her new partner, which she rejected.

And that was the weird thing. She didn’t even know why she had rejected her ex as her partner. Was it because he was trying to rekindle their relationship, and she didn’t want to be that personally involved with someone who would be her partner? Chloe knew it could end up being a conflict of interest, so maybe that was why...? She didn’t know. It just felt wrong.

Their relationship had taken an odd turn, as well. Dan had been very attentive toward her in the last month, if not downright pushy, demanding that they rekindle their marriage. Something still felt... off, though. Like a piece of herself was missing. Chloe just couldn’t seem to get excited about a life with Dan. Her heart screamed no, but her brain didn’t know why. It was all very confusing. Dan asked if it was because of her old partner, Lucifer Morningstar, but she had countered with, “Of course not.” There wasn’t much she could remember about her old partner. She knew they had worked on cases together, but her memory was strangely foggy. She couldn’t even remember the man’s face, which was... disturbing.

The witness had nothing constructive to offer, so Chloe closed her notebook and started heading toward the car. She crossed the street and walked by an old photo development shop. Just as she passed it, the owner stepped out and hailed her. He was a small Asian man, with an alarming amount of shockingly white hair on his head. Although he looked quite old, he had the movements of a much younger man.

“Hello, Detective!” he greeted her. Chloe blinked. She hadn’t interviewed him, so how did he know she was a detective? Maybe Owens had mentioned her.

“Can I help you?” she asked.
The spritely old man stared hard at her for a long moment, then said, “Oh dear, what have they done to you?”

“Excuse me?”

The old man shook his head. “This is horrible. Just horrible. How could you let them do that to you?”

Chloe felt confused. What was this old man talking about? “I’m sorry, I don’t understand....”

“No.... no, of course not. I’m sorry, my dear. It’s just that --“

“Yes?”

“This is really unacceptable. This will never do. We have to fix this. Wait here.” The old man rushed into his shop, only to come out seconds later, huffing and puffing a bit from the exertion. He held an envelope, which he thrust into her hands. “Here,” he said. “Open this when you get home, with your daughter. Hopefully it will fix everything. If not, then be sure to come back here. You’ll know if you need to. Here’s my card.”

“Wait, what? What is this? How do you know I have a daughter?” Chloe’s police senses went on high alert.

The old man waved in the air. “We met once, a very long time ago. You’ve probably forgotten. You were married to... I believe his name was Dan. It was right after you gave birth.”

The blonde woman stared at him. “I... don’t remember.”

The old man gave her a huge grin. “That’s all right. I’m used to it. I have one of those forgettable faces, I guess. Just... be sure to open that with your daughter, tonight. Has to be tonight. Sooner the better. Even now it might be too late.” He started to turn away, but then said to her, “And tell Mister Morningstar to come see me, when he has time.”

“Mister Morning...?! What? Wait!” Chloe called out but the shopkeeper had already gone back into the shop and closed the door. She started to go after him, but Owens called for her. At first she stared at the envelope she had received, then switched her gaze to the business card in her hand.

“Memories Photo Lab,” she read. “Ray Kamiya, owner.” The blonde detective shook her head at the strangeness of their conversation, but found herself putting the envelope in her jacket pocket.

________________________________________________

After eating dinner with Trixie, Chloe went to her jacket and pulled out the envelope she had gotten from the strange photo lab shopkeeper. Unable to stop thinking about the encounter, she had kept pulling the envelope out of her jacket pocket at work and fiddling with it. More than once she thought she would just open it, but then something always came up and she’d return it once more to its hiding place. Now that she was at home with her daughter, they could open it together without
“Trixie!” she called as she sat down on the couch. Her daughter came running up and gave her a hug.

“Mommy! What’s up?” The little girl looked at the envelope in her mother’s hands. “What’s that?”

“It’s... it’s something someone gave me at work today. He said we had to open it together.”

Trixie’s eyes grew round with excitement. “Is it a present?”

“I don’t know, monkey. Let’s see, shall we?” She tore open the envelope and turned it upside down.

Three photos fell out.

Chloe picked one up and looked at it. It was a photo of her and Trixie... and a man. He was dressed in a black vested suit with a maroon shirt, and was devastatingly handsome. When had they posed with him? She squinted at the photo. He had a huge smile on his face, and she could sense the happiness emanating from him through the photograph. She handed the photo to Trixie.

“Do you recognize him?” she asked.

Trixie stared hard at the photo, then her eyes lit up. “This is him -- the man from school that day! Do you remember? The one with the sad eyes!” The little girl picked up another photograph, again a posed photo of the three of them. They were all laughing in it. Suddenly recognition hit.

“Lucifer! Mommy, this is Lucifer!”

“Lucifer?” As in Morningstar? Her old partner?

She took the photo and looked at it closer. They all looked so happy together. Obviously she and Lucifer were going on a date...? She was wearing the red dress she had kept for special occasions, before it had been ruined. Trixie must not have been going, because she wore jeans and a tee shirt. Lucifer’s hands were on Trixie’s shoulders, and her little girl was looking up at him with hero worship. Chloe’s hands started to shake. She could remember -- what? Something --

“Mommy, it’s Lucifer!” Trixie repeated. “How could we forget him? Do you remember him, Mommy? Do you?”

Without answering, Chloe picked up the third photograph and looked at it. She and Lucifer were looking at each other, grinning. There was love there, she could see it. A really strong, beautiful love. Why couldn’t she remem--

All of a sudden, she was hit with a deluge of memories. Meeting Lucifer. His claim to be the Devil. Working with him, solving cases. The death of Father Frank. Sitting next to the tall man at his piano. Lucifer getting shot by Malcolm at the airport hangar. Sitting beside him in the hospital after he had been badly beaten. Losing him for five weeks.... Michael. Lucifer’s wings. Their date.... The accident.

“Oh, my god....” She whispered. Tears burned her eyes and she buried her face in her hands. All the suppressed love she had for him welled up and threatened to drown her. How could she forget? How in the world could she have forgotten? She reached out and grabbed Trixie in a hug. “How did we forget, monkey? How did we forget?”

“He’s an angel -- he must have wanted us to forget.” A shadow crossed Trixie’s face. “Why would
Lucifer sat in his armchair, thinking about what Maze said.

He knew he had changed. How could he ever go back to what he was with a huge chunk of his heart missing? It might have been easier if Sachiel could have taken his memories away as well, but that was not how dear old Dad played the game. Oh no, Dad loved to watch people suffer.

Knowing that Chloe and Trixie were out there in the world, with absolutely no memory of him, tore at his insides. The blank look Chloe had given him at Trixie’s school three weeks prior was enough to have him cringing. He couldn’t bear to run into her again, even if his heart screamed for her. It just wasn’t an option. The memories of Chloe kept cutting away at him, though, and the wound of losing her never healed. There were times when he wished that Michael and Camael really had finished him off. Hopeless and worn down, he just wanted everything to end. It was days like these that had him wishing he could get roaring drunk like a human and just forget for a day. An hour. A minute. Even a second.

The flutter of wings on the balcony interrupted his thoughts. Great, he thought. Another angel. Michael and Camael coming to claim the sword again? Gabriel with more deals from Dad? He groaned at the thought as he got to his feet. He didn’t want to deal with this now.

Sure enough, it was the redheaded Gabriel standing on the balcony, looking so nervous that it made Lucifer edgy.

Bloody hell.

“What do you want, Gabe?” Lucifer asked wearily. “Make it fast. I’m in no mood for your typical load of rubbish.”

The slender angel swallowed hard. “Father... Father wants to know if you’re ready to return to the fold.”

The fallen angel looked sharply at his brother. “What?!”

“Father wants to know if you’re ready to bend to his will. To follow orders like the rest of us. He wants you to come home.”

Home.

Lucifer closed his eyes as he thought of the word. Home. He once thought that the only home he
needed was with Chloe and Trixie -- his human family. But they were gone now, and he really had nothing. Nothing at all in the world was holding him down. Could he become the good soldier that he once was? Could he return to work for his manipulative father? Did he want to? Did he even care? They had all treated him so badly. Could he return to that, and bear their contempt? Or was he better off on earth, where his ruined heart lay? Could he live day in and day out, knowing Chloe was out there, but never being able to see her? Touch her? Hear her gentle voice?

Bloody hell. He really couldn’t bear being on earth without Chloe. Wouldn’t it be better to just cut off the festering wound? His heart instantly rebelled at the thought of never seeing her again, but staying was so painful....

Lucifer sighed. When it came right down to it, he really didn’t give a bloody damn what happened to him from now on. Did anything even matter, without Chloe and her child by his side? No. Dad could do whatever the bloody hell he liked. He just didn’t care anymore.

Taking a deep breath, he looked at Gabriel. “Tell the bloody bastard that I’ll come. When does he want me?”

“Tonight. He wants you tonight,” the red-headed angel said.

Lucifer’s insides instantly rebelled. “No. Not tonight. Tomorrow -- I’ll be there tomorrow.”

Gabriel looked at him with suspicion, so the fallen angel sealed the deal with, “I give you my word.”

Gabriel nodded. “Father agrees.” And with that, the angel took flight and was gone.

Lucifer sighed. One night left on earth. Might as well live it up -- no sense in moping. What he really needed was a party. There were plenty of revelers downstairs at LUX -- he’d grab them and pull them up to the flat. After all, who could resist free booze? And if a little sex got thrown in on the side -- well then, so much the better.
Chapter Notes

A super huge thank you to my most excellent beta, ScooterThyme, who really helped clean up my awkward turns of phrase, and caught all my missing capitals -- thank you!!! You're the best!

After finally getting a last-minute sitter for Trixie, Chloe got into her car. She wasn’t sure where to look for Lucifer, exactly -- it had been a month and he might be anywhere. Best chance, though, would be the nightclub. Driving like a mad woman, she got to LUX in record time. A quick scan of the club showed no Lucifer, although she did spot Maze tending bar. Chloe decided to head up to the penthouse.

When the elevator doors opened, Chloe stood there with her mouth open. The apartment was filled with partygoers drinking, dancing, and making out... everywhere. She entered slowly, shock on her face. Well, apparently Lucifer had reverted to his old ways. Disappointment shot through her as she picked her way through the throngs of people. Had he made her forget so that he could go back to... this? Anger burned in her, and she considered leaving at that very moment. To hell with him! She’d go back home and never think about him again! After a moment’s pause, though, she reconsidered. She had come all the way to see him, and see him she would -- even if it was just to punch him in the face and tell him what a bastard he was.

She started looking for him, searching the inside of the apartment first. His bedroom had several couples making out on his bed, but none of them had him participating. Then she checked the guest bedroom, where there were more couples entwined together, but still no Lucifer. She stepped over drunk bodies and pushed past half-naked revelers to the outer deck. She almost missed seeing the tall club owner at the far corner of the balcony.

He was alone, leaning on the clear railing and staring at the city lights. It surprised Chloe, for she thought he’d be partying it up. She approached quietly, but he didn’t seem to notice her. He kept to himself and just kept his eyes on the horizon. He looked so good to her eyes, but she supposed angels always looked beautiful.

As if aware of her scrutiny, he turned and saw her. At first it was almost like he didn’t recognize her, then his eyes grew wide and his mouth dropped open. He looked like a dying man in the desert who had just spotted water. For a long moment they just started at each other, as their awareness of the rest of the world fell away.

And then he was moving, striding to her with eyes full of fire. Before she had any idea of what he was up to, he took a gentle hold of face and kissed her with all of the passion and pent up desire he had for her. His ardor practically burned her, it was so consuming. She felt a strong echo of the same desire welling in her.

It was over all too soon. He pulled back suddenly, as if realizing what he was doing, and rested his
forehead to hers.

“I don’t care what you think -- I’m not apologizing for that,” he whispered, before letting her go and returning to his corner on the balcony.

Chloe’s legs almost went out from under her from the sudden burst of passion, but she straightened and tried to get a hold of herself. She took a step toward him.

Lucifer started laughing, a harsh ugly sound that almost seemed to border on deranged if she hadn’t known him better. Glancing at her once, he settled down to a rueful chuckle and shook his head. He finally turned toward Chloe and smiled, although it did not reach his eyes. “What brings you here, Detective? Perhaps you have a case that you need assistance with?”

“No,” she managed to say.

“You require me to ask someone about their deepest, darkest desires?”

Ask me, she wanted to say, but only shook her head.

“Well, in that case, stay! Come enjoy the party! We have plenty of alcohol -- and sex, if you wish it.”

“Lucifer --“

“Or perhaps you’d like to skinny-dip in the hot tub? Relive your Hot Tub High School days?” He grinned devilishly, but his eyes looked... sad. Tortured.

Chloe took a deep breath. “No. Look, Lucifer, I just want --“

“Yes, what do you want, Detective? What is it you desire?” he asked with a smile and cocked head.

“I want to know why you tampered with my memories.”

All expression dropped off of Lucifer’s face. He stared at her with shock. “You... you remember?”

She nodded. “Why, Lucifer? When I first came here, I thought it was because you wanted to return to your old lifestyle, but after that kiss, I can see that’s not the case. So why...?”

His gaze returned to the city lights and he was quiet for a long time. She walked up to his side, and touched his arm. He jumped at the contact.

“I didn’t have a choice,” he finally said.

“What do you mean? I need to know. Please.”

He took a deep breath. For a moment she thought he wouldn’t say anything, then he said, “It was the price I had to pay.”

That puzzled Chloe. “Price?”

“Right. It was my fault.” He turned to look at her, his eyes filled with sorrow. “Dad wouldn’t have had you targeted if you hadn’t been with me.”

She swallowed. “The car accident.”

“Yes. Camael... he caused it. You were so badly injured and in a coma. I couldn’t reach you. Dad
offered me a deal....”

“A deal?”

He nodded. “Your life, if I left it.”

Chloe was stunned. “But... But surely I would have recovered on my own...?”

He looked at her, his dark eyes intense. “Even if you had, your back was broken. Your life would have been hell. I couldn’t let that happen.”

“Oh, god.”

“Yes, it has his bloody fingerprints all over it.” He took a deep breath. “It was the price I had to pay to get you well again. I couldn’t very well leave you like that. You have a child. A life.” He swallowed hard. “I can’t be a part of it -- no matter how badly I want to be. Don’t you see? This is the only way I can keep you protected.”

Lucifer’s face was a study in agony. He looked like he had suffered every minute of the month they had spent apart. And he had, she realized, for he still retained his full memories. She tried to put herself in his place. How would she feel if Lucifer was in the world and didn’t know who she was? If he didn’t remember all the love they shared?

Anger welled up in Chloe -- not at Lucifer, but at his crazy, manipulative family. Why couldn’t they leave him alone? She grabbed his arm angrily. “Now you listen here, Lucifer, don’t tell me that you can’t be a part of my life. That’s not you talking -- that’s your father. And it’s not for him to decide -- it’s up to us.... Up to me. And I say you stay.”

She reached up fiercely and kissed him with all the passion and hunger that she had for him. For a moment he was hesitant, almost as if afraid of things being too good to be true, but then he wrapped her tight in his arms and kissed her back. She felt herself drowning in desire as he deepened the kiss. The fire that burned between them was hot, explosive.

Lucifer couldn’t think straight. The weeks away from her had been devastating for him. He’d felt as if his soul had been ripped in half. And then suddenly there she was, right in front of him, kissing him -- giving him heaven. Lucifer couldn’t believe it. Shouldn’t she be hating him for having her memories tampered with? But no... Chloe never did the expected -- she was strong. Pride welled in him at the thought that this beautiful, strong woman was his. His!

Desire hotter than the fires of Hell engulfed him and he felt his body react to her loving embrace. He couldn’t think. All he wanted was to have sex with her. No, not sex -- love. He wanted to make love to her.

He reached down and swept her up in his arms, cradling her close as they continued to kiss. She felt so good against him, like she belonged there. He wanted to lose himself in her right at that instant, but making out on the balcony like some randy teenager would cheapen the experience. He didn’t want that -- what he wanted was to see her in his bed, with her hair fanned out around her, and her body welcoming his. Just the images in his head had him in a mad rush to get to his bedroom.

“Whoa, Lucifer! You go, my man!”

The loud voice penetrated Lucifer’s passion-fogged brain. He broke the kiss and looked up. A drunken party-goer was giving him the thumbs-up.

Well, if that wasn’t one way to completely kill his desire....
Glancing at his flat, he realized the party had turned into an all-out orgy. There wasn’t any way he couldn’t possibly make love to her like this, with all these strangers everywhere, mucking up the place!

“Bloody hell!” he nearly yelled, his eyes flashing red.

Chloe looked up at him with desire-clouded eyes, then followed his gaze to the absolute debacle in front of them. As Lucifer set her on her feet, she sighed with frustration, then finally chuckled.

“Well, maybe it’s for the best. I do have to get back to Trixie tonight,” she said with a wry smile before kissing him on the cheek. He looked so bereft that she hugged him and whispered, “Trixie misses you. Come home.”

Hope sprang into his eyes. He knew he shouldn’t, but... “I want to.”

“Then come.”

She took his hand and gently led him away.

________________________________________________

The drive was quiet to her house. Chloe glanced at Lucifer a couple of times, but he kept his eyes on the dark scenery passing by. She thought he would have been happy, but from what she could see of his face, he looked troubled.

“Talk to me, Lucifer,” she finally said as she pulled into her driveway. He glanced at her and smiled, although his eyes looked angry and there was a bitter twist to his mouth.

“Oh, it’s nothing you need concern yourself with, Detective.”

“ Lucifer, I know that look.”

He laughed humorlessly. “I was just thinking that my life is a series of incredibly bad-timed events. Dear old Dad... how he must love ruining my life.”

Chloe reached out and caressed his cheek. “Hey. It’s okay. Trixie and I are here with you now. We’re together, and that’s what’s important. Now let’s go inside.”

Lucifer stared at her for a long while, then nodded. He knew he should tell her about going back to Heaven, but he didn’t want to. It would just cast a dark cloud over everything. There would be time enough to tell her tomorrow... before he left. He just wanted to be with his family tonight, without any other troubles to ruin the reunion.

They both got out of the car and walked up the drive. Trixie must have been watching for them, because she opened the front door just as they reached it.

“Lucifer!” she cried, launching herself at the tall man. He laughed as he gave Trixie a brief hug back. Chloe looked on with approval. It looked like Lucifer was finally getting used to Trixie.
“Hello, little one. It’s been a while.”

“Why did you make us forget?” Trixie asked.

“Ah... well, why don’t we let the babysitter go home before I answer that?” Lucifer said as he glanced at the teenage girl hovering in the background.

While Chloe paid the girl and sent her home, Trixie took the fallen angel’s arm and proceeded to tell him all about the month that had just passed. Lucifer listened attentively as they sat together on the couch, even though it was all school gossip she was telling him. He had missed this -- just being with family. He grabbed onto the warmth spreading through his chest, hoping to remember it in the lonely years ahead.

“You came to school one day, didn’t you?” Trixie asked. “I saw you.”

Lucifer blinked with surprise. “You... you remember?”

Trixie nodded solemnly. “You had really sad eyes. You missed us, didn’t you?”

“Very much.”

She gave him a hug. “I’m sorry you missed us, but we’re together again now, right?” Trixie grinned at him; Lucifer felt his heart burst with emotion. How was he to tell this beautiful child that after tomorrow, he’d be out of their lives for good? His eyes were stinging, but he figured that maybe it was from dust... or something. He hugged her back, unable to speak.

Chloe walked up then and looked down at the pair. Lucifer glanced up and gave her a watery smile. He held out a hand to her and she took it, squeezing gently.

Trixie seemed so reluctant to be away from Lucifer that they all decided to sleep in Chloe’s bed. Lucifer took his place in the middle, fully dressed except for his shoes and suit jacket, with Trixie snuggled up on one side of him. Chloe took the other side.

Lucifer and Chloe held each other close after Trixie fell asleep. It was like Heaven to Lucifer. After such a long month of torture, he couldn’t believe that the woman he loved remembered everything, and was lying next to him.

Of course there was the dark thought of leaving, but he pushed that aside. He didn’t know if he could survive without them -- well, obviously not, if the last month was any indication -- but he’d have to make do. At least they remembered him. Perhaps he would be able to endure, knowing that.

With all the worries on his mind, he unconsciously tightened his grip until Chloe cried out in protest.

“Oh, sorry, love. Are you alright?” he asked.

Chloe laughed. “I’m okay. Just... let me breathe, okay?”
Lucifer nuzzled her hair in apology, squeezing his eyes shut as he cherished what little time he had left. “How did you remember?”

Chloe cocked her head. “Well, that was the weirdest thing. I was working a case with my new partner --”

“How did you remember?” Lucifer sat up, practically pushing Chloe off of him. His chest tightened with what felt suspiciously like jealousy, and he swallowed hard. The blonde woman eyed him indignantly as she sat up next to him. “Bloody hell, you replaced me?” he cried.

“Well yes, since my old partner was nowhere to be seen,” she said with a glare. She pushed him back down and snuggled next to him. “Don’t worry, Lucifer. He’s got nothing on you.”

“Damn right he doesn’t,” he muttered, still annoyed.

“Anyway, this old man from a photo lab ran out and gave me an envelope. Said I had to open it with Trixie. When I got home, Trixie and I found three photos inside.”

The tall man’s eyebrows lifted. “Photos?”

“Of our date night. Remember? Ashley took some with my phone.”

Lucifer remembered Sachiel deleting the photos from the device. “I wasn’t aware you had printed them.”

Chloe looked up at Lucifer then. “Well, that’s the thing. I hadn’t. And even if I had, I’d never take them to a photo lab -- I’d just print them off my computer.”

“So how did he...?”

“I don’t know. But looking at those photos made me remember everything.” Chloe lay her cheek on Lucifer’s chest, her eyes unseeing as she thought of the old man. “I’m so grateful that I ran into him.”

Lucifer held Chloe close. “As am I.”

The detective’s eyebrows furrowed as her eyes narrowed. “Come to think of it, he asked that you go and see him.”

“Me?”

“Yes, you. It was so odd...” She shook her head. “I have his card. We can go see him together tomorrow, if you like.”

“Mm.”

But Lucifer wasn’t thinking of the photo lab owner. Chloe’s words about tomorrow reminded him that there would be no more tomorrows together. Squeezing his eyes shut, he tried to memorize the feel of the woman in his arms. He stayed awake long after Chloe had fallen asleep, and watched the night slowly ebb away.
Chloe woke up in Lucifer’s arms. He made a wonderful pillow -- she could really use this particular one every night. Smiling at the thought, she rubbed her eyes then glanced at him. He was awake, looking at her with a gentle smile.

“Good morning, Detective,” he said softly.

“Good morning. Didn’t you sleep?”

Lucifer shook his head. “Too many wonderful things to look at,” he said, staring at her intently before cocking his head at Trixie sleeping on the other side of him.

His eyes looked sad. Chloe frowned, feeling a strange apprehension at the sight. “Are you alright?”

“Shouldn’t you be getting this one up for school?” Lucifer asked, changing the subject as he nudged Trixie. The little girl mumbled something in her sleep and threw an arm over Lucifer’s chest.

“What time is it?”

“7:00.”

Chloe bolted out of bed. “Oh no. No, no, no. Trixie needs to be at school by 8:30 and I’ve got to get to work.” Reaching across the tall man, she shook Trixie awake. “Trixie! Get up! You have to get ready for school!”

Lucifer watched Chloe dash into the bathroom, then looked down at the little girl who continued to sleep. He didn’t know how he was going to live without them. He felt a heavy weight descend on his chest, like he was slowly getting crushed to death. Was this what dread felt like? What a horrible emotion -- one he certainly could do without. Taking a deep breath, he eased Trixie’s arm off of his chest and sat up. Well, the least he could do was make breakfast for the pair of them.

He ambled over to their kitchen and started taking stock of the refrigerator. He just didn’t know how the detective could feed her little one with so few ingredients! Cherry French toast with vanilla cream would have been good, but the poor woman didn’t have any cherries. He’d have to rectify that for tomorrow --

No. He wouldn’t be here tomorrow.

Sighing, he pulled out the fixings for French toast anyway, and started making the vanilla cream. Cinnamon French toast with vanilla cream and maple syrup would have to do. Frustration and
regret started filtering through him as he started cooking. If only his father hadn’t asked him to go home. If only he had seen Chloe earlier. If only he hadn’t given his word. If only....

He laughed out loud, but it was a humorless sound. His life was a joke. One big, cruel joke.

“You bastard, you must be laughing your head off,” he growled at Heaven angrily.

Well, it wasn’t as if he could change his mind now. Even if he hadn’t given his word, he really had no choice. He couldn’t afford having his father target Chloe and Trixie again. They were everything to him and their safety came first. He’d just have to live away from them, knowing that they were safe -- even if it killed him.

Damn, sometimes he really hated these noble feelings the detective inspired in him. Life was so much easier when he only had himself to think about.

Ah, a tiny voice in his head said, but were you happy?

“Shut up,” he muttered to himself. He knew that he had been nothing before Chloe -- there was absolutely no comparison -- but there were times when he missed being selfish. His old self would have just said, “To hell with this,” and stayed with them whether it put them in danger or not. His old self would have had more time with them, which was exactly what he now wanted but couldn’t afford.

Lucifer heard Chloe trying to wake the child again, and it brought a smile to his lips. Was this what it would be like if he and the detective were a couple and living together? He found himself envying Detective Douche, of all people, who had gotten eight years of happiness with Chloe. It just wasn’t fair.

Chloe came into the kitchen as Lucifer started making the French toast. Coming up behind him, she wrapped her arms around his waist and pressed against his back lovingly. Lucifer reveled in the embrace, trying desperately to memorize the feel of her.

“Mmmm, something smells good,” she said as she peeked around him.

“French toast,” Lucifer said with a smile. He turned to her. She was wearing slacks and a blouse -- nothing special -- and yet she had never looked so good to him. “You, my dear, look good enough to eat.”

She laughed. “Keep your attention on the food when you’re cooking, Lucifer.”

He glanced down. The toast was starting to burn. With a curse, he pulled it out of the frying pan. “That was your fault, you minx,” he grumbled. “You know I can only think of one thing when I’m around you, Detective.”

“Naughty Devil,” Chloe said with a smile.

“Is there any other kind?” Lucifer said with a smug look.

Chuckling, she leaned against the counter next to him. “So did you want me to drop you off at LUX before I head to work? Or are you actually going to come into the station today?”

Lucifer paused for a moment, not liking the direction the conversation was headed. “You can drop me off at LUX.”

“How about we meet up for dinner tonight? I can pick up Trixie and meet you at a restaurant
somewhere around 7:00, if that sounds good to you.”

There it was.

Lucifer straightened. He wasn’t sure how to tell her. “I... I won’t be able to.”

“Oh.” Chloe’s face spasmed briefly with hurt. After being away from him for a month, she felt a little unsure of her place in his life. His words reminded her that perhaps he didn’t feel the same love that she felt for him. Infatuation? Passion? Sure. But love? That was something she wasn’t so sure about. Pushing away the disappointment, she pasted a smile on her face. “It’s okay. I know you have things to do. The club, and all....”

Lucifer saw the hurt in her eyes. Swearing, he took the pan off the heat and pulled her into his arms. “To hell with the bloody club. It’s not that.”

She stared at him, puzzled. “Then what is it?” When Lucifer said nothing, Chloe’s intuition went off like an alarm. “What is it? Lucifer, what’s wrong?”

This was bloody hard. Pulling away, he put some distance between him and the woman he loved. He grimaced. “Dear old Dad has requested that I go back to Heaven.”

Chloe felt as if her heart had dropped to the pit of her stomach. “What? When?”

“Yesterday. Before you came.”

“But... you’re not going, are you?” she asked, fearing the worst. At his silence, she continued, “Lucifer, you can’t possibly be thinking of going back to that crazy family of yours?”

He shook his head. “I gave my word.” A bitter laugh escaped him. “Right. Just when your memories return, that bloody bastard calls me back. I wouldn’t put it past him to have planned it this way.”

Anger flared in Chloe. “No. He can’t have you back. We just found each other again, and I’ll be damned if I’m going to let you go.”

“You don’t have a choice, my dear. I gave my word. I have to go back.”

“Do... do you want to go back?”

“Bloody hell, no. Not now.”

“Then why did you agree...?”

Because I was dying without you and nothing mattered anymore, sat unspoken on his lips. Lucifer just shook his head, unable to answer.

Chloe shut her eyes. It was like some nightmare. She laughed a little. “This is a joke, right? Please tell me it’s a joke, Lucifer.”

“I can’t. I... I’m sorry, Chloe.”

“Not for... forever?”

“Probably.”

Chloe went straight into his arms, holding onto him with anguish. Lucifer returned the embrace, and
kissed the top of her head. “Right. It really is for the best, Detective,” he said. “At least you and your little one will be safe. As long as I’m with you, you’ll always be in danger. I bloody well can’t have that.”

“Don’t say that, Lucifer. We can work through this.”

“I’m not sure that we can. They’re sodding angels. If anything happened to you and your little human, I... I ---”

“Shh,” Chloe said, placing a finger on his lips. “We will be okay. There’s Amenadiel and Mazikeen to help us. And you. There’s you. I know you would protect us.”

Her faith in him took his breath away. Tears pricked the back of his eyes as he buried his face in her neck. What was he going to do without her?

“I refuse to let you leave,” she whispered as she held him tightly. “You can’t go. Not until....”

He pulled back a bit. That sounded ominous. “Until?”

A shadow crossed her face, and she smiled sadly. “Until you get tired of us.”

Lucifer tilted her head up and gazed deep into her eyes. “That will never happen.”

Chloe felt hope blossom in her chest. She had been worried about Lucifer eventually losing interest in her and Trixie, but his statement seemed pretty definite. It gave her strength.

“Then don’t tell me you can’t be with us. We’re your family,” she said firmly. “There is nothing we can’t handle as long as we’re together. We need you here. I need you here.”

She kissed him then -- one of those searing kisses that destroyed any sense at all in the fallen angel’s head. Lucifer found himself reacting to it, kissing her with all the pent-up desire he had. It burned them both with its intensity. He wanted so badly to lay her right on the kitchen counter and take her, but some stupid, sane part of his brain reminded him that Chloe’s child was roaming around somewhere. Stupid, bloody, noble feelings told him he had to do the right thing. Trying to pull away, he whispered, “Detective, stop.... I can’t think --”

“Then don’t,” she said as she pulled his head down again.

He was drowning -- absolutely drowning -- and there wasn’t anything he could do about it. He willingly gave himself in to all the passion and longing that was running rampant to him. His hands briefly settled on her waist before roaming her back. Every inch of her body was pressed against him, burning him. He wanted -- he needed --

Too soon she pulled away, and Lucifer leaned his forehead against hers as he tried to catch his breath. She was breathing hard too, he was satisfied to see. His head was in a complete sexual haze; he couldn’t think at all. Bloody hell, was this how humans felt when he used his charms on them?

Chloe looked up at him with her beautiful eyes and said, “If you have to go, then go, but promise to come right back to us.”

His immediate impulse was to just nod yes to anything she said and kiss her again, but he couldn’t lie. Damn, he couldn’t even bloody think! Shaking his head to clear it, he tried to keep a straight thought in his head.

“I can’t promise...” He shut his eyes. “I don’t trust the bastard.”
“All the more reason to come right back,” Chloe said. “Don’t stay there any longer than you have to.”

Lucifer found himself helplessly agreeing. “Very well.”

“Promise me, Lucifer. Promise me that you’ll come back.”

“I’ll try. It’s the best I can do.”

Chloe gave a sharp nod of her head. She wasn’t happy about him going, but it couldn’t be helped. “Okay. In that case, I’ll let you go. I’ll expect to see you tonight.”

The horrible weight pressing down on Lucifer’s chest was easing. Chloe gave him hope that things would work out. “Tonight,” he said hoarsely.

Just then Trixie peeked around the corner of the kitchen with a huge grin on her face. “Is it safe to come in now?”

Lucifer beamed as the woman in his arms blushed. “Yes, come in, weasel,” Chloe laughed. “You have fifteen minutes to eat and then we have to go!”

Trixie gave Lucifer a thumbs-up sign as she ambled in. Lucifer grinned.

The trip to Heaven was uneventful.

Lucifer wasn’t sure what he had been expecting, but this was not it. He landed on the western edge of the kingdom and calmly put on the shirt and suit jacket he had brought with him. Sodding angels had no sense of style, and he had no intention of wearing a bloody dress. Tucking his shirt in his trousers, he looked around. Everything looked unchanged. The land was green and lush, the flowers were in bloom, and the colors of the world looked far brighter than those on Earth. Beauty was everywhere, but Lucifer found it strangely unappealing. He missed the hustle and bustle of Los Angeles.

Lucifer spotted the spires of the Silver City in the distance -- it was splendid, but left him cold. Gleaming in the sunlight like a great beacon, the great palace called to the souls rising up from Earth. He could see the spirits from all over flying toward it. He followed more slowly, content to just walk. It had been a long time since he had felt Heaven under his feet. Only his father knew if he’d ever be back again.

Walking up to the Western Gate was like reliving the past. This was the gate from which he had been expelled -- where Michael had forcibly removed him from the palace and thrown him over the edge of Heaven. Just seeing the place pulled up the memory of when he was chained with wings bound so that he had no choice but to Fall. Squeezing his eyes shut, he wondered why he had ever agreed to return. This had been a mistake.
Well, he would just pop in, greet his bloody father, then pop out just as quickly. Chloe and Beatrice were waiting for him, and he was anxious to get back.

The Western Gate was open, but guarded. He hailed the sentries who looked at him like he was... well, the Devil. Holding up his hands, he approached, but they drew their swords.

“I’m here at the request of dear old Dad,” he said. The guards just stared at him.

Something was wrong -- Lucifer’s instincts went on high alert. Looking over his shoulder, he spotted a flock of angels fast approaching. In the split second it took for him to recognize the black wings of the Warrior Elite, they were upon him like a pack of wild dogs.
Chloe was worried.

She sat on the couch with her phone in her hand, willing it to ring. Calling Lucifer had yielded no results -- his phone went straight to voice mail. There had been no response to her multiple messages, which left her waiting impatiently.

He hadn’t called on the first night, but she had figured that perhaps the meeting with his father had gone longer than expected. But by the second night, she was fretting. Lucifer would not have taken this long. Something had gone wrong -- she could feel it in her bones.

Trixie picked up on her anxiety and joined her on the couch after dinner, snuggling up close. Chloe put the phone down and gave her daughter a hug.

“Mommy, how come Lucifer’s not here?” Trixie asked.

Chloe looked at her daughter and sighed. “I don’t know, baby. I’ve been calling but he’s not picking up.”

A worried expression crossed Trixie’s face. “Has he gone away again?”

“Well, he went to see his father.”

Trixie’s face lit up. “He went to see God? That’s so cool!”

Chloe grimaced. “Yes, well... Maybe not so cool, Trixie.”

“Why?” the little girl asked with a puzzled expression.

Oh boy. This was going to be awkward. “Well,” Chloe started, “Lucifer and his dad had a major falling out. They weren’t talking to each other for a long time.”

“Because he’s the Devil,” Trixie said with a nod.

That caught Chloe by surprise. She knew that Trixie knew Lucifer was an angel, but she hadn’t realized her little girl had put two and two together. “You know he’s the Devil?”

“Please, Mommy, I’m eight,” Trixie said in a worldly voice. “He’s an angel and his name is Lucifer. Who else could he be?”

“Oh. Okay. And... you’re not scared?”
“Of Lucifer?” The little girl giggled. “That would be silly. He saved us and he’s family.”

Wow. Chloe was amazed. Her little girl had taken the news better than she did -- Lucifer would be tickled pink. “Okay.... Well, God asked him to visit. Lucifer was supposed to just go and come straight back, but he hasn’t returned. I think something bad has happened.”

Trixie frowned. “Do you think God did something bad to him?”

“I don’t know,” the detective said. “I hope not, but he hasn’t called. Lucifer wouldn’t come home and not call -- not if he knows we’re waiting for him.”

Trixie gave her mother a hug. “I hope he’s okay, Mommy.”

“I hope so too, baby.”

“Why did he go back? Isn’t that where the bad angel is?” Trixie asked, looking at her mother with big eyes.

“It is, but I guess his father asked him to come....”

“That bad angel better not hurt Lucifer, after making him Fall,” the little girl muttered.

Chloe’s brow furrowed. “Wait -- what did you say?”

“When they were fighting, the bad angel told Lucifer that he said all sorts of bad things to everyone to make them think Lucifer was bad. He framed him, Mommy, so that he’d Fall. He said he should have been the left hand, instead of the right. What does that mean, Mommy?”

Chloe felt fear crawl up her spine. “I’m not sure about the hand reference, baby, but if everyone thinks he’s bad because of Michael, then I think Lucifer is in big trouble.”

Later that night while Trixie slept, Chloe decided to try to reach Lucifer. She wasn’t sure if she could even do it, but she had to try. A horrible feeling was overtaking her that Lucifer had walked right into a trap; time was of the essence. She had to help him.

But how to get to Heaven? That was the question. She wasn’t sure if she could even focus in on Lucifer without having something to help her, like the jacket she had the last time she went to Hell.

Was traveling to Heaven different from traveling to Hell? Thinking hard, it dawned on her that she did have something that belonged to Heaven. Perhaps that would help her get to where she needed to go.

Grabbing a ladder from the garage, she lugged it up the stairs to the second floor hallway. Climbing the metal steps until she reached the ceiling, she popped open the attic access overhead and shoved it to one side. Drywall and insulation dust rained down on her and she coughed. A few more steps upward on the ladder had her upper body into the attic. Groping around in the dark, she found a large metal object wrapped in a sheet resting on the ceiling joists. She grabbed the Sword of Heaven
and tried to pull it toward her.

It was really heavy. Lucifer had hidden it after the battle with Michael; he had easily lifted it with his angelic strength, but she was human and it was a struggle. Dragging it against the wood members, she managed to push the sword through the attic opening. Chloe winced as it clanked against a part of the ladder, denting it, before dropping to the floor with a very loud thud. She was surprised it didn’t punch a hole through the floor. Hopefully she hadn’t woken up Trixie with all the noise she was making.

Chloe closed the attic access, pushed the ladder out of the way, then proceeded to drag the sword to her bedroom. It made the most awful noise, but c’est la vie. She couldn’t get it up on the bed, so she pulled blankets down onto the floor next to the sword and lay down beside it.

“Come on, sword,” she spoke to it. “Help me find Lucifer -- I think he’s in big trouble. Please get me to Heaven. Please....”

With a deep breath, she laid her hand on the sword’s hilt, and closed her eyes. The fear that she would not be able to relax ate at her, but surprisingly, she dropped off to sleep very quickly.

Chloe found herself in the middle of a giant silver plaza surrounded by a multitude of shining high-rise buildings. Everything was blindingly beautiful, and yet she found it unappealing. She wasn’t sure why, but maybe it was because her opinion of Lucifer’s family colored her view of the city. Thousands of angels either flew or walked this way and that, each with some destination in mind. There were so many of them that Chloe didn’t know how she was going to find one Devil among so many winged beings.

Walking aimlessly through the plaza, she noticed that most angels ignored her. One angel, though, passed by then did a double take before walking up to her. He was tall -- well, all angels were tall -- but not quite as tall as Lucifer, with big white wings, chestnut hair, hazel eyes and an easy smile.

“I know you,” he said. “You’re the human Lucifer is in love with.”

Chloe blinked in surprise. “What?”

“He had me heal you. I knew there was something special about you that night, but I didn’t realize it until later.”

“I’m sorry, who are you?” she asked.

“I’m Raphael.”

Rafe, Lucifer had called him. “Thank you for making me better,” she said.

“It was my pleasure.” Raphael smiled charmingly at Chloe, and if her heart hadn’t been completely full of Lucifer, she probably would have found herself falling for him. “Why are you here?” he
asked. “I can see you’re not a spirit. You’re too... solid. Come to think of it, how --”

“I’m looking for Lucifer,” she interrupted.

“Ah.” Raphael regarded her steadily. “He’s in a lot of trouble, but I’ll help you get to him.”

Suspicion raised its ugly head; her dealings with Michael had made her wary. Chloe asked, “Why? Lucifer said that all his siblings hate him.”

“Well, most of us do, but I’ve had a lot of time to think, and I’m finding he’s not so bad. Don’t get me wrong -- he’s still an ass -- but there must be some good in that black heart of his for him to love you as much as he does.”

Chloe stared at him, dumbfounded. “Lucifer loves me?”

“What, he’s never told you?” Shaking his head, Raphael mumbled something that sounded suspiciously like, “Luci, you idiot.” Then he continued in a louder voice, “Oh well, he always did like to play his cards close to his chest.”

“H-how do you know that he...?”

“Well, when he almost died --“

“What!?” Chloe was aghast.

“He didn’t tell you about that either?” Rolling his eyes, Raphael said, “Talk about being tight-lipped.... Michael and Camael attacked him three weeks ago -- nearly killed him. It was almost too late by the time I got there. All he could think about as he lay there dying was you.”

Chloe felt faint. Lucifer almost died and she hadn’t known about it. Her legs almost went out; Raphael helped steady her. Her heart went into a near frenzy at the horrible thought of Lucifer dying alone. Tears flooded her eyes, but she blinked them back -- she had to stay strong.

“Thank you for saving him,” she said fervently. “I -- we -- owe you.”

Shrugging, the angel beckoned Chloe to walk beside him as they talked. “Nah, it’s all part of the job as a healer. Anyway, it used to be that Luci only thought about himself, but if he’s fallen in love, then I figure he’s becoming a better angel. Well, at least I hope so.”

They didn’t say anything to each other for a while as they walked through winding streets and around massive silver buildings. Very quickly Chloe lost her bearings and was completely lost. She hoped her guide was trustworthy.

Finally breaking the silence, Chloe asked, “You said earlier that Lucifer’s in a lot of trouble?”

“Well, yeah,” Raphael said. “He should have never come back.”

“Why?”

The angel regarded her with surprise. “He’s been exiled. I thought you humans knew that...? He can never come back here -- and yet he did.”

“His father asked him to come,” Chloe said.

“Right, sure,” Raphael said with a laugh. “Pull the other one.”
Reaching out, she pulled her guide to a stop. “No, I’m serious. Lucifer said his father requested his presence.”

“Why would Father do that? Surely you’re mistaken.”

“Lucifer doesn’t lie,” she said firmly.

Raphael looked at her strangely. “All Lucifer does is lie.”

Chloe shook her head. “He’s never lied to me.”

“You humans,” the angel muttered in a tone that said he thought her insane. “You do realize we’re talking about the Devil?”

“Yes. He doesn’t lie. Maybe instead of doubting my word, you should ask your father why he called Lucifer here.”

Raphael studied her for a long moment. “Maybe I will at that,” he said before turning to guide her once more.

The pair continued to weave their way through the streets and narrow back alleys, until they came to a courtyard where many angels were gathered. From the look on the angel’s face, Chloe could see that something unusual was happening. Raphael pushed his way forward, with Chloe following in his wake, until they reached the front of the gathering. She peeked around her guide, and gasped.

Lucifer stood in a clearing, stripped to the waist and weighted down by numerous chains. His big, white wings were shackled tightly together at their base, making it impossible to fly. He had been beaten badly, with bruises covering his face and torso, but he still stood tall and proud, with a fierce, defiant expression. As Chloe watched, four burly angels with large spears poked and prodded him forward.

“This wasn’t supposed to happen until tomorrow,” Raphael whispered, shocked.

“What is going on?” Chloe asked.

“They’re going to force him to Fall again.”
Chloe turned to Raphael in horror. “They’re going to what?!?”

“Force him to Fall. Throw him over the edge of Heaven -- it’s how they did it last time. He can’t fly, so he has no choice but to Fall,” Raphael said. “I can’t imagine it will be pleasant.”

“And you’re going to just let this happen?!” she hissed.

The angel looked at her in surprise. “It’s Father’s will. Even if we don’t agree with it, it’s not our place to say anything.” His brow furrowed. “But it wasn’t scheduled for today. Why the sudden need to speed everything up?”

Chloe wasn’t listening. Nausea hit her full force, and she thought she was going to throw up. Mindless sheep -- she was surrounded by mindless sheep! Shoving her way past Raphael, she ran up to the guards and yelled, “Stop!”

Lucifer’s eyes widened with surprise as he caught sight of her. She was the last person he had expected to see in the lion’s den. “Detective! How did you --“

One of the guards whipped the butt of his spear at him, catching him across the face. The fallen angel fell in a heap, getting tangled in the chains weighing him down. Crying out, Chloe threw herself between Lucifer and the guards.

“Don’t touch him!” she yelled. “Don’t you dare!”

A murmur went through the crowd of spectator angels. A large angel with white wings walked up, pushing his way through to the clearing. “What’s going on?” he asked. He eyed Chloe oddly. “You’re not a soul. What are you?”

Ignoring his question, she attacked instead. “What right do you have to force Lucifer to Fall?”

The large angel’s eyebrows went up. “Father commands it. Lucifer knows the punishment for returning after being exiled.”

“Your father ordered him back!” Chloe snarled. Turning to Lucifer, she asked, “Are you alright?”

He grinned, delight in his eyes. “I am now, love.”

Disbelief crossed the large angel’s face. “Ridiculous. Father wouldn’t order him back, then sentence him to Fall. It makes no sense.”
“A lot of things your father does makes no sense,” Chloe muttered as she tried to help Lucifer to his feet. She was surprised that she instantly didn’t get transported back to Earth upon touching him like she had in times past, but perhaps the workings of Heaven were different from that of Hell. The chains the angels had wrapped Lucifer in were extremely heavy -- she could barely lift them. Somehow she was able to get him back on his feet. It was a wonder he could even stand, let alone walk, with all that weight holding him down.

“Father did request my presence, Zerachiel,” Lucifer said.

The large angel scoffed. “Impossible. You lie.”

“Lucifer doesn’t lie,” Chloe said.

“I’m not lying,” Lucifer said at the same time. “Ask Gabe. He’ll tell you -- if he’s got the bloody stones to do so.”

Raphael spoke up then. “I’ll get him,” he said, and launched into the sky.

With a glance, Zerachiel could see the crowd of spectators growing. Frowning, he said, “This is unacceptable. We must carry out Father’s orders --”

“Don’t you think it best to get to the bottom of this before doing anything?” Chloe interrupted. “I mean, come on. If your father did indeed order Lucifer here, you’d be punishing him for no reason, which is wrong. You’re angels. Aren’t you supposed to know right from wrong?”

Another murmur ran through the crowd as Raphael landed in the clearing with a tall, slender red-headed angel. “I’ve brought Gabriel,” he announced.

Looking left and right with nervous eyes, Gabriel said, “What is it you wish to know?”

“Did Father order Lucifer here?” Zerachiel asked.

There was a long pause before the angel hung his head. “Yes.”

Loud exclamations came from the crowd and angels exchanged shocked glances at each other.

Zerachiel looked puzzled. “Well then, why didn’t you say so? Why did you let the Elite punish Lucifer?”

Gabriel looked up then, his eyes fearful. “I couldn’t say anything because I was afraid.”

Zerachiel frowned. “You are among family here. What could you possibly be afraid of?”

Just then Michael and Camael landed in the clearing. Lucifer groaned. Of course. As if the timing of things couldn’t get any worse.

“What is going on?” the archangel asked. “Shouldn’t you be taking him to the edge beyond the Western Gate?”

Zerachiel turned to look at the two newcomers. “There seems to be some confusion about whether Father asked Lucifer here.”

Michael smirked. “Really? Come now, Zerachiel, why would he ask the Devil to come here? Father was the one who exiled him. And you know what Luci is: evil! Look what he’s done -- incited insurrection, punished the humans for no reason...”

An indecisive look crossed the large angel’s face as he listened to Michael.
“Don’t listen to him,” Lucifer tried to interrupt, only to be struck hard on the back by another guard. The blow from the spear’s shaft knocked him forward into the dirt. Chloe knelt by his side, but Lucifer waved her off as he pulled himself to his feet.

Seething, Chloe stood and took a few steps toward the blonde archangel. “You’re lying,” she shot out. “Lucifer never did those things. That was you.”

Michael’s face reflected surprise before he hid it with a mask of innocence. “My dear human, whatever are you talking about?”

“My daughter overheard you talking to Lucifer when you fought. She said you said all sorts of things to make people believe Lucifer was evil. She said you framed him so that he would Fall.”

Another torrent of undertones swept through the ever-growing crowd. Michael looked around and laughed uneasily. Loudly, he proclaimed, “Obviously the human has been influenced by the Devil. She speaks nothing but lies, like he does.”

“I don’t lie, my daughter doesn’t lie, and neither does Lucifer!” she yelled over the rumbling voices. “You, on the other hand, do nothing but lie!”

Michael’s face became an ugly depiction of rage. He approached Chloe, his hand raised as if to backhand her, but Lucifer quickly stepped in between them. He lifted his chin at his brother, as if daring the archangel to strike him.

“Showing your true colors now, are you, Mikey?” Lucifer goaded with a feral smile. “You want to hit her, don’t you? The bloody protector of humans! Well, that shows everyone what a big man you are.” The fallen angel took a threatening step toward his brother. “Lay one finger on her and I’ll kill you.”

Mike glanced around nervously, then laughed and took a step back. “She isn’t worth the effort,” he muttered quietly, so that only Lucifer heard. Rage burned through the fallen angel, hot rage that practically set him on fire. He started toward the archangel, before Camael intervened and punched him in the face. Lucifer went down hard. Before he could pull himself up, the Angel of Wrath kicked him. With cold, analytical eyes, he then advanced on Chloe and studied her.

“You fascinate me,” he said with a slight smile that turned Chloe’s blood cold with revulsion. “What is it about you that has our brother so bonded to you? I would like to know.” Reaching out, the angel tried to touch Chloe’s hair. Trying hard not to show fear, she backed out of his reach.

“Don’t touch her, Camael!” yelled Lucifer before barreling into the angel from the side, knocking them both to the ground. Grabbing the chain between the manacles that bound his wrists, the fallen angel held it to Camael’s neck, pinning him to the ground. With eyes that burned with fire, he started strangling the blonde man. Michael came up behind and punched Lucifer on the side of the head, knocking him away. Michael and Camael both advanced on the felled angel, before a voice called out.

“Stop!”

Everyone turned at the booming sound. Chloe was surprised to see a robed, gray haired man with a neatly trimmed beard walk into view. A pathway opened up before him as angels venerated the man and bowed out of his way.

God, she thought. This had to be God.

“What is the meaning of this?” he roared. “Why are my sons fighting?”
“Father, there seems to be some confusion as to whether or not you called Lucifer here to the Silver City,” Zerachiel said as he bowed low.

Yahweh’s eyebrows lifted. “What does that matter? We are not barbarians. Angel should not strike angel, unless it is an Affair of Honor.” His cold eyes looked at Lucifer. “Although I do see that there is one here who is an instigator of violence.”

Hurt flashed briefly across Lucifer’s face at the accusation; Chloe saw it and saw red. She walked right up to the bearded man. Obviously no one had ever approached him so boldly before; he stared at her with surprise. Pulling back her right hand, she balled it into a fist and punched God in the face with everything she had.

The robed man staggered back, then looked at her with astonishment as a huge collective gasp rose from the crowd.

Chloe’s bravery and defense of him filled Lucifer with pride. That was his Chloe! “Well done, Detective!” he said with glee as he pulled himself to his feet. “She does have quite a nasty right hook, doesn’t she, Dad?”

Focusing on Yahweh, Chloe yelled, “Who are you to blame Lucifer for this fight! Look at him -- he’s chained! He can’t do anything!”

God rose to his full height, looking thunderous. “How dare you, mortal!”

“How dare you!” she yelled right back. “Lucifer came in good faith because you called him, and this is how you treat him? What kind of god are you?!”

“You should fear for your immortal soul!” Yahweh snapped.

“I’d rather be in Hell with Lucifer for all of eternity than to be in this crazy place!” Chloe countered.

The bearded man looked apoplectic for a moment, then started staring at her with something like puzzlement in his eyes.

“You....” he said, regarding her with sharp eyes as he carefully approached her. “Well, well.” Yahweh’s voice grew softer as he studied her. “This is a surprise. No wonder you have always been an unpredictable element in all my logistics.”

Fear suddenly shot through Chloe and she took a step back from the look the bearded man was giving her. She felt like a bug under a microscope. Lucifer staggered up and stepped protectively in front of Chloe.

“Leave her alone, Dad,” he warned.

“I didn’t think there were any of you left. I thought we drove you all out.” Yahweh muttered, his eyes never leaving Chloe. “Although I’m not quite sure -- you don’t seem like the others.”

“What are you talking about, Dad?” Lucifer asked suspiciously.

The tense moment passed as the bearded man looked at his son and laughed. “Nothing, Samael, nothing.” He turned to Chloe. “You, my dear, have been making a lot of trouble since coming here, making accusations against Michael.”

“They aren’t accusations. It’s the truth. Michael is a liar,” she said. Another ripple of exclamations went through the crowd.
Yahweh sighed. “I can’t have you making such statements. I can see we need to talk.” He gestured to Zerachiel. “Take these chains off Samael, will you? And escort them to my solar.”

“Raphael comes with us,” Chloe interjected. She glanced at the other angel, who was blinking in surprise.

Lucifer found himself swamped with sudden jealousy at the blonde woman’s demand. “Rafe? Since when are you so close to that arrogant prick?”

Turning to him, Chloe put a calming hand on his chest. “If God is willing to talk to us, then I want someone neutral to hear the reason why he’s been so hellbent on punishing you.”

“Rafe won’t believe, even if Dad tells the truth,” he replied bitterly.

Chloe took his hand in hers and squeezed. “It’s still a good idea to have a neutral party there. Then he can back you up when you tell everyone the truth.”

Lucifer frowned. “Just... just tell me you haven’t fallen for that... that arse.”

She immediately rolled her eyes. “Oh for crying out loud -- I just met him! There’s no way I’m going to fall for him!”

With that Lucifer had to be satisfied as Zerachiel unshackled him, then led the trio through the city to the main palace.
“Come in, sit down.”

Yahweh beckoned Chloe, Lucifer and Raphael into his private solar and shut the door. Gesturing to them to have a seat, he took his place behind a large desk. Chloe and Lucifer sat while Raphael leaned against the door behind them. Steepling his fingers, Yahweh regarded them steadily.

“You never do what you’re supposed to, do you, Samael?” the bearded man said.

“My name is Lucifer.”

Yahweh waved his hand as if that had no import. Giving Raphael a hard glance, he said, “How did you get involved with these two?”

The chestnut-haired angel shrugged. “I’m not quite sure, but here I am.”

“Well, you’re sworn to secrecy, son,” Yahweh said. “Nothing said here goes past this room.” Raphael nodded in agreement.

“Now,” the bearded man said as he studied the couple in front of him, “I can’t have you making accusations in front of all the angels about Michael. That is unacceptable.”

“And punishing me is?” snapped Lucifer. “When I’ve done nothing to deserve it?”

“Why did you order Lucifer back, just to have him Fall?” Chloe asked angrily. “Why are you doing this when Michael -- the real troublemaker -- goes free?”

She expected him to say it was because Lucifer was evil -- it seemed to be the prevailing opinion in Heaven. She was shocked when Yahweh answered, “Because Samael’s my favorite son.”

Lucifer stared at his father in disbelief. “I’m sorry, can you repeat that? Because I think just I heard you say you’re punishing me because I’m your favorite son.”

“That’s correct.”

“What the bloody hell does that mean?!” the fallen angel roared, getting out of his chair. The old anger and feelings of injustice spewed forth from Lucifer, threatening to overwhelm him. It was only Chloe’s hand on his arm that brought sanity back. Sinking back down into his seat, he grabbed Chloe’s hand and held it tightly in his.

“You bloody bastard,” Lucifer snarled. “Why don’t you punish Michael? He’s the crazy one!”
“My dear Samael, I punish you to keep him in check.”

“What?!” Chloe and Lucifer exclaimed at the same time. Raphael straightened from his place by the door, shock on his face.

Yahweh leaned back in his chair. “It’s perfectly clear,” he said.

“Clear as mud, you mean,” the fallen angel muttered. Chloe squeezed his hand and turned to the bearded man.

“You’re going to have to explain,” she said.

“As long as Lucifer suffers, Michael will be content,” Yahweh said calmly. “It is the way of things. They are opposites -- mirror images of each other. It’s why I chose them as opposite hands. Good and evil, light and dark, truth and lies. Lucifer is strong. Michael’s character, unfortunately, is weak. He has become a bully to compensate.”

“But... but Michael is the one who’s evil, not Lucifer. Why send Lucifer to Hell?” Chloe asked. “It doesn’t make sense.”

“Michael is the embodiment of evil, yes,” the bearded man agreed. “But do you think I could trust him in Hell, where he would be so far from my control? Imagine the havoc he would wreak among humankind, walking among them, telling them to do heinous things.

“But with you, Samael -- I knew you would just do your job of punishing wrongdoers without trying to influence the humans. They are, after all, bad enough without needing extra encouragement.”

“So let me get this straight,” Lucifer said with narrow eyes and a bitter tone in his voice. “You sent me to Hell so that you could control Michael? You punished your good son and rewarded the bad?”

“I made Michael a protector so that he would be forced to work with humans and learn some compassion from them. Unfortunately, that hasn’t happened yet. He needs to stay close to me so that I can keep a watchful eye on him. On the other hand, you, Samael -- you I trust implicitly. That is why I sent you so far from home.”

“But -- But...!” sputtered Lucifer.

“I told you, Samael. Don’t you remember, so long ago? This is the most difficult job and the greatest honor. It’s why I chose you.”

“So... so sending me to punish people --”

“I knew you would carry out my will and go no further.” Yahweh sighed. “Can you imagine what would have happened if Michael had been sent as my left hand to punish wrongdoers? There would have been complete and total chaos on Earth.”

Lucifer rubbed his eyes with his free hand, feeling a growing headache. “Right. So why didn’t you tell anyone that I was your left hand? Why did you let them believe I was evil?”

“That was necessary, unfortunately,” Yahweh said. “You see, after the war I had with your mother, I realized that humans would need a figure to drive them toward me and no other. That’s where you came in. You were the only one I trusted to be the Devil. I had to send you to Hell, but I needed Michael to believe it was a punishment and not a reward, in order to maintain my authority.”

Chloe looked sympathetically at Lucifer, her heart bleeding for him. She could see this conversation
was tearing him apart. Giving his hand another squeeze, she tried to impart some strength in him.
“Hey,” she whispered. At his agonized glance, she said, “I’m here.”

He gave her hand a grateful squeeze back, then turned to his father once again. “So Hell was a reward?”

Yahweh looked at Lucifer steadily. “Sending you so far from home so that you could make your own way? Of course. It was a gift.”

“I think I’m going to be sick,” Lucifer said.

“I didn’t tell anyone you were my left hand because I needed you to Fall. If everyone knew that I had given you the task of punishing people, no one would believe what I needed them to believe. On the other hand, if they thought you were punishing humans indiscriminately -- well, it would only make things easier to believe in the long run.

“I knew Michael was jealous of you, so I told him how much better you were than he was, increased his jealousy, until he was spreading lies and rumors. Everyone thought you were evil, which gave me the perfect reason to send you away.”

“My god,” Chloe breathed. “You had everything planned from the start.”

“Never let it be said that dear old Dad isn’t a champion chess player,” the fallen angel said bitterly.

“Everything was proceeding well. As long as you were in Hell being ‘punished,’ Michael was happy and manageable. I sent him on missions to try to make him more compassionate, and it seemed to be working.... But then you upset the balance by going to Earth. Michael grew jealous. I needed you back in Hell so that I could control his baser tendencies, so I secretly set your mother free --“

“You did that?!” Lucifer gasped. “You?”

“You succeeded beautifully in returning her back to Hell. But you didn’t stay, did you? And you were changing. I needed to test you and Michael, to see how things stood. Was he changing as well? I determined that your fight with him would be the litmus test of that balance between the both of you.”

“He almost killed Chloe and Beatrice!” the tall man yelled at his father.

Yahweh looked dispassionately at his son. “I knew you would save them. It was all part of the test. Michael showed no mercy, which was disappointing, but you did. You are both still polar opposites of each other.

“So I asked you home --"“

“To have me Fall --"

“Yes. I had to show the angels and Michael that you were being punished for being the disobedient son. It would make Michael happy and restore the balance, once you were back in Hell. And that’s why I cannot have you or your... human undermining Michael’s reputation and telling the other angels about his faults. We must keep him content and under control. It’s the only way.”

“Only way?! He’s the epitome of evil!” Lucifer cried.

Yahweh shook his head. “He needs my help. You cannot expect me to abandon him.”
Frustration gnawed at the fallen angel. He just couldn’t understand his father. “Why not?”

“He’s my son.”

“And I’m not?!” Shaking his head, Lucifer just stared at the bearded man. “What kind of father are you?” he whispered. “This is all just a sick game to you, isn’t it? And we’re all bloody pawns on the chessboard.

“Don’t you even care about all the bloody pain and suffering you put me through? The torture?” His voice started getting louder and louder. “Do you know how painful it was to Fall? To have all of my flesh burned away because you removed your Grace?!”

“Now Samael --“

“And now I come to find that all of that pain and suffering I went through was because you were coddling Michael! Bloody Michael! This has never been about me at all -- it’s always been about that bastard!”

“Lucifer,” Chloe said gently. Releasing her hand, he half-rose from his chair and turned wild eyes to her.

“And you?” he asked hoarsely. “Were you part of Dad’s sick plan too?”

“You know I’m not,” she said firmly. Standing, she took a firm hold of his stubble-lined cheeks, forcing him to look at her. “Look at me, Lucifer. Look at me.”

He gripped her wrists hard, his eyes filled with paranoia and an incredible amount of hurt. Leaning forward, she kissed him very gently on the forehead. “Shhh,” she said. “It’s me. Chloe. Remember? I love you, Lucifer Morningstar. I would never do this to you. Never.” She rested her forehead to his, a gesture they had done in the past. “Do you trust me, my love?”

After what seemed like a long time, she felt him nod. “I do,” he whispered.

“Then believe me when I say I would never have anything to do with this bastard’s machinations.” She pulled back so that she could look at his face. His eyes were still full of hurt and agony, but he was quieter. Kissing his forehead once again, she whispered, “Hang in there. We’re going to get through this.”

After easing Lucifer back into his chair, she resumed her seat across from Yahweh. She glanced at the fallen angel and took his hand again.

Taking a deep breath, Lucifer tried to control all the emotions overwhelming him. Chloe’s warm hand in his helped him regain a sense of balance. The red haze started lifting from his eyes as his rage and hurt abated.

The bearded man studied the blonde detective with a calculating look in his eyes. “You have a very fascinating effect on my son,” he said.

“Don’t you dare think of using me against him,” she snarled. “Now why don’t you just sentence Michael to Hell, instead of punishing Lucifer?”

Yahweh shook his head. “I cannot. To be so far from home and out of control... Can you imagine the havoc he would cause to the human world? No. The balance must be restored, otherwise I cannot manage Michael. Samael must go back to Hell.”
“You bloody bastard, I am not going back.”

“He’s not going back,” Chloe emphasized.

“He must. I cannot have Michael running loose,” the bearded man said simply.

Lucifer rolled his eyes in frustration. “This is bloody ridiculous. There is no way in hell that I’m going back to Hell while that bastard stays here.” He stood up. “Right. I’m going to end this.”

“Lucifer --“ said Chloe, her voice full of worry, but he bent down and kissed her gently.

“Don’t worry, love. I know what I’m doing. I can’t kill him -- Dad would just bring him right back here -- so I’ll have to fix this another way.” His eyes were red with fire as he looked at his father. “I’m going to clean up your bloody problem for you, Dad,” he said. “There’s one way Michael can go to Hell and not cause any problems.”

“Which is?” asked the older man.

“I’m going to lock him up.”

“You can’t do that!” Yahweh cried.

“Watch me.”

“I won’t protect you down there,” his father warned.

Lucifer laughed bitterly. “Since when have you ever?” He led Chloe away, toward the door and Raphael, who looked like he was going to throw up. The fallen angel looked at the blonde detective with worry. “Will you be able to get home?” he asked in a whispered voice.

“I think so,” Chloe said, nodding. “I can already feel Earth pulling at me. I think I’m going home very soon.”

“Don’t let them stop you. Stay safe.”

“I will.”

“Chloe....” he began, his eyes full of pain. “I may not be able to come back.”

Reaching up, she kissed him with all the love she felt for him, then looked deeply into his eyes. “I will find you,” she said for his ears alone.

Lucifer nodded once, then turned back to his father. “I want your promise that you will stop targeting Chloe and her child.”

Yahweh regarded him with interest. “And what will I receive in return?”

“The Sword of Heaven.”

The bearded man thought for a moment. “Done.”

For a long moment, Lucifer stared at his father, as if weighing what he saw. Nodding once, the fallen angel then turned his attention to his brother and grabbed Raphael by the shoulder. “Are you quite all right?”

Raphael turned tortured eyes to his brother. “Luci, I am so sorry --“
“Well, you can bloody well make it up for it by giving me a hand with this Michael sitch. I need you to keep the other angels off my back. Can you do it?”

“Count me in, Brother.”

“Raphael,” Yahweh warned. “Remember, not a word.”

The angel still looked nauseated. “Understood, Father.”

Both brothers left the solar then. Chloe was about to follow, when she turned and caught a smirk on Yahweh’s face. And then it dawned on her --

“This is what you wanted all along.... For Lucifer to lock up Michael.”

Yahweh laughed. “You’re very clever. My wayward son always was a soft touch.”

Chloe couldn’t believe it. “So... so all of this... was for that?”

“Of course. It’s been my plan all along to have Samael lock up Michael. That way the balance stays in check. Michael will blame his brother for sentencing him to Hell, and Samael will have to watch over him for the rest of eternity. I won’t have to worry about Michael wreaking havoc anymore. Keeping the hatred for Samael stoked prevents Michael from turning his attention toward Earth. Samael locking his brother up will reinforce his evil reputation, which also benefits me in the end. And I remain blameless. So you see? It all works out perfectly.”

Yahweh’s boisterous laugh rang in Chloe’s ears as she felt vertigo pulling her downwards, back toward Earth.
“Mike!”

Lucifer walked out onto the streets, hollering for his brother. Raphael followed closely behind. Angels from all over started gathering, shocked at seeing the Devil in their midst, free and roaming around. A huge mob congregated behind them until the flood surged out into the wide plaza at the center of the city.

“Where the bloody hell is that rat bastard?” Lucifer muttered as his eyes scanned the sky.

“Luci, don’t do anything rash that will have the Warrior Elite coming after you. Challenge him to an Affair of Honor -- single combat. Yelling for him is just going to garner support for him,” Raphael advised.

The fallen angel shot an annoyed glance at his brother. It irked him to no end that Raphael had a point. Michael had many followers -- all the angels believed his word to be law, due to the fact that he was Yahweh’s right hand. Lucifer would have to take on his brother one-on-one, if he had any hope of winning.

“An Affair of Honor, then,” Lucifer said, then turned to the crowd. “Hear me! I challenge my brother Michael to a duel -- single combat! An Affair of Honor, since he ruthlessly attacked my --“ His what? Family would not have been the right word to use here, even if it was true. Most of the angels believed they were his family. “Humans!” That didn’t have quite the same ring, but hopefully it would be effective. “Michael is the protector of humans, yet he nearly killed the humans under my protection! I demand satisfaction!”

A rumble went through the crowd, and Lucifer could hear them speculating about his statement.

“The humans must have been evil,” one angel yelled out. A murmur of general consensus filtered through the crowd.

“On the contrary, they are good people. A human woman and her eight year old child!” Lucifer yelled back. “Mike almost killed a young human child! Does that sit well with you, you bloody pillocks?!”

At Lucifer’s remarks and the crowd’s angry response, Raphael rolled his eyes and intervened. “Brothers! Sisters! I have met the human woman. She is not evil. I believe that our fallen brother has fair grounds for his claim. He has a right to satisfaction.”

Zerachiel pushed his way to the forefront and looked at the fallen angel. “I am not sure what
transpired with Father, but we did wrongly punish you when you had been called here. We owe you
the benefit of the doubt. You and Michael must resolve your issues with one another, and an Affair
of Honor is fitting. I will officiate.”

Lucifer blinked, surprised. That was unexpected.

“Thank you, Zerachiel,” Raphael said. “Now, where is Michael?”

The large angel waved to the nearest group of angels close to him. “You there. Go find the
archangel Michael and escort him here. Tell him archangels Raphael and Zerachiel demand his
presence.”

The flock of young, brown-winged angels took off in flight. Lucifer watched them for a moment,
distracted, before Zerachiel asked, “What will be your method of combat?”

The fallen angel looked at him then. “Hand to hand. No weapons. No flight. Loser goes to Hell.”

“Very well. We shall have the arena here, in that case,” Zerachiel said, then yelled out, “Clear the
area -- 75 cubits each direction. Now!”

The crowd immediately parted, making an area about one hundred twenty-five feet square. A ripple
of excitement went through the crowd. It had been a long time since anyone had challenged another
angel to an Affair of Honor.

The large angel shot a glance at Lucifer. “Father might intervene.”


Zerachiel studied the two men, then nodded once. “Very well. Now we wait.”

It took a while for Michael to arrive, but eventually he came, flanked by Camael and the Warrior
Elite. The young brown-winged angels brought up the rear. The archangel laughed as the group
landed in the clearing.

“What’s this?” he asked with amusement. “What are you all doing next to the Fallen One?”

“Lucifer has requested an Affair of Honor. He has the right to claim it and it is your obligation to
fulfill it,” Zerachiel stated. “Rules of engagement: single hand to hand combat, no flight. The arena
will be here. The loser will go to Hell.”

The shock on Michael’s face would have been comical if the situation had not been so serious. “He
should be in Hell already,” the archangel said. “You can’t be seriously considering this?”

Zerachiel’s face was hard. “We punished him without knowing the facts. We owe him this.”

“Ridiculous,” Camael interjected. “We owe him nothing.”
“Nevertheless, Michael must face Lucifer,” Zerachiel insisted. “Or do you seek to petition?”

Michael’s mouth worked but no sound came out. Lucifer waited to hear what his brother would say. Petitioning -- asking Father to intervene -- was considered cowardly and not well looked upon. He was counting on Michael being too much of a prick to agree to a stay.


“He claims you attacked a human woman and child.”

The archangel laughed. “Why would I do that? Don’t you know that he’s the Prince of Lies? He never tells the truth about anything! Are you going to have me fight him because of a falsehood?”

“What’s the matter, Mike? Afraid to fight me?” Lucifer goaded.

“I’m afraid of no one!” Michael exclaimed. “No one!”

“Then what are you waiting for? Come on, you bloody bastard. Here’s your chance! You can send me back to Hell. All you have to do is beat me.” Grinning, the fallen angel held his arms out wide. “Don’t think you can take me?” He suddenly leaned forward, his eyes glowing with devilish intent. “Come on, Mike. Do you want everyone to think you’re a bloody coward? Is that what you really desire?”

Rage engulfed Michael and he smashed his fist into Lucifer’s face, knocking the fallen angel to the ground. Lucifer laughed as Zerachiel stated, “The duel is on! No weapons, no flight!”

Everyone backed out of the arena, except the two participants. The two men circled each other with deadly intent. Michael lunged at Lucifer, who evaded the move and struck the archangel’s side as he flew past. The blonde angel fell, but recovered quickly and tackled his opponent. They wrestled on the ground, each struggling for control. Lucifer kicked Michael off of him, but not before the other angel struck him in the face.

The Devil wiped the blood from the side of his mouth as he eyed Michael for weak points. His brother was bigger, stronger, but Lucifer was fast on his feet and he had extra motivation. If he wanted to return to his family, he’d have to take care of this bastard. He feinted one way, then the other, trying to get into a good position for a strike. Michael countered his movements with a grin.

“Not so smug, are you now?” the blonde angel said.

“The fight has just started,” Lucifer countered.

The fallen angel rushed his brother, tackling him to the ground. Michael kicked him off, knocking him away. Rushing each other, they punched each other in the face, stomach, and sometimes below the belt. For a moment it seemed as if Lucifer had gained the upper hand, but then Michael lifted him and threw him across the plaza. As Lucifer scrambled to his feet, Michael took to the air, slamming into him at full speed and pushing him into the side of a building.

Yelling foul, Zerachiel demanded that the fighting stop, but Michael took advantage of the situation and pummeled Lucifer while he was down. Tackling his brother, the Devil got a few quick jabs in before Michael shoved him away.

Camael tossed Michael a knife, which he caught easily. Zerachiel ran up, trying to get in between the two angels, when the archangel stabbed him in the side; he fell to the ground with a cry. As Michael pulled the knife from the man’s body, Lucifer took off in flight, barreling into his brother at top speed and knocking him away from Zerachiel. As spectators gasped at the turn of events,
Raphael rushed up to help the downed angel.

Swinging the knife wildly, Michael tried to slice his brother. An arc caught Lucifer across the chest, another across his midsection, but they weren’t too deep. The Warrior Elite were moving now toward the two battling men, but Lucifer yelled out, “No! He’s mine!”

The archangel took off into the sky. Lucifer took off after him, pausing only long enough to grab a length of rope off the belt of one of the Elite. Pushing himself hard for speed, the dark-haired angel tried to catch up with his larger brother. They darted between buildings and around towers, with Lucifer craftily herding his brother toward the western edge of Heaven, beyond the boundaries of the city.

Once the landscape turned to wilderness below, Lucifer put on a burst of speed and struck Michael from above, knocking them both to the ground. They rolled away from each other after impact.

Swinging the knife, Michael tried to stab Lucifer, but the Devil caught the knife arm and struggled to turn it aside. They wrestled on the ground, until Lucifer was able to slam Michael’s arm into the ground and loosen his hold on the knife. After punching his brother in the face, Michael scrambled for the knife.

With a cry, Lucifer tackled the blonde man around the legs; the archangel fell hard on the ground, just out of reach of the knife. Dragging his brother toward him, Lucifer grabbed a fistful of Michael’s hair and slammed his head into the ground several times. While his brother was stunned, Lucifer started binding Michael’s wings with the rope he had taken from one of the Elite. Michael threw an elbow, catching the fallen angel in the side; he grunted in pain but kept working steadily until he had trussed up his brother like a Thanksgiving turkey.

Once his brother was incapacitated, Lucifer fell to one side to catch his breath. He hurt all over, but he had won. Pulling himself to his feet, he grabbed the ropes that held Michael and pulled him up as well.

“Now, Mikey, you and I are going to take a little walk off a bloody steep cliff,” he said as he started pushing him toward the Western Edge.

“You can’t do this, Lucifer,” the other angel snarled as he dug his heels in the ground. “Father will stop you. You’ll burn in Hell for this.”

“I’ve already burned long enough,” Lucifer said. “It’s your turn now.”

Michael lunged at him, trying to bite him; Lucifer had had enough. He punched his brother hard on the back of the head, rendering him senseless. “Rat bastard,” he muttered as he threw his brother over his shoulder and hiked to the edge of Heaven.

The fallen angel looked to the sky; there were no angels anywhere. He wondered what was happening in the Silver City and then realized he didn’t even give a damn.

Standing on the edge of Heaven, looking down with nothing but clouds and sky below, brought a wealth of bad memories for Lucifer. He remembered getting shoved over this edge. There was nothing more horrifying for an angel than feeling that sickening sensation of falling and being unable to open wings to stop one’s descent. It had been almost maddening back then, for it had taken so very long to Fall. He had almost gone insane from it. And then there had been the fire. The heat. The incredible torment of everything getting scorched off his entire body. He had thought he died... but he hadn’t. His bastard father had kept him alive.

He didn’t want to Fall again. Lucifer remembered the excruciating pain from the Fall, when he had
incarcerated his mother and later when he went back to Hell on his own. He had no wish to experience it again. A part of him wished he could just throw Michael over the edge and let him fall, as he himself had fallen so many years ago -- but no. His brother would just wreak havoc on Earth. Sighing, he realized he would have to see this through to the end.

“Bloody hell.” Taking a deep breath, Lucifer gripped his cargo tightly, and stepped off the edge.

They fell faster than when Lucifer had fallen, for the fallen angel pushed them faster and faster downward. The wind screamed past them as Lucifer tucked his wings in and streamlined himself for speed. Perhaps it wouldn’t hurt so badly if he did this quickly. Michael started struggling on his shoulder, which only caused him to tighten his grip. His brother was yelling something, but the fallen angel couldn’t hear over the roar of the wind. That was probably a good thing. He had no wish to listen to his bloody brother scream epithets at him.

When they reached the boundary of Hell, Lucifer saw his one-way ticket in -- the Hellmouth was open wide and waiting for him. Pulling Michael in front of him like a shield, he hoped to be protected from the burning fires that awaited him.

It didn’t work. Michael still had his father’s Grace, but Lucifer had nothing. As they streaked across Hell’s sky in a mass of burning flame, Lucifer screamed in agony as everything burned -- clothes, hair, skin, a layer of flesh -- everything except his wings, which still held their divinity. Yet despite the Grace his appendages still held, the heat of hell still singed the feathers where they weren’t tucked in tight against him. Trying not to let the pain distract him, he pushed Michael across the sky until he reached his destination -- a cell next to his mother.

He couldn’t afford to slow down. With the ropes tying him burned away, Michael could easily overpower Lucifer in the state he was in; there would only be one chance at this. He slammed them both into the prison. While Michael lay there on the floor, stunned, Lucifer scrambled to his feet. Backing up as quickly as he could, he escaped the cell and slammed the door shut.

Michael roared with fury as Lucifer threw the bolts home and chained up the door.

“You think this will hold me, Luci?” the archangel yelled. “Do you? It will only be a matter of time before I escape, and then I’ll kill you and your human woman!” Lucifer watched the cell door warily as Michael threw himself against it over and over, but it held. Relief flooded through him. He didn’t have to worry about his bloody brother anymore.

Lucifer looked skyward; he knew the Hellmouth was now closed to him. There wasn’t any point in trying to get to Earth that way -- not that he could even fly that high, in the state he was in now. He was in no condition to do anything, really. Scanning the landscape of Hell, he picked out the highest point that he could walk to.

It was an excruciating journey. Every step was agony, but he kept putting one foot in front of the other, with his eye on his destination. It seemed to take forever. At last he staggered to the little hill and collapsed at the base of one of the many giant rocks there. His breathing was labored as he rested his back against the stone and tilted his head upward. His body screamed in pain; staying as still as possible, he wondered how he could possibly still be alive. Dear old Dad just loved to see him in torment. He would have laughed bitterly if he could have.

Waiting always seemed longer when there was nothing to do. Although he couldn’t be sure, he suspected that he passed out for a while. When he opened his eyes, the world had not changed -- Hell was like that. The scenery, the lighting, everything remained unchanged at all hours of the day. Time passed, but he had no idea how much. Sighing, he kept his gaze to the sky. He wasn’t sure what he was looking for, but he would know it when he saw it.
When Lucifer finally saw a gleaming white orb descending into Hell, he hailed it with a smile and a lifted hand.

Chloe....
Lucifer opened his eyes to find himself on Chloe’s bed, staring up at her bedroom ceiling. The last thing he remembered was hailing her from Hell... and then nothing. He looked at his hand in the moonlight; the terrible burns were gone, as was the horrific pain. Chloe must have healed him.

Turning his head, he could see her in her old nightshirt sleeping beside him, one hand linked in his. His breath caught at the sight of her -- she looked so beautiful with her hair spread over the pillow and her face relaxed in sleep. He had never felt as grateful for her presence in his life as he did at that very moment. Reaching out, he pulled her close; she stirred but didn’t wake. Pressing a kiss to her head, he whispered, “Thank you,” and rested his cheek against her hair.

His body was healed but he still felt exhausted. Closing his eyes, he slept.

When next he awoke, bright sunlight from the window had filled the room, blinding him. Groaning, he turned and buried his head in the pillow. A soft chuckle sounded above him. Peeking up, he squinted to see Chloe fully dressed, leaning over him.

“Hey, sleepyhead. You’re worse than Trixie,” she said with a smile. “How do you feel?”

Lucifer rubbed his face with his hand. “Bloody relieved to be alive.” And crazy in love with you was on the tip of his tongue, but he bit it back. He reached out and took her hand in his. “Thank you for coming for me.”

Sitting on the bed beside him, Chloe brushed his hair back from his forehead and smiled beatifically down at him. “I will always come for you, my love.” A shadow crossed her face. “Do... do you think your father will leave us alone now?”
“I don’t know,” he said with a shake of his head. “That manipulative bastard should, once we return the sword. Is it still in the attic?”

“It’s... uh... under the bed, actually,” Chloe said with a touch of embarrassment.

Surprise lit his features. “What the bloody hell is it doing under the bed?”

“I needed to use it to get to Heaven,” she replied defensively. “It was too heavy to lift so I just... shoved it under the bed.”

“If it’s too damn heavy for you to lift, then how the hell did you get it out of the attic?”

“You... don’t want to know.”

“Au contraire, Detective -- this tale is sure to be a fine one! I can wait, however,” he chuckled. “We’ll let Amenadiel take the sword back. He must miss the Silver City and would appreciate a chance to visit, since he’s still on suspension.”

“That’s sweet of you, Lucifer.”

“Bloody hell, the Devil is not sweet!” he sputtered as he looked up, only to see her smiling.

For a moment he was content just to look at her, but then he recalled all of the recent events. His face darkened. “Right. Michael is locked up in Hell, but...”

“But?”

“Camael is still out there.”

Chloe shivered at the thought of the cold, somewhat reptilian angel. “He scares me.”

“Come here, love.” Lucifer pulled her down so that she was lying next to him, but on top of the covers. “I won’t let him harm you,” he whispered as he hugged her. He felt her nod against him.

They held each other for a long moment before Lucifer gave Chloe a gentle kiss. Well, it was supposed to be gentle, but very quickly turned into something hot and passionate. Lucifer felt his insides burning at the feel of her. Too soon she pulled away, trying to catch her breath as she sat up. The tall man tried to pull her back down, but she slid off the bed with a laugh.

“Trixie’s in the living room,” she reminded him. Lucifer’s hand fell back down on the covers.

“Oh. Right,” he said. He stared up at the ceiling in disappointment. “Very well, Detective.”

“It’s time for you to get up, anyway.”

“I suppose.”

Sitting up in the bed with the covers haphazardly covering him, he realized he was naked. Not that he minded -- nakedness never bothered him -- but it surprised him that he was. His eyes twinkled as he asked, “Why Detective, did you have your wicked way with me last night?”

Chloe chuckled as she rolled her eyes. “You wish. No, you came that way. All your clothes had been burned off, along with... well, everything else.”

“Ah, the loss of another good suit,” he said regretfully as he started to get out of bed. The detective stopped him with a hand on his shoulder.
“Just hold on there, you can’t just go walking naked everywhere. I had Amenadiel bring you some clothes.”

The fallen angel groaned. “No, no, no. My brother has no bloody sense of style.”

“Well, you’re just going to have to wear what he brought,” Chloe said with a laugh as she pointed at a bag sitting on a chair. “I’ll meet you in the living room when you’re dressed. Trixie is anxious to see you.”

He blinked. “Just... just what time is it?”

“11:00, Mister Morningstar. You’ve slept the morning away.”

________________________________________________

“Lucifer!” Trixie barreled into the tall man once he had dressed and gone into the living room. Giving him a big hug, she said, “You’re back!”

Her greeting brought a smile to his lips. “Yes, child, I am back,” he said as he returned her embrace. “What are you up to today? Playing hooky from school?”

The little girl giggled. “Silly Lucifer, it’s Saturday!”

“Ah. Right. I completely lost track of the bloody days,” he said.

“I have a birthday party I have to go to at 2:00, but I don’t suppose you could....”

Oh no, the little spawn was looking at him with those big eyes and expectant expression, which meant she wanted something. He certainly hoped it wasn’t another round of playing dolls with her.

He knew he was going to regret it, but asked anyway: “Yes, child?”

“Could you give me a ride with your wings?”

A sigh of relief escaped him. Well, at least it wasn’t playing with dolls. “Ask your mother.”

“I already did and she said it was okay.”

That response came out a bit quicker than Lucifer liked, which made him suspect that perhaps the little ankle-biter hadn’t really gotten her mother’s permission. The little girl kept looking at him with those big eyes, though, and he found himself saying, “Very well. Just a short ride.”

He pulled his shirt from his trousers and began to unbutton it. “I shall carry you in my arms, if that suits?”

“Oh no, I want you to take me around on your back.”

Lucifer’s fingers froze. “Like a horse?!” he asked indignantly.
Trixie gave him a huge grin and nodded. “Yup!”

“A bloody horse.”

“Uh-huh!”

“Oh no,” he said. “No. This is where I draw the line. I am not a bloody horse.”

“But Lucifer, please? Please, please, please? You won’t even be like a horse -- it’ll be like riding a bird. Please?”

The tall man just stared at her for a long moment with absolute horror -- horror because he knew in his heart of hearts that he couldn’t say no.

Grimacing with resignation, he rolled his eyes and muttered, “Oh, bloody hell!” as he took off his shirt and unfolded his large, white wings.

Chloe laughed her head off as Lucifer buttoned his shirt.

“It’s not funny, Detective,” he said. “You really must stop her from asking me to do such things!”

“Just say no, Lucifer! Just say no!” she managed to say before dissolving into another round of laughter.

“I did! It didn’t work!” he cried as he tucked the shirt in his trousers. “She just looked at me with that -- that look of hers and -- and--” he broke off with a frustrated sigh.

He wanted to say no -- he did! It was that he just... couldn’t. Damn, that little spawn had him well and truly tied in knots. He supposed she wasn’t much different from her mother, who also him tied, but in different kinds of knots.

As he looked at Chloe laughing with such joy, though, he decided that the humiliation had been worth it. A smile touched his lips and he found himself chuckling along with her. Warmth spread through his chest at the thought that he could bring her and her little child such happiness. He would have never believed it, especially considering all years of torture he had suffered at the hands of his father. It was still unbelievable to him that his father had destroyed his life, just to make his brother’s life better. He felt the betrayal keenly, but buried the feeling for now. He just wanted to forget his father, his brother, and all of Heaven. All he wanted was to be here, with his family. That was all. It was enough for him.
After taking Trixie to her birthday party, Chloe and Lucifer went next to Amenadiel’s apartment to drop off the Sword of Heaven. As the detective drove, the fallen angel fingered the weapon lovingly before wrapping it up in a sheet.

“Right. I never did get to use this bloody thing.”

The blonde woman glanced at him; he had sounded a little wistful. “You don’t have to return it if you don’t want to,” she said gently.

“And put you and your little one in danger?!” Lucifer exclaimed, aghast. He shook his head. “No. Your safety is more important than a little swordplay. Although I wish....”

“You wish?”

He paused for a long moment before saying, “I just wish you could have seen me wield it properly, and not when I was dragging the bloody thing on the ground.”

Chloe started to chuckle. “Lucifer, were you planning on impressing me with it?”

A mischievous smile lit his features as he slid a glance her way. “Perhaps,” he said. “You must admit, Detective, I would have cut a mighty fine figure with it.”

She laughed. “You should know by now that you always cut a mighty fine figure, in my eyes.”

That had Lucifer sitting up a little straighter, a huge grin on his face. Pride swelled in his chest -- his Chloe always made him feel so good! He happily caressed the sword in his lap and didn’t say another word until they reached Amenadiel’s apartment.

“She did what?!”

Amenadiel stared at Chloe in horror while Maze brightened with glee.

“She punched dear old Dad right in the face,” Lucifer crowed proudly. “It was the finest moment of my life.”

Chloe wanted to find a hole to hide in. “Yeah, well, it’s not exactly something I want to be known for.”

“But why not, my dear?” the fallen angel asked. “You can be known as ‘The Woman who Punched God.’ Has an ever so lovely ring to it.”

Pushing Lucifer out of the way, Maze got right into Chloe’s face. Her face was alive with interest
and a bit of burgeoning respect. “Well, Decker, there may be some hope for you yet. So... then what?”

The blonde woman laughed a little. “What do you mean, then what?”

“I mean, did you snap off his arms? Tear off his legs? Rip his chest open and pull out his entrails?” The demon became more and more excited as she listed the various states of dismemberment.

“Down, Maze,” Lucifer said with a grin, while Amenadiel grabbed his girlfriend and pulled her back.

“She means,” the angel said to Chloe while giving Maze a warning glance, “What happened after you punched him?”

“Well, we yelled at each other for a bit and then talked in his solar....”

Disappointment spread over the demon’s face. “Just when I thought I was beginning to like you,” she spat. “What a let-down.”

“Right. Look, that old bastard and I came to an understanding,” Lucifer said as he hefted up the weapon in his hand. “If we give him back the Sword of Heaven, he’ll leave the detective and her child alone. Can you to take it back up for us, Amenadiel? We thought you might like to visit home for a spell.”

With eyes the grew bright with hunger, Maze reached for the sword. “Ooooh, come to Mama, pretty baby.”

“I’ll take it up,” Amenadiel interrupted, grabbing the sword while putting himself between it and his girlfriend. “Thank you, Brother. It would be nice to see the Silver City again.” He struggled to hold off the demon, who was making desperate grabs for the weapon.

“Come on, Amenadiel -- let me touch it,” she begged. “I just want to cleave some heads with it -- that’s all. And hack off some arms and legs. And maybe slice open some bellies. I’ll give it back after that. Just let me --”

“You better go now, Brother,” the angel said to Lucifer. “I think I might have my hands full for a while.”

The fallen angel grinned as he ushered Chloe out of the apartment. “Have fun!” he called out as they left for Memories Photo Lab.
At last, Chloe pulled the car up in front of Memories Photo Lab. Lucifer was very interested in meeting the shopkeeper who had somehow restored Chloe to him. He owed the man a great deal -- indeed, his very life.

A bell rang as they entered the small, narrow shop. The smell of photographic chemicals filled the air, but it wasn’t unpleasant. A little Asian man came bustling from the back room. He took one look at the couple and smiled widely.

“Detective Decker! Mister Morningstar! So good to see you!” he greeted. “Come in, come in!” He went past them to put a “will return in an hour” sign in the front window, then waved them through to the back room. “I was hoping you would come by,” he said. “I just made some tea.”

“Mister Kamiya, thank you for inviting us,” Chloe said.

“Ray. Call me Ray.” He smiled at them both as they sat down at a little dining table with him. Lucifer eyed the back room with interest. All around were old, framed photographs that seemed to vibrate with... something. He couldn’t put his finger on it. They were definitely giving off some sort of... aura, though.

Pouring the tea, Ray asked, “Did the photos work?”

Chloe blinked. “Yes. Yes they did. I wanted to ask you about that.”

“How did you get them?” the detective asked. “I never printed them and they were deleted off of my phone....”

Ray waved dismissively. “I specialize in memories, my dear. It’s why this place is called Memories Photo Lab.”

Lucifer interrupted then. “Your photos -- they’re very interesting,” he said as he pointed at them. “It’s almost like they’re....”

“Alive?” The old man laughed. “They are, in a way. I’m a Keeper of Memories. I try to give good advice when I can, as well.” He passed out the tea cups.

The tall man stared at Ray. “Keeper of Memories?”
“Well, I didn’t always used to be like this, but that’s what I’ve been reduced to, yes.”

Chloe studied him with puzzled eyes as she sipped her tea. “I don’t understand.”

“Don’t you, Detective?” Ray stared at her with sharp, intense eyes. For a moment, Chloe could see eternity in them: thousands of stars were in those eyes -- galaxies.... The fallen angel’s hand on her arm pulled her back into herself.

Concern shone in Lucifer’s eyes as he said, “Are you unwell, Detective?”

Glancing at him, she shook her head. Perhaps that strange feeling was just her imagination. “I’m okay.”

“Well, I guess you wouldn’t remember anything,” the shopkeeper said. “It’s understandable, since it was the sacrifice you made. But now that you’ve found Mister Morningstar --”


“Must I spell it out?” Ray sighed with resignation. “Very well.” He leaned forward. “Mister Morningstar, do you know what Detective Decker is?”

Chloe was surprised when Lucifer said, “No.”

“No?!” she asked him with an annoyed look. “Seriously, Lucifer?”

The fallen angel looked at her then, his face troubled. “No, Detective. I really do not know what you are.”

“She’s the Goddess of Compassion,” Ray said.

The couple gawked at the shopkeeper. “What?” they said together at once.

“She’s the Goddess of Compassion,” the old man repeated, then waved at Lucifer. “I know your kind don’t like to acknowledge us --“

Lucifer’s eyebrows shot up. “My kind?”

“Angels. Your kind. You drove us off this plane. Well, not you -- you had already Fallen. Your brethren. Your father really doesn’t like sharing the playing field, does he? But that’s fine. We don’t mind. We do miss being on Earth, though.”

The tall man just sat and stared. “Bloody hell, how did you know I...? What -- what exactly are you? And please try to be a little less cryptic and a little more bloody clear. I’ve had enough cryptic talk from my bloody bastard father to last a lifetime.”

Ray rolled his eyes. “Ugh! Subtlety is lost on the young! Very well.

“Ohay, let’s start from the beginning. Detective Decker and I... we’re part of a family of Old Gods that were driven off this plane by your family. You Fell. You were suffering and in pain. This one here --” he pointed to Chloe, “-- saw you suffering in Hell. She could see you were a good man, and fell in love with you right then and there. She sacrificed almost everything -- even gave up her immortality to become human just so that she could be with you. She hoped and prayed you would come to Earth sooner or later. She’s been in a constant state of rebirth, waiting for you to come. It’s the only way we can leave our plane, thanks to your father.”

“I’m sorry, but... what?! I’m what?” Chloe couldn’t believe it. “You must be mistaken. I’m
Ray shook his head. “I’m sorry, but no -- not entirely. You just don’t remember. That was part of the sacrifice you made. Most of your powers are gone. You still have a few, born from love, but that’s all. Your memory of what you once were was also part of the sacrifice. I suppose when you die you will remember, and at that point you can decide whether you wish to remain with Mister Morningstar, be reborn again, or come home.”

Lucifer sank back in his chair, which creaked threateningly. He couldn’t believe it. Chloe was a goddess reborn as a human? She had given up her immortality to be with him? She had lived lifetime after lifetime, just waiting for him to arrive? Without even knowing him?! He had never heard of such sacrifice. That sort of unselfishness just didn’t exist in his family.

“How did Chloe know we would even meet?” Lucifer asked Ray.

“Oh, she didn’t -- but she had faith you would eventually come together. If you didn’t, well... then she would be able to come home. She wanted to go straightaway to Hell to you, but after we were coerced to our current home, we lost the power to cross over to different planes directly. We can see other planes, if we choose to -- we just can’t travel to them. Rebirth on Earth is the only way -- a sort of intermediary, if you will. She decided she’d wait here on Earth for you.”

“Bloody hell -- that’s downright mad!”

“That’s our Goddess of Compassion for you.”

Lucifer turned to Chloe. “You gave up everything for me? Without even knowing me?” He couldn’t even imagine that sort of love a person could have for another.

The detective laughed nervously. “Lucifer, you’re not taking this seriously, are you?”

“Detective, I’ve seen the things you can do. Pull me out of Hell. Visit me in Heaven. Heal me. How can I not take this seriously?”

Chloe went pale. “My god....”

“Is apparently not Dad,” Lucifer finished for her.

“How long --” She tried to get control of her shaking voice. “How long have I been waiting for Lucifer?”

“Oh, I’d say a hundred lifetimes or so -- three millennia, at least,” Ray said.

Chloe felt like she was going insane. Surely it couldn’t be real? But it would explain so much.... She rubbed her forehead. “This can’t be real. This has got to be some sort of dream.”

“I’m afraid not. I wish I could help you to remember, but I cannot. Just trust that you and Mister Morningstar were meant to be together. The Fates have decreed it.”

“And you?” she asked. “What are you?”

Ray smiled. “An old friend. I also gave up my immortality so that I could help you. I used to give counsel to the Family -- they thought you might need my help one day.”

“But you remember...?”

Ray nodded, a little sadly. “I gave up other things in place of my memories.”
“I... I’m sorry,” Chloe said. The three of them sat in silence for a few minutes, each lost in their own thoughts.

Suddenly Lucifer looked up, a wicked gleam in his eye. “Hang on, let’s back up a moment,” he said. “You’re saying the detective’s powers are born from love?”

“That’s right.”

Lucifer’s face lit up with joy. “Splendid! Did you hear that, Detective? Can you imagine what would happen when we finally have sex? Why, the results might be positively incendiary!”

Oh god. “Lucifer --” she began, but he continued as if she hadn’t spoken.

“Why, we might wipe out all of Los Angeles -- or at least a good chunk of it! I think we should definitely try this!”

She rolled her eyes. “Lucifer, he said love, not sex.”

“We can’t have love without sex, Detective!” he said happily.

Horribly embarrassed, Chloe hid her face in her hands. “Lucifer, I am never going to have sex with you. Ever.”

“But -- Detective! Think of the possibilities!”

“I’m not listening, Lucifer.”

“But Detective!”

Ray watched the interaction between them, and started laughing. “You two are like a comedy team,” he said.

Chloe stood up and offered him her hand. “It was nice meeting you, Ray. Perhaps we’ll meet again.”

“Oh I know we will,” he said with a smile. When the detective walked quickly away, Lucifer made to follow her, but Ray stopped him.

“Please take good care of Detective Decker. We’ll be counting on you to protect her.”

Lucifer blinked. “Protect...?”

“Bad days are coming, Mister Morningstar. You know that as well as I.”

The fallen angel grew serious and nodded. “I’ll protect her, you can bloody well count on it.”

“Good.”

“Right.” Lucifer gave him a single nod, then went running to catch up with Chloe.

Ray called after him, “And be sure you both come to see me after you have --”

The front door slammed shut behind the fallen angel.

“-- the baby,” the old man finished. He chuckled to himself, then started cleaning up the dishes.
Lucifer caught up with Chloe at the car. Swinging her into his arms, he kissed her deeply with all the love that he had for her. Passion burned bright between them as she returned his kiss. When they finally broke apart, she smiled, but there was a puzzled look in her eyes.

“What was that for?”

“For a hundred lifetimes of waiting,” he whispered as he rested his forehead against hers. “When I think of you taking such a chance on me -- and you bloody well didn’t even know me! -- I just can’t... I wish.... I mean, all that wasted time --”

“Shh,” Chloe said, pressing her finger to his lips. “We found each other, and that’s all that matters. I will always be here for you, Lucifer.”

“Now that I have you, I’ll never let you go,” he whispered. “If we’re ever separated, I’ll find you -- even if it takes three thousand years.”

Chloe’s eyes filled with tears. Lucifer had never professed his feelings, but that sounded very much like a declaration of love to her. “Trixie’s probably done with her party, by now,” she said. “Let’s go home.”

“Yes,” he agreed. “Let’s.”

He suddenly grinned as they got into the car. “Maybe we can try some of that incendiary sex?” he asked hopefully. “You know, set the bloody world on fire?”

She rolled her eyes and shook her head. “I believe you still owe me a dinner, Lucifer.”

Lucifer laughed, his heart filled with warmth and love. “And you shall have it, my dear Detective. This time I’ll show you how the Devil does romance!”

Chapter End Notes

Thank you to all of you wonderful readers out there who kept up with this Lucifer and Chloe, especially those of you who were kind enough to comment after every chapter. You keep me inspired to keep writing about these two, and I really appreciate each and every one of you and your comments! THANK YOU!!

I have written Part 5, titled "Courting Chloe", and I hope you’ll all join me for it. It has a lot of fluff, romance and humor -- I figure you could use some of that after this angstfest. I hope to get it up very soon. Out of respect for my beta, whose real life has suspended
the excellent help, I'm going to wait for a bit. With any luck, I'll be able to post very soon. :-) 

And for those of you wondering how I came up with Chloe's background: I was researching gods and goddesses back when I wrote the Morning Star, and came across the Goddess of Mercy/Compassion. There's an old Chinese myth where she goes down to Hell to take the place of someone else, and by her just being there, she changes Hell into Heaven. The Lord of Hell has to kick her out of Hell because she's destroying his realm. I thought she sounded like the perfect match for our Lucifer. I like the thought that Chloe and Lucifer, even if they end up back in Hell, will have Heaven. :-) 

I am not that familiar with Chinese myths -- I'm a little more familiar with Japanese ones, so I'm using them as a starting point for my Old Gods (the goddess is also in Japan). I hope this isn't tooooooo far off canon for you all.

Thank you again for reading! You are all AWESOME and I am YOUR biggest fan! Thank you!!

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!