"Dean you cried when the baby penguin died."

"Fuck off! I didn't cry!"

In which Castiel Novak accidentally finds a book on how to make a deal with a demon. He accidentally sells his soul in exchange for a friend. Not one of his smartest moves.

In which Dean Winchester is the king of hell and accepts the deal. Not one of his smartest moves either.

This is the longest slow burn I'll ever write. Read the tags.

Notes

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Chapter 1

Castiel Novak was walking down the street from the library to his dorm. Finals were over and most students had fled campus in lieu of the holiday season. Cas had nowhere to be besides his room and the library. Gabriel, his brother, lived in California and had no place for Castiel during the season. Gabriel worked as a porn director and shared his apartment with his girlfriend Kali who hated Castiel. The dislike was mutual.

He dragged himself across the street with his bag full of books. He was so immersed in his own thoughts that he didn't hear the man approaching him from behind. It was probably also the fact that he was wearing headphones and listening to a lecture on a class he would be taking in January. Cas didn't know what happened, but he was suddenly being shoved into a wall.

“What-

“Scream and I'll cut you, bitch.” The man pressed a blade to his neck. He was wearing a hoodie and covering his face with a red scarf. “Give me your phone and your money.”

“I don't have any money or a phone!” Cas stuttered. “This is a Nano.”

“A what?” The man shoved him against the wall. He lifted the knife from his neck and placed it on
his cheek. With the other hand he ripped off his headphones and grabbed the iPod Nano from Cas’ pocket. “Merry Christmas.” The man chuckled and punched Cas in the stomach until Cas dropped to his knees. The man kicked Cas on the side and pushed him fully to the floor. When Cas was done he landed two more kicks to his stomach before running away.

Cas groaned and curled up on himself. It was late enough for no one to pass by and see him lying on the floor. Cas slowly pushed his body into a sitting position and continued to clutch his stomach. He eventually managed to stand up and walk all the way to his dorm room. He would have to get himself another device to listen to his lectures. He was in too much debt to get himself a smart phone and the iPod Nano had been a gift he received in high school. Life sucked and his room was on seventh floor with no elevator in the building.

By the time he got to his room he was sweating and he felt like he wasn’t breathing. He got his phone out of his pocket and almost cried when he saw it had cracked when he fell on it. Cas placed his bag on his side of the room and sat down on the chair by the single desk.

There was no Christmas tree, no annoying family members, no ugly sweaters, or terrible music. Cas thought he would have preferred it this way. To have a place all to himself and to have no reason to feign interest in whatever was going on during a family dinner.

The thing was, he had never had a family Christmas dinner. It had always been him and Gabriel who he barely saw ever since Gabe got himself into college and got himself in the adult film industry. After his mom’s death and his father’s disappearance, Gabe had become an emancipated teen to take care of Cas until Cas became old enough to be left alone. Gabriel never really knew how alone Cas turned out to be.
“This is ridiculous,” Cas murmured to himself as he stood up to unpack his bag.

He placed the books on the shared bookshelf, rubbing his side all the time. Cas was glad the man hadn't been strong enough to crack one of his ribs, a small miracle. He couldn't help but staring at the bookshelf while he rubbed his bruised side half-heartedly.

“100 ways to eat zucchini,” he read out loud and frowned. “What the hell, Brady?” he asked out loud.

Cas grabbed the book and frowned at the cover. It was a picture of a blonde kid holding a zucchini with a grin. It was an odd hardcover book with a removable sleeve. Cas removed it and once again frowned. It was actually a black, leather covered book with a pentagram burned into it. Cas turned around the book and saw nothing else. He shrugged and placed the book on his roommate's bed.

The next day Cas woke up feeling worse. His side ached and his stomach growled. He sighed and turned on his side trying to go back to sleep. His usual plan was to sleep until lunch hour to save some money on breakfast and then go to get some hotdogs from a stand near the dorm. He had some food in his room, but he usually preferred going out for a cheap meal.

Today he didn't feel like getting out of bed at all. It wasn't unusual per say, but today felt different. Like there were four tons of shit pressing down on him and telling him to just disappear.
Cas slowly crawled under the covers and stretched his arm out to grab something from the bedside table. The effort would have been nice if he hadn't gotten his phone smashed into the sidewalk last night. He sighed and dropped his hand. So much for the effort.

When he did that, his eyes instantly focused on the black, leather book sitting on the other bed. He stretched his arm out to no avail and ended up having to stand up to pick it up. He crawled back under the covers and opened the book to a random page.

"The Demons must always be approached with extreme honesty and respect," he read out loud with his sleepy voice. He continued reading. "When we are new, most of the Demons are willing to help us. The goal of Satanism is to become as a god. This means self-empowerment through consistent meditation and using the powers of our minds and souls to accomplish our goals and personal desires." Cas wrinkled his nose at the book and closed it. He dropped the book on the floor and sat up slowly against the wall.

Why would Brady have such a thing? It's not okay to have that stuff. It's wrong. Cas should just throw the book away or burnt it. It's stupid and dangerous to have such a thing in his own room.

With that thought, Cas stood up and got dressed for his midday walk around the park next to his building. He put on a jacket, wrapped a scarf around his neck, and took off. He didn't look at the book and he slowly closed the door behind him before he headed toward the park.

When he finally sat down on a bench with his hotdog, a water bottle, and a bag of chips, Cas tried to not think about himself. Usually thinking about not thinking about something makes anyone think
about it. Like telling someone not to think about an elephant, Castiel began thinking about the book he left back in his dorm room.

Castiel was raised in a Christian home and had received help from the church after his parents’ death. He had grown up with a strong faith, but his interest in such an unholy book was downright making him panic. It was unusual for his faith to be tested like this. He used to be the type of kid who attended church every Sunday and joined the church youth groups to help out with the meetings and to socialize with other kids like him. Castiel was a devoted man and he knew right from wrong.

Then why did he want to keep reading the book? Somehow the book didn't make the subject of demons look so… so demonic. It normalized the subject and he wanted to read more about them. He wanted to learn about the other side of the story with an open mind. Not to follow the belief, but to understand those who chose the wrong path.

No one could blame him for trying to understand someone else's point of view.

With that thought in mind, Castiel wolfed down his food and chugged his water down. He jogged back to his building and up the stairs and locked the door behind him. He grabbed the book and sat down on his roommate's bed with the book in his lap. He once again opened the book to a random page and began to read it to himself. It was an odd thing he did to be able to understand things easily without having to read the paper over and over again. It didn't work for everyone, but it did for him.

“To summon a demon you will need to draw a containment circle with chalk large enough for the demon to stand and walk around a bit. Most demons are temperamental and proud, keep this in mind
when drawing the circle.” Castiel hummed and laid back on the bed, with his back facing the ceiling and his elbows supporting his weight. “These are instructions on how to draw a strong circle, make sure that your pentagram is—” Castiel crinkled his nose and flipped the page.

He frowned when he saw an entire paragraph written in what looked like Latin. He tried to pronounce all of it, he had taken some Latin classes, but he didn't understand anything written in there. He did it three times until he was content with his pronunciation. He flipped over the page and focused on the headline, “Waiting for your demon,” he read and chuckled. “This sounds like a maternity article.” Castiel smiled to himself. “Your candles will light up in the presence of a higher demon. If they do so, don't be afraid, the containment circle will keep you safe. If the candles don't light up, it means you've got a lesser demon in your presence or the demon doesn't want to approach you. Try talking out loud to your demon with the utmost respect. Try talking about your reasons for summoning him. Summoners usually do it for spiritual strengthening or empowerment.” Cas stopped reading and closed the book.

“Spiritual strengthening,” he repeated. “I don't want spiritual strengthening… I'm just… lonely in here.” Castiel sighed and pressed his face to the bed. “I think it would be weird to ask the king of hell for friendship.” Castiel chuckled. “Greetings, your demonic lordship, I was wondering if I could sell my soul to have you become a close friend of mine.” Castiel groaned and stood up. “I'm more lame than I expected,” he said and went back to his bed. He crawled under the covers; he fell asleep fairly easily. Castiel couldn't help but feel emotionally and physically drained after reading the book and jogging at the park.

Dean sat with his feet on his desk and his Galaxy Note 7 in his hands. He was playing Words with Friends with the only demon who wouldn't let him win on the damned game. Jo was his favorite Lieutenant, and she didn’t allow anyone to kick her ass, unless it was Dean.
“Sir?” A demon knocked on the thick wooden door and stuck his head inside.

“Can't you see I'm busy!” Dean screamed and slammed his hand on the desk. “What the fuck do you want? Come here, you little shit.” Dean slammed the phone down on the desk and pulled the demon in with a hand.

The demon tried to struggle under Dean's demonic strength to no avail. It only made Dean chuckle and slam the door closed with a flick of the wrist.

“You have five words to say something that'll make me consider not sending you back down to the dungeons and get your ass whipped until I remember to get you out.” Dean leaned back on his leather throne and let go of the demon.

“There's a contract aimed to you!” The demon mentally counted his words and closed his eyes in fear when he realized he was off by one.

“What do you mean aimed?” Dean asked instead of focusing on the verbal word count.
“A human sent a request for you. We tried to crack the contract open before delivering it to you, but there's something off about this human. We thought he was a powerful warlock, but he is just a kid who used an advanced summoning. We checked and he doesn't have any unborn magic in him.” The demon bowed and handed over a white scroll.

Dean took it, but didn't try to open it. “When did the kid send this?” he asked instead.

“Uhh, yesterday.” The demon gulped.

Dean exploded. “YESTERDAY?” Dean stood up and grabbed the demon by the neck. He lifted him up and over the desk. Dean continued to manhandle the demon until he had him pressed against the wall behind his throne. Dean's eyes glowed a deep red when he got closer to the demon. “SOMEONE TRIED TO SUMMON ME WITH A CONTRACT INSTEAD OF A CROSSROADS DEAL AND YOU IDIOTS TAKE A WHOLE DAY TO TELL ME ABOUT IT?”

The demon grabbed Dean's arm and tried to speak without choking. “The kid has been asleep the whole time! It must be around 3 am where he lives, so it must be less than 12 hours since he sent out the contract!”

“And you think this makes things better?” Dean asked. “Who the fuck received the contract? I want you to fetch them for me unless you want your head shoved up your ass and not in the metaphorical way!”
Dean pushed the demon off the wall and opened the door with a flick of his fingers. The demon nodded and ran out of the darkened throne room with a hand rubbing his neck. Dean chuckled and sat back down on his leather throne. He propped his feet back on the mahogany desk and retrieved his phone and the contract. He tucked the phone into the inner pocket of his leather jacket. Dean made a face of boredom as he snapped the seal on the contract open. It was meant to be opened by a specific demon not by anyone. Dean was actually impressed by the strength of the seal. He had trained the messengers himself to open several types of seals. Dean skimmed through the words on the contract and focused on what the human wanted. When he came by the actual deal, Dean smirked.

“What the fuck?” Dean’s smirk grew into a full grin. “Poor kid, heh. This looks like an easy soul to take.” Dean bit his thumb and signed his name in blood.
Chapter 2

Cas woke up slowly. He felt lethargic as he fought with himself to open his eyes and turn around. Cas turned around until he had an arm hanging off the bed and his cheeks pressed against the mattress. He opened one eye and frowned when he saw an orange glow coming from underneath Brady’s bed.

Cas shot up and pressed his back against the wall when he saw a man sitting calmly on the bed with his feet off the floor. The first thing he noticed was the green glow of his eyes. When the man saw him staring, his eyes darkened unbelievable fast. Cas could've sworn the man's eyes had turned completely black, including the white area of the eye.

He clapped his hands loudly. “Good morning, sleeping beauty.” The man was wearing dark jeans and a leather jacket over an open red button up over a black t-shirt. “Welcome back to the land of the living,” he said and leaned forward to place his face right under the thin ray of light entering the room from the window.

“Who- who are you?” Cas asked, staring at the impossibly black eyes and not focusing on anything else. “This… uhh… this is a private room!”

The man laughed in response. Cas swore he could feel the man’s deep laughter reverberating through his bones. The man’s voice felt like warm honey whiskey to his ears and he had never even seen that beverage before. Cas was immediately more afraid of the stranger.

“Well kid, I'm afraid you invited me here.” The man formed guns with his fingers and pointed at Cas when he said ‘you’. “Pretty neat summoning you pulled off over here.” He motioned to the room with a smirk. “Not many people have the mojo to call me of all demons! The name's Dean, by the way.” Dean smiled and winked. “I can see by your expression that you have no idea what’s going on.” The smile remained, revealing sharp perfect teeth.

“What are you?” Cas asked, pulling his knees to his chest under the covers. “Are you a demon?”

“King of hell actually.” Dean winked. He stood up on the mattress and bowed. “At your service.” Dean grinned and sat back down, Indian style. “Now if you would please cut the containment circle…”
“What circle?” Cas asked. He looked at the glow emanating from beneath the bed. He suddenly remembered the book talking about candles lighting up in the presence of strong demons. “What will happen if I do liberate you, demon?”

“Well that's mostly up to you, bud.” Dean shrugged and licked his lips. “I already signed your contract, but we still need you to sign to complete the transaction.” Dean shrugged. He dug into his jacket and came up with a black folder. “I dug up some dirt on you, Castiel Novak. Proper Christian boy with dead parents and an absent sibling. You used to be homeschooled by your parents until high school, your parents died that same year, not long after that. You hid under the bleachers, the library, bathroom stalls, empty classrooms, and the janitor’s closet to escape your bullies. You have no family members that want to contact you and your last meaningful relationship was an elderly cat that was poisoned by a neighbor.” Dean threw the folder at Cas. “You are also a pre-law student with no real drive, a half scholarship, and student loans to last you a lifetime.” Dean shook his head. “Tell you what, your contract says that you want me to be your friend. Kinda lame, but also really vague.”

“I wasn't aware I made any deal.” Cas frowned, picking up the folder from the floor, but not opening it. The folder felt heavy in his hands. Cas was silently afraid of the inanimate object after the mudding Dean had given him. He lowered his head in shame, starring at the orange glow under the bed, glad that the beds were separated from the floor high enough to keep whatever candles Brady had set up from burning the bed.

Dean raised an eyebrow and began counting with his fingers. “So the demon trap under the bed, the summoning spell, and the containment circle around the demon trap are all imaginary?” Dean chuckled. “The spell you mixed was specifically directed to me and I have no idea how you pulled that off because I don't even know how to summon myself. Demons are usually summoned directly with special sigils. I don't have a special sigil. Now, our contract-” Dean stopped when Cas raised an eyebrow.

“Look, stop.” Castiel grabbed the folder between his hands and stood up. “I'm not saying I did not chant the spell or whatever it's called. I'm saying it was an accident. You are free to go and forget I even said anything like everyone does.” Cas saw Dean open his mouth to complain, but Cas raised a finger. “I don't even know what Brady has under that bed and I'm honestly scared of reaching under the bed to undo whatever it is you want me to do.”

Dean seemed to want to comment on the previous statement, but he chose the later. “Y-you just have to erase a tiny ass part of the chalk circles. The two outer circles, to be exact.” Dean motioned to his feet. “I really need to stretch my legs, dude.”
“Outer circles?” Cas asked. He was about to stick his foot under the bed to blindly erase the circles when he remembered something he read. “Hang on, the book said the circles protect me from you. Will you kill me if I erase them?” Cas asked. He was suddenly aware of the very subtle smell of sulfur, but then it quickly dissipated. Cas figured he must’ve imagined it.

“No, at least not yet.” Dean grinned devilishly. “That's the problem with soul deals. I have to cash in eventually.”

“What?”

Dean raised a finger. “Ok, first of all you already summoned and bound me to a contract. Second, said contract prevents me from murdering the client unless the client asks for it or their time’s up.”

“Wait, what? What does that mean?” Cas paled and sat back down, the black folder still in his hands.

“How did you think we collected souls?” Dean scoffed. “You can't just take them! I mean, I could, but most of demons can't pull that off and the hellhounds aren't smart enough to do it. Even my baby girl Zep can't do it.” Dean shrugged almost comically like he was talking about the time he got an A- on a test instead of an A+.

“Did I just sign my death sentence?” Cas asked. “And who is Zep?”

“Zep is my own hellhound and no, you haven't signed anything yet. Which is why I'm here. Please erase the chalk.” Dean pursed his lips in disgust and pulled his knees closer to his chest. “I'm fighting my mojo to keep the candles from lighting up the place.” Dean pressed his chin to his knees and pouted.

Cas would have found it amusing to see the burly demon in such position if it weren't for the fact that he was an actual burly demon. He tried not to think about what was actually going on as he stood up and kneeled down to wipe off the chalk without looking. He didn't want to see whatever his roommate had placed under that bed to summon the king of hell. Dean sighed in relief and let out a moan of content when Cas stood back. He jumped off the bed and took a deep breath.
“Oh thanks for that, bud!” Dean stretched out his legs and arms. He sat back down, legs akimbo, and relaxed against the wall. “You have no idea how claustrophobic I get inside demon traps.” Dean shook his head. “Now, for the contract—”

“No,” Cas interrupted.

“You don’t know what I was gonna say!” Dean complained.

Cas raised his voice. “The answer is still no!”

“Ok, fine.” Dean sat up and snapped his fingers. Cas’ blue eyes widened when he couldn't yell at him. “I'm gonna take this.” He grabbed the folder and continued, “and I'm gonna tell you what I added into the crappy deal you made.” Dean cleared his throat. “Friendship is a really wide term, so I'm doing you a solid by adding some stipulations of my own. Feel free to revise them later.”

Cas shook his head and mouthed something at Dean.

“Great! Moving on.” Dean grinned. “Usual contract time is equal to ten years, but you still need to finish pre-law, pass the BS test to enter law school, get hired by a firm, and climb up the steps in that firm. Ten years is almost a joke.” Dean saw Cas nodding angrily. “So I'm going to move some stuff around and make it so the time is more flexible.” Dean began listing with his fingers. “You get twenty five years maximum, anything more is a no can do on my side. If you want to cut me off, you can do so at any time and I'll send in a hellhound to—”

Cas shook his head violently.

“What? You don't like puppies?” Dean asked and Cas shook his head again. “That doberman that bit you when you were 8 had issues.” Dean sighed when Cas continued to shake his head. “Fine, no Zeppy for you. I'll kill you myself and it'll be quick and easy. That okay, princess?” Dean was satisfied when Cas only glared. “Good,” he said, “I can't make you hate me to cut the deal. I have to be myself with you.” Dean gave himself a once over with a smirk. “I'm a catch, babe, you won't be disappointed.” Dean winked at him. “Also, I can't hurt you at all, but accidents don't count. I'm not God.” He huffed. “I also can't break the contract by myself, bring people back to life, or enhance your body or mind in any supernatural way.”
When Dean stopped, Cas motioned for him to continue with a hand movement.

“I get to do whatever I want regarding your career and other human things I can make better for you like this place for starters. Because that's what a friend with power would do for his lame friend.” Dean snapped his finger and Cas gasped loudly.

“That's it?” he asked.

“Dude, what more do you want?” Dean spread his arms. “You are getting a way better deal than everyone has ever gotten in a long time.”

“Why?” Cas asked, trying not to think about his Christian morals.

“Because no one was ever stupid or strong enough to pull me into a forceful contract. That's why I already signed it with my own blood.” Dean grinned. “I'm your bitch, Cas. No one has ever dared to think about making me their bitch and here you are being able to do it and only wanting me to be your BFF.” Dean shrugged and stood up. He moved to sit down next to Cas and wrapped an arm around his shoulders.

“Where is my soul going to go?” Cas asked, finally asking what he really needed to ask.

“Hell and not the town in Michigan.” Dean pulled Cas in closer by the shoulders. He was holding Cas like he was a snotty kid who need some cheering up before a baseball game. “After that I'm not allowed to say because I don't know yet.”

“What about the basis of the contract?” Cas pushed himself away from Dean and sat back. “I asked for something specific and you added some sidelines to it.” Cas frowned. “I know I asked for a friend, but-”

Dean interrupted him “But you've never had a real friend and whatever you were gonna say was an absolute expression of your depression and self-hate. I'll be a good friend to you.” Dean squeezed his shoulder roughly. “At least until I get to kill you and send you to hell into a dungeon like the other souls.”
“Well, at least you are honest about that.” Cas shook his head.

He should have known the king of hell wasn't actually going to form a true friendship with him. Cas may be lame and lonely, but he wasn't stupid or optimistic. On one side he had his religion telling him to send the demon packing and move to a monastery in Italy to protect himself; on the other side he had 25 possible successful years with a friend who could possibly-

“If I ask for favors during our, uhhh, time together, will you do them?” Cas asked quickly and without stuttering.

“Within reason.” Dean shrugged nonchalantly.

“What does that mean?” Cas frowned. “What's reasonable to a demon?”

“Not any demon. I'm the king of hell, knight of hell, and bearer of the first sword. I'm a badass.” Dean raised his eyebrows and released Cas to fix his leather jacket to make himself look more dapper. “Within reason means that I can't do something that clashes with another contract or our contract. It also depends on whether I'm in the mood or not.” Dean shrugged.

Cas pursed his lips. “That's not very reliable.”

“Sucks.” Dean dug into his pocket and took out the original contract that he had already signed. He snapped his fingers and the contract light up on fire. Instead of it turning to ashes, new words were burned into the scroll. “There, I added what we just discussed.”

“So, I just sign and you are…?”

“Your bitch and friendly, neighborhood demon.” Dean smiled at his own Spider-Man reference.
“I’m not going to heaven.” Cas eyed the contract.

“’Nope, that trains gone.”

“Are you going to keep this a secret?” Cas asked. “You being a demon and we’ll…” Cas pointed at the contract.

“Yes.”

“What does being your friend mean?”

“I don’t know. I haven’t had a friend in a long time.” Dean raised a hand to run his fingers through his hair. “Dude, it's 4am and I don’t need sleep, but I still do it. Are you going to sign or not?

“Yes.”

“Can’t blame me for trying- wait what?” Dean stood up, accidentally knocking over the black folder. “You just said yes?” Dean balked.

“Yes, I did say yes.” Cas eyes him weirdly.

“Whoa!” Dean’s eyes widened. “Give me your hand. We are not gonna kiss on it.”

“What?” Cas gave Dean his hand hesitantly. “Kiss on what?”

The demon didn’t answer. Dean grabbed his hand and hauled Cas up. He didn't let go of his hand, but brought it to his full lips. Cas would forever swear his hands didn't start sweating right there, but that's a lie. Dean brought his thumb to his lips and gave it a gentle kiss. Cas gasped lowly and then hissed when Dean bit into it. Blood oozed out of the bite and Dean quickly pressed it to the paper next to the other bloody mark.
“Done!” Dean pushed Cas away and snapped his fingers. There was a knock on the door and Dean opened the door.

“Sir?” A second demon walked in.

“Come in.”

She picked up the paperwork strewn all the floor and smiled when Dean handed her the rest. “Arrangement are done. Your car is outside the building.” The demon gave Dean a pair of car keys with an odd bronze key chain.

“Thanks, Eileen. Go back to hell and finish all the paperwork. You are done for the rest of the day. Have Hudson replace you.” Dean pocketed his keys and smiled at the demon.

“You are far too generous, my Lord.” The demon bowed and exited the room without showing her back to Dean.

Cas didn't even know what to think about what just happened. He admitted that he was surprised at seeing the demon entering his room so quickly to take care of the paperwork. That was when he realized something.

“I just made a deal with the devil,” Cas muttered to himself.

Dean turned around with a raised eyebrow. “Yes you did, Poindexter.”

“Who is Poindexter?” Cas asked.

“Oh God, shut the fuck up, kid.” Dean rubbed his eyes. “Look, it's 4am. Go to sleep and we'll have a talk tomorrow. Bye.” Dean snapped his fingers and disappeared.
Cas sat just sat there staring at the empty space. His mind seemed to suddenly turn on and he scrambled to find the black leather book. He found it on the floor and quickly searched for the list of known demons. He started trying to find “Dean” on the list, but he only saw weird names on the alphabetical list. He sighed and instead looked for the title Dean had claimed.

He only found a brief description and a mention to Satan/Lucifer. Cas didn't want to know anything about Lucifer so he looked for anything related to “Knight of Hell”.

“Knights of Hell are hand-picked by Lucifer himself,” Cas read. “A Knight of Hell is a unique breed of demons that are trained by Cain, the original Knight. The Knights are thought to be among the oldest and most powerful of their kind. Their exact rank in the hierarchy of Hell is not stated; however, they appear to be figures of awe among most demons and refuse to obey demons they consider inferior to themselves.” Cas closed the book when the chapter steered away from the topic. Cas stood up. Placing the book on the desk and standing in front of it, he skimmed the book in search for anything on deals, but found nothing besides a vague warning on being careful with demon deals.

That's when the dam broke and Cas fell to his knees.

Had he really gone that low? Did that just happen? What kind of deal had he made? The demon had seemed cocky and impressed. Cas was honestly confused about what the demon was thinking. His expressions were so fake and full of shit, no wonder the guy was a demon.

He kept crying silently and looking at the white tiles like they would comfort him. He was alone, couldn't call anyone or go to anyone's place for help. This is the perfect moment to have one of those friends who would simply let you into their house at 4am without saying a word, but Cas knew that only happened in fiction and he was too weird and annoying for anyone to do that for him.

What is the demon going to do? Something told Cas that Dean had something planned out for him. Maybe some way to make him believe the lie that the supposed deal asked out of him or maybe Dean would get him some friends. Cas couldn't think straight right now. The answer was clear. Dean would fake being his friend; he had said so. The real question was: what was he going to do?

“Buy the cow, enjoy the milk,” Cas quoted his brother Gabriel.
The idea of letting himself enjoy a fake relationship with a demon was hilariously stupid. If Dean was something other than a demon, then maybe Cas would've thought it was romantic or even Christmassy when you thought about the date. Maybe Cas would cure Dean of his demon with a Christmas miracle.

Cas laughed at the ridiculous idea. He whipped his face with the collar of his T-shirt and sat up with his back against his bed. He couldn't stress over his mortality or the fact that he had a straight ticket to hell.

Right now, Cas had to continue with his life.
Chapter 3

Exactly twenty-five years later, Dean picked Castiel up and pressed him against the glass door of his corner office. Cas’ secretary saw this and screamed in shock. Dean rolled his eyes and broke her neck with a snap of his fingers before she could call for security. Her body collapsed, arms accidentally clearing the desk from any belongings. Dean sighed in relief at the silence and tightened his grip on Cas’ neck.

“It's finally over, hotshot!” Dean whispered in his ear with a grin. “You have no idea how much I've dreamed about all the ways I could kill you.”

Cas gasped when Dean nibbled on his neck. “Dean! I thought you were my friend.” Cas wasn't even aware of what he was saying. The truth was, he knew Dean was just acting all these years. “Please!”

Dean backed off slightly. “That's the problem with you, Cas.” Dean slowly allowed Cas to touch the ground with his feet. “No one wants to be your friend. You are so fucking weird and awkward. I can't believe I accepted your shitty deal.” Dean frowned when Cas closed his eyes. “You annoyed the shit out of me with your bullshit issues, with your depression, and your anxiety.” Dean raised his other hand to grab Castiel’s face. “Fucking look at me when I'm talking, bitch!” Dean slapped his face. “I wanted to make this last because I only get one chance to kill you. I could bleed you dry with tiny cuts while you lay on your pansy-ass, mahogany desk. I planned on making your secretary enjoy the show, but her screams!” Dean grimaced. “Fuck! She sounds even more annoying that you. You fucking worthless, piece of shit lawyer.” Dean growled and then slammed him across the room and to the floor.

Cas hit the corner of a glass table with his head. He could feel the blood trailing down from the back of his head to the pristine white collar of his shirt. “Dean? Please,” Cas said when Dean straddled him. “Please,” he repeated.

“Shut the fuck up!” Dean wrapped his fingers around Cas’ neck and pressed down hard enough to keep him from talking. “I guess I'm just going to have to rip your throat out real quick, you know? Just like a hellhound would, with my teeth.” Dean smirked dangerously. “Can't say I'm not gonna enjoy seeing you choke on your own blood.” He licked his lips. Dean removed his hands from Cas’ neck and grabbed his wrists instead to keep him steady.

“Dean, please don't.” Cas looked up into Dean’s bright green eyes. “Please.” Cas closed his eyes in fear and tried not to cry. He was a grown man, God dammit.

“A deal is a deal, Cas.” Dean grinned and his green eyes turned black. He bit down on Cas’ neck, ripping out his throat. Dean licked his lips, enjoying the taste of blood.
Cas gasped and sat up. He rolled out of bed and fell to his hands and knees. He coughed and coughed until he swore his throat was too dry to continue. Cas pressed his forehead against the cold tiles of his dorm room. That’s when he realized he was sobbing.

Cas angrily wiped away his tears and sat up on his haunches. He glared at the small puddle that formed itself on the tiles. Cas avoided it and looked around the room. He saw the black leather book on the corner of his eye. There was also a wooden bowl in the middle that Cas didn’t even want to look at.

That was the last straw.

Cas had originally planned to clean out the evidence, but now he was running for the showers with his toiletry bag in hand. He was glad for the lack of other students; it meant that he could run as loudly as a wanted and look as disheveled as he wanted. Once in the showers, Cas stood under the water and cried.

He had officially signed up for his death. He had never been a person to dwell much on his own mortality, or so he thought. In reality, Cas had always dreamed of transferring to Harvard University and becoming the best lawyer he could be. He had his life all planned out. Finish Law school, enter the DA’s office to help people, then work his ass off in something else to build up funds to get himself stable. Finally, he would work as a legal aid attorney and get married to a perfectly normal woman who would later become a soccer mom to his 2.5 children.

Cas sighed and closed his eyes. He stretched out his arms and craned his neck. Perhaps stretching his muscles would help ease his mind. He maintained the position and tried to relax under the cold water as much as he could. He gave one last hard stretch and moaned - scratch - sighed in content.

“What a show!” Dean yelled from behind him. He clapped his hands and wolf whistled at him.

“What!” Cas yelled and turned around. He tried to cover up his dick with his hands. “What the hell are you doing here?” Cas realized the curtain had disappeared. “What did you do with the curtain?”

“You have a freckle that looks like a chicken on your ass,” Dean said instead of answering. “That’s weird man.” Dean grimaced. He was standing two feet away from Cas in the same black leather jacket and a black V-neck shirt with jeans and boots. Dean grabbed a towel and handed it out. “Get
dressed, we have stuff to do.”

“Stuff?” Cas asked and wrapped the towel around his waist.

“Stuff.” Dean nodded. “Hurry up or I'm carrying you out of here naked.” Dean didn't say anything else as he exited the bathroom.

Cas quickly dried himself up and got dressed in jeans and a plain t-shirt. Before he could finish tying his converse, Dean walked into the bathroom and dragged him the arm.

“Dean, stop!” Cas tried to free himself from Dean. “My things are still there and my laces are-”

“Will you shut up already?” Dean snapped his fingers and Cas’ shoes were magically tied. “I'll have someone pick up your shit.” Dean snapped his fingers again and a blonde man appeared besides them. Cas gasped in horror when he saw that the man's lips were sewn tight. “Pick up the stuff in the showers and don't forget to fill the truck when you are done.” The demon nodded and walked away.

“His… his mouth.” Cas pointed behind him and followed Dean down the stairs.

“Bad contract.” Dean frowned. “I don't know what exactly happened, but the demon that did this to him is now being tortured on a daily basis for disobedience.”

“Hell has laws?” Cas asked with a raised eyebrow. “That's ironic.”

“Shut up.” Dean stopped Cas from walking further. “Hell works like feudalism, I'm on the top of the food chain and I can do whatever I want. That includes ruling however I want and that means that no soul deals will have extra handicaps. A demon can't take more from a human if they are already offering up their souls.”

“That's… not exactly kind of you, but close enough considering the circumstances.” Cas slowly removed Dean's hand from his elbow.
“I guess.” Dean shrugged and tucked his hands inside the pockets of his jacket. “There are more laws, of course, but I don’t know them all.”

“But, you are the king. You should know all of them to be able to ‘rule however you want to.’” Cas followed Dean when he began walking again.

“Mind your own business, Cas.” Dean glared at him and made sure to turn his eyes black for extra measure.

Cas flinched and took a step back. Dean clenched his jaw and continued to walk. Cas stared down at the floor. He had forgotten what his position was and what Dean was. It had been strange to feel comfortable around the demon for a second. It had been an oddly nice conversation with Dean talking about his job description and Cas adding his two cents.

Dean exited the building with Cas hot on his heels. He didn’t wait for Cas as he began walking down the street towards an imposing, black, muscle car. Cas wasn’t even surprised that the demon owned such a manly car. He didn’t even ask Dean the cliché “is this your car?” phrase to start a conversation. He wasn’t sure he wanted to start any conversations for that matter.

He sat down on the warm leather seats and closed the door. Dean looked at him oddly, but Cas ignored him altogether and chose to look at the front. Dean gave up and shrugged to himself. He started up the car and drove off with ease. The demon drove like the car was something to be taken care of and not like the mad man Cas had expected him to be.

“Where are we going?” he asked out of boredom and not curiosity.

“I’m taking you out for breakfast while my demons work on a surprise for you.” Dean smiled to himself and stopped for a red light. “You’ll love it.”

Cas looked at the red light, thinking that it was weird that the demon obeyed traffic laws. “I hate surprises. Why are you doing this?”
Dean shrugged and started driving again when the green light was on. “I’m supposed to be your friend, aren’t I? Friends do nice things.”

“Friends take into consideration each other’s likes and dislikes,” Cas shot back, annoyed. “I dislike surprises.”

“You would have protested to my surprise anyway.” Dean pursed his lips and turned his head around to look at Cas for a second. “I promise you’ll like it.”

Cas opened his mouth to continue protesting, but Dean's green eyes looked honest and unsure. As if he was afraid Cas would reject whatever this surprise was. He closed his mouth and allowed the silence to continue. He suddenly got the idea that Dean had probably faked that vulnerable look. Maybe that's how demons like Dean draw people in; with their looks and big puppy eyes. Cas tightened his jaw at the thought of falling for Dean's “vulnerable” eyes; the mere idea sounded ridiculous in his head.

“Here we are, Grumpy.” Dean parked the car in a parking lot.

Cas hadn’t even seen Dean slowing the car to park between two huge SUVs. He looked around the parking lot in search for a clue as to where he was. When he did, he raised an eyebrow.

“Uhh… IHOP?”

“Can't have breakfast without pancakes and bacon!” Dean grinned and opened the door. “Come on, dude, my treat.”

“I'm basically paying for pancakes with my soul.” Cas murmured to himself.

“What was that?” Dean asked. He had a leg out of the car and his ass half in the air from where he was getting ready to get out.

“Nothing.” Cas shook his head and exited the car as fast as he could manage.
Dean stared at him in confusion for about three seconds before following after him.

Once inside the restaurant, the odd couple stood out like a sore thumb between the families with young children and groups of old-ish people hanging out together. It was the typical Sunday morning crew of churchgoers. Cas kept waiting for someone to accidentally touch Dean with a rosary or a bible. Dean, for his part, looked completely at ease with the crowd.

“Good morning, gentlemen, my name is Mariam and I'll be your wait-”

“Hello, Mariam.” Dean flashed her a large seductive smile and leaned forward. “I'm Dean and this my friend Cas.” Dean winked at her for absolutely no reason.

Cas rolled his eyes when the blonde waitress giggled and covered her red lips with a hand. He was too annoyed to realize that Dean had used the word “friend” to describe him.

“I just want a stack of pancakes, an order of bacon, and coffee, black like my soul.” Dean slowly grabbed the pen and the extra notepad from her front pocket. “Why don't you give me a call someday, huh?” Dean grinned and wrote down his number.

“And what make you think I'm going to do that?” she asked. The waitress straightened up her stance and tried to sober up.

“I have a feeling you will.” Dean licked his lips and tucked the notepad back in her pocket.

Cas cleared his throat loudly before anyone could keep flirting. “I want pancakes and a chocolate milkshake, thank you very much.”

“Sure thing.” The waitress nodded. “Allow me to repeat your other.” She smiled. “Two stacks of butter pancakes, one extra order of bacon, a chocolate milkshake, a coffee, and a date on Friday night.” The waitress winked at Dean and left before the boys could say anything.
Dean grinned devilishly and sat back in his chair like a champion. Cas wasn't sure what to make of what just happened. On one part, he wasn't surprised at all considering Dean's looks. On the other part, he was worried for the girl who was going out on a date with the King of Hell.

“Why are we here?” Cas asked, glaring at the retreating waitress.

“For breakfast, duh.” Dean shrugged and laid back further in his seat.

“I thought you had just dragged me with you to see you flirt effortlessly.” Cas frowned. It wouldn't be the first time he was just baggage for people who claimed to be his friends. Then again, Dean wasn't even an acquaintance.

“Uhh… excuse you?” Dean leaned forward and pursed his lips. “I had to write down my number and all that.” Dean cradled his wrist tenderly against his cheek like a giant cat. “Might as well go check myself out for carpal tunnel.” Dean pouted and rubbed his cheek with more vigor against his wrist.

Cas chuckled despite himself. He tried to cover it by turning sideways and covering his face with his hand. It wasn't even funny, it was just ridiculous to see a demon acting like a cat. It was probably just stress trying to find an outlet. Dean straightened his posture and gasped dramatically.

“Is that a laugh I hear?” Dean pressed a hand to his chest. “Be still my heart!” Dean grinned when Cas groaned. “I mean, I thought I'd have to beat a smile out of you, but I didn't even have to take out the big guns!”

“Big guns?” Cas raised an eyebrow in disbelief. Silently kicking himself for prompting Dean to continue talking.

“Oh yeah, you betcha! I've got this one joke about two strippers and this huge fucking-”

“Chocolate milkshake and coffee!” The waitress interrupted Dean, who had begun to lean over the table and was now leaning back to smile at her. “I'll be back with your pancakes in a while, boys.”
She smiled and left.

Dean made sure to turn around in his seat to stare at her ass. He nodded to himself and sighed when she went back into the kitchen area. “Where was I?” he asked Castiel with a sheepish smirk.

“You were saying something degrading about women in a den of iniquity.” Cas rolled his eyes. “I'm starting to believe you are not an actual demon, much less the King of Hell. Someone like you couldn't possibly hold a high rank like that.” Cas didn't know what made him say something like that. He wrote it down as stress induced response.

“And why's that, Castiel?” Dean leaned forward with a smirk. “Expected to see me wearing a crown, some horns, or maybe even a tail?” Dean chuckled. “I didn't take you for the kinky type, but I could give you a show.” Dean winked at him. “I'll show you mine and you show me yours kinda deal.”

“Shut up, Dean!” Cas hissed, cheeks flushed with what he hoped was embarrassment. Fueled by anger, Cas kicked Dean's shin and gritted his teeth when his foot collided with strong muscle and bone.

“Be careful there, sweetheart. We don't want you hurting yourself.” Dean leant over the table and pulled Cas by the collar of his shirt. “If you wanna hurt me, you've gotta try a little bit harder.”

“Go fuck yourself,” Cas said between gritted teeth.

Dean hummed and let go of Cas. “Don't tempt me.” Dean shrugged and laid back on his seat once more. “Demon tails, after all, can be really flexible and long.”

Cas tilted his head to the side. “I don't understand what your tail’s length and flexibility has anything to do with anal penetration.”

“What?” Dean blinked and opened his mouth. Gaping, it took him a couple of long seconds to realize that Cas was honestly confused. “Jeez, Cas.” Dean shook his head and grinned down at his shoes. Slowly, he began chuckling and pressing his fingers to his lips.
“I don’t understand.” Cas frowned.

Dean lost it then, he leaned back and threw his head back with laughter. His hands uselessly hung at chest level like T-rex hands as he laughed as hard as he could. The people around them turned around to see who the owner of such a loud noise was. Cas couldn't help but join the other patrons in the staring session. He would've never guessed the leather clad demon held such a magnetic laugh. Cas turned around to see some people chuckling slightly at the sight of Dean. Cas smiled and simply watched Dean trying to control himself.

The waitress stopped by eventually with their food. Dean didn't smile at her this time around, too occupied with deciding between blueberry, strawberry, and maple syrup. Cas wasn't surprised to see that Dean had no manners whatsoever. Dean liked his fingers and sipped his coffee noisily. He even licked the fork when he was done and swiped his finger across the remaining syrup on his plate. Cas lost his appetite somewhere along the disgusting show of manners and Dean switched plates with him without asking. Cas was silently glad Dean had stolen his food. This way, he could focus solely on his milkshake and stare out the window in peace.

Surprisingly, Dean actually paid for the meal and left a huge tip for the waitress. Cas was expecting to be forced into paying for the meal. He raised an eyebrow at Dean, but Dean ignored him because he was too busy flirting with the waitress. Dean eventually pushed Cas out of the restaurant and half dragged him to the car. Cas didn't understand why Dean had to pull him by the arm so forcefully. Dean looked giddy and excited, which scared the hell out of Cas- no pun intended.

“Dean?” Cas put on his seat belt and nervously stared at Dean. “Where are you taking me?”

“It's a surprise!” Dean grinned, sharp teeth making Cas move closer to the door. “Friends surprise each other and shit.”

“If you say so,” Cas said, unconvinced.

Dean slapped his arm playfully and turned on the car's engine. Cas was proud of himself for being able to hide his wince. Dean looked like he hadn’t meant to slap him that hard, but Cas was unnerved anyway. He could still remember how, in the dream, Dean had enjoyed ripping his throat out. Cas could still feel the hard wooden floor under him and the corner of that one table Dean had slammed him against. Some details were already becoming blurry. He could still hear the screams coming from his secretary, but he couldn't remember what she looked like. Cas couldn't remember
whether his desk and coffee table were made of glass or solid wood. Considering the chances of being killed in his office, Cas decided that he would buy sturdy wooden furniture with soft edges.

“We are here.” Dean killed the engine and waited for Cas to react.

“Where are we?” They were parked outside a modern apartment building not too far from the University. Cas recognized the building. The twin brown buildings were nicknamed “The Hershey towers” for their color and design.

“I said it was a surprise, bucko.” Dean shrugged and unlocked Cas’ seat belt.

Cas reacted on instinct and finished removing the seat belt and getting out of the car before Dean decided he needed help with that too. Cas followed Dean across the parking lot that barely had enough space for six cars. Cas noticed that each empty spot had a number and initials painted in white. He wondered whose spot Dean had taken.

They entered the lobby. Dean smiled at the security guard holding the door open for them and headed straight for the elevators. Besides the elevators, the first floor had a small living room and a corridor leading to the gym and underground pool. Cas would love to live in a place like this. He knew the neighborhood was perfect for his morning jog.

“Dude, come on.” Dean saw Cas staring longingly at the corridor and dragged him inside the elevator.

Cas hadn’t even noticed he had stopped to take a look. He saw Dean hitting some numbers on the pad and use a key card to start the elevator. Cas hoped Dean wasn't taking him to a party or an apartment full of prostitutes. They reached the 10th floor and Dean led Cas down the hall. Each floor had eight apartments, except for the last one that had only four. He knew that because the project for this building had really good online publicity and some of his teachers seemed interested as well.

“Corner apartments are amazing because they have more windows and natural light.” Dean waved the key card around as he talked. “I think it helps your fine sushi or something like that.”

“Did you mean Feng Shui?”
“That’s what I said.” Dean stopped at the last door on the right and opened it.

The apartment was mostly empty. The wooden floors were covered with cardboard boxes and small wooden crates. There was a brand new leather couch wrapped in plastic and a TV set on the wall. The place looked huge on the inside because of the open plan design. If he lived here, Cas would fill up the empty spaces with bookshelves, soft rugs, comfy chairs, and small tables to go with them. He could already imagine the perfect table for the dining space. There were three black doors contrasting with the white walls on the far end of the apartment. The kitchen area was on his left, all white, black, and metallic tones. On the right with the couch and the TV, Cas finally realized what Dean was talking about. The window made up about half the wall. Cas was instantly drawn to it. The view was amazing. He could see himself with one of his law textbooks sitting by the window and not paying attention to the book at all.

“So?” Dean asked, an uncharacteristically shy smile on his face. He tucked his hands into the pockets of his leather jacket and waited for Cas to answer.

“What?” Cas frowned. “Why are we here, Dean? Who lives here?”

“No one.” Dean shrugged. “At least not yet.”

“What do you mean?” Cas tilted his head.

Dean wasn't able to answer because there was a knock on the door. Dean opened it and the room was suddenly filled with demons in suits carrying cardboard boxes and dropping them on the floor, kitchen table, and inside the rooms. Some demons brought in larger boxes with things like a coffee maker, a microwave, and other kitchen appliances. They arranged some of the stuff and left other boxes untouched. The demons bowed at Dean before running away without a word.

“I don’t understand.” Cas shook his head.

Dean smiled. “I'm obviously asking you to move in with me, you fuck. How more fucking obvious do I need to be?”
"But why?" Cas looked around the large living room. He wondered if those boxes held a mix of Dean's and his belongings.

Dean rolled his eyes. He squared his shoulders and, with the most fake, sweet tone, he said: "Because I'm so nice that I'm giving you a room of your own in my brand new place after realizing your room are was in some shady shit and you hate sharing a shower with fifty other college kids."

"That does make sense, but why should I accept your offer?" Cas crossed his arms over his chest and put on the most serious face he could.

Dean flinched. "Uhh... because the poor demons already worked hard to get all your stuff here?" Dean tried to grin, but it came out as a grimace.

Cas had learned early in law school that people gave information freely when they tried to hide something else. "There's something you are not telling me." Cas tilted his head to the side.

"There isn't." Dean shook his head and shrugged unconvincingly. He looked to the side and avoided eye contact with Cas.

"What did you do?" Cas asked more forcefully. He was silently proud of himself for standing up to someone who was two heads taller than him and looked like he lifted ridiculously heavy weights for fun. Cas also couldn't believe he was glaring at the king of Hell. "Dean?"

"I made my demons fill in the paperwork for you to live here instead of at the dorms. They forged your signature and all." Dean gave him a sheepish smirk. "I also have this one shapeshifter working for me that-"

"You what?" Cas shouted.

"Bobby-John is a nice dude and he wanted to save this girl with cancer, but he didn't have a soul so
"Not that, Dean. You did something without my consent." It wasn’t that he was mad about what Dean did. He liked the apartment and the idea of moving out even if Dean scared the shit out of him. He was mostly angry about Dean making decisions for him.

"So? I'm a demon!" Dean said, louder than he intended. "That's just the type of shit that I tend to do because I don't give a shit about feelings and social niceties." Dean began circling the space between the couch and the kitchen area. He looked like caged animal.

"Dean?" Cas deflated. There was something odd about Dean's reaction and Cas didn't want to push his luck. "I'm not..." Cas stopped when Dean turned to look at him with black eyes.

"You what, Cas?" Dean paced some more before stopping all together to lock his eyes on Cas. He was standing with feet shoulder width apart, hands in fists by his sides, and shoulders hunched.

Cas didn't like it when the soft green of his eyes was covered by black. "I'm not mad at you." Cas looked at the window, staring at the soft clouds. "I'm not used to surprises. I hate them in fact, which is why I didn't know how to react to... to this." Cas saw Dean slowly starting to deflate out of the corner of his eye. "I've also been independent my whole life and..." Cas shook his head. "I like being my own person." Cas took a deep breath and turned to look at Dean with a troubled frown. Dean's eyes were still black, but his posture was more relaxed. "You forcing my signature and basically forcing me to move out of my room felt like I was losing control over myself. Like I was back to being the weird kid in Catholic school."

Dean's eyes turned green. He lifted his hand and scratched the back of his neck almost sheepishly. He looked back up at Cas, assessing the situation. He didn't look apologetic, but he looked like he understood the sentiment. Dean turned around and picked up a box effortlessly.

"Uhh... this one is yours." Dean handed him the box and Cas almost dropped it because it was too heavy.

"Take it back! Take it back!" Cas sighed in relief when Dean grabbed the box back.

"Dude, it's not that heavy." Dean held the box in a hand.
"You are a demon! I'm a human!" Cas glared at the box. "Are those all my books?"

"Yeah." Dean shrugged. "Where do you want them?" Dean seemed to suddenly remembered something. "Oh shit! I forgot we don't have any furniture." Dean dropped the box back in the pile. "We need furniture, Cas!" Dean's eyes widened comically as he looked around the living room and the kitchen area. He went straight to the kitchen and checked the cupboards and fridge. "Ok, the kitchen is cool for now."

"Uhh..." Cas watched as Dean moved around the apartment with quick steps.

Dean checked the bathroom, both bedrooms, the closest, mumbled something about laundry, went into the room designated for extra storage and the drying and washing machines, and returned to the living room that was mostly empty.

"We have to go to IKEA! Cas, we barely have a couch in here! We need hangers, rugs, curtains, toilet paper, chairs, a dining table, cookies, more tables, a desk for you-"

Cas stopped listening eventually. He slowly made his way to take a peek at the rooms. He didn't even walk into them, just stuck his head in like an ostrich. He opened the fridge and was content to see that it was fully stocked. Meanwhile, Dean kept listing items that they needed or that they could get. Some where actual necessities while some were useless.

"-we need a coat rack, something to hang keys, flower vases, mirrors-"

"Do you have the keys?" Cas asked.

"-an Xbox or an PS4- yes, why?"

Cas grabbed Dean by the wrist and pulled him out of the apartment and lead him to the Impala. Dean continued listing random items and asking Cas what shampoo he preferred.

"We are going to Walmart," Cas announced.
Dean shut up and drove them to Target, then to Walmart when he disliked the curtains, then back to Target for the curtains, and finally to IKEA. They found everything they needed and Dean called in his demons to pile up everything they bought in trucks and then set up everything. Cas remained silent while the demons struggled to build his desk. Dean tried to help and it was hilarious to see the king of hell and his minions stressing over a piece of wood.

Dean eventually ordered pizza for lunch. Cas took a slice to his room and closed the door behind him. The demons were kinda fighting amongst themselves over this one screwdriver. Cas' new furniture was ready and in his room. The desk was facing the wall and against the beautiful window. He had a lamp on his desk and a tiny cactus that Dean bought. He also had some new highlighters, pens, notebooks, and other stuff Dean bought at Target when Cas wasn't looking. Cas didn't know what made Dean so... well stressed over buying things. It was weird, Dean didn't look like the kind of person to stress over material things. Maybe it was the contract or something else. Cas would've loved to ask Dean about it, but there wasn't a chance.

Cas inhaled his pizza and started working on arranging his books on the shelves. Next he made his bed with the new sheets and lay on his new pillows. It was weird how relaxed he was to the idea of having a living room filled with demons. As if on cue, Cas heard a glass breaking and then Dean screaming at someone to go buy a replacement. Cas heard the front door being slammed shut and then heavy footsteps coming towards his room. Dean didn't knock, he just walked into Cas' room, spared a look at the furniture, and threw himself face first next to Cas on the bed.

“Uhh…” Cas recoiled and stared at Dean's back for too long. “Dean?”

“My bed is still just a mattress,” Dean answered, turning his head to look at Cas. “Efrain is working on my room.” Dean sat up on his elbows and looked around the room. “I like how you pushed the bed to the corner. There’s so much room for activities!”

“Activities?” Cas frowned.

“It was a reference to a movie.” Dean shook his head and laid back down.

“Oh.” Cas dropped his frown and continued to stare at Dean. He was down to a T-shirt and jeans. Dean's muscles weren't the bodybuilding type, but they still made Cas slightly afraid. The only reason Cas was calm was because he knew Dean wasn't going to kill him until the contract was over.

“Didn't your mom ever tell you not to stare at people?” Dean wiggled his eyebrows.
“My mom died during childbirth, there's no way she could've told me that.” Cas frowned.

Dean’s eyes widened as he sat up. “Cas! I- I'm sorry! I didn't know-”

“It's okay, I know you didn't mean to.” Cas shrugged.

Dean didn't try to apologize any further, but the damage was done and he looked uncomfortable. Cas didn't have the energy to appease an uncomfortable demon. It wasn't a big deal. Cas stood up and walked over to the bookshelf (also next to the window, facing the desk). He picked up a text book and set it on his desk.

“Classes don't even start until February for you.” Dean got settled on the space Cas vacated, pressing his back to the white wall. “You can't be that much of a nerd.”

“I prefer to know what I'm getting into.” Cas went to one of the boxes on the floor and found his backpack. “It's not uncommon to read something every once in awhile.”

“Excuse you? I read! Okay?” Dean crossed his arms above his chest.

“Do you?” Cas asked. He was genuinely interested in what Dean would say. Cas dropped what he was doing and took a couple steps towards the bed.

Dean flinched and lowered his head. "Yeah, I do." He started fiddling with the bed sheets. "I had to read all the books my baby brother had to write papers on for English class." Dean shrugged a sad smile on his lips. "I eventually picked up the habit and started going to garage sales looking for cheap, science fiction books." Dean sighed and looked up at Cas.

Cas was looking at him like he was the most interesting thing that he’d ever seen. Considering who Cas was, the possibility of Dean being the most interesting person in his life was really high. Dean gulped and cleared his throat. He didn't need Cas to look at him like that. He stood up clumsily before Cas could ask about his Tragic Backstory™.

"I'll leave you to your boring books." Dean pressed his lips together and nodded awkwardly as he fled the room.
Once in the living room, the demons attacked him with a barrage of questions about where to put the new furniture and hang the mirrors. Dean pointed them in random directions, he and Cas could always move the things later. The demons cleaned up the mess and disappeared from the living room.

Dean sighed in relief and took out the knife from his boot. He began carving sigils all across the wooden door. Small, shallow sigils that were invisible for the untrained eye. The sigils worked in such a way that no one could get in unless their name was written by Dean. He finished writing his name and Cas' name. He was sweating slightly from focusing so much on the sigils. He tested the sigils with his thumb, smiling at how perfect they were. Dean grabbed the knife again and made a cut across his forearm.

"Dean, no!" Cas ran to the kitchen, grabbed a small towel and ran over to Dean.

Dean was too shocked to see Cas running that he didn't react to Cas wrapping the towel around his arm.

"Cas, stop." Dean smiled. He tucked the knife inside his back pocket and placed his free hand on Cas' shoulder. Cas shook his head, but Dean pushing him away gently. "I'm working on something." Dean grabbed the towel from Cas and kneeled down were the sigils began. "Look." Dean used the towel to spread out his blood all across the sigils. He dug his fingers in his wound when the towel didn't have enough blood. When he was finished, the sigils glowed a bright red. Dean's blood went up in black smoke.

"What?" Cas looked at the door. It looked normal to him, he couldn't even see the sigils anymore.

"I'm just cooking up my special protective sigils with extra demon-King blood a la Dean." Dean threw a kiss at the door. "It'll keep everyone out except for you and me… hmm." Dean leaned down and wrote down something else.

“What did you do?” Cas frowned at the door.

“Added in someone else's name.” Dean poked at his wound with the knife, trying not to laugh at how Cas flinched. “You'll meet them eventually.” Dean stood back up and wrapped the towel around his arm. “This means you can't invite people in for parties.”

“I don't."
“I know you don't,” Dean interrupted and pointed a finger at the door. “If you wanna add a girlfriend or something you've gotta tell me. I don't want you fucking up my masterpiece.”

“I wasn't going to-”

“I know you aren't going to mess with it. Don't worry Cas.” Dean clapped Cas on the shoulder and went to take a seat on the new reclining chair they bought.

“I was going to say that I don't have a girlfriend and I don't have any plans to change that situation.” Cas sat on the couch. He eyed the TV remote, but he really didn’t want to watch anything; he just wanted the background noise to fill the apartment.

“Cool, a boyfriend then.” Dean winked at him and wiggled his eyebrows.

“Dean, I'm not interested in romantic relationships. My studies come first.” Cas grabbed the remote control and turned on the TV to a nature channel. He frowned at the TV and crossed his arms over his chest. He was beyond tired of Dean, but it wasn't like he had anything better to do or somewhere else to be. Cas considering storming out to his room, but that would be ridiculous. He can't overreact over such a small thing.

Dean shut up for a while, but didn’t hesitate to study Cas from his seat. Dean looked curious and hesitant. He didn't know Cas, and vice versa. There could be so many things going on in his head. Dean could basically see the wheels turning in Cas’s head. On one hand Dean wasn't sure which part of the conversation pushed Cas into his silent and cold demeanor, and on the other Dean was sure that it had been his fault.

Perhaps Dean could've apologized or asked Cas what was wrong. There could have been a million things to be said during the entire hour that Cas glared at the TV until his facial muscles became too tired and relaxed themselves reluctantly. Dean eventually paid attention to the penguin documentary that Cas was watching. It was cute and also really intense when the narrator talked about life spans or the documentary included killer whales and other predators eating the penguins. Dean couldn't remember the last time he just sat down and watched TV.

Cas eventually relaxed in his seat. Dean took the opportunity to do something nice for Cas. He stood up and went to the kitchen. He prepared some popcorn and sat down closer to Cas to share the popcorn. Cas nodded his thanks and stuck his hand inside the bowl. Dean pressed his palm to his chest when one of the penguin parents tried to wake up their dead baby penguin.
“You are a demon, that shouldn't affect you this much,” Cas teased Dean.

“I have some human feelings intact.” Dean rubbed his cheeks to check for tears. Cas grinned when Dean looked back at him. “Shut up.”

“I didn't say anything.” Cas turned his focus to the TV.

“No, but you thought about it!” Dean snapped, grabbing a handful of popcorn and trying to cram it all into his mouth.

Cas flinched. “Can you read my mind?” Cas asked quickly with a scared expression.

“I'm a demon, not a psychic.” Dean shook his head. Just in time for a baby penguin to flap his small wings around and run with his chubby legs towards his mom. Dean tried not to react, but Cas was already smiling at him with a knowing look. “Shut up.”

Cas hummed.

That's how Dean got into the habit of watching nature documentaries with Cas when there was nothing else to do.
Chapter 5

Dean was a demon, that much was clear. Demons didn't need to eat which meant they didn't need to pee, shit, or sleep. Dean didn't care about what he could or couldn't do, which annoyed Cas. Dean always made sure to clean up after himself, but he was constantly eating Cas’ snacks and things he saved for later. Whenever Cas wanted to read in the living room, Dean had the TV on or was listening to loud, rock music. The music didn't bother Cas much, but that wasn't the point. All these small things built up inside Cas like venom until something bigger happened.

Cas was sitting on the inflatable, glowing chair that Dean had insisted on getting from Amazon when he heard soft panting coming from the kitchen. Cas dropped the book he was reading and twisted his body around to look at the kitchen. There was no one but him in the apartment. Cas kept his eyes trained on the empty spot until he gave up and continued reading his book. He was finally catching up on the books he had bought a couple years ago and never found the time to start on them. Cas was almost done with the chapter when he heard a clicking noise against the wooden floor accompanied by the panting.

Cas dropped his book on the rug and stood up. He walked barefoot towards the kitchen and frowned at the wall that separated them from the neighbors. He had a couple ideas what those noises could be. How thin were these walls? This was supposed to be a fancy building, why the hell could he hear the neighbors going at it? Cas shook his head and opened the fridge. He had already done the effort of walking into the kitchen, why not make himself a sandwich?

He grabbed the mayonnaise, the ketchup, the mustard, and some veggies before closing the fridge. Cas started cutting veggies and spreading condiments on bread when he realized he didn't grab the ham. Cas rolled his eyes at his own stupidity and opened the fridge. He heard more clicks and the panting got louder, but Cas ignored it. He grabbed the ham and closed the fridge. He panting increased and Cas realized it sounded like a dog instead of a human. Cas would've continued preparing his sandwich if he hadn't heard a loud bark.

He clutched the ham to his chest and took a step back. His back collided with the fridge and Cas heard the barking again. It was impossible, but it sounded like there was a dog in the kitchen with him. Something heavy punched him in the stomach. Cas flinched when something wet pressed itself against his hands. Cas screamed and tried to run. He didn't make it to the door, because something heavy tackled him to the floor. Cas screamed and tried to reach out for something to use as a weapon, his other hand clutching the ham on a death grip. The invisible thing holding him down growled and barked at him, digging it's claws on his back.

Cas obviously didn't find anything, but it wasn't necessary because Dean flung the door open hard enough to leave a mark on the wall. Dean shouted something in Latin and slammed the door shut. Cas saw Dean tackling whatever had him pinned to the floor. Dean fought the invisible beast until he had it in what appeared to be a choke hold. Cas crawled backwards until he had his back to the door.
Dean shouted more Latin until the growls died.

“Stay the fuck down already!” Dean tightened his chokehold and stood up on his heels. He was straddling the beast and glaring at it. “Cas,” he called softly. “Are you okay?”

Cas couldn't answer quickly enough for Dean to drop the subject.

“I'm so sorry, Cas.” Dean stood up and kicked the beast with his heel. “You stay there or I'll look you up in the dungeons.” Dean received an answering whine. He kneeled down next to Cas and slowly coaxed Cas into a different position to check out his injuries. “I'll need you to take off your shirt.” Dean stood up. “I'll go get the first aid kit.” Dean stopped when Cas curled his fingers around his leg. “Hey, listen buddy.” Dean kneeled back down and placed a hand on his cheek. “I'll be quick, you have nothing to fear when I'm here.” Dean patted him on the shoulder and jogged to the bathroom.

Cas brought his knees to his chest and remained alert to any sound from the beast. It was panting harder than before and whining softly. Cas didn't relax even when Dean came into the room and kicked the beast once more on the side.

“Shirt. Off.” Dean kneeled while Cas took off his shirt. “I promise I'll get you a new shit,” Dean murmured while he worked on cleaning the wounds and patching him up. “You are lucky she wasn't being aggressive.”

“What?” Cas shouted. “What the hell, Dean?”

Dean grimaced. “I'm sorry. I'm sorry. This wasn't supposed to happen.” Dean finished and moved around to look at Cas. “I brought Zep into the apartment last night because I wanted you to meet her.”

“Zep is an invisible dog?!” Cas shouted. He flinched when Zep growled at the sound of her name.

“I told you that I owned a hellhound.” Dean pulled out a pair of glasses from his pocket and placed them on Cas without asking for permission. Cas gasped. “I've been training her as a guard dog instead of an attack dog.”
Zep wasn't a beast at all, she was adorable in her own hulking way. She had a light grey coat and big blue eyes, her black nose was half hidden by her paws as she tried to hide her face from Dean. Zep’s puppy eyes widened when Dean glared at her. She crawled forward a bit without lifting her body from the floor. It would've been laughable if Zep didn't look like she weighed more than a hundred pounds and her claws seemed capable of cutting through muscle and bone.

“She’s basically a Blue Staffordshire Terrier on steroids.” Dean sighed and saw that Zep was eyeing the ham sitting on the floor. “Uhh…” Dean reached out for the ham and sighed when Zep’s tail wagged and she whined. “This is what you want?” Zep barked. “Fucking mutt.” Dean dropped the ham on Cas’ lap. Zep immediately stood up and walked towards Cas. Dean shouted in Latin and the dog backed off. “Cas, grab a piece of ham.”

“Excuse me?”

“I want her to be your guardian and I need her to know that you are her new master.” Dean shrugged. “I bet you don’t have any plans on learning how to use a whip, so we are using food to assert dominance.”

“This is crazy.” Cas fixed the glasses on his face and took a deep breath. He grabbed a piece of ham and tried not to flinch when Zep became excited.

“Tell her to sit or something,” Dean whispered. “Then give her the ham.”

“Uhh… sit?” Zep sat down and Cas hummed. “Roll....” Zep rolled on her back and sat back up. “Bark?” Zep barked happily and wagged her tail at Cas. “Is it really this easy?” he asked Dean.

“Nope, give her the damn ham already.”

Cas threw the ham at her and she caught it mid air. Dean pulled Cas to a standing position and guided Cas through a few more complex commands. Zep complied to all the commands happily until there was no ham left.

“Nice job, Zep!” Dean grinned and patted the hellhound on the head. Dean grabbed the dog by the black leather collar. “Cas.” Dean grabbed his hand and placed it on the collar next to him. “Don’t let go!” Dean said before chanting something in Latin. The dog sat perfectly still while the lights flickered on and off. Cas grabbed Dean's arm with his free hand and stared at the dog. Zep was
looking at Cas like nothing was going on around her. Dean finished and the lights went back to normal.

“Wha-”

“Congratulations, it's a girl.” Dean patted Cas on the shoulder. “She doesn't need to pee, sleep, or eat. She doesn't like to be touched and she's been trained to be sneaky. You will eventually forget she's there unless you put on those glasses.” Dean stood up and ordered the dog to go sit down below the kitchen table.

Cas took off the glasses. “What are this made of?”

“Uhh… what are normal glasses made of?” Dean shrugged. “They just have some holy oil, nothing fancy.”

“How oil?” Cas asked.

“Yup, found only in Jerusalem.” Dean sat down on the inflatable glowing chair. “It's the duck tape of the supernatural world.”

“I'm… not sure how to answer to that.” Cas gave one last look at the dog. It was actually kinda cute for a monster.

“Don't look at her like that,” Dean chided. “Oh by the way, she doesn't need to eat or shit.”

“Like you don't need to eat or shit?” Cas asked raising a dubious eyebrow.

“What can I say, man? I like food.” Dean shrugged. “But don't go feeding her too much or she'll get used to it and remember she's made for hunting down people and bears.”

“Bears?” Cas' eyes widened almost comically.

“How come you are surprised by the bears and not about the humans?” Dean placed a hand on his
“Bears are bigger.” Cas shrugged. He eyes Zep once more and decided to try something. “Go sit by the couch.”

Zep snorted and wagged her tail. She did as she was told and went to sit down by the couch like a guard dog.

“Hmm…” Dean nodded. “I ordered her to follow you around 24/7. That little trick will do you good.”

“What? Follow me? Why?”

“For your protection.” Dean patted him on the shoulder and walked to his room. “I know you got mugged a couple days before I met you,” Dean shouted from his room. He came back with a black plastic bag. “Here.” Dean threw the bag at him.

“What…?” Cas caught the bag and opened it. He found two big boxes wrapped in newspapers. He picked up the smaller one and ripped off the paper with his free hand. “Dean…” It was a brand new black IPhone.

“Open the other one.” Dean grinned, like a child.

“But…” Cas did as Dean asked. Placing the bag, the iPhone, and the discarded newspaper in the kitchen table. Something told Cas that Dean had wrapped the boxes himself. He picked up the bigger box and removed the paper. “Dean…” He finished taking off the paper and stared at the new Boss headphones.

“The phone had unlimited Internet and all that stuff. It's already set up with an account with money in it for your music.” Dean smiled down at his feet and shrugged. “It's not much.”

Cas somehow knew that Dean didn't know much about being a friend. This was the only way Dean had found to do something for Cas. The apartment, the furniture, the one time they went to IHOP, the dog, and now the new phone and headphones were the only ways Dean thought people showed appreciation for others. Despite this, Cas heard a small voice telling him to deny the gifts because they were charity. He looked up at how nervous Dean looked. No, this wasn't charity for Dean who
could have it all. Cas looked down at the newspaper and remembered how his Father would wrap his Christmas gifts in blue paper and Gabriel's gift in bronze to match their eyes. That was before he left without saying goodbye and his mother Naomi had to take care of the Novak money and children by herself until she kicked him and Gabriel out onto the streets after a particular fight.

“Cas?”

Cas snapped himself out of the memory. He had been clutching the paper in his hands hard enough to make his knuckles pale from lack of blood flow. Cas dropped the paper and turned around to hug Dean. The King of Hell flinched and lifted his arms like he was being attacked. Cas chuckled at his reaction and buried his nose in Dean’s black T-shirt.

“Thank you, Dean.”

Dean slowly dropped his arms and wrapped them around Cas. He placed his chin on the smaller man’s head and smiled.

“You are welcome, Cas.”
“Bye, Cas! Don't wait up!” Dean slammed the door behind him and left.

Cas blinked at the closed door and shrugged. Yesterday had been an oddly emotional day. Cas wasn't sure what exactly happened, but it was definitely weird. Zep whined when Dean left and Cas patted her on the head. She calmed at the touch and laid her head back on the rug. Cas disregarded Dean's antics and returned to reading.

Dean left for two days and came back like nothing happened.

“Honey! I'm home!” he yelled and sat down on the kitchen table besides Cas. “Man, it's hell down there! Haha, get it?”

Cas rolled his eyes. “Yes, I get it.” he returned his attention to his meal.

“There was an issue with a new soul acquired,” Dean said without Cas prompting an explanation. “Took care of it quickly and then had to stay to review the hundred progress reports on everyone in hell.”

“Every single one?” Cas said, skeptical. “In two days?”

“Two days?” Dean smirked. “Hell works different, Cas. A month is like ten years in Hell.” Dean grinned when Cas’ skin went pale. “You do the math.” Dean stood up after that. “I'm gonna take a nap.” Dean winked at him and said: “Feel free to join me.”

Cas frowned and Dean laughed at his reaction.

Days passed with Cas and Dean cohabitating in peace. Dean usually made dinner and didn't bother Cas when he read. He'd play with Zep or nap on the couch when Cas took the reclining chair by the window. On the third day of just reading, napping, and eating, Dean took off for an entire week without saying anything.

Cas frowned when he felt like it was too much and did the math. Dean said a month was equal to 10
years in hell. A month had 30 days, and a year had roughly 365.25 days in it because math and shit. So it was roughly about 120 Hell-days per day. If Dean spent 7 Earth-days in Hell, that meant that Dean spent 840 Hell-days down there by the time he returned to the apartment.

Cas looked down at the calculator app on his phone and whistled. Zep looked up at Cas at the sound of the whistle. She stood up from her almost permanent spot on the rug and widened her stance like she was preparing herself to take off running. Cas dropped his book on the coffee table and tilted his head.

Zep was looking at him with a blank stare. It was cold and obviously something that was trained into her. Cas leaned forward in his seat and raised an eyebrow at her. She was terrifying as she was, but Cas wasn't scared of her anymore. Dean had taught him that Zep understood English as well as some other languages. It was impressive for a dog. Zep fixed her stance, ready to just attack someone on command.

“Uhh… relax?” Cas mumbled. Zep snorted and shook her big head, like she was trying to shook off whatever she was going through in her head. Cas hummed to himself and made a mental note to ask Dean about the whistling. Zep didn't seem bothered at all.

He made himself some lunch and gave Zep a treat. Cas noticed how Zep didn't do the effort of following him around the room unless he was somewhere out of her sight like in the kitchen. Cas laid back on the couch and continued reading his book when Zep stood up and barked at the door.

Someone was knocking on the door, hard. Cas let out a (very manly) yelp at the sound of Zep standing up and barking. He stood up from the couch and fixed the holy oil glasses. Zep wiggled herself in between Cas’ legs and continued barking from her defensive position. It made Cas feel protected and highly impressed by the dog’s action. He tried to step towards the door and Zep moved with him. Cas went to open the door with Zep protecting him.

A woman dressed in black leather was standing on the hallway with an eyebrow raised at Zep. “So, this is where Zep disappeared to?” she said and rolled her eyes. “Seems fitting; making a pet guard your pet. I will never understand why Dean likes to keep cute pets such as you.”

“Who are you?” Cas asked instead of reacting to her words. He made a mental note to ask Dean about it later.

“Name's April. Dean wanted me to tell you that he's not gonna be here for a while because things aren't good in hell.” April shrugged. “It's been hell down there, you know? What with the sudden change in management and all that.” She smiled sweetly, but Cas didn't like it.
“Change in management?” Cas asked without realizing.

“Dean didn’t tell you? He hasn’t been a demon for more than a couple of Earth years, but I can’t tell you more than that or he’ll turn me into hellhound food for opening my mouth.” April laughed at that, but Cas didn't understand the joke. “Anyways I gotta go because this warding is making my skin itch like hell.” April glared at the door and then disappeared in the blink of an eye.

Zep huffed and finally stopped barking and growling. She wiggled her way out from between Cas’ legs and trotted back to her earlier spot next to the couch. Cas closed the door gently and went back to the couch.

He has some questions for Dean when he got back.
Cas couldn’t sleep. He was sharing an apartment with a demon and the lack of said demon’s presence was the thing keeping him awake. Zep was sleeping next to his bed on a tiny bed Cas had bought for her. Zep had looked like an oversized puppy when she saw the bright pink dog bed on the living room and immediately dragged it next to Cas’ bed. Cas didn't complain at all, he found that he liked to be near the hellhound.

Zep slept peacefully, but Cas stayed awake thinking about how to approach Dean and ask him about his human past. April had left him with many questions. As a nerd, Cas was curious about how Hell really worked and what Dean did. As a human, Cas wanted to know more about Dean. As a future lawyer, he wanted to know more about the conflicts in hell.

All these things made him pull up a mental list on things he wanted to know.

Dean returned a couple days before Christmas while Cas was playing with Zep’s ear on the living room. His entire body was covered in blood and he was carrying an actual bone in his hand. Dean held the jaw bone like a dagger and Cas immediately added this to his list of “things to ask Dean”.

“You should see the other guys.” Dean grinned. “None of this blood is mine.”

“You sure? You don't look okay.” He didn't, Dean was favoring his side and grimacing at every step.

“I heal quickly, don’t worry about me.” Dean placed the bone on the coffee table and Cas stared at it. “That's the first blade, don't touch it.” Dean did a double take and lifted the bloody blade from the coffee table. “I'll clean that later, don't worry.”
“Is this going to be like the new normal?” Cas said in a shaken voice.

“Nah, demon holocaust is over until someone else feels like they would be better than me on the throne.” Dean winked at Cas and grinned. “Did April drop by? She told me she did, but I don’t really trust her not to lie to get out of responsibilities like that.”

“Uhh, yeah she did. She mentioned something about the things going on in Hell.” Cas shrugged. “Not much, just the basics.”

Dean’s face fell. “The basics, huh? What did she say?”

Cas panicked. “She said you haven’t been a demon for too long and that some older demons weren’t happy with you.”

“Understatement.” He chuckled. “I could tell you the entire story, but I don’t owe you shit and I’m dripping.” Dean huffed and walked into his bathroom before Cas could apologize.

Cas heard Zep whining after Dean, but didn’t pay attention to her. Dean was a vicious demon and Cas needed to remind himself about the fact. He needed to be more careful or he’d get himself prematurely killed by the king of Hell. Cas felt like he could have a panic attack right in the middle of the living room. His eyes fell to the blood pooling on the coffee table and decided to busy himself with something more productive.

When Cas finished cleaning the blood, he saw that Dean was still in the shower. Zep was staring at him like a hawk. Cas stared back at her.

“You know what? There’s no reason for me to stay here,” Cas told Zep who wagged her tail at him.

He ran into his room and changed into his jogging gear. He removed the holy oil glasses and grabbed his new iPhone and his old earphones. Zep brushed a paw against his leg to let him know she was in the room. Cas blindly reached out to pat her in the head, accidentally putting his hand on her mouth. Cas grimaced and wiped his hand on a dirty shirt.
Cas grabbed his keys and ran away from the apartment.

Cas usually took Zep out for a run in the morning to keep himself sane. He didn't need a job because he was in a full scholarship and Gabriel sent him some money once a month that Cas saved up for books and clothes. Now that he had Dean, Cas had a stable place and food on the table without moving a finger. He did kinda feel like a kept wife, but he was literally selling his soul for the comfort which made it oddly okay for Cas.

Zep loved to run with him. Humans didn't see or hear her, but other dogs were able to sense her massive body. Dogs usually peed themselves at the sight of Zep or tried to run the other way and right into their owner's legs. If Cas was paid for every time Zep caused an accident in the streets he would have enough money to pay for his textbooks without Gabriel.

Cas was the only one stupid enough to go out for a run while the sun was strong enough to cook eggs on the sidewalk. He had pulled off a decent amount of sweat and his legs were feeling amazing when Zep began howling loudly. Cas stopped and wished he had kept his holy oil glasses. People on the streets looked around to see where the monstrous howl was coming from and Cas tried to act like he was just as confused.

The Impala's loud engine shut Zep up. Dean stopped the car and opened the side door for Zep to climb in and he glared at Cas.

"Why the fuck did you run away from me like that?" he snapped.

Cas didn't want to admit to Dean that he was running away from talking to him, but his actions didn't really look too logical to pull off an excuse. He did try to deny it despite Dean's glare. "I didn't-"

"Of course you did!" Dean shouted. "I'm sorry for snapping at you because I sometimes forget you are a sensitive snowflake. Now get in the car."

Cas didn't hesitate this time. He sat down and closed the door. Zep welcomed him into the car by bopping her nose to his ear. She had somehow climbed to the back without making a sound. He saw Dean clenching his jaw and white knuckling the driving wheel.
Dean was able to drive all the way back to the apartment without screaming at Cas. He looked highly stressed despite his wet hair and his clean shaven jaw. He was dressed in faded jeans and a white t-shirt. To Cas, he looked almost human without the layers of leather and black.

Dean parked the car and sighed loud enough to make Zep whine.

“Zep, go back to the apartment.”

Zep barked and then she was gone.

Dean pressed his palm to his forearm and hissed. He closed his eyes and looked up at the Impala’s roof. The neck muscles looked tense with discomfort and Cas forgot all about the fear that made him run away for a while.

“Dean? Are you okay?” Cas placed a hand on his shoulder and Dean hissed. Cas tried to remove his hand, but Dean prevented that from happening by grabbing him.

“I’m…” Dean's grip tightened and then he let go of his hand. “I'm honestly sorry for snapping at you because I was still in the King of Hell mood and it's not easy for me to snap out of it while I'm still covered in my enemy's guts. This.” Dean showed Cas his forearm. “This is the Mark of Cain.”

“Cain as in Cain and Able?” Cas asked.

“That one.” Dean nodded. “Cain became one of Lucifer's personal knights along with some other dudes that he killed eventually. Think of Cain like a white shark in the womb.” Dean smiled at his own comparison. Cas frowned. “Don't judge me, Cas. Shark week is awesome week.” Dean smiled slightly and proceeded to touch the Mark on his arm. The Mark glowed bright under his fingertips and Cas gasped. “Fifteen earth years ago when I was twenty-two, Cain made a deal with me. He gave my brother everything I couldn't give him in exchange for me taking over his curse.” Dean smiled sadly at the memory. “He gave my baby brother a way into college and brought back my parents. I'm not sure how he pulled that off, but he did. My brother thinks I died in a car accident that wrecked the Impala.” Dean took a deep breath and stroked the Impala’s roof. “I technically did die in a car accident, but the Mark brought me back with black eyes and a hunger for murder and power. Cain dragged me down to hell to train under Azazel in the torture chambers for a couple of decades
until I got tired of him and tortured him until I got bored and killed him off. It all went downhill from there and suddenly Cain was holding a crown for me. I killed Cain too after he thought I was too dangerous.” Dean shrugged. “I didn’t feel any regrets whatsoever. Being a demon is being rid of several human emotions.”

“Why did you accept my deal?” Cas asked, feeling brave enough to do so.

“I don’t know,” Dean answered honestly. “It's just that focusing on you makes me feel less like the King of Hell and more like just Dean in a bad mood.” Dean looked up at Cas for the first time in a while.

Cas saw how insecure Dean felt and how badly he wanted Cas to just accept him for what he was. Dean's green eyes were so easy for Cas to read. It struck Cas as something unique. Dean lowered his gaze and Cas reacted before his brain could catch up. He gripped Dean's shoulder tightly and allowed Dean to just breath and be himself for a while.

Dean initially tensed up at the touch, but he slowly started to accept him. The Mark slowly stopped screaming bloody murder and Dean's muscles relaxed. It was something about having someone to take care of on Earth that gave Dean back a sense of humanity. Cas wasn't like his brother at all. With Sam, he had felt a strong codependency that eventually caused Dean's death. With Cas, he felt... he didn't know how he felt, but it wasn't like Sam.

Castiel wasn't like Sam because Dean would've never killed Sam and dragged his soul to Hell. Dean wouldn't even consider doing that to Sam. Castiel, on the other hand, would be an easy kill.
“Hey, bro! I'm sorry for not spending Christmas together. I did get you a gift, tho! Give me a call as soon as you listen to this. Oh and, by the way, I'm thinking about opening a candy store. Not the kinky kind. I want to sell actual candy. I know, I know, what will happen to the porn industry without me? Well, turns out I'm getting bored of watching people get fucked. I've got my eyes on this sweet little shop in downtown L.A. to set up shop. Rumor has it that the owner hates Californians and is moving to Texas or something. The dude's a huge ass by the way. Anyway, how are you doing? How many courses are you taking this semester? I... what? FUCK YEAH! Uhh I gotta go Cassie. Kali just came home and she has a huge Victoria's secrets bag! Yeah, bye dude! Give me a call! Kisses!”

Cas smiled when the voicemail ended. Gabriel had called while he was asleep. Cas and Dean had stayed in the Impala for a while. They didn't say anything to each other, they'd basically just existed next to each other for a while. Dean had eventually mumbled a “no chick flick moments” and gotten out of the car. Cas had followed him up to their apartment where Dean had ordered Chinese food and played a random movie on his Netflix account.

Cas could've just gone to bed and passed out like he wanted to. Instead, he cuddled on the couch and watched Dean's movie and ate too much Chinese food. Cas didn't want to leave Dean alone for the night. There was something about the demon who looked twenty-two, but was probably older than his professors if you took into account his years spent in hell. Yet, despite the emotional car ride, Dean looked completely normal. He was enjoying Die Hard with a beer in hand and an arm draped over the back of the couch.

Cas fell asleep on the couch and woke up to an empty apartment and a sticky note on his forehead.

“I'm in hell. Literally. -The King of Hell :^)"

Cas had chuckled at the wording. With a smile, he went to his room to check his phone. He changed into some jogging pants, grabbed his wallet and his phone, washed his face, applied some deodorant, and took Zep out for her morning run. There were no dog owners to scare this morning; Zep disliked the fact. Cas stopped by a coffee shop, bought a bagel and a coffee, and went back to the apartment to eat, shower, and spend his day on social media and reading his books. Gabriel called before lunch time and Cas told him about moving in with “a friend from college” and Gabriel asked about his address and about his classmates. Cas didn't have much to say about them so Gabriel asked him about Dean instead.
"Who's your roommate?" Gabriel asked.

"His name's Dean and he's a demon," Cas replied with a small smile.

"Really? That bad? Is the place good at least?" Gabriel asked with a slightly angry tone.

"This apartment is beautiful, Gabriel. Dean's just messy and-

"And it hits your OCD like crazy? Well I'll be sure to drop by when I have the time. Right now I'm about to shoot a scene with some twins and huge dildos which means a shit load of prepping and cleaning. Fucking dragon dildos, I'm telling ya. You don't wanna know, these guys are so brave Cas."

"EWW!" Cas laughed and gagged at the same time. It came out as an odd sound that Gabriel found hilarious for some reason.

"I gotta go. Twins are here. Punch your roommate for me, will ya?"

"I uhh..."

"Bye!" Gabriel hung up.

Cad shook his head and picked up a book. He started reading it and petting Zep’s head lazily. He lost track of time until Dean returned around dinner time with a deep frown on his face. Cas didn't bother turning around. He was so engrossed in his book that he didn't pay attention to Dean's anger as he dropped his leather jacket on the coffee table and took off his dirty boots. Dean huffed all the way to where Cas was sitting on the couch with a small frown of concentration. Dean, being the attention seeker that he was, laid down on the couch and placed his legs on Cas’ lap.

Cas complained, but made no attempts to shove Dean away. He got his arms comfortable on Dean's legs and glared at Dean who was absolutely fuming.
“Dean?”

“You'd think that hell would be full of smart guys who know what marketing and law means. These fucking assholes wouldn't be able to find progress even if it fucked them in the ass!”

“Uhh… yeah sure.” Cas shrugged and went back to his book while Dean continued to complain.

“Mark freaking disobeyed a law that's pretty straightforward. He was fucking caught on tape and denied it! He even tried to get one of the lawyers down in the pit to help him out, but guess what? He wasn't even a real lawyer!”

Dean kept complaining and waving his hands around. Cas nodded when he felt it was necessary and pressed a palm to Dean's legs to reassure him when it was needed. Otherwise, Cas wasn't listening and instead he kept his mind focused on the book he was reading.

“Crowley on the other hand is a breath of fresh air down there. Don't tell him that or he’ll tease me about it for decades. I thought I couldn't stand humans, but demons take the fucking cake! The only highlight was seeing April's head on a stake and dragging down a bunch of conservative assholes down to the pit.”

Cas stopped reading. “Excuse me?”

“Yeah!” Dean raised himself on his elbows to look at Cas properly. “Apparently they sold their souls to pass a law that's gonna be taken down in a couple months. Fucking conservatives man, they sure do belong in hell for the amount of bullshit they speak. Tell you what-”

Cas raised a hand to stop Dean from talking. “No. I don't want to hear about them, I meant April.”

“Well she did tell you that I was human not long ago.” Dean shrugged. “I hate being talked about, specially if it's about my human past.”
“You don't consider yourself to be human anymore.” It wasn't a question, it was more of an statement that Cas needed to clarify.

“Haven't been human for a long time, Cas.” Dean blinked and showed Cas his black eyes. “Don't forget that I'm not human.”

Cas hummed and looked down at his book. Suddenly The Hobbit wasn't so interesting anymore and Dean's legs felt too heavy on his lap. Cas knew that, Dean's race wasn't news to him. Then why did hearing Dean say it hurt so much to listen. Cas sighed and pushed Dean's legs off.

Dean huffed in annoyance. “Where are you going?”

“Bathroom.” Cas didn't look at Dean as he dropped his book on the coffee table next to Dean's jacket. He considered for a moment to go hang the jacket, but Dean was a demon so maybe he didn't care.

Cas walked into the room and wasted his time checking his emails and washing his hands carefully. When he came out of the bathroom. Dean was gone and so were his jacket and boots. Cas rolled his eyes and went back to his book. Leave it to Dean to flee from having to talk about something. They may not know each other well, but Dean was predictable to Cas. Dean was stubborn, rough, complained too much, ate too much, didn't clean up after himself, didn't -

The sound of keys opening the door stopped Cas from his list of shitty behaviors. Dean was juggling a brown bag and a cardboard cup holder in one hand and large box in the other hand. Cas stared at Dean instead of walking over to help him. Dean grunted and closed the door with an elbow. Cas had no idea how he had managed to unlock the door by himself. Dean let out a deep breath and placed the things in the kitchen table. He went back to the living room and sighed.

“I'm not sure what pissed you off. I'm guessing it's something about April, but I don't want to overthink this too much.” Dean swallowed down his nerves and smiled at Cas. “I brought you your favorite cheeseburgers, fries, soda, an Oreo milkshake, and some donuts to buy your forgiveness.”

Dean looked downright nervous and uncomfortable. There was something that pulled at Cas’ heart in the way Dean was grimacing and toying with the silver ring on his right hand. Cas suddenly felt exhausted. Fighting wasn't going to make anything better and the smell of fries called him.
“Well, at least you are honest about it.” Cas looked up into Dean’s bright green eyes and sighed. “I'm not sure what angered me either,” he lied. “I'll accept the bribery.”

Dean grinned like a kid and straightened up his stance. Green eyes shining with mirth as he led Cas to the kitchen. Cas followed him trying not to laugh at him. Dean truly looked like a puppy with the way he smiled at Cas and kinda trotted to the kitchen. It made Cas wonder how much of his reaction was for show. To keep the deal running and make Cas think Dean was actually happy that Cas had forgiven him.

Dean had bought enough food to feed a family of four apparently, so they had some issues with cleaning up afterwards. After getting everything in the fridge and wiping off the table. Cas went back to his spot on the couch; he was half expecting Dean to join him on the couch in their earlier position.

Dean walked into the living room with hesitant steps and took the reclining chair. He grabbed the TV remote and began channel surfing like his life depended on it. Cas wasn't even trying to look like he wasn't looking at Dean. He didn't know what was wrong, but he figured it was something that Dean needed to figure out by himself. Cas shook his head and went back to reading The Hobbit.

“My brother used to like those Tolkien books,” Dean mumbled when he found something on the history channel about ancient torture. “Now this is quality TV! Not that penguin stuff you like.”

“Dean, you cried when the baby penguin died.” Cas faked a grin for Dean's sake. It had been obvious that Dean was trying to change the subject and Cas would allow it.

“Fuck off! I didn't cry!”

“Your-” Cas stopped talking when his phone rang. “Excuse me.” Cas placed his book on the coffee table and answered his phone. “Gabe?” Cas ignored Dean's frown and walked into the kitchen. “Hi, how are you?”

“Dude, I broke up with Kali again! Can you believe that shit! Now I have no plans for new years. Wanna come over? I'll pay for your ticket and you can stay for a week or so. You don't have classes
anyway, so there's nothing you can say to stop me from buying your ticket.”

Cas panicked. “Gabe, I-”

“Too late, Cassie! Your plane sails on Saturday!”

“Planes don't sail.” Cas shook his head. “Saturday's Christmas eve. The airport is going to be full.”

“So? Oh right, your social skills. Fine, I'll change it for tomorrow. Done.”

“What if I just don't wanna go?”

“Well I already bought the ticket so man up, baby bro! I'll email you the details. See yaaaaa!”

Gabe hung up and Cas sighed. He turned around just to see Dean leaning against the counter with his arms crossed. Dean looked like a male model, which was kind of annoying because Cas still looked like a 16 year old lesbian. No offense to lesbians, but Cas was tired of being called sweetie and baby boy. Cas shook his head and pocketed his phone. He looked up at Dean who had a frown on his face that was a mixture of concern and anger.

“You really wanna go?” Dean asked

“Yeah, haven't seen my brother in a while and it's not like I'm doing anything else here in Illinois.” Cas shrugged. “I could use some family time. Even if it means hanging out with Gabe and his porn star friends.”

“I'd pay to see that!” Dean laughed, some of the tension disappearing. “But I wanted to talk about Christmas with you anyway.” Dean’s smile fell. “It's peak hunting season and sales go up on the holidays. I need to be there to make sure the hellhounds don't attack innocent people and that the deals are well written.” Dean scratched the back of his neck. “I'm sorry I can't stay, but I won't forget your present.” Dean winked and disappeared in a poof of black smoke.
Zep howled at his sudden disappearance and ran to the kitchen to return to her guard dog position. Cas patted her head and sighed.
His plane was delayed. Zep followed him to the airport. The police dogs made a lot of fuss and Cas was glared at by people who tripped over Zep. He had to buy a lame airport sandwich and ended up giving it to Zep. Cas wasn’t sure he packed everything he needed. When he mumbled something about deodorant Zep disappeared and came back with a brand new women’s deodorant that she must have stolen from a store. Cas was silently glad it wasn't one of those flowery scented deodorants. The deodorant claimed to be able to lighten up his armpits. He was suddenly worried that his armpits weren't the right skin color.

Cas was nervous and that only got worse when he heard his name called through the speakers. He ran with his boarding pass to the lady at some weird front desk that lead to his gate and showed her his passport. She smiled at him reassuringly and promptly announced that his pass was being upgraded to first class and that he would be allowed to board the plane first.

Cas didn't complain at all when he was seated on the window seat next to a friendly teenager who apparently ran a travel blog. She called him adorable and took a picture with him for her blog. She didn't bother him anymore after that. He had extra leg space and he was comfortable enough to almost fall asleep.

He lost track of Zep somewhere between boarding the plane and sitting down. He wasn't even sure Zep boarded the plane. Cas wasn't worried. Zep could be scaring the police dogs in the airport. Cas wasn't worried. Zep could be sitting in the cockpit and waiting for the pilots. Cas wasn't worried.

“Beverages?” asked the stewardess.

Cas asked for anything with alcohol and a coke. The teenager besides him eyed him carefully.

Arriving on LAX was surprisingly smooth and fast. Cas liked first class and wondered if Dean had something to do about that. He must've done something because Cas wasn't a regular traveler and he was generally unlucky. Exhibit A: making a deal with Dean. Exhibit B: his life in general.

Gabriel was waiting for him at the airport. They hugged and Zep booped her nose against Cas’ leg during the hug. They tucked away his luggage in the back of Gabriel’s car and headed straight home to let Cas shower and take a nap before going out for dinner and drinks at a local bar and grill. Gabriel spent the entire dinner complaining about Kali and talking about his new business, mainly
how he had already contacted the owner of the small shop in downtown L.A.

Back in Gabriel's guest room, Cas went straight to bed and didn't wake up until it was lunch time. Gabriel wanted to go to the grocery store to see if they could still buy something nice for Christmas dinner. Cas showered and allowed Gabriel to lead him to a burger joint somewhere and then to the grocery store to get a surprisingly small turkey and ingredients to cook it properly.

Cas enjoyed how easy life looked when he was with Gabriel. One step after the other and take a jump for fun. Gabriel was warm, vibrant, and accepted that Cas wasn't anything like that. Dean, on the other hand, wasn't anything like Gabe and made Cas far too curious and anxious about what was going to happen next. Dean was just a mystery wrapped around thick layers of violence and leather wrapped around fake friendliness and warm green eyes. Cas liked Dean (or at least he thought he did), but there was too much that made him uneasy. For starters Dean was a demon and a powerful one at that. He had transcended fear and gone right into reluctant acceptance at the news; so he was barely reacting to the information now that he was far from the demon.

Cas didn't want to panic in the middle of a grocery store. He had always known he was going to die eventually, but now that he had an expiration date dying became realer. Everything that he didn't want to talk about came barreling into his mind as Gabriel was paying for his groceries and Cas was following him like a lost duck. He was going to die sooner than expected and now life made less sense than ever. What was the point of even finishing pre-Law or doing anything else? Oh right, there were other people to take into consideration. He needed to pay Gabriel back for basically raising him since their mom died and left them alone since their father had disappeared when Cas was barely in first grade. He needed to pay Gabriel back; not because Gabriel was asking for the money, but because Gabriel had given up on college and ran straight to the porn industry to earn enough street smarts to be a director.

“Castiel, you look constipated. What's got your panties up in a twist?” Gabriel answered.

“I'm not wearing any panties,” Cas answered before he could actually rewire his brain to answer like a normal person.

“You know what I mean.” Gabriel frowned and gave Cas some bags to carry to the car.

“I'm just… overthinking.” Cas sighed. “I'm okay. Just…” Cas tried to think about an excuse and said, “college wasn't what I expected, but I'm doing great. I'm just thinking about the amount of people who drop out of pre-Law and those who drop out on their first year of Law School. I'm just anxious.”
“You are a bad liar, Cassie.” Gabriel shook his head. “I'm gonna give you points for trying and ignore it for a while. If I catch you brooding again, I'll go all CSI on your ass.”

Cas chuckled. “I'm fine, Gabe. Really, don't worry about me. It's just jetlag.” Cas smiled and dragged his bags to Gabriel's car.

Gabriel raised an eyebrow. He wasn't going to pressure Cas anymore because he'd basically promised not to. He'd seen enough fake orgasms to know that Cas was faking his tone. The comparison made Gabriel nauseous. Instead of puking on the supermarket floor, he slowly followed Cas to the car.

The car ride wasn't uncomfortable because Gabriel was singing loudly to pop songs on the radio. Cas was just smiling and trying to frown at him. He hated how Gabriel sang, but he couldn't deny it was hilarious to watch. It was amazing how back in high school he'd never looked forward to spending time with Gabriel. It was something that he didn't actively look for; something he took for granted. Now with college and his classes, Cas found a new appreciation for family time even if it meant hanging out with Gabriel. They went back to Gabriel's home, packed their groceries, ordered a pizza, watched some TV, and relaxed until Gabriel wanted to start preparations for Christmas.

Christmas was a quiet dinner, lots of alcohol, and warm cocoa around 2am for the brothers. Gabriel gave Cas a red leather jacket for Christmas. Cas had run to the mall and got Gabriel a phone case. Gabriel was the type of person who hated to buy cases for no reason.

The next week was spent going through the leftovers and avoiding serious subjects because they both didn't want to talk about life in general. Gabriel had to leave in the evenings, something about the sun being perfect for porn. Cas wasn't paying attention.

Zep had been following him around and making herself invisible. Cas had hidden his glasses because he didn't want Gabriel to ask about them. That meant he didn't get to see Zep while he was with Gabriel. Zep seemed to understand Cas' situation and always kept some physical contact to let him know where she was. Cas slowly realized he felt calmer when she was around him.

New Year's Eve was spent at several different parties until Gabriel wanted to go to a party hosted by whoever the “cocky boys” were. Cas had decided to use his glasses for the parties. Gabriel had asked him about it and Cas had told him that the University clinic prescribed it to him because he was getting headaches while he was studying. Gabriel had called him Clark Kent and made no further comment.

The hellhound enjoyed herself at the party by stealing food from porn stars. Cas never thought he'd
say such a thing, but here Zep was standing on a table and eating cake from a porn star who was too busy chatting with a larger man. Cas chuckled and accidentally walked into someone.

“I’m sorry, sir.” Cas stepped back from the taller man and looked around the room in search of Gabriel in case he started a fight.

“Well you can bump into me anytime, angel.” The blonde man grinned and winked at him. “Name's Balthazar.” He offered his hand for Cas to shake.

“I'm uhh Castiel.” Castiel shook his hand carefully, trying to remain polite and unafraid. In reality he was sweating and blushing a lot out of embarrassment.

“Pretty name for a pretty little thing.” Balthazar grinned. “Are you legal? Cause I'd like to put you in some pretty compromising positions.”

“Balthazar!” Gabriel shouted from somewhere in the other side of the room. “Get your ass away from him.”

“Interesting choice of words, Gabe!” Balthazar shouted back as Gabriel practically ran to the rescue.

“That's my brother, Balthazar.” Gabriel frowned and pulled Cas away from Balthazar.

“Is he? I was wondering if he’d work for me, ya know? Add some fresh meat and all that.” Balthazar shrugged. “Oh well, I'll have to be satisfied with a menage a… what's the word for twelve in French.”

“Douze,” Cas replied without thinking.

“And he speaks French too!” Balthazar held out a card and Cas took it once again without thinking. “Give me a call if you want to teach me how to say thirteen in French.” Balthazar winked and left.

Cas blinked down and the card in his hand. Apparently Balthazar worked for Men.com and was their casting director. Gabriel huffed besides him and growled under his breath.
“Can’t leave you alone for a second.”

Someone approached them. “Hey, Gabe! Who’s this cutie pie you’re with?”

“Oh fuck no.” Gabriel grabbed Cas and pushed him towards the snacks. “He’s not gonna work for you either Haliel.”

Gabriel stayed with Cas for a while with Cas like a guard dog until he was distracted by jello shots and Cas was once again alone and everyone interested in him noticed the fact. Cas sighed and started drinking. Not his best idea because that made him drop his guard.
Chapter 10

Dean used Cas’ absence to go down to hell. Demon politics were difficult in the sense that everyone was a liar and a murderer. Crowley was one of those barely trusted demons Dean had on his side. He knew what Crowley wanted and Dean made sure not to give it to him. Crowley craved power, but he was also smart enough not to try to double cross Dean. Crowley actually valued his life, which meant he wasn't much of an issue for Dean.

“You are back,” Crowley said with mock surprise. “Though you'd be up hanging out with your human boyfriend.” Crowley grinned teasingly and dropped what he was doing to follow Dean through the dark halls and to his throne room.

“Crowley, are you jealous of Cas?” Dean raised an eyebrow. “Afraid you are being my side chick.”

Crowley chuckled. “Not my type Dean-o. I like them cuter.”

“Pfft! I'm adorable!” Dean pursed his lips and batted his eyelashes at Crowley.

Crowley laughed without meaning to. He tried to cover his mouth, but it wasn't enough. Smug, Dean continued walking.

“How are things down here?” Dean asked.

“Well,” Crowley began with a tired voice. “It's been easier ever since you beheaded April in the great hall. The older demons liked that show.”

“I should just kill them too. They've been giving me too much shit,” Dean snarled.

“Well you could do that, but then you'd have to reorganize their followers, name new generals, make sure those generals won't get killed, make sure the followers actually listen to the generals. There's a reason they exist, Dean.” Crowley gulped nervously.

Dean turned around, glaring at Crowley with black eyes. “I'll do whatever I want!” Dean approached Crowley. He grabbed him by the collar and slammed his against a wall. “I don't give a
shit if they made deals with you for protection. I'm the King and I do whatever I want.”

“Armani!” Crowley tapped Dean's wrist and sighed when Dean let go of him. “Fine, kill them do whatever the fuck you want, but first do me a favor and find replacements. You aren't here as much as you used to.” Crowley flinched when Dean tensed up again. “It's the truth and you know it! You've been spending a lot of time with that college boy.” Dean opened his mouth to complain, but Crowley didn't let him. “Oh don't you dare tell me otherwise. I'm cool with it since I'm the one the one who actually works, but the demons down here need a stronger hand to keep them in line.”

“What do you want Crowley?” Dean frowned and shoved Crowley away from him. “I know you, and I know you are not really angry about me being with Cas.”

“I only want you to keep the mark well fed.” Crowley tapped Dean's forearm. “Don't want it BITING me in arse.”

Dean shrugged his hand away. “I'm keeping it controlled,” Dean mumbled.

“Yeah? How? Playing house with the boy toy? You and I know that's not what you need.” Crowley smirked, not realizing how tense Dean was. “Tell you what… the sales team has a list for people ready to mingle.” When Dean raised an eyebrow Crowley rolled his eyes. “Souls ready to collect,” he added and Dean understood. “Now those are some safe kills.” Crowley handed Dean a black envelope. “Deals need to be closed. If you don't want to do them I'll send the usual hell hounds.”

“Thanks, Crowls.” Dean pocketed the envelope on his back pocket. “I actually came here to have a chat with our resident lawyer.”

“What for?” Crowley scoffed. “The good for nothing is as useful as a bloody cock up.”

“I know.” Dean smiled. “But he knows people and I need something else. Don't worry your pretty little head about it.” Dean walked away.

“This about your brother?” Crowley asked softly.

Dean stopped and looked down at his feet. “No.” Dean straightened up. “Don't mention my brother or I'll rip your lungs out or behead you just like April,” Dean said in a low voice, calm and collected.
The flight back to Illinois wasn't as stressful as the flight from Illinois to California. Zep didn't bother him as much and he was once again upgraded to first class. Cas frowned at that, but didn't say anything. This time, Zep got on the plane and used the extremely nice leg space to sleep. Cas didn't mind. Once in the airport he saw Dean waiting for him with a huge grin on his face.

Seeing Dean leaning against the Impala wearing his leather jacket with bleached jeans and a white t-shirt made Cas stop and enjoy the view. He didn't know he'd miss the demon, but here he was feeling calmer. Like he had found something that he didn't knew was missing. It was different to seeing Gabriel at the airport. With Gabriel he had felt happiness and some sort of excitement, with Dean it was just peaceful like a refreshing deep breath. Cas smiled back at Dean and let out a sigh.

Dean helped him with his luggage and opened the back door for Zep. She greeted him by standing up on her hind legs and nosing his neck. Dean pushed her away grumpily and ordered to get in the car. Cas didn't tease him about the small smile playing on his lips. Dean clapped him in the shoulder and they both took their seats in the Impala.

“So, how was it?” Dean asked.

Cas grinned and told him everything except for some details about the party that included Kali walking into the party and dragging Gabriel away. People noticed and kindly offered Cas a place to stay for the night. Cas wasn't going to tell Dean about any of that. It was probably one of his worst decisions and his best experience, but that was TMI. He didn't think the girl he went home with, Daphne, would mind being talked about, but Cas did.

Dean was laughing when Cas finished talking. Ignorance was bliss. “A casting director wanted you for a legit orgy and you declined?” Dean gasped.

“Didn't even get the chance to decide. Gabriel-”

“Your brother cockblocked you from an orgy?” Dean laughed again, this time louder with his head thrown back and his eyes closed.

Cas was glad they were close to the apartment; otherwise the chances of crashing the Impala against a tree would be higher. Cas let Dean laugh and tease him about it all the way back to their apartment building. Truthfully, Cas liked it when Dean laughed because he looked more human and he could
tell himself that this wasn't all a lie.

Once in their building. Dean picked up Cas’ bags and took them to their apartment. Cas knew better than to argue with Dean, but he did glare at Dean for doing so. Dean only grinned and called Zep to head up without them. Zep barked and obeyed.

In the elevator, Dean asked Cas about Gabriel and the things they did. It started out as Cas talking about Gabriel and then about Cas complaining about his relationship with Kali. Dean asked if she was hot and Cas punched him in the stomach. Dean laughed.

In the apartment Dean made Cas unpack and take a shower. Zep was already asleep under the coffee table and snoring gently. She barely fit under it and it was hilarious to see half her lower body poking out from under the table. Dean poked her in the side and she grunted.

“She's gone. I'll make some lunch and then I'll let you sleep.” Dean poked Zep again with his foot and then entered the kitchen without another word.

Cas smiled all the way to the bathroom. He took a hot shower and dressed himself in pajamas. He had no plans on going out and he'd exorcise Dean if he even tried to suggest going out. He made a mental note to find books on demonology. Actually knowing how to pull off an exorcisms would be useful. Dean would probably refuse to say anything, but Cas wasn't gonna keep things like that from him.

The cheeseburgers Dean made for Lunch were amazing. Cas moaned on his first bite. Dean shook his head and chuckled. He handed over some napkins and grinned.

“Man, you sure love cheeseburgers. I'll never stop being surprised by that.”

“This taste like Heaven, Dean.” Cas shrugged. “No offense.”

“None taken.” Dean took a bite out of his own burger. His cheeks were slightly flushed and the corner of his lips was slightly curled upwards enough to show off a perfect dimple. While they ate, Dean remembered a particular conversation with Crowley.

“Are you really going to give the boy twenty-five years on contract?” Crowley had asked in a decent bar down in Hell that Dean had built. “Who’s gonna collect that one? I noticed you never filled in
that part of the paperwork.”

“Put my name in and sign on my behalf. I wanted to use Zep on him, but the damn dog is too soft for that.” Dean took a deep breath and took a swing of his own beer. “Kid doesn't want a hellhound to kill him anyway.”

“You are granting many liberties to this ‘kid’, Dean.” Crowley licked his lips.

“I'm giving you a lot of liberties too.” Dean grinned.

Crowley didn't smile. “I don't doubt that. The only difference is that I'm real, I'm a demon, I'm your follower, and this Castiel kid is probably faking everything to try and see if you spare his soul and keep giving him more benefits.”

“Crowley.” Dean rolled his eyes.

“No, Dean, I'm right.” Crowley stood up. “Maybe the kid's not using you, but you should never forget this is a business transaction and not a vacation.” Crowley glared at Dean and fixed his suit angrily. “I've gotta go and do something productive. You go ahead and play house with your human.”
Classes started faster that Cas or Dean expected. Their days went from chilling in the apartment to Cas freaking out 24/7 about his grades to keep up his scholarship. Dean didn't tell him anything, he simply offered to drive Cas to and from campus and brought him food at odd hours to make sure Cas was eating properly.

“Here you go.” Dean brought a plate full of meatloaf and potatoes and dropped it next to Cas’ books. “I know you didn't have time for lunch, eat up.”

“It's like you are fattening me up for Christmas,” Cas joked.

“Maybe.” Dean smiled and bent over to bite Cas gently on the shoulder. Cas screamed and flinched. “Still too skinny.” Dean tutted and walked away to his room before Cas could slap him.

“I hate you!” Cas shouted.

“No you don't!” Dean screamed back in a singing tone.

Cas didn't reply.

He didn't make the effort of getting to know new people on campus. Of course he knew the names of some of his classmates, but none of them talked to him. It was lonely and sad. Some people even asked him why he didn't go to any of the parties held by other people. Cas simply told them he had something else to do with one of his friends. Most people believed his lie and nodded. Cas didn't want to tell them that nobody invited him to any parties.

“Cas, what are you studying so much for?” Dean asked one day.

Cas groaned. “I have this one professor who likes doing tests every two classes. Sometimes we get three tests a week from him.
“What's his name? Maybe I can kick his ass for you.” Dean grinned.

“Lovely, his name is Jack Christo and-” Cas didn't get to finish because Dean growled at him, his eyes black and terrifying. Just the look of Dean made Cas jump back and step away from Dean. They were standing in the close quarters of the kitchen and Cas hit the refrigerator with his back. “Dean?” Cas asked in a shaky voice.

Dean gasped and stepped back, his shoulders dropping. “It's his last name.” Dean rubbed his eyes, but the black refused to go away. “I didn't mean to scare you. I'm sorry.”

Cas relaxed and got closer to Dean. He raised a hand as if to caress Dean's cheek. Cas chickened out when Dean looked at him in the eye with his black eyes. Cas tried to smile and placed his hand on Dean's shoulder, his thumb touching his neck. He didn't fail to notice that Dean was warm and tense under his touch. “It's okay, Dean.”

The weeks went by with Cas not seeing much of Dean unless you counted the short car rides and Dean bringing him food while he studied in his room with headphones and a shit load of gum and stress food. Dean was kinda worried because Cas wouldn't even move while he studied on a ridiculously tight schedule. Cas studied like crazy before and after class to have his 6-8 hours of good sleep in peace. It was crazy how much the kid studied and revised and revised and revised-

“Ok! Enough!” Dean swung the door to Cas' room wide open. It hit the wall and probably dented it with the doorknob. Zep didn't flinch, but Cas yelped, jumped, dropped his pen, ripped his headphones off, dropped his phone, threw his pen across the room at Dean, and stood up. “We are going out!”

“Dean I have a test on Tuesday!” Cas looked down at his book nervously and then up at Dean who was fuming.

“It's fucking Saturday and it's a really nice fucking sunny day out there to go out and have a damn stroll in the park and see some fucking adorable little animals. Shit!” While Dean cursed, he also dragged Cas out of his spot. He eyed Cas wearing jeans and a sleeping shirt, so he picked up a hoodie and Cas’ tennis and hauled him out of the apartment. Zep barked at Dean for being rough, but Dean screamed something at her in a guttural language that made her hide under the desk.

He eventually lifted Cas like a potato sack and dragged him to the elevator and all the way to the Impala. A couple of elderly women saw them and giggled. Cas covered his face, but Dean winked at them and smiled smoothly. They blew kisses at him and giggled. Dean smirked and dropped Cas in his seat. Dean rounded the Impala and waited for Cas to close his door to enter the car and drive out.
“We,” Dean growled “are gonna go see some fucking puppies, have an amazing greasy burger, watch a shitty sunset on the fucking beach, and you are going to enjoy yourself!” Dean punctuated every action by pointing at Cas and shouting like a drill Sergeant. “I’d take you out for a drink and hookers, but I'm saving up that evening for finals.”

Cas didn't answer because he was too shocked to even have an idea. He was just watching Dean fuming on his seat and pursing his lips into an adorable grumpy pout. The comment about the hookers made him think about Daphne being all drunk and horny. She had been all over him, moving too much and moaning loudly in his ear like the actual professional porn star that she was. Cas had been surprised at her skills and had come twice that night.

The thing about Daphne and her far too skilled… skills was that it made Cas realize he was definitely not straight at all. He hadn't found her sexy; he had found sex sexy and that was it. He hadn't been turned on by her perfect breasts, her pink lips, her soft long hair, or her feminine moans. Don't get him wrong, he had enjoyed sex with her very much (thus his two orgasms), but not that much.

Cas snapped out of his train of thought when Dean slapped his thigh and ordered him to get out of the car. Cas followed Dean to a dinner. They sat in a booth facing each other. Dean still looked grumpy, but less exasperated than before. This made Cas brave enough to talk.

“I don’t understand why this is necessary.”

“Having fun is necessary and I'm supposed to be your friend so here.” Dean grabbed a menu from behind the napkin dispenser and threw it at Cas.

“Supposed…” Cas mumbled low enough to confuse Dean.

“What?”

“Nothing.” Cas shook his head and squinted at the menu. “I think I want the guacamole bacon and blue cheese burger.”

Dean hummed. “Same.” Dean lifted a hand to call a waitress’ attention. “This is where I bought the bribe burgers last time you were pissed at me.”
“I always did wonder where you got them from so quickly.”

Dean winked at him. “I'm a demon.”

“Hello! Welcome to Comet Diner! May I take your order?” The waitress was far too cheery for Cas to deal with. Dean smiled at her.

“Hey.” Dean gave her a flirty look and rested his elbows on the table. “We want to guacamole bacon and blue cheese burgers, with the comet fries, a coke and a… milkshake?” Dean eyed Cas.

“Cookies and cream,” Cas replied.

“And we'd like some apple pie for dessert.” Dean smiled at the waitress. “Unless you've got other ideas for something sweet.”

The waitress giggled and covered her face with her small notepad. She repeated their order and left when Dean and Cas nodded. Cas frowned at Dean, but he didn't seem to notice. The burgers were amazing and Cas and Dean moaned at the same time when they took their first bite. They both looked away and pretended to not exist for the entire meal. On the other hand, the apple pie was amazing. Dean claimed that he had had better. Cas didn't comment, too busy with his own pie.

When the waitress came back, she had scribbled her phone number on the bill. Dean hadn't noticed her because he was glaring at his phone. Cas grabbed it with an awkward smile.

“Dude, pay for me.” Dean handed over his wallet and squinted at his phone. “I think I have a…” Dean trailed off to glare at some new text. “I'm not sure what the problem is anymore.”

“Uhh…” Cas shrugged at the waitress and handed her some bills. She pursed her lips and walked away with the money.

Dean growled under his breath and stood when the waitress disappeared. “Come on, Cas, we've got stuff to enjoy.”

“Uhh what about the-”
“Leave it.” Dean pulled Cas up by the elbow and together they left a fuming waitress behind.

Cas tried very hard not to look back at her and smile at her. He felt smug about Dean not paying attention to her. It was probably something he shouldn't be proud off, but he didn't care right now. Perhaps growing up without friends made him a possessive friend… even if Dean wasn't human and there was a time limit to their friendship.

Dean looked back at Cas, expecting to see a small smile and relaxed shoulders. Instead, Dean found sad blue eyes and a clenched jaw. He cursed himself for not knowing what to do. He slung an arm over Cas' shoulders, surprising the younger boy with the physical contact. Cas shook his head, but there was a tiny smile on the corner of his lips. Dean smiled and almost patted himself in the back for managing to make Cas smile.

"Where are we going now?" Cas asked, swallowing the urge to wrap an arm across Dean's middle. He didn't know why the urge existed. He supposed that's something you did with someone you were physically comfortable with, like a best friend or a significant other. Dean was none of these. Dean was a demon.

“It's a surprise.”

“Don't you have work to do?” asked Cas instead of prodding him further.

“Crowley had a problem with a deal.” Dean looked at Cas with a calculating look on his eyes. “A man wanted to sell his soul for immortality.”

“So he just becomes a soulless man in ten years? What's the issue?” Cas frowned.

“I.” Dean choked on his answer and stopped walking. Cas had solved the issue without even forcing his brain to work. “You just gave me the solution, buddy.”

“That was your issue?” Cas scoffed. “You need someone better than Crowley to handle the deals.”

Dean hummed in disagreement. “Crowley handles the sells; he's King of the Crossroads.”
“I don't know what that means.” Cas tilted his head to the side and away from Dean to look at him properly.

“Most deals are made by summoning a demon or finding one. You tell the demon what you want and he gives it to you in exchange for your soul.” Dean let go of Cas and walked to the Impala that was a few feet away. Cas followed him.

“How do you summon one?”

“Summoning spells are easy if you have the ingredients and the demon’s name. The most popular way is to bury a box filled with some stuff for the summoning in a dirt crossroads and wait for someone in sales to answer.” Dean looked at Cas with suspicion. They were standing in the parking lot and talking over the hood of the Impala. “Why do you ask?” When Cas shrugged, Dean began guessing. “To summon me? To make another deal? Friendly reminder that your soul is mine.”

“Dean, I was just curious,” said Cas before Dean could keep talking. The friendly reminder hit him right where he didn't know it hurt. “And don't worry, I'm not gonna forget about my soul’s state. It's not like you'll let me forget.” Cas opened the door and glared at Dean. “Can we go back to the apartment? I could use some study hours.” Cas didn't wait for Dean to reply. He sat down on his side and closed the door hard.

Dean groaned and opened his door. He sat down, but didn't make a move to drive away from the diner. Cas was fuming and refusing to look at him. He had his arms crossed and his head turned to stare out the window. Dean groaned once more, closed his door, and started the engine.

He spoke once they were driving in the general direction of the apartment. “This is definitely not what I planned.” Dean heard Cas scoff softly. “I was going to take you out for lunch and then to volunteer at an animal shelter to play with dogs and cuddle with the cats or something gay like that.” Dean saw Cas tense up. “I didn’t mean to use gay as a slur. Calm your tits.” Dean tried not to glare or smile at Cas. “Some demons use the word gay as in happy because that's what they did back in their time. I thought I would mock them, but I ended up with a bad habit.” Dean took a deep breath. “What I mean was that I was planning on getting rid of some of that stress. Looks like I just fed you and pissed you off.”

“Why do you always do that?” Cas uncrossed his arms and flung them wildly.

“Do what?” Dean crinkled his nose in confusion.
Cas’ voice was loud as he said: “Mess up and then logically analyze the situation for me so that I end up feeling guilty and just accepting whatever you did. I was close to apologizing and saying that it was the stress making me moody, but no. I deserve to be angry at you because I didn’t even want to go out in the first place.” Cas relaxed slightly and dropped his tone. “Can I just be angry without you trying to manipulate me?”

“I wasn’t trying to manipulate you.” Dean attempted to face Cas, but the traffic was horrible at 2pm on a Saturday and it was hard for him to do so. “I don’t understand what you want me to do!”

“I don’t want you to do anything about it,” Cas snapped back.

“Man, you are just like are chick with your mixed signals. This is worse than having a girlfriend because otherwise I’d be getting my dick sucked every now and then.” Dean stepped on the brakes when a car almost hit him. “Learn how to drive, cunt!” he yelled through the open window. “I need to know what you want me to do because I’m fucking bound to the contract.”

Cas wanted to yell something at Dean. He could yell that he could always rip apart the contract because he was the King of Hell and could possibly get away with it. On the other hand, Cas wanted to keep the contract because he knew he’d be completely alone without Dean. It was weak and pathetic, but Cas was low key selfish when it came to Dean. The green eyed demon with the universe on his high cheekbones was his for 25 years and he was going to enjoy them now that he already fucked up. It was getting hard to breathe with Dean glaring at the other cars and sitting like he preferred to be somewhere else. It hit Cas that Dean actually paid to be somewhere else. He looked at the street, he wasn’t far from the apartment, but he didn’t want to go back there and lock himself in a room to brood.

“I don’t even know what I want from you, Dean. I didn’t know what I was doing when I had a panic attack on my dorm room and yelled some pretty stupid things.” Cas eyed the keys to the apartment sitting in the space between him and Dean next to Dean's wallet.

“Well fucking tough luck, buddy. You are stuck with good ol me,” Dean replied sarcastically.

“I can't deal with you when you are like this.” Cas shook his head. “I'm sorry, I just can't stay here any longer with you yelling at me. I know I fucked up, Dean! I just can't.” Cas grabbed the apartment keys and ran out of the car.
Cas found himself in a book shop. It smelt fresh unlike the smell of old books, but Cas liked it. There were couches and beanbags spread all over the main area of the book shop. There was some soft music playing in the background, it was an unusual combination of jazz and hip-hop that Cas could get used to. He picked up a random book from the classics and settled down on a couch in the back of the room. There was a brunette girl sitting in a bean bag close to him. She didn't look up at him or seem to notice him. It took him a minute to notice a weird smell on the air. He sniffed and grimaced at the smell. He looked around and gasped when he saw smoke. The girl in the beanbag was smoking a joint and reading a Stephen King book like there was nothing wrong.

“You shouldn't smoke here, you'll get ash on the books and on the seats.”

The girl turned around and shifted on the beanbag until she was laying on her stomach and looking at him. “Such an angel, they don't care as long as I buy the books that smell like weed.”

“Even so, it's rude to do so in a public space.” Cas didn't tell her it was against the law, it didn't look like she would care.

“Tell you what, Clarence.” She ignored his frown and kept talking. “I'll stop smoking if you have a coffee with me.”

“My name isn't Clarence.” Cas glared at her, intentionally giving himself some time to consider the offer. He had some money with him and needed to spend more time away from his apartment.

“You look like a Clarence with those big blue eyes of yours.” She grinned. “Meg Masters, nice to meet you.” She placed her book on her floor and stretched out her hand.

“Castiel Novak,” Cas replied and shook her hand. “What was that about a coffee?”

Meg grinned. “I'm glad you asked.” She sat up and extinguished her joint against the sole of her boots. “Come on, Clarence, let's pay for this and go.” She picked up her book, lead Cas outside.
I'm glad everyone is liking Zep so far! I wasn't sure about whether she'd be good for the story, but I went with it since the story is meant to last 25+ years according to the deal and well I need to fill in that time somehow.
Chapter 12

Chapter Notes

I need a new beta because my current one is too busy atm.

Pros: early chapters
Cons: my typos
Required: knowledge on how to use google docs and a social media account to DM you

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“They why is this shit so difficult?” Dean yelled, pulling his hair and breathing hard.

Dean paced the apartment while Zep watched. He could literally send the hound to hunt down Cas, but that wouldn't do any good since Cas didn't take his glasses with him and Zep wasn't going to drag Cas anywhere without shredding his skin and bones in the process. He thought about sending her out as a security measure. Dean was worried about Cas doing something stupid like ending up on a stranger's house because they offered him drugs or something similar. Zep wouldn't recognize that as a situation where Cas would need to be saved in. Zep only understood direct orders and violence. It would take ages for Zep to see the concept of abuse of substances as something bad.

What if Zep confused a normal situation with a fighting situation? He had trained Zep as a guardian dog, but she wasn't trained for crowds or other social situations. The last time Cas was in a crowded area was that one party in California with Gabriel. Zep had behaved herself, but Dean's anxieties were eating at him from inside and he couldn't risk putting both Zep and Cas in unnecessary danger. If Cas had his glasses with him it would be easier because then Cas would know to keep an eye on Zep in case of any behavioral mishap. He decided to text Cas instead.

Dean: U want m3 to send Zep out? I'm gonna give you the space you need, but please tell me if it's okay to make Zep keep an eye on you.

Dean didn't give a fuck about his typos. Cas never answered the text. Dean continued to curse under his breath and pace the length of the living room and the kitchen area.

When Dean heard the rattling of keys against the door, his heart stopped. Dean stopped his pacing and froze. His focus on the floor waned and his brain tried to think. It was the next day already judging by the strong sunlight. Dean had spent the evening, night, and morning pacing.
The door opened and Cas walked in with his hair looking like he just rolled out of bed from a threesome and a large bruise on his cheekbone. He locked the door behind him and looked up to see Dean gaping at him. Castiel gasped and took a step back in surprise. He immediately raised his hands in a “calm down” gesture and grimaced at the prospect of hearing Dean scream.

“I uhh I didn't think you'd be here.”

That broke Dean's stunned silence and he whispered a soft “what?” Dean shook his head and glared at the floor. His eyes fell to his fists and Dean felt anger heat up inside him. “And where the fuck would I be, Castiel?” Dean asked coldly. Cas winced at the use of his full name. “And what the fuck happened to your face?”

“I can explain,” said Cas, sheepish.

“Oh can you?” Dean replied sarcastically with his hands on his hips. He was trying not to get mad; the fact that Cas wasn't reacting to his anger made him deflate. “Demons don't need to sleep, Cas. I spent the night worrying about you and also planning your funeral.” Dean's face darkened and so did his eyes. Cas stepped back and pressed his back to the door. “I'd play Highway To Hell when they lowered your body to the ground,” he added, “but the thing is that I'm pissed but I'm done being worried because I know you are safe and here in the apartment with me.”

Cas looked down at his shaking his hands. He closed them into loose fists and looked up at Dean with a new sense of braveness. “Dean, I'm not going to apologize for my actions,” Cas sighed. “What I'm going to do is tell you what I did instead.”

Dean scoffed. “Yeah? And what good would that do?”

“I made some friends and they helped me realize something about you, but I'm not sure what… I'm not,” Cas shook his head and took a moment to gather his thoughts. He closed his eyes and prepared himself to talk, “I'm not sure about how you… how you uhm feel things as a demon,” Cas blushed because he sounded like a schoolgirl with a crush. He expected to open his eyes to Dean ready to yell, tease, or attack him.

When he did open his eyes, Dean had an unreadable expression on his face. He was looking at the large windows with his jaw clenched, his fists clenched close to his stomach, and his eyes cold. Dean blinked and his eyes turned green. He took a deep breath through his nose and nodded. Cas sighed in relief and started talking
“You have anywhere you need to be or you wanna meet my roommates?”

That's all Meg said to convince Cas to go to the house she shared with three other girls. The house was obviously not cheap judging by the size and the well manicured lawns of the neighborhood. Cas eyed the classic cars on some of the neighbor's driveways and wondered what Dean would think about them. He got out of the Uber Meg had ordered and stared at the white house. It was a cozy two-story white house with a surprisingly well cared garden and two cars on the driveway. Meg murmured something about someone not being home, Cas ignored the comment and followed her to the door.

Meeting a stranger in a random place smoking weed and then following them to a house is the type of thing in the beginning of a serial-killer movie. Cas slightly hoped Meg was a serial killer, that would probably save his soul since death would probably break the contract… or send him straight to hell.

“Honey! I'm home!” Meg yelled once she unlocked the door.

Cas liked the place. The girls had great taste in decoration. Meg led him to a comfortable couch next to a huge bookshelf, Cas was immediately drawn to it. He picked a book that he hadn't read yet and looked at Meg with a raised eyebrow.

“Take it, I've read it twice.” Meg patted the spot next to her.

Cas nodded and sat down just in time to see someone run downstairs.

“Oh, hi,” she said coldly with a frown of disgust on her face. “I'm Rachel. Didn't know Meg was bringing anyone home,” Rachel gestured down at her yoga pants and oversized sweatshirt, her features softening slightly. “Sorry.”

“No problem, I'm Castiel Novak,” he stood up, dropped the book on the couch, and offered his hand for her to shake.

“Nice to meet you,” she smiled politely and shook his hand. “I apologize for the mess. I didn't know someone was coming,” Rachel brushed her blonde hair behind her ears and nodded at the spotless living room where Meg was watching with an amused smirk.
Cas opened his mouth to tell her that the place was spotless, but he didn’t get a chance to do so before someone else groaned from upstairs.

“Calm your OCD Rachel,” the new person said. “I'm Anna, nice to meet you.”

“Castiel,” he repeated and offered his hand. They shook hands and smiled gently. Anna had fiery red hair and pale skin. She wore black slacks and a pink dress shirt.

“Why are you dressed like that?” Meg asked with a scowl. “I know we don't have any classes on Saturday.”

“I had to meet with a teacher about a test we have on Tuesday,” Anna shrugged. “I just got here and didn't have time to change,” she turned to Cas and added: “We are all in pre-Law,” She pointed at Anna, Meg, then herself.

“Really? Me too, second year,” Cas smiled and raised his eyebrows in surprise, Meg grinned.

“Bela is going to shoot herself when she meets you. Four pre-Law second year students under the same roof.”

Anna and Rachel laughed, but Cas tilted his head in confusion. “Who is she and why would she do that?”

“She's on business school and she hates when we discuss our classes,” Rachel said in a cold tone. It was weird to see her laugh one second and see her go back to her cold demeanor the next second.

“Oh,” was all Cas could answer.

“Yeah, she owns the house bought it with her parents money,” Meg shrugged. “We kinda just pay the bills and do all the housework around here.”

“You barely take care of yourself, Meg,” Anna retorted and crossed her arms.

“Hey! I bring the weed, the booze, and the guys,” Meg pointed at Cas with a finger and a grin.
“Uhm? Excuse me? Am I being objectified?” Cas raised an eyebrow.

Meg gasped. “Of course not, Clarence, I'm just playing with you.”

“Nah, she's objectifying you,” Anna nodded to herself and Rachel tried not to smile when she saw Cas’ confused face.

“Wait, wait, wait,” Dean said. “You met a girl smoking weed at bookshop and immediately decided it was cool to go to her place and meet her friends?” Dean raised an eyebrow. “Buddy, that's how bad pornos start,” Cas shrugged. “Is that why…?” Dean trailed off and gestured at Cas’ hair. Cas tilted his head in confusion. “You know what? Nevermind. Continued.”

Cas cleared his throat. “I met Bela next.”

Dean frowned. “Bela? She give you a last name?”

“If she did I don't remember,” Cas shrugged.

The three girls had her full attention on Cas. They asked him about the classes he was taking and gossiped about the teachers and the people in his class.

Anna was the friendliest. “There's a congress for pre-Law students in California this summer. We wanted to go last year, but Meg broke her leg and postponed the trip.”

“Your leg?” Cas looked at her leg like he would see a sign of her injury.
“Volleyball can be a bitch Cas,” Meg patted her leg. “I'm okay though, not on the team anymore.”

“You should come with us to California,” Anna said with a smile. “You don't need to make any decisions yet. We'll send you the info and how much it's gonna cost. There's a discount for college students and groups.”

“I'm not sure I'll be able to afford that,” Cas pursed his lips and tried not to look as embarrassed as he felt. He could ask Gabe for the money, but he didn't want to bother him with his issues. Dean on the other hand wouldn't even blink as he gave Cas whatever he needed. He wondered why Dean did that. He was more of a caregiver than a friend.

“You haven't even seen the price, Clarence,” Meg rolled her eyes. “Let's order some pizza and eat the brownies I made yesterday.”

“I'll make the call, it was my turn to make dinner anyway,” Rachel looked at Cas. “You are not lactose intolerance or something like that, are you?”

Cas shook his head. “I don't want to impose.”

“Nonsense,” Rachel said grabbing the house phone in the living room. “Meg dragged you here so it's only logical you stay with us for dinner.”

Cas nodded and tried not to react at the way she said it. Rachel sounded like a mother forcing her kids’ friend to stay home longer. Rachel walked away with the phone and called the pizza place while Anna checked something Cas was unaware of on the kitchen. He heard a car parking on the driveway and turned around in time to make awkward eye contact with a brunette girl.

“Uhh who are you and why are you in my house?” she asked.

“This is Castiel, friend of mine,” Meg replied from behind him. “Rachel's ordering pizza.”

“Good,” she said to Meg and offered a hand to Cas. “I'm Bela-”

“We had meat lovers last week,” Anna said in a loud voice that made Bela shut up.
“Anna, I'm ordering two pizzas, calm down,” Rachel rolled her eyes and walked away from Anna. “I'm sorry for the interruption,” she continued on the phone.

Dean pursed his lips. “So you met four chicks and had pizza? How the hell did you get…” Dean stopped talking and sniffed Cas. “You stink of beer and weed.”

“I wasn't drinking.”

“But-”

“Someone dropped their beer… on me,” Cas looked away from Dean's face and shrugged. “Meg wanted to introduce me to some people.”

“Hey you must be in the same classes as Chris T. and Emily,” Meg said when the five of them were eating pizza in the living room.

“I don't know who they are.”

“What about Hans Wood?” Rachel asked with sauce on her chin. Anna silently leaned forward and wiped the sauce off her chin.

Cas shook his head. “I'm sorry, my people skills are rusty.”

Bela made a face as if she wanted to insult him for his use of words. Rachel smiled at her plate and Anna pouted like he was adorable.
Meg groaned. “You need to go out more, Clarence,” she said. “There's a party tonight a few blocks from here at this dude's house.”

“Full of asshats from pre-Law and pre-Med,” Bela added. She saw Meg, Rachel, and Anna look at her; challenging her to say anything else. “Ugh I mean the pre-Law chicks are the worse!” Bela gasped dramatically to let them know she was kidding. “I pity the professors on pre-Law because they must see how much better the students over at my faculty are.”

“Better at sucking dick for grades,” Meg snapped. She bit her tongue and grinned at Bela who's eyes widened comically.

Anna and Rachel hissed and waved their pizza free hands as if they had fire on them. Castiel looked alarmed where he sat with a piece of pizza hanging from his lips.

“Do I win this one?” Meg asked cheerily.

“Fine,” Bela snarled.

Rachel nodded and stood up. There was a small blackboard hanging on the wall next to the TV. It had their names and some lines under them. The words “shots fired” were written in bold letters and underlined twice at the top of the blackboard.

“What does the winner get?” Cas asked. Bela and Meg were tied at eight and Anna barely had three lines under her name.

“Anything from the looser as long as it's not too much,” Rachel said as she sat down. “I won last month and forced Meg to wear pink for a week.”

“Turns out I kinda liked it,” Meg shrugged with a uncharacteristically shy smile.

Cas laughed.
“So this cheeks dragged you to a party and some douchebag splashed some beer at you and use your face as a punching bag?” Dean asked.

“You should see the other guy?” Cas grimaced at how unsure he sounded.

“What does that even mean?”

“Uhh… Uhm…” Cas cleared his throat. “I ate some of Meg’s space brownies and headed out to the party.”

Cas knew he was high when he was laughing hard enough to piss himself. He was at the party drinking beer from red cups and trying to stay close to one of the girls just in case... in case-. Cas forgot why he wanted to stay close to them, but he did it anyway. In between Anna, Meg, and Rachel, he was introduced to half the college students. Bela had taken to socializing with some other rich kids that had ended up at the same party. They were all smoking in the backyard.

Cas looked at his beer. He tapped the bottom and focused on the bubbles rising up to the surface. He lost track of time simply staring at the beer warming up in between his hands on the red cup. He didn't want to think anymore. He just wanted to disappear and find himself once again in what remained. He realized everyone around him was talking to someone or simply enjoying each other's company surrounded by loud music and beer.

He also realized how lonely he truly felt.

“Cas?” Anna sat down next to him. “I'm bored, entertain me.”

“You are looking for entertainment in the wrong place,” Cas said.

Anna smirked. “I don't think so.” She shook her head and leaned further into the couch. “You are literally the smartest person here and I'm tired of the Liberal Arts students comparing my hair to fruits and other weird shit.”
“Apple red, firetruck red, dragon fruit-”

“Ugh stop it!” Anna groaned and jokingly punched Cas’ thigh. “Dragon fruits are kinda purple,” she said absentmindedly.

“Hey-o guys!” Meg appeared from between the crowd and sat down on Cas with a grin. Cas barely had any time to move his cup away. “I'm smiling like this because my ex is here and I'm trying to look casual.”

“Eww, Al is here?” Anna grimaced. “Cas, wrap an arm around her or something,” Anna didn't wait for Cas to answer and grabbed his free arm to wrap it around Meg’s waist.

“Why?” Cas frowned. He wasn't exactly uncomfortable (thanks to the weed), but he was confused.

“Alistair is my abusive ex boyfriend,” Meg replied with frustration. “God, I don't know who the fuck invited him here.”

“So you fought this chick's ex?” Dean guessed.

“Nope,” Cas said, putting emphasis on the P.

“Uhhh…”

“I didn't even meet her ex,” Cas shrugged. “Where was I?”

“So how are things with your roommate?” Meg asked, getting more comfortable on Cas’ lap and holding his cup for him. This is the part of the story that he would later skip when telling Dean about
Cas tensed up. “Why do you ask?”

Meg rolled her eyes. “You were alone in a random place without your wallet or any cash. I’m guessing you had a cat fight with your roommate and ran out of the apartment.”

“His car actually… and it wasn’t a cat fight,” Cas shrugged.

“A lover’s spat?” Meg grinned.

“Meg, leave him alone,” Anna chastised.

“He’s not my boyfriend,” Cas lowered his eyes.

“Hmm… I don’t know, dude,” Meg squinted at him. “You looked just like Anna does when she fights with her girlfriend.”

“Ex girlfriend,” Anna corrected.

“You are gay?” Cas raised an eyebrow and shifted to look closely at Anna. “How did you find out?”

“I realized I didn’t like dick that much when my first girlfriend and I had a make out session in the back of my car,” Anna smiled remembering her high school years. “I dislike labels in general, but I see myself as a lesbian,” Anna sighed and finished her beer. “Keep in mind that sexuality can be an ever changing broad spectrum and that it’s okay to like what you like.”

Cas’ eyes widened and he tried to get away from both Anna and Meg with no luck due to Meg’s firm weight. “I…”

Anna placed a gentle hand on his shoulder. “You wouldn’t have asked unless you were questioning your own sexuality,” She pointed a finger at Meg. “Meg here would fuck anyone and anything as long as they are hot or whatever. She’s pansexual,” Anna ignored Meg’s enthusiastic nod. “Rachel
wouldn’t fuck anyone. Period. She's asexual,” Anna frowned. “I think uhh… Bela hasn’t said anything so I'm guessing she's straight,” Anna shrugged. “The only thing that matters is how comfortable you feel on your romantic or sexual relationships.”

“Who knows?” Meg grinned. “You could even be a unicorn!”

“Unicorn?” Cas frowned and tilted his head. “I don’t understand what's that got anything to do with-”

“O. M. G. I can't. Meg you are nasty sometimes,” Anna stood up. “I'll go find more beer.”

Cas watched her go and then looked at Meg. “What?”

“It's about threesomes hun,” Meg laughed. “You are such an innocent angel,” Cas huffed and chugged his beer. Meg looked down at his cup and noticed he finished it off. “Come on, let's go find Anna and beer.”

“Beer,” Cas nodded and followed Meg around the house until they found Anna near a beer keg. Cas didn't know what was wrong with him, but he kinda craved affection. Anna smiled at him and Cas immediately wrapped an arm around her waist while Meg prepared herself a drink more complicated than just beer.

A voice made Cas turn his head around. “I thought the only reason this redhead bitch blew me off was because she was a lesbian, but here she is being all clingy with the autistic kid.”

Autistic?

“Fuck off, Jamie,” Anna turned around in Castiel’s arms, making sure to remove the arm. “Even if I liked dick, I wouldn't be going after yours.”

“Yeah? No one would ever give you such a good fuck as I would,” Jamie grinned and stepped forward.

“She told you to fuck off,” Cas pushed Anna behind him and straightened up his stance.
“Really? You want to fight me?” Jamie scoffed. “Fuck off, dude,” He quickly threw the contents of his cup at Cas. Sadly, it was filled to the brim.

Cas didn’t even think as he pushed his body forward and punched the asshole in the face with his fist. Jamie stumbled back, leaving himself open for Cas to hit him once more in the stomach. Jamie didn’t react as much to that punch and raised his knee strong enough to make Cas gasp and lean forward. Jamie lifted his knee once more and hit Cas in the face.

Cas stumbled back into Anna. Meg dropped what she was doing and ran up to them. She looked at Cas and then at Anna before slapping Jamie hard enough to make everyone around them hiss with sympathy.

Jamie growled and shoved Meg away into the forming crowd. Cas growled as Jamie grabbed him by the shoulders. Before Jamie had any time to readjust his hold, Cas stomped down on his food, punched him in the stomach, waited for Jamie to lean forward, and kneed him in the face.

The crowd cheered and roared. Cas felt his lips curling up into a smile, but it hurt too much. He quickly found himself in a chair drinking more beer while Anna and Meg checked his face. Anna stepped away from them to find a first aid kit while Meg found a rag and grabbed some of the ice from the sodas to press against Cas’ face. Anna eventually slapped Meg’s hands away and gently covered the injured cheekbone with a thick layer of ointment.

Meg and Anna told Rachel and Bela what had happened and soon enough they were back at the girls’ house with a surprisingly drunk Cas.

“I kinda woke up in Meg’s bed with a hungover Anna. Meg later gave us this disgusting smoothie and Anna gave me a ride here,” Cas smiled. “I don’t want to fight with you, Dean. It’s stupid, but you can’t keep acting like… like you are taking care of a pet instead of just… I don’t know! Okay?”

“You are not a pet Cas,” Dean bit his lower lip. “I just don’t…”

“What, Dean?” Cas asked when it became obvious that Dean wasn’t going to continue.
“I just don't remember what having a friend feels like,” Dean cleared his throat and looked down at his shoes. “I'm used to demons trying to stab me in the back… and the last thing I remember from my human years is… taking care of my baby brother,” Dean sighed. “I'm sorry I signed your deal. I'm not even sure why I did it.”

“I'm still not sure how I did it so I guess we are even there,” Cas tried to smile reassuringly.

Dean scoffed. “No we are not.”

“Maybe not, but I'd still like to get to actually now you instead of wondering if you are just humoring me like a condescending child.”

Dean’s face fell. “You wouldn't like the real me, Cas. I'm still a bloodthirsty demon who happens to be at the top of the food chain.”

“Still, I'm stuck with the bloodthirsty demon who happens to be at the top of the food chain and I'd like to actually know him,” Cas smiled, encouraging Dean to accept it.

After a while, Dean deflated and said a soft, “Okay,” He shook his head but smiled at Cas. “Come on, let's get that shit on your face cleaned and then you can pass out properly.”

“I need to study for-”

“Dude, no. Go take a shower.”

“Dean, you are doing it again.’

Dean grinned and shrugged. “What can I say? I guess I like taking care of the people close to me.”
I made this chapter longer to compensate for the lack of updates this summer
AUTHOR'S NOTE:

GUYS! I apologize for the confusion some of you will have during this chapter. Earlier on I had written Ruby as a demon and Dean killed her off. The thing is, she fits so much better here tbh so I changed Ruby the demon for April the demon (remember the reaper April? Yeah that one) and that made me change who did Cas had sex with during that one party with Gabriel to Daphne (from the Emmanuel storyline).

I'm so sorry. Enjoy the chapter

Dean thought that after their short heartfelt conversation in their apartment that things would be good for them. Instead, Cas avoided him like the plague and started hanging out with the girls he had met. Cas came back home smelling of weed and looking so happy it broke something in Dean. Not because of some sort of misplaced envy, but because he didn't know Cas could look so effortlessly happy.

It made Dean stay away from Cas and work harder in Hell.

Cas wasn't aware of this and thought it was ironic how much he missed Dean. Dean always had an excuse to leave for a few days and sometimes even brought some paperwork to read on Sundays. It didn't take long for Dean to leave paperwork under the couch on accident while he gave Hell a little visit. It also didn't take long for Cas to read the documents and add little post-it notes to them.

“Cas, what is this?” Dean dropped a document with a bunch of blue little post-its on it.

“Have you read them?” Cas asked from his spot on the couch. He grabbed the document and handed it back to Dean, knowing that Dean hadn't read them.

“I...” Dean pursed his lips and snatched the document from his hands, “huh?” Dean raised an eyebrow, “this is actually a good idea.”
“You are welcome.”

“Shit, Crowley needs to see this.” Dean groaned and started looking around for his jacket and wallet.

“Goodbye.” Cas waved a hand carelessly in dismissal.

Dean didn’t answer. Cas sighed and stared at the ceiling for a good five minutes until he sat up and grabbed his phone.

“Yes?”

“Meg! What was that you guys said about California?” Cas asked.

“Oh you are gonna love this!”

Meg began explaining everything about the top lawyers in the countries gathering in this one hotel to hold a convention of sorts. Only law students and lawyers were invited, which meant that they needed to sign up with their student IDs. The actual trip was a whole week to enjoy California and to just chill with each other. Cas barely listened to the names Meg mentioned. She kept talking about ‘hot lawyers’, ‘panels’ and, other stuff Cas barely had the energy to listen to. They discussed the prices for everything and Cas promised to get the money somehow.

“What money?”

“What?” Cas sat up and saw Dean waiting for an explanation, “uhh. . . I gotta go Meg.” He hung up and looked at Dean, “I thought you were going to Hell.”

“I did, time works differently in Hell.” Dean dropped his jacket on the coffee table and sat down on a chair, “what was that about money?”

“I, uhh, I need to ask Gabriel to lend me some money for a law convention in-”

“Wait law convention? That's a thing?” Dean huffed, if that ain't the nerdiest thing I've heard. How
much do you need?"

“Dean-”

“Hey, I don't give a fuck if you are uncomfortable taking my money because I'm basically giving it to you in exchange for your soul.” Dean shrugged and Cas looked slightly mortified, “how much is it?”

“Uhh.”

That's how Cas got the money for the trip to California with the girls (minus Bela who didn't want to waste her time). Anna, Meg, Rachel and, Cas met up at the airport at around 1 p.m. Dean dropped off Cas in the Impala just as Bela was leaving the airport in her own car. Dean glared at her car but, didn't mention anything. He looked at Cas like he wanted to say something yet, he decided against it and got out of the car. Cas took the cue and grabbed his luggage with Dean's help.

“Have fun in nerd-city.” Dean grinned and patted Cas on the shoulder.

Cas looked down at his shoes, “yeah, I will.”

Cas smiled awkwardly and watched Dean get in his car and drive away. When he turned around, Meg was grinning like a Cheshire cat while Anna and Rachel stared at him with wide eyes. “What?” Cas asked.

Meg's grin widened even further, “Clarence you are so gay.”

“Was that Dean?” Anna asked before Cas could say something, “is he a model or something? Hot damn.”

Cas frowned, “Dean's not a model.”

“Well he should be,” Anna said and Rachel nodded in agreement.
“Clarence, if you are not tapping that ass I wouldn't mind.”

“Tapping? I don't understand why I would-”

“I think it's time to go,” Rachel said looking at her wristwatch, “come on guys! Let's go.” She grabbed Cas by the elbow and pulled him away from Meg and Anna.

Zep followed Cas and Rachel silently all the way to the waiting area. Zep kept pushing Cas’ leg with her paws and laying her huge head on his lap. Cas found it odd how Zep acted more clingy when Dean wasn't present and he made a mental note to ask the demon about said behavior.

Once at the hotel, Anna and Rachel separated from Castiel and Meg who would be sharing a room. When Meg opened the door to their room, Zep ran straight to the desk and settled under it. Cas found his best to ignore Zep’s gleeful and tired face as she rested her head on her paws. Meg, of course, wasn't aware of this and sat down on the bed closest to the desk.

“So,” Meg began, “Dean?”

Cas frowned, “what about Dean?”

“He your gay thing?” Meg asked.

“What do you mean?” Cas tilted his head to the side.

“You had a really emotional talk about sexuality during that one party,” Meg pointed out, “those kinda talks only happen when you've got the hots for someone specific.”

“I'm not interested in Dean,” Cas huffed.

He began unpacking his bag to have something to do during this highly uncomfortable talk, “he's just my roommate and I don't even know his last name.”

“I've fucked people without even knowing what they looked like.” Meg wiggled her eyebrows and Cas raised his, “look, what I'm trying to say is that you should go for it before someone else does.”
“I’m not going for anything,” Cas rolled his eyes and slammed his spare pair of shoes on the bed to emphasize his statement. “Look, Dean and I are barely friends,” Cas saw Meg raising her eyebrows in disbelief, “I don’t want to make things worse, okay?”

“So you do like him?” Meg smirked when Cas groaned.

“No,” Cas denied it.

“Would you even tell me if you liked anyone?”

Cas stopped what he is doing and considered her question, “like as in just attraction or like as in like like?”

“Both?” Meg asked carefully, “I would never tell anyone or judge you.”

Cas hummed and Meg moved to place a hand on his shoulder, “yeah, I'd tell you.”

“Cool, let's go to the girl's room. I'm starving,” Meg slapped his ass and then ran away before Cas could yell at her.

Cas groaned then ran after her.

Break

The girls and Cas had dinner together at a pizza place near the hotel and went back to their rooms after to sleep the pizza and the jet lag off. The next morning had everyone up in the early hours and Anna, being the only morning person of the group, was surprised to see Cas in gym shorts in the hall. Cas looked like he preferred to be asleep and Anna looked like she had drunk a gallon of coffee.

“Are you going out jogging?” Anna asked, wearing tennis shoes and jogging gear.

“Yeah, wanna come along?”
Anna grinned, “thought you might prefer to be alone but, sure.”

“Great, though I won't be listening.” Cas made a show of putting on his earphones and guided Anna to the elevator.

That's how Cas and Anna became jogging buddies. They lived close enough to meet each other for a jog around the nearest park.

Back in their rooms, they took showers after Meg and Rachel were done with theirs. The group was ready for breakfast and were wearing semi-formal clothes. They had a simple breakfast then went to the hotel that was holding the convention.

The morning was a blur of introductions and directions as the group attended several different panels during the morning. They had lunch outside of the hotel to get away from the large amount of people that were bustling about at the convention. They chilled at a McDonald's for half an hour before going back to save spots for a panel that Meg wanted to attend badly.

Cas grabbed his brochure to see who Meg wanted to see. Ruby Cortese was about to talk in hall B and Meg was literally pushing people away to sit down at the front. The brochure said that Ruby was a young defense attorney and one of the best at it. After Ruby's panel came, Sam Winchester, a high profile prosecutor; the brochure didn't say anything else about-

Cas crashed into someone that Meg had pushed away. He tried to stabilize himself but, his arm was trapped between his and the taller man’s chest. The taller man wrapped an arm around Cas as Anna and Rachel grabbed them to stop their fall. Meg turned around with a shocked expression and began apologizing nervously. Cas would've laughed at her but, he was too busy being embarrassed.

Meg grimaced, “I'm so sorry, sir!”

“It's fine, really,” the tall man smiled at her and patted Cas on the shoulder, “are you okay?” he asked before stepping back.

“Yes, I'm okay,” Cas rubbed his arm self-consciously and looked around but he didn't see Rachel with them.

“I'm glad,” he looked around the room and spoke again, “everyone in here seems eager to hand over
a business card,” he chuckled.

The tall man stopped smiling and frowned when a woman shouted his name.

“Winchester.”

“Cortese,” Sam grimaced.

“I see you are still awkward and clumsy,” Ruby sneered at him.

“I see you are still a bitch,” Sam snapped back.

“And proud of the fact,” Ruby winked at him then looked right at Cas and Meg.

Anna was standing somewhere behind Sam so, Ruby couldn't see her, “are you kids going to attend my panel?”

“Yes we are, Ma'am,” Meg answered with a polite and uncharacteristic smile.

“Good, make sure to leave when I'm done because this dork goes up on stage after me,” Ruby glowered at Sam.

“Why? My topic of discussion is about everything you do wrong,” Sam shrugged, “can't miss that kids.” Sam smiled at Cas, Meg and, Anna. “If you'll excu-”

“Are you still dating that nurse?” Ruby asked.

Sam rolled his eyes, “Jess is lovely, thanks for asking.”

Ruby scoffed and began walking away, “you need to aim higher, Sammy. The food chain doesn't spare anyone,” she waved behind her and left them alone.

“What a bitch,” Cas said immediately.
Meg nodded, “I know, right? She's so badass, too.”

Anna grimaced, “Eww Meg.”

Sam chuckled, “Well guys, I don't think we've been properly introduced,” he shook hands with Anna who was closer to him, “Sam Winchester.”

“Anna Milton.”

“Meg Masters.”

“Castiel Novak.”

“Nice to meet you guys. I'll be seeing you around,” Sam smiled when the three college kids nodded enthusiastically.
Chapter 14

Rachel was definitely the smartest out of the group. Zep, being herself, had also disappeared to follow Rachel who had separated herself from the mess Meg had created and ran to the save front row seats for the entire group.

Meg was the first one to thank Rachel by saying: “Oh man I could go down on you right now.”

Rachel just grimaced and silently switched seats with Anna. Meg simply laughed and stood up to kiss her forehead. Cas and Anna watched the interactions with gentle smiles. They chatted with Rachel about meeting Sam Winchester and Meg’s idol Ruby Cortese. Anna joked about Meg managing not to pee herself and about how Cas had been too embarrassed to say more than two words at a time. Cas shrugged because it was true, but Meg had jokingly challenged Anna to a duel outside in the lobby.

The group finally shut up when Ruby was introduced. The staff dimmed the lights in the hall and turned up the ones aimed at the stage. The room felt silent as Ruby walked into the center of the stage and ignored the high chair set up for her. Ruby talked about offensive defense strategies and how to overcome morality issues when defending someone accused of something like murder. The scariest part was how much sense she was making with her logical arguments and her general aura. Meg looked like she was in Heaven listening to Ruby embellish her job. Cas had the feeling he was suddenly a sheep among wolves.

Ruby ended her speech and the room applauded loudly. Cas saw Ruby making eye contact with Meg and winking at her. Anna and Rachel gasped and turned around to see Meg melting on her seat. Cas rolled his eyes.

There was a short break after Ruby's lecture. The group decided to simply stay in their seats and wait for the next lecture. Cas was hoping Sam Winchester would be different. The earlier animosity between him and Ruby seemed deeply ingrained.

When the public retool their seats and the moderator announced Sam Winchester’s lecture, the staff deemed the lights and Sam walked in. The mood was immediately different with Sam walking in with a smile and a hand up. He waved at the crowd and took the chair Ruby had previously ignored.

“Hey there, how y'all doing?” he asked into the microphone. The crowd answered and Sam nodded. “Great, I hope y'all are having a good time.” He smiled and the room felt warmer. “My name is Sam Winchester and I’m a prosecutor. This means I stand by the law and everything that's right.”
Sam began his lecture slowly and smoothly. His voice was relaxing Cas and some people on the public were smiling without paying much attention. Sam was talking about finding his moral compass through the laws of ethics. He spoke about some cases where he found himself doubting himself. He told the story about a man with a thirteen year old daughter fighting cancer. The man had already lost his wife to the sickness and was swimming in debts.

This man had also been part of an attempted armed bank robbery.

The crowd had begun whispering at each other and Sam allowed it. He allowed them a minute of shock and told about how he had tried his best to ignore the man's background without completely dehumanizing the man. It had been difficult, but the man had injured several people with his actions.

Sam talked about abiding to the law even in cases like this. He also talked about not unnecessarily damaging the family members with extra lawsuits or something.

Where Ruby Cortese was a demon, Sam Winchester was an angel.

When his lecture ended, Cas applauded the loudest. Sam saw him and thanked him with a smile and a slight nod. Meg rolled her eyes, but clapped her hands out of politeness. Sam stood up and left the stage.

The other lectures weren't as interesting as those two. The group ended up in the expo area just picking up random brochures, pens, and paraphernalia from universities and law firms.

Looking at the expo room, Cas was glad that Zep was staying away from the crowd. Cas was amazed at how easily it was for him to forget that she was there. He swore the hound didn't even need to breathe. Rachel and Anna left him and Meg alone when Rachel dragged the redhead away. Something about Harvard Law school. Meg and Cas found themselves drawn to the Stanford University expo.

They chated for a while with the man in charge of giving out the information when he asked:“Did you guys catch the lectures by Cortese and Winchester?”

Meg nodded. “Yeah, Ruby Cortese was amazing on stage.”
The guy grinned. “Glad you like it! They both are Stanford alumni and drop by to give lectures every now and then for different subjects which is cool for the first years.”

“Really?” Meg asked.

“Yup! Winchester has also been talking about taking a couple years away from court and teaching at Stanford.”

Cas raised his eyebrows, but didn't prompt the guy further. Meg obviously didn't care about Sam so she continued to ask about Ruby. The guy gave them extra brochures about applying to Stanford University and Cas thanked him. They called Anna and met up at the lobby. Anna and Rachel were both carrying twin Harvard bags filled with random stuff when they found Cas and Meg.

“Hey guys!” Anna grinned.

“Cute,” Cas said and laughed. He reached out and opened Anna's bag with his pinky to look at her things.

Meg shook her head. “You guys are ridiculous.”

Rachel huffed and Anna stuck her tongue out. “You are just boring and jealous.”

“Which one of you is boring and jealous?”

The four them turned around to see Sam Winchester laughing at then. Anna quickly pointed her finger at Meg who glared back. Sam laughed softly. If rainbows made a sound then that would be it.

“Awesome,” Sam said, still laughing, “I just stopped to ask y'all if you liked my lecture.”

Rachel was the first to answer. “We did, Cas here looked like he was going to stand up and yell encore.”

“I noticed.” Sam grinned and Cas blushed. “My apologies, I don't think we've been introduced.”
Sam held out a hand. “Sam Winchester.”

“Rachel Angelman.”

Sam froze. “As in Naomi Angelman?”

“My mom,” Rachel answered coldly.

“Umm wow!” Sam tried to recuperate his smile. “I didn't know she had a daughter.”

Rachel’s face remained blank. “We like our privacy.”

Sam smiled awkwardly. “Understandable,” he said and added, “I'll leave you guys alone. My flight takes off in a couple of hours and I've gotta go.” He smiled again, this time less awkward. “It was nice meeting y'all.” Sam waved and walked away.

Anna, Cas, and Meg turned around to stare at Rachel.

“Don't ask.”

They didn't ask. They didn't talk about it. Meg didn't even mention it to Cas when they were alone in their room. Cas was still thinking about it while Meg slept in her own bed. Sam Winchester didn't look like someone who would be easily shaken by anyone.

Cas continued thinking about the issue all through the night until exhaustion defeated him.
Chapter 15

They spent the next day just hanging out and discussing what they saw on the expo. This got them into fighting about what the best law school was and later into what field was the best. Cas didn't have an opinion on the later. They went to a club later and got drunk enough to forget what the cub looked like.

Cas woke up hungover with Zep sleeping on top of him. She probably weighed like a ton, but he found the weight oddly comforting. He his head around to see Meg still passed out on the next bed. The clock said 10 am and they had to be at the airport at 1pm. Cas hated himself for drinking.

After a couple of hours filled with groaning and self-hatred, Cas and the girls arrived at the airport and boarded their plane like zombies. Cas just wanted to go home and- home… he just called living with Dean home. Wow. He didn't even know Dean for that long and they didn't even speak to each other that much besides eating together.

“Did anyone call Bella to pick us up?” asked Anna on the seat next to Cas.

Rachel frowned. “Meg said she would do it.”

“Uhh…” Meg shifted in her seat.

Cas rolled his eyes and grabbed his phone, ready to call Dean until he remembered that he was still on a plane.

“Bella isn't gonna come even if we call.” Anna sighed. “She's gonna be pissed that we didn't call her with anticipation.”

“We could pay for a cab…” said Meg.

“I'm out of cash,” Rachel shrugged.

“Guys,” Cas said trying to stop them from arguing.
Meg ignored him and sat up on her seat to lean over and argue. “Anna can lend you some money.”

“Me?” Anna glared at Meg. “It's your fault Bella won't be here.”

“Guys…” Cas repeated.

“My fault? Anyone could've called Bella!”

“But it was your responsibility, not ours.”

Cas cleared his throat loudly and the girls looked at him. “I'm gonna call Dean when we get there, he won't mind.” He saw their expressions change from anger into guilt. “I won't hear any arguments.”

Anna, Meg, and Rachel shared an impressed look at Cas’ commanding tone. They sat back in their seats and didn't bother Cas during the rest of the flight.

They landed and Cas called Dean while they waited for the rest of the passengers to disembark.

“Hello, Dean.”

“Hey, Cas! Are you at the airport?” Dean asked.

“Yeah, I don't want to bother you if you are busy if you have any…” Cas looked around to his friends who weren't paying attention and said, “…business to attend to.”

“Nah, I just came home this morning and I'm ready to chill for a couple days.” Dean grunted in the background and Cas could hear the sound of keys being picked up. “I'm assuming you and your friends need a ride.”

Cas sighed in relief. “Please,” he said. “Meg forgot to ask Bella.”
“Ah, Bella.”

Cas frowned at the phone. Dean's tone had an edge to it that he couldn't pinpoint. “What?”

“Nothing, I just don't like Bella.”

Cas blinked and was about to ask Dean to elaborate on the topic, but Meg tapped him on the shoulder because the others were already grabbing their luggage. Meg motioned at him to stand up and Cas nodded.

“Dean, I need to hang up. I'll see you at the airport.”

“Cool, see ya.” Dean hung up before Cas could reply.

Cas frowned again, Dean's tone was cheery and normal, but he couldn't help but notice a certain tension. He wondered what Dean, the king of Hell, had to do with Bella. To him, they were both a mystery regarding their past and what they wanted from him. Bella seemed like a good enough person, but not a trustworthy one.

“Hey, Clarence, we gotta get going.” Meg knocked shoulders with him and pulled him forwards by his sleeve.

Cas followed her with a frown. “Clarence?” he asked.

Meg pulled him forwards instead of replying, Anna and Rachel laughing behind them. It didn't take long for the group to go past security and grab their luggage despite the Monday crowd. Cas received a text from Dean and he led the girls towards the Impala.

Outside, Dean was leaning against the car when Cas saw him. The crowd waiting for taxis and family members seemed to stay away from Dean. Cas guessed it had something to do with his demonic aura. Dean had a cigarette on his lips, dark sunglasses, and his dark leather jacket. He took a long drag of his cigarette before stepping on it to greet Cas with a grin. Cas would have stopped to gawk at him if it weren't for the girls waving at Dean enthusiastically.
“You didn't tell us Dean was a model, Cas,” Meg whispered.

“He isn't,” Cas replied in a confused tone.

Anna huffed. “Not what she meant, honey.”

“Shit, look at those arms!” Rachel whispered back. “His jacket looks so tight around all that beef.”

Meg laughed. “You need a cold shower, girl.”

Cas was blushing by the time he was within hearing distance from Dean. Dean walked up to him and pulled him into a strong hug. Cas grunted by the force of Dean practically holding him in a chokehold against his chest. Dean smelt like leather, smoke, and pine.

“Good to see you, buddy!” Dean clapped Cas on the shoulder and let go of him to greet the girls. “Hello, ladies. My name is Dean.”

“Anna, Rachel, and Meg,” Cas pointed at each girl as they shook hands with Dean.

“Ah, the pot girl.” Dean winked at Meg. “I've heard a lot about you.” Dean grabbed his keys from his pocket and motioned for them to follow him to the trunk. “Let me help you with your bags.” Dean approached Meg and offered to grab one of her suitcases.

“Such a gentleman.” Meg winked at Dean whose grin grew wolfishly at the sight.

Dean and Cas packed everything into the trunk without a word. The girls piled up into the back seat with Meg in the middle, waiting for them. Dean closed the trunk and smiled at him. Cas tilted his head to the side in confusion; why was Dean smiling at him? Dean chuckled and shook his head.

“What?” Cas asked.
“You look like a bird when you do that.” Dean smiled gently and shrugged. “It's adorable.”

“What?” Cas asked again, taken aback.

Dean chuckled and walked away from him.

Once in traffic, Cas was happy to let Dean turn up the volume on the music. Dean was humming lightly and the girls behind them were talking amongst themselves. His peace ended when Meg got a text from Bella.

“It's, Bella. She says that she's busy with her parent's business so she won't be able to pick us up.” Meg rolled her eyes. “Too damn late for that.”

“Well, we are lucky that Dean was kind enough to give us a ride.” Anna said in her most polite tone.

Cas turned around in his seat and wasn’t surprised to see the blush coloring her cheeks. He couldn't blame her. Cas turned his attention towards Dean. He was smiling at them through the rearview mirror and Cas couldn't help but stare at the soft look on his eyes. He sighed and focused on the road. People weren't joking when they said that distance made the heart grow fonder… or was it absence? Either way, Cas was noticing Dean more and that was weird and wrong in so many ways. He couldn't let himself forget that the gorgeous man with green eyes was a demon. Wait… gorgeous?

Rachel hummed in confusion and that pulled Cas away from his thoughts. “You've met Bella? Why?” she asked with a frown.

Dean's smile fell. “I knew her parents.”

Rachel blinked. “Oh.”

“Her parents?” Cas asked carefully. He looked at Dean's hardened expression and looked back at the girls who looked guilty. “What happened?”

“Someone broke into their place and murdered them,” Meg replied briskly. “Police never found out
who did it, but it was all over the news.”

Cas gasped and realized why no one else seemed eager to tell him about it. “That's horrible.” What else could you say to something like that?

Dean shrugged. “She doesn't seem to be bothered by it.”

“Dean! That's a terrible thing to say!”

“Doesn't mean it isn't true.” Dean clenched his jaw and eyed Cas out of the corner of his eyes. “And you should know by now that I'm not a nice person.”

Cas felt Dean had slapped him in the face. All the nice things he had been feeling about Dean fell apart like leaves on the fall. “Don't worry, I don't think you'll let me forget.”

“What does that even mean?” Dean huffed.

“It means that you are an asshole!” Cas shouted.

“Well excuse me for hurting your feelings, princess!” Dean snapped back.

“I'm not the one making a huge deal of it!”

“You are -- shit!” Dean’s arm quickly went up as he struggled to swerve the car to the side.

Cas frowned at the protective hand on his chest. He looked up when he heard a cars honking and the girls screaming. Dean had managed to dodge a van that had lost control over the highway. It had crashed into the car in front of the Impala and hit yet another car in front of it. Dean slowed down and Cas was able to see people running out from their cars to check on the van’s driver. Cas sighed in relief when he saw that the driver was alive.

“Holy shit,” Meg whispered.
“Is everyone okay?” Dean asked, his hand still on Castiel's chest.

Meg checked on Anna and Rachel before replying. “Yeah, you can let go of your boyfriend now.”

Dean snatched his hand back with a tsk. “Not my boyfriend.” Dean placed both hands on the wheel and glared at the road.

Meg laughed. “God, you are so grumpy. It's adorable.”

“I'm not adorable,” said Dean with a pot.

Cas chuckled nervously.

He could still feel Dean's hand on his chest.
Chapter 16

Chapter Notes

2 things:

1. I'm sorry.
2. October 18th is my birthday!

"Goodbye Cas! Goodbye Dean! Thanks for the ride!"

Cas waved at the girls as they closed the door to their house. Dean and Cas had remained in the car after Cas had refused to come inside and the girls had threatened Dean's life when he offered to carry their bags. Cas was pretty sure that if anyone was going to figure out how to kill a demon, it would be them.

“About-”

“No,” Cas interrupted Dean. “Don't apologize to me.”

Dean smiled. “You don't know what I was gonna say.”

“I sometimes forget that you are a demon,” Cas confessed. “When you are smiling… it makes you look… human.”

Dean tensed up for a moment before taking a deep breath. Dean looks so sad as he drove the Impala towards their apartment building. “I'm sorry.”

Cas frowned. “About what?”

Dean shook his head. “When I'm with you, I too forget what I am for a few seconds.” Dean gulped. “And then it all comes crashing back and I take it out on you.”
“You…?” Cas trailed off.

“Crowley says you are making me weak.” Dean cleared his throat. “Perhaps he is right.” Dean glared.

Cas sat back in shock. He began overthinking about what Dean was saying and about what would come next.

Dean seemed to notice this and said, “We still have a deal, Cas. I'm not going anywhere. We Winchester boys are like glitter, hard to get rid off.”

Cas was astounded by that. He wanted to argue that he didn't want to get rid of him. He wanted to say that he was better off without Dean by his side. He wanted to argue that he hated the demon. But Dean was smiling sadly like a kicked puppy, like he knew Cas didn't really want him. It was tearing Cas apart to see Dean being so vulnerable while all he wanted to do was rip him to shreds.

Cas took a deep breath and nodded. “Thank you, Dean.”

Dean tensed up. “Don't thank me, I'm still dragging your soul to Hell.”

“What will happen to me in Hell?” Cas asked gently.

Dean hummed like he was trying to think. “You will be tortured for eternity unless you decide to come to the dark side.”

Cas was about to ask more when he realized Dean said something important. Shit. “Winchester?”

“Fuck, I said that, didn't I?” Dean bent down until his chin was pressed against the steering wheel. “Shit.”

“Dean, what's wrong?” Cas slowly and carefully placed his hand on Dean's shoulder. Dean didn't reject the touch.
“Can't believe I let that slip, my last name.”

“And what's so…” Cas gasped. “Sam Winchester is your older brother.”

Dean's eyes turned black as he drove the Impala to a stop in the middle of the road. Cars honked their horns at them and drivers yelled obscenities at them, but Dean paid them no heed as he was busy choking Cas with his forearm.

“Where did you hear that name!” Dean hissed, spit coming out of his mouth.

“I- I met him in Ca- California! Please, don't hurt me, Dean. Please don't.” Cas closed his eyes, trying to forget the cold dark gaze from the demon. Dean snarled and Cas flinched away with no results. “Please,” he begged again and again until he felt a single tear rolling down his cheek.

“Fuck,” Dean whispered and pulled back.

Cas opened his eyes just in time to see Dean raising his hand towards his face. Cas’ entire body flinched away from him, but that didn't stop Dean. When Cas felt Dean's fingertips on his cheek, he wasn't expecting Dean to wipe away his tears with a tenderness that was almost…

“Dean?” Cas opened his eyes to Dean's guilt stricken face.

“I'm sorry for scaring you.” Dean chuckled darkly. “Demon… can’t help it sometimes.”

Cas slowly reached out to touch Dean's shoulder again. “It's okay, Dean.”

Dean brushed off his hand gently. “It's not okay, Cas.” He huffed and turned on the Impala's engine once again. Cas was startled by the loud pour of the engine, having not noticed when Dean turned it off. “I'm in control here,” Dean said in a soft voice that Cas realized was not aimed at him. “I'm in control here.” Dean took a deep breath and bit his lip worriedly. “I'm sorry if I hurt you. I'll check your neck when he get home.” ‘Home’, Cas repeated on his head like a hopeless romantic. “This is not an excuse, but it's an explanation— my behavior changes when I spend my time mostly surrounded by demons. Without you…” Dean trailed off and his eyebrows rose as he figured out an answer for the question that had plagued him for months. “With you, I remember what being human felt like and I forget that I'm the king.” Dean’s face showed many conflicting emotions, but Cas caught the one Dean tried to hide the most: hope. “Also, I'm the older brother, not Sam. He's just
ridiculously tall.”

Cas frowned. “But you don’t look older than twenty-five and that's stretching it. Sam Winchester in his early thirties.”

“My body is actually twenty-two, not that you asked.” Dean smirked when Cas gasped and leaned forward like an excited puppy at the personal information Dean was offering. They didn't talk much, and Cas had never asked questions. “I'm four years older than Sammy and I used to be the taller one even when I… when I…” Dean deflated and the smile, that had taken control of Dean's features, deflated as well. “I don't….”

“Dean, I understand.” Cas smiled at Dean reassuringly. “We don't have to talk about it until you are ready.”

“Great, I'll put in my calendar.” Dean rolled his eyes. “How does October 18, 2117 sound? You think you'll be free for a couple days? We can start growing our hair now so that we can braid each other's hair.”

“You are an assbutt.” Cas tried to glare at Dean, but the soft chuckles coming out from his body weren't helping him.

“We can also work in your trash talking and get nail polish that matches our eyes. I'm thinking baby blue and hardcore black.”

“I think candy apple green would fit you so much better.”

Dean laughed loudly at that and tried not to look at Cas to hide his blush. Cas didn't fail to notice the pink cheeks, but that wasn't what called his attention. He was seeing a relaxed man, laughing with his entire body at a joke he made. It was like watching the sun between dissipating black clouds. Dean shook his head with a wide grin and said something important. Cas didn't care, he was still watching how green Dean's eye looked under the sunlight and how his smile revealed his sharp canines.

“We could also get a gay movie!”

Cas flinched so hard that Dean’s smile fell. Cas didn’t want to believe it, but Dean had used that
word as an insult.

Dean panicked. “Unless you are gay, of course. Not that being gay is wrong. I mean… as long as it's not me, you know? Not that— that I don't want to watch a gay movie with you. I mean, I don't want to. I mean, I wouldn't mind it if you wanted to watch it. I— fuck.”

“You should stop talking now,” said Cas, his voice slow and cold to make sure that Dean understood.

He felt angry, but not in the way that made you burn with wrath. Cas felt cold, contemplative, and yet, he wasn't thinking much. He heard Dean apologizing in the distance and he just nodded to make him shut up. He didn't need an apology, he didn't need a fight. Dean was anxiously turning his head to watch him from time to time, but Cas was sure that his face remained expressionless.

No, he wasn't angry. Cas was hurt and disappointed.

Soon, the car stopped and Dean killed the engine. He turned his body to face Cas fully, his face soft and worried. Cas looked up, realizing that they had arrived at their apartment. He removed the lap belt with haste and opened the door rapidly. He would have taken off running if Dean hadn't pulled him back into the car by the arm.

“Cas.”

“Let me go, Dean!” Cas struggled out his grasp and got out of the car.

“Cas, are you-?”

Cas scoffed and turned around with a dark look in his eyes. “I don't know, Dean!” Cas grabbed the door and said, “I don't know and it shouldn't matter to you whether I like dick or-”

“Cas! I was going to ask if you were okay.” Dean's face lost all it's color and he physically pulled away from Cas. “I'm just….” Dean trailed off and wrangled his hands.

Cas frowned at the reaction, but didn't stay there long enough to give it much thought. He made his
way to the stairs instead of the elevator and climbed all the way up to the roof.

He is not angry.

He is not angry.

He is not angry.

“Fuck!” Cas kicked a lawn chair and sat down on the edge of the building. He ran his fingers through his hair and scowled at the setting sun.

It was like the universe was laughing at him and showing off it's beauty. “I was going to ask if you were okay” my ass. Dean was gonna ask if he was gay and then be all macho about it. He could see Dean being the asshole says “okay, but don't flirt with me” and that's what angered him the most. He cared about what Dean though and that wasn't helping his mental state. Cas couldn't deny that he was angry. He was pissed.

“Cas?” Dean yelled from the stairs.

Cas heard and purposely faced away from the stairs and to the sun.

“Cas?” Dean yelled again. This time closer.

Cas bit the inside of his cheek and focused on the sun. His eyes were starting to sting with the strength of the wind hitting his face and the emotions bubbling up under his skin.

“Cas… please look at me.”

Cas closed his eyes in anger. Dean was right there behind him. Cas had a leg over the edge and both hands gripped the cement he was sitting on. He heard Dean's careful steps towards him and he hated how hesitant Dean sounded. He was approaching him like you would an injured animal. Cas felt his blood boil inside him and when Dean grabbed him by the shoulder, Cas reacted.
He didn't exactly aimed to punch Dean, he wanted to push Dean’s hand away. Something went wrong with that and suddenly…

“Cas!”

He was falling.
“Cas!”

He was falling.

Holy shit.

He was falling.

Cas closed his eyes. The air was thin. The building was really fucking tall and the air was thin. He was seeing black spots even through his closed eyelids and he was falling.

He passed out.

He was falling and his brain defence mechanisms was to lose consciousness. It was actually a good idea. Plummeting to the hard sidewalk didn't seem like an enjoyable experience, he was all up for dying and not feeling anything.

“I got you.”

Who said that? Suddenly, the air wasn't so thin anymore, but he knew his body was still moving at an incredible speed. He was still falling, but he could breath and there was something wrapped around his back and waist. That something was pushing his front against something warm and hard. He couldn't breath for a whole new reason now, his chest was unable to expand because of the new pressure and he needed to know what was happening because he was now falling and having a panic attack mid air.

He opened his eyes to Dean's stern face and black eyes.

Dean had his an arm wrapped around his waist and the other was cradling his face against the crook of his neck. Dean wasn't looking at him, he was looking straight ahead like a man on a mission.
They weren't falling.

Cas looked his surroundings and noticed a pair of dark wings. They were ugly and leathery, like a bat’s wings but with a thicker and more texturized membrane. Cas shivered at the sight, both in disgust and in awe.

Dean had wings.

Cas felt something wrapping itself around his legs; like a snake, thick and strong. Cas didn't need to crane his neck to know that it was a black tail. Cas his his face on Dean's neck and realized that Dean was trying to pull him closer so that Cas’ legs didn't dangle and slow him down. He tensed his muscles and tried to adopt a position that would help Dean.

Dean squeezed Cas’ waist in thanks and attempted to flap his wings. Instead of gaining altitude or speed, Dean lost control momentarily. He cursed and tensed up, Cas felt the air escape from his lungs as Dean squeezes him again. Dean spread out his wings and they continued to glide down to the floor on a steady path. Cas had lost all senses, he was too shocked to move or think.

Dean continued to curse under his breath as they continued to head towards the ground. He didn’t try flapping anymore, just angled his wings to slow down as much as possible without losing his momentum.

Suddenly, the ground was a couple feet away from them and Dean closed his wings. He wrapped the leathery membrane around Cas and twisted them midair so that Cas was on top.

They hit the floor and Dean grunted as they slid across the sidewalk until they hit a wall and Dean was forced spread his wings.

“Fucking useless stinking pieces of shit.” Dean tightened his arms around Cas as his wings flapped uselessly against the wall and sidewalk. “Cas?” Dean used a hand to make Cas look him. He caressed the side of his face as he checked for injuries despite knowing that he was the only one hurt. “God, I'm so sorry. Please, forgive me. I didn't mean to push you.” Dean’s eyes turned black and pleading. “I’m such a fucking brute and an idiot. I should've ignored your contract. I should've passed it on to someone else.”

“You have horns.”
Dean froze. “What?” Dean took a second to process what Cas had said and then nodded. “Yeah,” he said as he shifted their position so that he had a leg between Cas’ and his wings weren’t being squished by either of them. “I was told they are Markhor horns. I don’t know what that means, tho.” Dean shrugged and his eyes went back to green.

“Markhor?” Cas looked at Dean's horns. They were tall and impressed. They spiralled up and outwards, with red stripes contrasting against black bone. The tips looked sharp enough to stab someone and the bone near Dean's skull was thick and it blended in perfectly against Deans forehead, forming intrinsical patterns in red.

“Don't look at me like that.” Dean place a hand against his forehead to hide the base of the horns and kept his other hand on Cas’ waist; tail tightly wrapped around his leg.

“Like what?” Cas gently placed a hand at either side of Dean and lifted his body to see Dean’s face better.

“Like you are not afraid.”

“I'm not.” Cas sat up before Dean could argue. He looked around, aware of the people walking next to them like they weren't there. “How?”

“Perks of being a demon.” Dean sat up without releasing Cas’ leg with his tail. “Come on, let's go. Just don't let go of my tail.”

“Ok.” Cas didn't need to ask why, he just obeyed.

They fumbled a bit as they stood. Cas had to help Dean up because the weight of the wings was pulling him down. Dean managed to keep his tail wrapped around Cas’ leg. His tail was black and smooth, with a similar swirling pattern decorating it. Dean’s moved his tail higher to be able to walk comfortably. Cas blushed when the tip touched the inside of his thigh.

Dean grabbed Cas by the shoulder and led him towards their building. People seemed to automatically make way for them without realizing why they did that. It was funny because some people bumped into each other in confusion. Cas guessed that this what being Zep was like.

Dean opened the door to their building's lobby and closed the door behind them. There was a man
wearing a suit leaning against the mailboxes. He was smiling down at the newspaper until he saw Cas and Dean walk in.

Cas immediately panicked. A human was looking at Dean and they would see Dean's dark horns, tail, and wings. He took a step back and pressed his back to Dean’s chest in what he realized was a defensive gesture. Dean pulled him even closer with a hand on his shoulder. Cas felt the tail around his leg tightening it's hold.

“Well, well, well.” The man chuckled and snapped his fingers. The newspaper went up in flames and Cas gasped loudly. “So, this is your boy toy?”

Dean growled. “What do you want, Crowley?”

“We had an issue with one of your pet projects.” Crowley tucked his hands in his pockets and walked towards Dean with a smirk. “Logically, you know what we had to do?”

“What the fuck did you do, Crowley?” Dean pushed Cas behind him and flared his wings, careful to keep his tail on Cas. “I told you not to touch what's mine.”

Crowley chuckled and tried to get a look at Cas from behind Dean’s shoulder. “Demons are very possessive, kid. Be careful with this one.”

“Don't ignore me, Crowley.” Dean stepped forward and stretched his tail to not drag Cas along. Cas followed anyway.

“Your pet decided death wasn't such a huge deal and decided to take down a couple demons along for the ride.” Crowley glared at Dean. “What were you thinking of, huh? She was unstable and-”

“I was thinking that I'm the king and that I can do whatever the fuck I want with past contracts.”

Crowley scoffed. “You are only king because you had a leg over papa Cain.”

Dean grabbed Crowley by the neck and lifted him off the ground. “No, I'm king because otherwise I would have already murdered everyone out of boredom.” Dean wanted to push Crowley against a
wall and beat the shit out of him until his vessel was barely recognizable. To do that, he would have
to let go of Cas. “Who was it?” Dean tightened his grip on Crowley’s neck, making it impossible for
the demon to talk. Dean itched to punch Crowley but the warmth of Cas being pressed against him
was still too fresh in his memory.

Dean dropped Crowley and he coughed out blood. Dean rolled his eyes at the dramatics and waited
for Crowley to regain his breath. He would have kicked Crowley if it weren't for Cas touching his
waist with a shy hand. The kid probably didn't even know he was doing it.

“It was Charlie.”
"Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck." Dean gripped his hair and kicked the coffee table over.

Cas wasn’t wearing his glasses, but he heard Zep whining under the same table Dean kicked. The demon seemed to realize his mistake and fell to his knees muttering sweet apologies under his breath. They didn't seem to work because the next thing Cas heard was the quick patter of Zep’s claws as she ran away into Cas’ room. Dean cursed under his breath and remained on the eyes floor.

Cas could see Dean's horns, wings, and tail. They showed more emotion than Dean’s facial expressions ever did. His tail was frantically moving up and down, hitting the floor repeatedly with a loud thud. Dean's wings were tightly pressed to his back, like he wanted to hide them desperately.

Cas did the only thing he could think off and placed a soft hand on Dean's wing. It felt really similar to skin, but softer and more delicate. Cas supposed that's what a bat’s wing must feel like. Dean tensed and stilled.

“You don't have to do that?”

“Do what?” Cas asked, wanting Dean to explain himself.

“Touch me like that.”

Cas frowned at the choice of words and used his free hand to touch the other wing.

“Like this?” Cas didn't understand.

“Like I'm not disgusting,” Dean muttered. He stood up and walked away.

Cas followed him to the kitchen and once again placed his hands on Dean's wings. This time being more careful and gentle. Dean gasped loudly and Cas let go out of fear of hurting Dean. “Shit, I
apologize if I hurt you, Dean.” Cas took a step back when Dean turned around.

"I don't have time for this, Cas.” Dean dragged his hand through his hair, cursing when he touched his own horns. “Charlie, I have to… have to…”

“Who's Charlie?” Cas asked.

“She's my friend too.” Dean gulped and looked down, horns coming dangerously close to Cas. “I knew her in school before I dropped out and became… this.” Dean pulled at his tail like he wanted to rip it off. “She made a deal with a demon.” Dean took a deep breath and closed his eyes. “Her mom got herself in an accident and was technical brain dead, but in a coma. Charlie sold her soul in exchange for her life.”

Cas hummed. “Crowley mentioned a project to help her.”

“Yes, she got to live 10 more years with her mom, but time is running out and she's due for a payment.” Dean shrugged. “That's where I come in.”

“Dean, what did you do?” Cas took a step forward and pushed Dean towards the high chairs on the kitchen island. Dean took a seat and Cas stood in front of him.

“I have a new rule to help good humans who don't deserve what's coming from them.” Dean frowned. “This kinda backfired when a son of a bitch or two convinced me they were actual good people or that they signed their deals without really knowing what they were doing due to their age or other factors.”

“What do they have to do?” Cas placed a hand on Dean's knee. He was surprised when Dean relaxed and parted his knees slightly as if to give Cas more space.

“They have to work for me and use their skills to either hunt down debtors, fulfil other contracts, or do me favors.” Dean scratched the base of his horns absentmindedly. “They chose what they want to do and Charlie… fuck… she chose to complete contracts.”

“Did she know?”
“I never told her I became the fucking king of Hell, Cas.” Dean threw his arms up and his wings reacted too. He accidentally hit the kitchen island and the fridge with them and yelped. “Ouch, sorry.”

“What are you apologizing for?” Cas tilted his head to the side.

“I-” Dean looked away. “I should just go hide in my room or something.” Dean stood and would have fled if Cas didn't run after him.

Dean turned to close his door, but Cas was running like a damn football player. Dean of course was much stronger, but the demon didn't want to hurt the human. Cas tackled Dean into what turned out to be a very tight hug. He wrapped his lean arms around Dean's waist and pressed his face to Dean’s shoulder.

“Stop hiding from me.”

Dean gasped softly and tensed his muscles. “You don't find me disgusting?”

Cas looked up. “No, I think you are kinda cool to be honest.” Cas shrugged. “Kinda remind me of Toothless but with bigger horns.”

Dean chuckled and finally wrapped an arm around Cas, touch almost nonexistent. “From fucking How To Train Your Dragon?” Dean wrapped his other arm around Cas and relaxed his wings, allowing himself to enjoy the hug and wrap the black leather wings around them like a cold blanket. “Only you, Cas.”

“You made me watch that movie, Dean.” Cas muttered. “It's entirely your fault.”

“Just like everything else.” Dean hugged him tighter. “Sometimes I just want to leave you alone, but then I remember we have a contract.”

“What happens if you do leave?”

Dean shook his head. “The contract is tied directly to me. I couldn't break it even if I tried.” Dean
swallowed. “I can't explain it.” He grimaced and tensed up again, slowly and gently trying to pry Cas away from him.

Cas frowned but nodded. “Dean, it's okay.” Cas glared when Dean scoffed. “I mean, the fault falls on both of us, so you shouldn't blame yourself.”

“Yeah right.” Dean angrily wiped his face with a hand suddenly feeling annoyed and exhausted. He kinda wanted to go back to hugging Cas, but that was weird and… why was it weird? “Look at me and tell me I shouldn't blame myself.”

“Is this about your horns, wings, and tail?” Cas raised an eyebrow and watched Dean's tail twitch nervously. “If you are so insecure about them, then why don't you hide them?”

“Because I can't!” Dean snapped. “Not until a certain amount of time passes and I don't need you to keep looking at me with pity.”

“You think I pity you, my lord?” Cas scoffed. “Oh please.”

“Don't call me that.”

“My lord? My liege? Sir? King?” Cas took several steps forward.

Dean couldn't take it anymore and pushed Cas against the wall. “Shut up.”

“Make me.” Cas tried to straighten up.

Dean sighed and let go of him. Cas knew Dean wanted to go away so he grabbed him by the horns. Dean growled and his eyes went black.

“I'm not afraid of you, Dean.”

“Yeah? You won't be saying that when I rip off your throat.” Dean grunted and stepped away. “Just you wait, Castiel.”
Cas never thought the use of his full name would hurt as much as it did then. Dean growled under his breath and left the apartment. Cas didn't run after him.

Chapter End Notes

The thing about Dean's projects will be important later ;) Oh! And I apologise for the short chapters, this is the only way I seem to be able to update fast for y'all.
Chapter 19

“Shut up!”

“Make me.”

Dean leaned in and closed the distance between them. Cas gasped and Dean took advantage of Cas’ open mouth to lick the inside of his mouth. His tongue was inhumanly warm and sharp and Cas couldn't help but whimper and try to pull Dean closer. Dean held onto his wrists tightly and let Cas squirm under his grasp for a few seconds before giving into his own desires and closing the distance between them.

“Can you be quiet now?” Dean whispered against lips.

Cas nodded silently and he could feel Dean's lips form a grin. Dean pulled back and took a deep breath, demonic black eyes filled with lust.

“Good.”

Cas frowned. He didn't want to see black, he wanted to see green eyes and soft laughter. He wanted to see Dean as he had been during the car ride when he sang off key and danced in his seat.

“What's wrong, sweetheart?” Dean growled and leaned forward to bite Cas’ neck, hard and painful. “I thought you wanted me to fuck you?”

“Wh-what?” Cas squirmed and this time it wasn't in pleasure but in fear.

Dean growled and pulled back. “I thought I told you to shut up, bitch.”

Dean let go of his wrists to pull them behind his back. His tail wrapped itself around his wrists as Dean used his hands to force Cas into a kneeling position. The tail pulled his wrists high up in his back in a painful position.
“Dean, you’re hurting me.” Cas struggled to stand up but Dean's tail and hands on his shoulders had him pinned down. “Dean.”

Dean released one shoulder to undo his belt. “Shut up and suck my dick.”

That's when Zep barged into the room and sat on Cas’ chest. She licked the sweat off his face and Cas woke up screaming and kicking. Zep thought it was a game and began jumping on his bead and barking happily.

“Just a dream,” Cas whispered to himself.

X

Dean disappeared for a few days.

Cas ignored that and tried to live his life like normal. He went to class, studied for tests, and read books. On the fourth day of Dean's disappearance, he came back. Cas was laying down on the couch reading a book with the Netflix menu on the TV. Dean dropped his jacket on the hanger and walked up to Cas.

“Lift your legs.”

“What?” Cas asked as he did just that.

Dean grunted and sat down on the couch. He grabbed Cas’ ankles and placed them on his lap. He kicked off his boots and placed his socked feet on the coffee table.

“Remote?”

Cas handed the remote to Dean with wide eyed surprise. He noticed that there was an odd red scar on Dean’s forearm. It looked like a weird smiley face. Cas didn't think it was important.
“Thanks.” Dean relaxed back on the couch and looked for something on the TV. He settled for Brooklyn nine-nine and dropped the remote on a throw pillow. He placed his hands on Cas’ legs.

Cas tried to keep reading but he was confused and oddly happy. He supposed he would be angry when Dean came back, but he missed the demon. Dean had been away because he needed time to be in a more controlled mental state and Cas understood that. Cas wondered if Dean had fixed his problems with Charlie, but he knew that asking wasn’t a choice. Dean was giggling at something on the TV now and his thumb was tracing circles on Cas’ exposed skin.

Cas relaxed under Dean’s thumb. He closed his eyes and fell asleep with Dean laughing softly at the opposite end of the couch.

X

Dean turned off the TV once he was sure Cas was asleep. Zep was under the coffee table wagging her tail at him with a her chin on her paws. She was being apprehensive about approaching him. Dean sighed and looked at Cas.

He was hugging the textbook like a pillow and he was drooling a bit. His hair was a black mess and his eyes were surrounded by dark circles from studying so much.

“I can’t believe this nerd grabbed me by the horns.” Dean pursed his lips and laid his back on the couch; his hand still on Cas’ ankle rubbing lazy circles. “Fuck.” Zep let out a whine and Dean smiled. “Fine, come up here, but don't wake him up.”

Zep snorted and nodded. She crawled over Cas and settled her weight between his legs and the backrest. Dean put an arm across her large body. Careful not to pet her too much because her tail was very close to Cas’ face.

“Do you think he knows what he did?” Dean asked Zep and she didn’t reply. “Yeah, me neither. Either way, he’s either very brave or really stupid.” Dean snorted. “He would be a great Winchester.” Zep huffed at that.

X
Dean acted like there was nothing wrong; a fake it till you make it attitude. He made breakfast for Cas and Zep in the morning while singing Def Leppard.

Cas walked into the kitchen with closed eyes. He went straight to the coffee pot and hummed in appreciation when he realized it was full. He didn't seem to be aware of Dean standing there watching him.

“Good morning, sunshine.”

“What's so good about it?” Cas mumbled.

“Pancakes.” Dean slapped Cas on the back, hard enough to almost make him drop the coffee pot. “Look alive.”

Cas took a deep breath and helped Dean set up the table. They ate in silence until Dean's phone rang. Dean grunted and answered the phone with his mouth full.

“You found her?” Dean asked. Cas perked up without looking at Dean. “Good, I'll…” Dean took a deep breath, “I'll take care of her.” Cas looked at him. “What?” Cas shrugged. “It was… they found Charlie's body.”

“What are you going to do?” Cas asked gently.

Dean shrugged. “A funeral.”

Cas nodded. “If you want any company…” he trailed off on purpose.

Dean grunted. “No, the place will be crawling with demons and I don't want you anywhere near them.”

Cas glared at Dean. “Funny, all things considered.” He gulped the last of his now cold coffee and stood up.
“Cas.”

“No,” Cas said before Dean could say anything. He headed to the bathroom and wasn't surprised see Dean already in there with his arms crossed. “I'm gonna miss my buss, Dean. Move.”

“Not until you aren't pissed at me.”

Cas made a face. “That's ridiculous, Dean.” He pushed him with his shoulder and grabbed his toothbrush. “I'm not angry.”

Dean grunted. “Alright, you are butthurt that I'm not taking you.”

“I haven't even said anything! He-”

“She,” Dean corrected.

“She's your business and I'm cool with whatever you want to do. I understand why you wouldn't want me to be there with you, Dean, but since I'm not going anywhere I'd like to brush my fucking teeth and go to class.”

With that said, Cas pushed Dean away and closed the door. He began to brush his teeth and flinched when he heard Dean slam the front door.
"GOOD MORNING, CLARENCE! Okay. Who the fuck pissed on your corn flakes?"

“I'm okay, Meg. Good morning.” Cas pushed past her and into their classroom. He took a seat next to the one Meg and the girls had already claimed.

“Was it your male model?” Meg asked.

Rachel dropped what she was doing to give Cas her full attention. “Are we talking about Dean?”

Rachel asked with a smirk.

“Ooh I too wanna talk about Dean!” Hannah exclaimed. “What did he do?”

Cas glared at the three of them. “I hate all of you.” The girls grinned and took their seats in such a way that they were surrounding him. “Fine, we had a fight this morning.”

“I know you didn't mean it, but it sure sounds like you fought in bed. Go on. Don't mind me,” Meg said.

Cas rolled his eyes. “Get your mind out of the gutter.”

Hannah scoffed. “You know better than to ask her that, Cas.”

“A friend of his died and he was upset. I- I wanted to accompany him to… see her, but Dean said he didn't want me there.” The girls hissed as if in pain and Cas shook his head. “Not like that. The people who are going to be there are some real assholes and not his family. I accepted Dean’s reasoning, but he thought I was being passive aggressive.”

“You are disappointed,” Meg concluded. She nodded at him, suddenly looking wise beyond her years.
“I guess?” Cas shrugged.

He was beginning to feel uncomfortable with all the attention so he looked away to indicate that storytime was over. The girls accepted it and moved their chairs back to their original position. It didn't take long for the professor to come in and start the class.

X

Dean came back with groceries and pie. He looked apologetic about the whole Charlie issue, but still unwilling to talk about it. He made dinner and sat down with Cas.

It would've been a perfect moment for them to talk, but Dean’s phone rang. He answered angrily and crushed the phone between his hands on accident. Dean cursed and went to the kitchen counter to pick another burner phone. He changed the SIM cards and apologized to Cas before leaving.

He hadn't said anything, but Cas knew that it was about Charlie.

X

Bella was different. She was kinder and more present at home with the girls and Cas. It was like a weight on her shoulders had been lifted. Cas and Hannah theorized about this.

They came up blank.

It wasn't until a couple weeks that she sent an email to Cas about a summer internship at her firm. It wasn't exactly her firm, but she had her last name on the wall a seat on the board waiting for her.

Talbot & Roman was the biggest firm on the state with a couple branches on DC and California. Dick Roman was the managing partner and Bella worked as a consultant until it was time for her to step up as name partner.

Cas wanted to ask about that, but he figured it had something to do with her deceased parents. It
wouldn't be polite to ask about such things.

Meg and Cas took her offer gladly. Hannah and Rachel declined because they already had been accepted somewhere else. Bella wasn't angry at all.

It was odd. It almost looked like Bella was being kind to all of them out of the goodness in her heart. Meg didn't seem to mind the odd behaviour, but Cas wanted to know more about it.

X

Dean returned for short periods of time, looking stressed and somber. The first few times, Cas tried to ask, but Dean just shook his head and turned on the TV with a beer on his hand. Cas left him alone and sat besides him. Dean seemed to appreciate the company and shifted to give him more space. They never touched or had a real conversation.

Cas understood Dean's reluctance to speak and tried to focus on the Dr. Sexy episode instead. He was beginning to understand the plot when Dean asked about college. It seemed like Dean needed to talk about things that didn't relate to Hell. Cas was happy to offer that distraction.

Cas talked and talked about campus, his professors, his friends, and whatever else he could think about. He also told Dean about the internship at Talbot & Roman.

Dean replied with a “that Bella friend of yours finally did some good.”

Cas was confused about it, so he changed the topic to his applications for Stanford Law and Harvard Law.

“I don't think I'll get the full ride to Harvard, but Stanford looks like a safer choice for-”

“Sammy went to Stanford,” Dean said, cutting the conversation to an abrupt halt.

Cas opened his mouth to say anything, but he wasn't even used to talking to people in general. Dean sighed and met his eyes.
“Look, Cas.” Dean turned off the TV. “If anyone asks you about my last name you lie, okay? I'm already pouring you in enough danger by hanging out with you, but you've got Zep with you and I wouldn't be able to give Sammy a hellhound.”

“I understand, Dean. Don't worry about it.”

Cas frowned.

“What?”

“Is the apartment under your real name?” Cas asked.

“It's under ‘Dean Smith’s and so is the Impala and everything else.” Dean shrugged add turned on the TV.

“Smith?” Cas raised an eyebrow.

“Yeah, as in Smith & Wesson,” Dean replied cheerfully.

Cas rolled his eyes. He didn't know what the was. “You should have picked Wesson instead. Smith sounds like a fake name.”

Dean scoffed. “Your name sounds like a fake name, angel.”

“Don't call me that!” Cas pouted.

Dean's eyes brightened. “You don't like it? Oh boy! Am I gonna use that.”

“Dean,” Cas whined, stretching out the E and throwing himself back on the couch.
Dean was drawn to him immediately. He stood up from the single couch and went to his. Dean lifted his legs and sat down on the end, making sure that Cas was comfortable with his feet raised.

“What's wrong, angel?”

“I should've asked for a pet instead of a friend,” Cas snapped. Feeling content with his feet on Dean's lap.

“You got two for one with me and Zep, angel.” Dean grinned.

X

The following days went back to normal. Dean had left for two days and came back with food instead of apologies. Cas joked that he would need to join a gym if Dean kept feeding him like that.

“Yeah? I can magic awat all that extra fat with a snap of my fingers,” Dean had joked. “Although I think you look fine.”

“Uhm.” Cas blushed and looked away.

Dean laughed. “Oh Hell! That's an adorable blush!”

“I'm not blushing.” Cas took a bite of his burrito. Exported straight from Mexico.

“Yes you are, angel, and it's a good look on ya.” Dean grinned and took a bite from his own tacos.

“Shut up, Dean.”

X

“I see you've made up with your male model,” Meg teased at lunch with the girls. “How is he?”
“He’s fine,” Cas grumbled.

“I'll say he's more than fine, angel.”

Cas raised an eyebrow. “Not you too.”

“What?” Bella asked. She raised an unimpressed eyebrow.

“Nothing.” Cas blushed and went back to his meal. “Just don't call me that.”

Hannah grinned like a wolf. “Does Dean call you that?”

Cas slapped his hand on the table, hard enough to make them look up, but not enough to make a scene. “Will you stop that? There's nothing between me and Dean! He's very straight and I'm not interesting in anything right now.”

“So… he does call you angel?” Bella asked, still unimpressed. She hadn't even met the man, but he knew how the girls liked to gossip.

Cas sighed.

Chapter End Notes

I’m so sorry for not posting an update sooner.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!