Make Me Remember

by SummerRaine14

Summary

After the car crash in Emmerdale, Aaron ends up in a coma. When he finally wakes up, there's one thing that makes it all worse...he doesn't remember the last 6 years of his life.

Notes

Another amazing prompt from Jamesm97

"After the car crash, after a few days of Aaron being in a coma he wakes up and doesn't remember anything from the past few years in his head he's still with Jackson he thinks Jacksn's still alive his family and friends have to help him remember but that means remembering a lot of heartbreak."

Soo I added a bit to the beginning besides him just being in a coma and waking up. But I hope this does justice to what you thought would happen.

See the end of the work for more notes
Chapter 1

It had been weeks now, and still nothing. Aaron was still quiet in a coma, the doctors had tried everything they could. But it wasn't cheap, Robert was going to pull money out of his secret account that he had. He was saving money for Liv, no one knew, not even Aaron. But months ago Robert had started saving money for Liv to go to college. When he told Chas that they could use the money on Aaron she put her foot down, it was clear that there wasn't more the doctors could do. As much as she wanted her son back there was nothing that could be done. That wasn't going to stop Robert, he contacted a world known surgeon who had done the unthinkable before and asked for her help. Saying that he would pay anything for her to do something, anything. "Chas, this surgeon she is amazing. I know people I used to be mates with when I was away that have had her as a doctor. She's done things that doctors here couldn't even dream of doing." He pleads, all Robert wants is Aaron back and if he has to spend every last cent he has, that's what he's going to do.
"Okay, okay. If you think this will work." Chas finally agrees and they go together to convince Aaron's doctor to contact her.

Two days later the famous surgeon finally arrived. "We know you're busy so thank you very much for this Dr Romana." Chas said as she entered Aaron's room. Robert sat quietly at his bedside as the doctor looked over his chart. "Ok, so you're his partner?" She asks Robert. He nods his head yes in response. "I'm going to discuss the plan with his doctor to make sure he is on board. As your partner is his patient, I can't call all the shots."

After about 3 hours, the two doctors return to Aaron's room and discuss the plan of action with Chas and Robert. They're going to run 2 tests on Aaron, a cat scan on his brain, and x rays on his heart and lungs to make sure he'll be able to stay breathing throughout surgery. After his results come back, if he's stable enough, they'll bring him into pre-op and then surgery. Then, in the OR Dr Romana will go into his brain and take a closer look. Examine as much as possible and do whatever needs to be done to make sure Aaron will wake up from his coma.

Cain comes to the hospital after being contacted by Chas that they're running more tests. He joins Chas and Robert in waiting.

Dr Romana arrives back and gives them the news.
"There is something abnormal around his brain scans, which I will deal with in surgery, but I don't believe it's anything to worry about. On a brighter note, his lungs and heart are healthy which will make the surgery less dangerous." Less dangerous? Robert thought. What does that mean, less dangerous? The last thing he wants to do is put Aaron in more pain or danger. They take the risk, Robert nods to Chas and Cain turns to Dr Romana,
"Do the operation then."
Within 30 minutes Aaron is being pulled out of his room into pre op.

They've been waiting for what seems like forever and heard nothing. Don't doctors come out and inform the family during surgery? At least that's what Chas had thought because of what she'd seen in the shows and movies. She was shaking, sitting on the edge of her seat in panic, what if something went wrong? What then? What would I do if I lost my son? Her palms were sweaty, Cain tried to calm her down but there was nothing he could do. She was blocking herself off in fear, afraid of what the doctors were going to say once they came out of the OR.

Robert had left the waiting room for one purpose only, he went back to Aaron's room. Sat on the same chair he had been sleeping on for weeks now and thought about what he'd give to hold Aaron again. He has hope everything will be okay, but at the same absolutely terrified everything might not be. And that's just something he can't help. It's natural to fear and worry for the ones
you love? Right? He had never been in this situation before. Sure he loved other people and wanted them to be okay, but he never knew what it was like to love like this nor fear this way. Just as Robert stood up to return to the waiting room, Chas came in and told him the doctor came out and informed them.

"She told us that he's going into recovery right now and that soon enough we'll be able to see him."

"So he's okay?" Robert asked. Before he could get an answer Dr Romana comes around the corner.

He walks past Chas and asks again, "He's okay? Aaron's okay?"

"Yes, Mr Sugden, Aaron is going to be okay." Robert can't help the joy, he's smiling wide and turns to Chas for a hug.

They go back to the waiting room until they can join Aaron in recovery.

Not long after, they're called on by a nurse. She appoints them to Aaron's recovery room and they continue on there. When they arrive he's still unconscious but that's to be expected with a brain surgery. Before agreeing to anything Robert looked it up, and saw that some patients stay down for hours to days but if the surgery goes well their chances are better of waking up sooner.

So he knows, he knows now that all there is to do is wait. So, he waits. Robert takes a seat on the chair by the door to let Cain and Chas closer to Aaron for when he wakes up. "Why don't you sit closer to him? We all know yours is the first face he's going to want to see." Cain acknowledges his nephew's love for Robert. But all Robert does it shake his head 'no', he knows the right thing to do is let Aaron see his mother and uncle when he wakes up.

Hours pass and Chas has fallen asleep with her face on her son's bed. Cain left for coffee but came back fairly quickly, Robert however, did not leave, did not fall asleep, and not once took his eyes off Aaron. Then, Aaron woke up, he couldn't move his head up but he knew his mother was right beside him. She was still asleep, and he couldn't talk. But as soon as Robert saw Aaron's eyes and fingers twitch even the smallest bit he jumped up and said Chas's name much louder than intended. She woke up quick and tears began falling when Aaron whispered, "Mummy?"

"Yes love, it's me. It's me." She cried grabbing his face and smiling as she kissed his forehead. "You're awake. Oh my God you're awake." Robert said, not being able to help himself from getting emotional seeing Aaron finally awake.

Robert gets closer but as he is about to touch Aaron's hand, Aaron pulls his hand back and looks confused. "Mum..." He hesitates before continuing, "Who is that?"

Robert's emotions changed completely and his smile drops quicker than ever before. "Aaron baby, it's me. It's me."

"Baby? I...I don't know who you are."

"If you're joking around this really isn't the time." Chas states.

"I'm not kidding you around, mum who is he?!" Aaron screams.

Just then Cain enters the room. "what's going on in here?"

"Cain he doesn't know who I am. He isn't kidding around, something is wrong. Seriously wrong." Tears are coming and Robert's shaking.

"Go get the doctor kid, I'll talk to him."

Robert runs out of the room and begins searching for Dr Romana.

Back in Aaron's recovery room, Cain goes over to the bed and smiles at his nephew. "You're awake. Everything is ok." He tries to reassure but Chas knows. She knows everything is so far from ok.

"Dr Romana, he's awake-"

"That's amazing news. Why, why are you crying?" She questions, confused as to why something
so wonderful could make someone look so devastated.

"Because it's not amazing. He's not him. He doesn't know who I am."

Her eyes widen, and she runs towards Aaron's room. Robert follows behind, praying that she'll know how to fix this.

"Ms Dingle, Mr Dingle, if you'll excuse me I'd like to get a closer look at Aaron here." Dr Romana says as she enters the room. She stands beside Aaron and examines his eyes. His pupils are okay, and everything seems to be intact medically. "Aaron, that man by the door-" She points to Robert, "are you absolutely positive you have no idea who he is?"

"I...I guess he looks a little bit like a girl I used to go out with..Vic." He answers. Saying her name so his mum and Cain are sure of who he is talking about.

"Okay, I'd like to ask you another few questions if you don't mind?"

He nods his head in agreement, still confused to what is going on here.

"Are you a homosexual male?"

"Yes." He answers, looking down in shame, still not fully okay with himself and who he is.

"Are you in a relationship?"

Aaron looks back up and he's shocked.

"What is it love?" Chas asks noticing the look on her son's face.

"Where is he? I figured he would be here."

"Who-"

"I'm sorry Aaron if you can just answer my last few questions, then you and your mum can talk as much as you'd like."

"I...Okay." He agrees, wanting nothing more than some answers.

"Who are you in a relationship with?"

That's the question, the question that changes it all. "Jackson." Cain, Chas, and Robert are all shocked. Jackson has been dead for 6 years. Aaron and Robert have been together on/off for nearly two. How is it possible that Aaron doesn't remember Robert and believe he's still with Jackson?

"No, love, he's gone." Chas says, she takes a seat back on the chair and holds Aaron's hands again, "Jackson is gone." She begins crying again, thinking of everything that happened with Jackson and what it did to Aaron years ago. How it still kills him today.

"What do you mean he's gone? He can't just be gone, we were together last night."

"Aaron, you've been in a coma for 5 weeks. You haven't seen Jackson in 6 years. He died. Jackson is dead" She wanted to try and not say the words, but realized it was the only way he would know and understand.

"Excuse me, can I speak to the three of you in the hallway?" Dr Romana asks.

They follow her out to the hall and stand against the wall.

"What the hell is going on with my son?" Chas yells, slamming her hand against the wall. Cain grabs onto her to make her calm as Dr Romana answers,

"He seems to be affected my amnesia. It's not uncommon amongst brain injured patients-" "But you told us he was okay." She cut her off. "You told me my baby boy was okay, but he's not."

"He's awake, which means he's okay." She states, trying to point out the most important thing right now.

"You have no idea. No idea! What that man has been through in the past 6 years, and now he has to relive it all just to know the man that's in love with him, to know his sister, his job. All of it!" Robert steps in and takes Chas from Cain. He pulls her to the side, "Hey, hey its okay. We'll get him back."

"It's not okay. He has to relive everything. Everything with Jackson, Ed, Adam, God everything
with you and his son of a Bitch father. How can you say that that is okay?"
"You're right, it's not okay. But we're going to get him back, and we're going to help him through everything. We have to."
Chapter Summary

Still in the hospital, Chas, Robert and an unexpected guest work to tell Aaron some things that have happened in the last 6 years.

Chapter Notes

So this is an emotional one but I hope you all enjoy

One week since Aaron has woken up and absolutely no change. Not even the slightest. Vic and Adam had come to talk to him, even Paddy made a visit. But when anyone would arrive he'd act like it was 6 years ago and nothing had changed from that time. Like their loves were all the same as back then.

No one had the heart to tell him everything that happened, even Robert, the most selfish man in the village couldn't bare telling him what happened with Jackson. Although, he wasn't there so he could only tell what Aaron had told him. Which he was positive wasn't everything.

Robert would spend every night in the hospital. Not matter what he would not leave Aaron there, even if it meant sleeping on chairs outside of the room. If one thing went wrong he wanted to be the first there, but also wanted to be there in the hopes of Aaron's memory coming back. He wasn't delusional though, he knew that there was only a small chance of that and as much as it tore him apart, they would have to work every day to make Aaron remember.

Lucky for Robert, he still had Dr Romana's number and she said if he had any questions to contact her. God, he had many questions. So that's what he did, daily Robert would pick up his phone and contact her. They would talk about what sort of things would jog Aaron's memory. Taking him to important places, saying important dates, telling stories that involved things that were important to him and showing pictures. Robert badly wanted to show Aaron pictures of them, but couldn't until he about the 4 years before Robert came into the picture. It took more self control than anyone could imagine for Robert not to just go into Aaron's room late at night and curl up on the bed. Hold the man he loved as he slept so peacefully. Then in the morning kiss him on the forehead and say he loved him. Because that's what they did. They held each other as they slept, bodies pressed against one and another, breathing steady because they knew they were save in the arms of the one they loved. That's the only thing that really kept Robert going, the memories of what they had, the good and even the bad. Because without the bad they wouldn't be who they are. Or...who they were.

Cain knew what had to be done. Despite his big 'bad-boy' act he was a real good man at heart and truly cared about his nephew, cared about him like he was his own son. He knew Aaron couldn't continue on not knowing what his life was life. Despite everything that has happened and the pain it will take to live through it all again, it's what has to be done. Chas believes so as well, but she's been fearful and confused. Scared her son will go back to his old ways and not sure what to tell him or where to start.
"Chas I don't know what happened then, I can't tell him." Robert told her once again, as she for what felt like the hundredth time begged that he would tell Aaron everything. "But Rob, he listens to you. He's always listened to you." Chas knew that the man on that hospital bed was not her son, but she also knew that from the beginning Robert got to Aaron and that could still happen again. "He's not the same. He...he's in love with Jackson. Not me." As Robert said the words for the first time since it all happened, it really hit him. And it killed. It felt like his heart had literally broken into a million pieces and that there was no going back from this. For the first time he accepted it, he was in love with Aaron, but Aaron was not in love with him.

"Okay okay okay." Chas paused to touch Robert's arm, "We will get him back, and I will be the one to start. Do you want to be in there?" He couldn't say no because a part of him desperately wanted to just be with Aaron as much as possible, but he knew it wasn't right. So against his judgement, Robert shook his head no and walked to the waiting room as Chas entered Aaron's room.

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"Hey love." She said, taking a seat on the chair beside her son's bed. Once again taking his hand, "We need to talk. And I've been avoiding this, but we just can't anymore." "Avoiding what mum?" No one has really talked to Aaron besides his doctors and nurses. Whenever someone came to visit they'd just talk about things that have happened but not go into detail. They were very subtle, leaving Aaron even more confused. He still doesn't understand the entire situation but he needs to know now. This leaving Chas with the hardest job a person could have at a time like this.

"You. You're life Aaron. It's not what you think it is. Things are different."

"That's what everyone's been saying. And Jackson, I haven't seen him once."

"I...Okay, we'll start with Jackson. Love, he's gone." Aaron still doesn't know what to believe and wants as many answers as he can get.

"What do you mean gone? You said he died...is he? Is he dead?" Not able to get the simple word 'yes' out of her mouth all Chas could do was shake her head in reply. Aaron began sobbing and before they knew it both were on the verge of completely crying. "H..." Aaron stuttered over his words, "How?" He managed to get out.

"The two of you got into a fight. You weren't sure of your feelings at the time and you told me that because you couldn't say that you loved him, he...he stormed off. He was driving and I guess you called him or something. His car...it uh-" She began crying just thinking of the way this tore her son apart the first time. She couldn't do this to him, but she knew it had to be done eventually. "It got stuck in front of a train. Everyone thought he was dead, but thankfully he was still with us. Paralyzed though. For a long while he tried to keep it together, that Jackson, he was a fighter. And he loved you and his mum more than life itself. But one day it all became too much. He couldn't take it anymore."

"What do you mean, he couldn't take it anymore?" Aaron too, was crying. But for completely different reasons. Last thing he knew, him and Jackson were together at a bar in Hotten sharing a few drinks and now...he's just gone.

"He was paralyzed, and living like that it was too much to handle. He needed and wanted out. He...he deserved it. To be at peace-" "Stop!" Aaron yelled, "Mum please please stop. Just, just get out." He couldn't bare it. This was killing him. The man he was in love with was gone and he blamed himself. "Aaron-"
"No. Out please." So Chas listened. She got out of the chair and left the room.

As she turned the corner Robert was standing with his back against the wall and head down. "I...I didn't know you were standing here. I'm sorry you had to hear that"

"It's fine." He shook her off and left.

It took a long time for Chas to be accepting of Robert, she never thought she'd get there. No one really did, but then the time came and she was. She knew how much he loved her son and how much her son loved him. He was good for Aaron, they were good for each other. A year ago if this had been happening Chas would be selfish and tell Robert to leave Aaron the hell alone. But now, now she knows that the only person who can help her truly save her son and get him back is Robert. She needs him, and more importantly, Aaron needs him.

Robert didn't smoke often, but when things got bad he'd need one. Last time he had a cigarette it was January and Aaron had just told him about Gordon. He had felt hopeless and smoking took him away from that for a bit. Chas knew, she had seen his pack of cigarettes in the house so she knew that when Robert left and he wasn't in the cafeteria or waiting room, that he was outside taking a drag.

"Rob-"

"Chas, I told you it's fine. He...he's been set back 6 years. We didn't even know each other then, so I know he's not gonna love me. If that means I have to listen to him cry over a man he loves that isn't me then it's fine."

"Loved." Chas said, taking a step closer to Robert.

"What?"

"Loved. A man he loved. Although his mind is set back to a time when he loved Jackson, his heart is still with you. I know my son, 6 years ago if there was a stranger in his hospital room he would've kicked them out and told Cain to beat their ass away from him. But he didn't even ask for you to leave. If I didn't think there was even the slightest chance of getting him back I wouldn't be doing this. But I know my son, and I know he loves you. I know he's in love with you."

"Excuse me!" Someone yelling interrupted Chas and Robert's conversation before anything else could be said. Robert's choked up but to avoid talking anymore about the one he loves he turns around and responds,

"Yes?"

"I'm sorry to bother you, I'm looking for Aaron Livesy."

"It's Dingle." Robert stated firmly, not even able to think of that man again.

"Hazel?" Chas asked. She looks so different, at a first glance Chas would've had no idea it was Jackson's mother talking to Robert and her. "What...what are you doing here?"

"Adam called me."

"You must be Jackson's mother." Robert said, looking down once again. Which seems to be a usual thing for him this past week. He's always hid feelings but that seems difficult so all he can do is look down and hide his face.

"I...I am. You are?" Hazel asked, putting out her hand to shake his.

"I'm Robert Sugden, Aaron's fiance...ex."

"No. Hazel, this is Aaron's fiance." Chas stated. Not letting Robert give up on their relationship. "Adam thought if anyone could help Aaron relive what happened that it'd be me, so I...I packed an over night bag and got the first flight out. I'm so sorry to hear what's happened to him."

"You shouldn't be sorry. You've lost your son-"

"Yes, and although he's still here he's not himself. You've lost your son too. Although Jackson can't come back, Aaron can. Some I'm here to help."

"He's in a tough place right now, I just told him for the first time what happened." Chas said, warning Hazel that Aaron might not want to talk yet.
"What all have you told him?"
"I was just about to tell him how Jackson had passed, but he freaked out. Told me to get out because it was too much to deal with."
"Can I...can I be the one to tell him how he died. It's just...I know you're his mum. But I've only had therapists to talk to, I need someone who loved Jackson the way I did. Call it selfish, but I was there so I know what Aaron went through."
"It's not selfish Hazel, you have the right to tell him. He's all yours. And if you want us in there then we'll go, but you can tell him on you're own as well."

Hazel shook her head and began walking into the hospital. Just before Chas was about to head in behind her, she stopped and turned back to Robert, "Are you going to be okay?"
"I...I will be. Go on in, I'm gonna stay out here and finish this." He answered, raising his hand with the cigarette in it. So Chas listened, the doors opened and she went into the hospital. Robert stood with his back against the wall and looked at his cigarette, deep in thought he thinks about his love for Aaron. His need for Aaron. All he wanted was for Aaron to be his forever, to become his fiance and then one day, husband. Right when he finally worked up the courage, everything came crushing down and now, Aaron is no longer his.

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Back in the hospital Chas shows Hazel to Aaron's room. She's hesitant about going in but when she sees the tears running down Aaron's face, she knows he needs closure. She knows that he needs to know, so she goes in. Smiles big and takes a seat beside Aaron. Chas watches from the window and sees as Hazel begins explaining what happened. She knows exactly when she is talking about Jackson's death as Aaron begins crying much more and much louder. He hangs onto Hazel's shirt and cries into her chest. Hazel too, is crying. But she's holding a lot in as this is all new for Aaron but a reality she knows all too well.

"I killed him" Chas hears Aaron manage to say through all his tears. Her heart breaks, once again she too is crying and drops to the ground, feeling completely helpless and not able to look at her son so broken.

Chapter End Notes

Tell me what you think!
I Can't Help (Falling in Love with You)

Chapter Summary

Aaron and Robert spend the day together alone outside of the hospital.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Hazel had been in town for three days, in the end Adam was right to call her. She was exactly what Aaron needed to get through the part about Jackson's death in his past. Although that been tough, there was still much much more for them all to re live. Aaron wasn't ready to talk though. Hazel left yesterday and since she said goodbye, he hadn't said a single word to anyone besides his doctor when she came in asking questions. He refuses to talk to his family or friends. No one really knew exactly how hard this was on Aaron, yeah it was killing them too but it was really tearing him apart.

Robert woke up in the middle of the night like he always does, and just like every night before he got up and went to stand at the door of Aaron's room. But this time was different, this time, Aaron was awake. Startled to see the man standing at his door, he sat up and finally spoke to someone, "You seem to care about me a lot."

Robert chuckled, "You have no idea."

Aaron let out a little smile, "We...we're together right? I mean that's what I've heard everyone saying. They haven't told me, but I can hear what happens outside of these walls."

"We...yes, we're together. I guess were together." It killed Robert to think of never being with Aaron again, to think that they're relationship was now a past tense thing. He didn't know what'd he'd do if he couldn't get the man he loved back.

"Are we happy?" "Well, we weren't like a gay TV sitcom happy, but yeah I'd like to say we were. It's a hell of a lot better than where we were last year."

"What do you mean?" Aaron asked confused, for a moment as Robert thought about him and Aaron before the crash he forgot that it wasn't Aaron on the hospital bed and that the man lying there doesn't know what happened last year.

"You know, it's late. You should get some sleep."

"I...fine. But uh, where were you sleeping?

"Um, one the lounge chairs in the waiting room." Robert said, once again chuckling a bit.

"I'm not stalking you, I just wanna wake sure you're alright." "You haven't bothered getting a futon for the floor to sleep on?" Aaron asked laughing for the first time since he'd woke from the coma. Finding it hilarious that Robert's been sleeping on chairs for days without even considering a more comfortable option of sleep. "I-"
"Mate, get one and set it up on the floor. You look worse than I do." They both smiled and laughed as part of the Aaron Robert fell in love with. His joking and teasing ways lit up the room and brought a bit of happiness to a hard few days.

"Ok, I'll be back." Robert left the room with a smile stuck on his face, I'm sharing a room with Aaron, he thought.

By the time Robert woke up it was half past 11 and Aaron had been awake for hours. When Chas had come by in the morning for Liv to say hi and drop off non-hospital food he told them not to wake him. Robert felt like a fool for sleeping so long,

"Oh my god. I am so sorry." He said, getting off the floor and tripping over blankets trying to clean up. Robert seemed to make Aaron laugh a lot because his stupid little freak out trying to get up was making him go historical. Aaron couldn't stop laughing and Robert almost wanted to do something else just to hear that laugh as long as he possibly could.

"So uh, my mum was here but she had to bring Liv to school and something came up at the farm. Moira's farm."

"Yea, I, I figured that was the farm you were talking about." Robert felt bad for commenting because he was still dealing with the fact that Aaron didn't know Robert knew everything.

"Right. Anyway, the doctor said I should go outside. That'd it'd be good to be outside in the fresh air. She also suggested you taking me somewhere to jog my memory I guess. If there is anywhere." Aaron looked down trying to hide his little smile because a part of him did want Robert to take him out to where he may get his memories back. He wouldn't say it, but Aaron desperately wanted to know what his life was and who he was now.

"I guess if you're okay with that, if it isn't too soon. I mean yeah, but only if you want."

"I...yeah I do. But I don't really think I can go anywhere in this hospital gown now can I."

"I had your mum bring me some clothes last week. She must've gotten mixed up cause some of yours are in there. I'll go them from the car."

"The car? We were in a car accident, how do you have a car still?" Robert looked down to hide his smile much like Aaron did a few moments ago,

"We were in your car." Then ran out of the room quickly to avoid the angry rage that was about to be shown. He may not remember the past 6 years, but Aaron has always cared about his cars, and Robert knew that.

Robert came back in with a gym bag full of clothes. God, he needed to change too. He'd been so focused on Aaron as he went through hell these last few days that his own personal comfort was no where near a top priority. Robert pulled out some clothes and as he held a black jumper in his hand he turned to Aaron and said, "I guess you know this one is yours eh."

Aaron smiled and took the black hoodie and pants from Robert's hands.

"I'm just gonna go to the bathroom down the hallway to change."

"I'm going in the bathroom here, if you just wanna close the door and blinds. No need to go for an extra walk." Aaron offered, a little blushed and surprised with himself that he'd let Robert stay in here. But a part of him just trusted this man, and more than that he knew that he was in love with him. He just couldn't feel it right now.
"I...ok. Thank you." Aaron shook his head then turned into the bathroom with his clothes.

Robert put effort into what he was going to wear, this was his first day not only alone but with Aaron at all and he wanted to look as good as possible. This leaving him to take longer to change, right before he was about to pull on his shirt, Aaron opened the bathroom door. He noticed that Robert was still changing so he stayed quiet and almost closed the bathroom door, but found himself standing there, staring. Admiring the man's abs, but something took his eyes away from the good looks. A wound on the right side of his stomach. Had Robert been shot? Aaron thought. He didn't know about this and it began raising all sorts of questions. When did it happen? Who did it? Why did they do it? Then he stopped himself. Aaron had too many questions to begin with, he couldn't give himself more at a time like this.

Before he even realized Robert had been completely changed. So Aaron opened the door completely and stepped out.

"So, anywhere in mind to go?" He asked Robert.

"Uh, Home Farm." Robert answered a little hesitant of his idea. He knew Chrissie and Lachlan had been put of the village for a get away but he was still scared they might get caught.

"Home Farm?" Aaron was confused, if he and Robert were together and living at the Woolpack then how could they go to Home Farm.

"Yea, I used to live there. It uh, it's an important place."

"If you say so." Aaron agreed, and they set off. Robert got a hold of the doctor and Chas before leaving so no one freaked out.

"Everything alright?"

"Yeah, I just had to call your mum."

"She's still over protective I see."

"God, you have no idea." Robert smiled before they both laughed quietly and headed out the doors to the parking lot.

The ride was quiet for about the first 30 minutes, and then a song came on a the radio. A song neither man would admit they loved, and Robert remembered the conversation they had about it a few months ago.

*After dropping Liv off at school her station was still on and an older song came on. I Can't Help Falling In Love by Elvis Presley, both men smiled and began mouthing the words. Before they knew it, Aaron was singing along and Robert started making fun of him.*

"Aw look at you being a real softy." He joked, pushing at Aaron's arm with a huge smile across his face.

"Shut up you were mouthing the words too." Aaron bit back at him, also laughing at this point.

Robert smiled big and when Aaron noticed he asked, "What?"

"This song uh, you love it." Aaron's face made it clear that years ago he loved the song, he tried to hide his smile but his face was beat red and when he argued,

"I do not." Robert was laughing and said,
"You do eh. Nothing to be ashamed of." Aaron and Robert were still both smiling big but let the conversation drop and began mouthing the words to the song.

A few more songs had played before they reached their destination but other than the radio the rest of the drive was silent.

They were at Home Farm, but to stay out of the way and not get caught Robert drove his car up behind the house. He wasn't risking anything, not with Aaron there. Robert took his old key and unlocked the back door, he wanted to remember the first week they had together. The first time they were really a couple, and hoped that even if it wouldn't bring back Aaron's memories, it would still make him happy. Almost everything was the same, and despite all the times he had sat on the couch with Chrissie, it didn't even come close to comparing to that one week with Aaron.

"When I lived here, you and I, we uh spent a week here together." Robert told Aaron. "It was the first time we had really spent some good and real time together."

"Why here?" Aaron questioned.

"Chas hated me, it was just recently that she accepted to put up with me. I guess she finally realized I wasn't going anywhere."

"What happened? With us." He sat down on the sofa, held his sweat filled hands together and looked at Robert with adoring puppy eyes. He looked, broken and confused. All he wanted to do was know, but didn't know what the right questions to ask were. And he didn't want to push Robert. By the look on Robert's face when he asked, things that happened weren't all too good.

"You know, there's still a lot you need to know. I csnt just skip 4 years." Robert was trying to be the better man, trying to make it so Aaron didn't have to live through all of what happened between them right after everything with Jackson. Then again, he was also being selfish. He didn't want to think about the first year they knew each other. It was hell and Robert was a different man then. He wished he could just skip to January and tell Aaron all the good things.

"Everyone's been treating me like a child since this whole thing started and I just want to know. Something, anything. What happened with us?"

"Aaron, I really don't think your mum would want that to happen."

"Well thanks now all my questions are gone." Aaron said sarcastically. "Fine, you're gonna be a smart ass. Don't tell me then." He didn't know Robert well but he hoped reverse psychology would work.

"I...fine. What exactly do you want to know?" And he was right. Robert gave in and now Aaron had a slightly better chance at some answers.

"Well I guess, first off, here. I know a lot of Sugden's and none of can afford a place like this. So
how did you? Why'd you come back?"

"I lived here but I didn't own the place. I mean I had the money from work but I never wanted to come back. My fiance at the time, her father bought the place and brought us along." Robert looked down in shame, almost like being with Chrissie and smooching off her father was now something he wasn't proud of.

"Fiance?" Aaron was confused, if this was his father in law's place then how did they spend a week here together?

"Were we...were we an affair?" "Not my finest hour that's for sure." He smirked, thinking of how it all started. But a part of him still hated himself for all that followed after their first kiss on the country side lane way. "They were gone for a while, I told them to take some family time. Truth be told I just wanted to see you. Be with you away from everyone and everything. All I wanted was you."

"But you were engaged?"

"It...it's really a long story Ba...Aaron." Robert hadn't gotten the two confused thus far. He knew where he stood in Aaron's life, and his place was not to call him babe. "My step mum Diane and sister Vic, they lived with you. So eventually we ran into each other and you were well, available. Besides having a thing with Finn I guess. I fancied you, couldn't help myself."

"Finn? I..no never mind I'll worry about that later. You fancied me?"

"Yes. I was stubborn and difficult and had no idea what I was feeling because it was different. Sure I'd been with men before but never with anyone that was in my life and so close to my family. Never even considered it. But then there you were. I guess it started when I needed a favor." Robert had to catch his breath, thinking about everything they had been through and back to the beginning. It all got to him and he didn't know how to feel. "I thought you fancied Chrissie at first, I teased you about but truth was I didn't like thinking that. I told myself it was because she was my fiance but it was because it was you."

"You thought I fancied your female fiance?" Aaron laughed loud. "God were you wrong there mate."

"Don't call me mate." Robert said firmer than intended. "Sorry, I've hated it for a while."

"All good. I'll keep that in mind. So uh, is there anything else?"

"Neither of us are going to live long enough for me to finish our entire story. But from the beginning, our first kiss, I faked my car breaking down and phoned the garage for you to come to me."

"Wait wait wait. You pretended your car had broken down just to see me?"

"I...yes. I kept telling myself all I wanted was a one off and that was it. But after that kiss, it was a hook up in the garage, then we got into business together and it just kinda kept going. The more times we were together I just couldn't help it."

"Help what?"

"Falling love with you." For a moment Robert got lost, he thought he saw a glimpse of happiness and hope in Aaron's eyes that he hadn't seen since the accident. Robert smiled shyly, and looked
down so Aaron couldn't see his flushed cheeks but there was no holding back the happiness Robert had felt being able to say it to Aaron himself how much he cared. Something he didn't think he'd be able to do again for a long while.

Chapter End Notes

Tell me what you think!
This Was Never The Plan

Chapter Summary

Aaron and Robert return to the hospital to see a worried Adam and Victoria sitting in the waiting room.

Chapter Notes

I feel like an ass for not finding time to write but exams were upon me as well as 2nd semester starting and life has just been a mess.
But here is a new chapter I hope you all enjoy

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Aaron and Robert stopped at a local fast food joint to eat, Aaron hadn't had something besides hospital food for weeks and he was craving a burger, but this stop was pushing them on time. Chas messaged Robert asking where they were because she had sent Adam and Vic to go see how Aaron was. As much as Chas now trusted Robert she needed another opinion, one from his two best friends was the best she could think of. They were driving in the car, not far from the hospital when Robert's phone went off, Aaron pressed speaker and then said, "Rob's driving."
"Oh, hi Aaron." Vic said quietly, almost like she was scared or upset about something.
"Vic, we'll be at the hospital soon Chas told me you and Adam are there. I'm going as fast as I can, but don't really need a speeding ticket on top of the rest eh."
"Ok Rob, please just...hurry." Then the call dropped.

"So Vic, she's your sister. Isn't that a little weird?" Aaron asked.
"What?" Robert tried not to distract himself from the road but he was worried about what Aaron was going to say next
"That I dated her, and then well we got together?"
Robert pulled the car over to the side of the road and hit the breaks. "What are you doing?"
"Last time we had a serious conversation in a car it ended in an accident where you lost your memory. Not risking another thing. So if we're going to have a serious talk then it's going to be pulled over."
"But they want us back at the hospital." Aaron argued.
"Fine. But this conversation will happen."
As Robert pulled away Aaron felt himself grow irritated because now he did want to talk about it but at the same time, he knew Vic and Adam. He didn't know Robert, so he wanted to get back to the hospital and see his friends. Turning up the music was a way of avoiding more conversation, if they can't talk over the music, then they won't talk.
The men finally arrived back at the hospital and Robert pulled into the same parking spot he does every day, before quickly jumping out of the car to go see his sister. Aaron followed behind, shocked to see Robert's urgency for Vic. From what he knew about Robert, the only care he saw him show was towards him. But if he remembered the last 6 years, he would remember all the times Robert showed his heart for his sister and family, and he'd believe that Robert was a good man to everyone. Well almost everyone he cared about.
They got upstairs to the floor Aaron's hospital room is on, and there they were. Vic and Adam sitting hand in hand almost crying.

"Hey. What's wrong?" Rob asked as he approached his sister and her husband, "what'd you do?"

Of course he accuses Adam right off the bat.

"Get over yourself Rob it wasn't Adam." Vic looked down, "Ok maybe it was a little Adam."

"If you hurt her I swear to God-"

"I'm pregnant" Vic cut her brother off. Robert stopped himself from saying anymore and his eyes widened in shock. But nothing was more noticeable than Vic and Adams clear unhappiness. The two have always talked about kids and it was the plan. It didn't make sense why they were so unhappy.

"That's great. I mean seems like y'all need some happiness with well-me."

"Don't talk like that. We don't need happiness because of you ba-Aaron." Aaron didn't seem to believe what Robert was saying but he didn't argue. Aaron's phone began ringing and he stepped aside to take it, "Don't be long" Robert said before Aaron left. "I mean Vic, he's definitely not my first choice for the father of your kids. But you wanna be a mum."

"Rob, Aaron doesn't remember the last 6 years of his life. He was going to the godfather-"

"Whoa wait. Godfather? Aaron?"

"But I'm your brother." As Victoria noticed that Adam was about to argue again,

"Stop! The two of you are together. If ones the godparent, the other is too. What he was trying to say was, we can't bring a child into the world when our best mate doesn't know who we are anymore. Ya he remembers us, but we've all changed." What the three of them didn't notice through all the bickering was Aaron had finished his call and he heard the last few things they had said. He knew that everything happening made the people in his lives put him at a high priority but he didn't realize how much it affected everyone around him. So instead of returning to his mates, and well, fiancé, he returned to his hospital room.

"He's gonna get his memory back. Ok. He's going to be fine in no time." Robert knew that was false hope, he knew Aaron may never fully recover. But he needed that bit of false hope, he needed it to continue holding on.

Robert looked around and Aaron was still nowhere in sight, "where is he?" He asked aloud to himself. Just in time one of the nurses came around the corner,

"Are you looking for Mr. Dingle? He's in his room. I saw him go in not even 5 minutes ago."

"Thank you." Is all Robert said before leaving his sister and Adam to go find Aaron, once again. Chasing after Aaron in a hospital.

"Why'd you lock yourself away in here. We-were having a good day or I'd like to think so." Robert admitted softly as he took a seat beside Aaron and looked at the sad look laying upon Aaron's face.

"If that's a good day to us then our lives must suck." Aaron was trying to lighten things up a bit but he could tell by the displeased look upon his partner's face that he didn't manage to do that. "I was just playing about. It was a good day."

"Then what's wrong?" Robert reached his hands out in hopes of Aaron taking at least one. And he did, much to Robert's surprise Aaron took both of his hands in his own. Robert felt a chill run through his body, the feel of Aaron's skin again his even if it's just their hands felt more amazing then he could ever describe.

"I heard the three of you talking. Just, Vic and Adam having kids seems so great and now the chances of them being happy are because of me."

"Hey, this isn't because of you. They just want you to remember everything when they have kids. So you can be the uncle that tells the embarrassing stories of you and their dad in your young years." Robert chuckled trying to hold back the tears he felt coming. "Trust me, there's a lot you could tell their kids about their dad being an ass or stupid."

"Well by the looks of things you're the one that's going to have to tell them." Aaron said much to Robert's dislike. All he wanted was to have someone else have hope. Someone else believe that
Aaron will okay. Someone else give him reasons to keep holding on. It was getting harder and harder as days went on because days felt like years sometimes. He just wanted Aaron back. Was that too much to ask for?

"No way is Rob telling our stories to the kids mate." Adam said entering the room alongside Victoria.

Aaron didn't know what to believe. He knew he had an amazing doctor, and he knew he had a family and mates that cared about him more than life itself. He also knew that maybe one day he would be ok again. But would it happen within nine months? No, probably not. And would Robert stay with him through all of it? He didn't know how much Robert actually loved him so he had no idea that the answer was yes. He had no idea that the one thing Robert would never do is stray away. Because despite all the time they've spent together and what he'd seen, he didn't know everything the two men had been through to be together and be happy. He also didn't know how much Victoria and Adam loved him. A part of him believed that they'd get new best mates and move on with their lives to people that knew them and understood where they were in life without a whole lot of explanation.

"Aaron, we love you. You're gonna be the ones telling the stories to our kids. Making Adam look like an ass while doing it." Vic smiled walking to the bed and hugging Aaron. "We want you to be the godfather." She saw Rob's unpleased look and added, "the two of you. Together, if you wanna do that."

Aaron knew that he and Robert must have been serious to be engaged. To be living together and making a life together but he didn't realize exactly how serious they were until Victoria asked for the two of them to godfather her and Adams child together. She must have really believed they'd end up being together forever to co-godfather their child.

"I don't see the harm in it." Aaron responded, he could feel himself smile and he saw the happiness fall upon Robert's face. Even if he didn't know how much they loved each other, he could feel it. And that was damn well worth holding onto.

Chapter End Notes

Tell me what you think!
Liv visits Aaron and takes her turn to try and make him remember

This idea came from the amazing Jamesm97 who gave me the prompt and I'm happy to finally be able to write it

Aaron had a long day between leaving the hospital, being constantly reminded by Vic, Adam, and Robert how everything was going to be okay and nurses coming in and out he hadn't had a moment to himself since he left the three of them in the waiting room. It was past visiting hours and because Aaron was in a better state medically the doctors said that no one could spend the night with him like Robert normally did. So now, he was completely alone, and it felt good. He needed the peace and quiet. He needed to have time to himself as he thought about everything that had happened in the last few weeks, and especially today. Aaron wasn't the kind of person to have an affair or be with someone who was already taken. He was loyal and caring, so how could it be the man he supposedly is engaged to and in love with became that man through an affair? How is possible that he could ever fall in love with a man who was married? Some of these questions he just couldn't ask anyone.

Aaron hadn't been alone for the night in forever, and he thought that this would be peaceful and he'd sleep well. But it was anything than that, he went from feeling like he couldn't breathe to crying and then looking at the scars across his stomach and wrists. They were much worse than they were from six years ago. He was a mess but pretended he was fine, he had thought about taking another razor to his skin. That way he wouldn't have to remember anything, he'd be fine and so would everything else. He wouldn't be a problem, he'd be gone and that would be that. His thoughts are disrupted by the sound of footsteps approaching his room, it's probably one of the night time nurses he thinks, until he notices the girl standing at the doorway. A shorter girl, can't be more than 15 years of age, with long dirty blonde hair and she's in a full black outfit. Something similar to what Aaron would've worn at that age, something similar to what he'd always wear. She looked familiar, Aaron couldn't shake the feeling that he'd seen her before and that's when it dawned on him. She's the girl that was always with Chas, Liv was it?

"Aaron, are you awake?" She whispered in the case that he wasn't or that someone might hear her and kick her out.

He sat up fully and looked at her, their eyes met and he saw a lot of himself in the younger girl. "Yeah." Is all he said which made her feel comfortable enough to walk into his room and sit at the bedside seat. She had a bag with her and after taking her seat she began pulling something out. It looked like a photo frame but Aaron couldn't get a clear view. She then pulled out a small flashlight and pulled the chair closer to her brother.

"I need to show you something." She said to him, no words came out but he shook his head and so with one hand she held out a picture frame and the other she used to shine a light on it. Aaron's eyes went wide when he saw what the frame held. A picture of Aaron, Liv and Robert from what looked like late August. They were at a beach and Liv had an ice cream cone in her hand while
Robert and Aaron were in shorts and t-shirts. All 3 of them with extremely big smiles across their faces, looking like they'd never been so happy before. "This was the first family thing we did where Rob and I didn't fight." She smiled remembering that day, it really was a turning point for all of them and she wished she'd never have to go back. But here she was, having to make amends with Aaron this time.

"Family thing?" Answered shyly not really understanding the meaning of it.
"Yeah, I mean Aaron we're a family." Both their hearts broke as the words fell from Liv's mouth. She had never really known what a family was and then the Dingle's came into her life, she met Aaron and Robert then the rest of clan and she felt like she belonged. Aaron just didn't think he'd ever know what a family was like, that he'd meet a man who loved every inch of him and his family would support it, that he'd be able to feel at home in the arms of someone. That was family to him, and the fact that Liv used that word it gave him immense hope. It wasn't that far fetched though, based on how Robert treated him the previous day he had some sense that the man really truly loved him. Even if he didn't know all that had to happen to get them to where they were.

"So Liv, how'd you and I meet anyway?" She didn't know what to do, they had never discussed what to say and not to say to him. Was he in the right state to relive their father? No, there were still years he didn't to remember first. But she couldn't very well ignore her brother, she smirked and said,

"That's a story for another time. Let's get some sleep eh?" Avoiding anymore conversation Liv got up from the chair and headed for the door,
"Oi! Where you think you're going there?"
"Uh home?" She answered as if she had to ask for permission.
"I'm not letting you go back at this time of night. Get over here, we can share the bed." The words felt like a stab right in the chest. She remembered all those nights that her dreams haunted her and eyes couldn't stay shut until she snuck into brother's room and slept in his dad. The kind of thing a child is supposed to do with their mother and father. And for the first time, Aaron and Liv were both able to fall asleep without any doubt or hesitation. It'd been a hard week on the whole family, and everyone was drained. But the two of them always took hours to fall asleep, if they did at all. And this seemed to be exactly what they needed.

They were woken up what felt like 5 minutes later but was actually hours. Both moaning and groaning as a nurse and doctor came in turning on the light. "We didn't realize you had company Mr. Dingle." The doctor spoke as the nurse checked all the machines and filled in her chart.
"My little sister, needed a visit." Liv's heart was racing as Aaron said the words. "My little sister" She knew those were going to play in her head for a long while as it'd felt like forever since she heard them last.
"Okay. Well thankfully she won't be needing any more visits, because we've run all the tests and you are cleared to go home." Liv jumped up from the bed in joy and didn't even realize it until it was happening but she was hugging the doctor. Never had she ever felt so much relief then finding out that Aaron could finally go home with them. "We've called your mum, she and your fiance are on their way." Aaron's heart sank at the word 'Fiance' He hadn't thought of what was going to happen with them when he was going to go home. But now he didn't have time to think, this was it. He was going back to his life, but it wasn't his was it? He's not that man quite yet, and it's going to take time.

"Maybe this will help with your memory, being around it all again." Liv said trying to hide the hope she had but her smile and voice said it all. She missed her brother and any slightest chance of getting him back she'd take it.

Not even 30 minutes later Robert and Chas were at the hospital and ready to take Aaron home. Liv jumped into Robert's arms when she saw him, sucking up so she wouldn't be in trouble for leaving in the middle of the night. "I'm gonna talk to you later about that." Robert said sternly, looking into Aaron's room and smiling as he was now here to do what he's wanted to do since the accident.
"Robert, you coming in or not?" Chas asked as she passed Liv and Robert to go into Aaron's
room. He nodded yes and followed her in. Aaron was sat up with the picture frame in his hand, he'd looked at it a few times since finding out he was going home. Whenever Liv left the room he'd pick it up and just stare at it. Trying to analyze what it all said, trying to feel something, anything that could bring back his memory. But each time, nothing. He noticed that the room now had more people in it and quickly put the picture back in Liv's bag. "The doctors said they just need to bring in a chart and then we're free to go." Aaron said informing his mum and Robert as he got up from the bed and looked for a change of clothes.

"Here." Robert suggested quietly, quiet enough that someone who wasn't used to his voice wouldn't have caught on. But Aaron did, he didn't know how but he knew Robert's voice. He turned around and took the outfit from Robert's hand, "Thanks ma." Aaron caught onto the look upon Robert's face as he nearly called him mate again. He stopped himself and just shook his head. He smiled at his mum before turning to the bathroom to change.

"I've got a meeting in Hotten later, I might as well spend the night in a hotel or something." Rob said to Chas as they were sitting there quietly waiting for Aaron. It wasn't what Robert wanted, he truly wanted to cancel the meeting and just stay with Aaron all day. He tried to as well, but so much was at cost. He just couldn't lose the chance at finally getting back on his feet with such a good job at a great company.

"Why for the night? I thought you didn't even want to go." Chas glared at him.
"It's not like we can share a bed, and I think it's right if I just give him some time with his family first."

"You are his family Rob." It had taken a long time for Chas to be okay with the idea of Robert and Aaron. But she did, and she knew Robert was family and there was nothing she or anyone else could do about it. "We are all family Robert and that is that." He knew it was true, but he couldn't bare to be in a house with Aaron and not share the bed. He didn't even know Aaron would let him sleep on the floor, because this wasn't some hospital room. This was their home, and everything was about to change.

"Is the doctor not here yet?" Aaron asked as he came out fully dressed and ready to leave looking at his mum and Robert. Within seconds Aaron's doctor and a nurse entered the room.

"Sign your name here and you're free to go." The nurse said to Aaron handing him the chart and a pen. Aaron signed quickly and smiled as he said goodbye and left the room hopefully for good.
They were back at the house soon and when they all entered the pub there was a large amount of people. Aaron may not remember the past six years, but he definitely remembered the big deal people made when someone came back to the village. Apparently he was a huge deal because he had never seen the Woolpack so full. He remembered most of the people, there was Cain, Adam, Vic, Moira, Charity, David, Marlon, Rhona, Paddy and Diane and Doug. But then there were five people sat together he'd never seen before, two elder men sat beside each other with two younger women sat across from them and a teenage boy at the edge of the table. Robert knew exactly who it was, his ex wife Chrissie, her beautiful but desperate sister Rebecca, her annoying and overly smug father Lawrence, his long lost love Ronnie, and the grandson that everybody loved to hate, Lachlan. He couldn't believe what he was seeing, they knew Aaron was coming home today so of course Chrissie had to be a selfish bitch and show her face on a day that was hard enough already. It was honestly the miracle they weren't banned from the pub already, it amazed Robert that they weren't and he was just praying she'd keep her big mouth shut.

"I tried to make them leave." Marlon stated as they got closer to the bar, he must've seen the look on Robert's face when he noticed the Whites sitting at a booth.

"What's that about?" Aaron asked looking at Robert. He wasn't going to get into details Aaron's first day back, and as long as they kept quiet there was no problem so Robert looked at him and said,

"Nothing important. Do you fancy a pint or going into the back room?"

Aaron's face pointed towards the door leading into the back which gave him his answer so they left the pub and went into the back room and were followed by Chas and Liv.

"Actually mum I was wondering if I could talk with Robert alone for a few." Aaron said shyly, unsure of whether or not his mother was going to like the idea. She wasn't exactly fond of not spending the first few minutes back with her son, but she was accepting of Robert being who he needed at the moment and she wasn't going to fight with him on that.

"Kicking her out already eh?" Robert joked as it reminded him of the countless times Aaron had kicked Chas out so they could be alone.

"She's going to be here all day. But you're leaving, I figured we should kick back for a bit." Aaron looked down embarrassed and afraid of what Robert would say.

"Ok. Watch some telly then?" Aaron shook his head and the men took a seat on the couch as Robert turned on the television.

An hour had passed, they had switched between about twenty different channels before finding a decent thing to watch and in the end Robert had decided. A Marvel movie was on and he couldn't...
hide his happiness about, he was a total geek when it came down to that sorta stuff. Aaron smiled has Robert sat interested and almost completely focused on the movie playing in front of them, the only time he looked away from the screen was to look at Aaron and make sure he was still okay. The hadn't spoken much until Aaron asked, "Is this the one with the guy in the red suit who doesn't call himself a super hero?" Robert looked back at him shocked. Aaron wasn't wrong about the movie, it was Deadpool. But Deadpool didn't come out until 2016 and Aaron's memories stop way before then. "There was some guy here in the village obsessed with it. When it came out he couldn't keep quiet." Robert couldn't believe what he was hearing, because he was that guy. The movie came out around the time of the trial and it made Aaron happy to see the man he loved all giddy about just a movie. Of course every time Aaron said that Robert would remind him that it wasn't just a movie, it was a movie that changed the view on Super hero's and how to fight. It changed the face of Marvel and was considered legendary.

"Aaron how do you know that?" Robert asked, almost like he was about to cry tears of joy because this was so much more than just a memory. This was a memory of recent times, of their life together, even if he didn't know all the pieces he knew something and that was everything. "It just crossed my mind I guess." Aaron didn't know why Robert was so curious and Robert didn't know what to make of it, but they both knew it meant something. Before Aaron or Robert could say another thing about it, Robert's phone went off. It was the time reminder for his interview in Hotten. He had to get a move on it when he really didn't want to. Especially if some of Aaron's memories were coming back. "It's that time is it?" Robert wouldn't ask but he swore he saw a frown fall upon Aaron's face as he saw Robert's phone light up.

"I really tried getting out of this, y'know." Robert said honestly, all he wanted was to continue to sit here and watch TV with Aaron. Maybe go out into the bar and get a couple pints. Eat some dinner and just maybe have s decent day back. But he had to leave, and Aaron needed time with his family anyway. "I'll be back later. Couple hours at most." He had decided after his conversation with Chas that he'd be spending the night in the Woolpack like he always did, it was going to be tough but it had to happen and he had to get used to being together without being together.

"I know." Aaron got up as Robert did and walked with him to the door, "Hey, can you do me a favour?"

"Of course, anything." Robert stopped himself in his tracks and looked back at Aaron. "The family sitting at the booth near the bar...don't talk to them." Aaron looked down, "I know it's not fair to ask but I just something about em' please."

"Trust me, I want less to do with them then you do Aaron. It's not unfair to ask." Robert responded patting Aaron on the shoulder fighting his urge to hug the man in front of him.

Robert got into the bar and saw that the White's were still seated with Ronnie at a booth. "Chas I've got to go now. And Cain, can you get them-" He pointed at their booth, "the hell out of here for Aaron. He doesn't need their problems too." Cain shook his head, a year ago he would've never shit all for Robert Sugden, but now they were close and if someone needed taken of, they could go to the other and it'd be a done deal.

"I wouldn't be surprised if he was faking memory loss just to get out of being stuck with you." Chrissie snarled at Robert as he passed by their seat to the exit. He stopped his tracks, he promised Aaron he wouldn't talk to them but they were entering dangerous territory at the moment. "Oi, keep your mouth shut and get out of my pub." Chas demanded. She had enough of the Whites and the last thing anyone needed at the moment was them making more problems on top of everything else with Aaron. "Are you deaf? Get the hell out."

"You can't make us get out. We're good paying customers." Lawrence stood up and defended his daughter, but no one was taking it.

"Get out before I have to make you." Cain stood from his stool at the bar and walked near their booth. "Let's go." Cain snapped.

They still didn't move so Robert went against his better judgement and joined in. He walked over to the booth and punched Lawrence in the face. Everyone was in shock except Robert, he had
wanted to do that for a long time and he was sure as hell at his breaking point now. "I have to go. But when I come back if you guys have caused anymore problems it's going to be a lot more than a punch to the face that you're gonna get." Robert turned back around and quickly left the pub. His hands were shaking has he tried to gain control sitting in the car, he dropped the keys and he had to contain himself again.

The interview seemed to drag on for what felt like forever although it really only lasted about an hour. By the end he was fairly confident about getting the position but wasn't positive as he was extremely distant through the entire thing. His mind thinking of Aaron and if he knows about what happened, or of anything else came back to his mind. He just couldn't stop thinking about Aaron no matter how hard he tried. If that made his chances of getting a job not so well then he didn't care, because Aaron was first Aaron ND always would be.

The drive back to the village was long and boring. Robert appreciated the quiet but he'd much have been with Aaron all day in the loud pub. His phone went off a few times, calls from Vic and Chas, all probably about earlier. He wouldn't be surprised if when he got back there were cops ready to cuff his wrists together and take him to the station. If Lawrence did one thing good it was make other people when he was to blame. He never could admit when he was being an idiotic sack of rubbish. He couldn't think about what might happen, all he could think about was what had happened. It'd been a tough couple weeks on him as well, everyone thought about what Aaron had to re-learn but what about what Robert had to re-live? It killed him to think about the stories he'd have to tell, because he knew the beginning, middle, and end to all of them. Some far from pretty but of course some good ones too. Those he could go through without problem, to think about the good times and talk about them with the man he loved that was okay. But all the bad ones, like right before the crash Robert finally opened up and he wasn't sure he could again. Or the shooting and all the terrible things he said to Aaron before he was shot, the countless times he denied his feelings when all he wanted to do was be with him. It was far from easy on him, and he'd come so far from the man he was when he first moved back that it nearly killed to have to tell Aaron exactly how bad he was then. A part of him wished he could just start over with Aaron, they move on and build new memories but they couldn't and as much as it hurt that was how it was. Robert's biggest fear of all though was what if Aaron remembered everything? All of it. And he remembered exactly how happy he was years ago with Jackson, or with Ed in France. That what he had with Robert was not anything compared to those years and those men. That Robert simply was not good enough for him and he needed to find someone more deserving of his love. The thought terrified and broke him all at once, because it was a very real possibility. Before he knew it, Robert was pulling into the parking lot of the Woolpack and it was around closing hours. He didn't think he'd been that long but it was already the afternoon when he left in the first place. He saw a number of cars exiting and Chas changing the sign from 'open' to 'closed' He got in before she locked the doors, not that it would be mattered given he had a key and all. "They left soon after you love. But don't be shocked if cops come a'knocking tomorrow." She said bluntly honest.

"Oh I won't be." Robert smiled as he sat at the bar. "I'm just going to pull myself a pint and then head to the living room for bed." He told her. They hadn't talked sleeping arrangements but he just assumed that he'd be on the couch and so he made the decision.

"Alright son, well you know the drill-"

"Make sure everything's locked and that lights are off before I head in." Robert smiled at her as she left for bed.

Thirty minutes later he's already downed three pints and pulled out the scotch. He didn't want to let himself fall apart but it'd been a long day and he was overly done. As the door opened and scared the crap out of him he dropped a glass on the ground.

"Sorry." He heard Aaron whisper, "I saw the light on. Figured I'd get a drink." Robert got up and grabbed the broom and dust pan. "It's all good. Just shocked me is all." "Let me help then." Aaron demanded, Robert knew based on the look on his face that he was going to be stubborn and make Robert help him with this no matter what.
"Ok." Robert didn't want to argue, especially with the amount of alcohol in his system, he wasn't going to be very smart and if he started an argument it wasn't going to be good. "I think you've had enough, come on let's go into the back." Aaron said as and Robert finished cleaning up the broken glass. He helped Robert up as the man was clearly having difficulties trying to stand up. Robert wanted to fight him but he couldn't; Robert caved to Aaron without hesitation. He always did, even if he didn't know it. "What are you doing?" Aaron asked as Robert layed down the couch. He looked like a small child who just needed to crawl into bed and sleep for ages. Aaron couldn't hold back his smile looking at the man before him show his vulnerable side. "I thought we were engaged. Don't we have a room together?" Robert forgot that it'd take some getting used to for Aaron too, that he also didn't know how it would all happen. "Yeah, but I think it'd be better if I just slept down here." Robert felt tears, he didn't want to cry but when he drank it was a more likely incident. It was late and he was gone past drunk a while ago, the last time he was this drunk he was still closeted and tried to put the moves on Aaron. But he was a reformed character, and wasn't ready to make any mistakes. "Oh, well if you change your mind then you know where to find me." Aaron said before heading the opposite way and taking one more look at the beautiful man lying on the couch. Aaron left and if there was one thing worse than Robert alone with his thoughts, it was Robert alone with his drunken thoughts. He couldn't do anything to stop these, he couldn't do anything to stop from hating himself. There was no place like home, but this didn't feel like home anymore. Home was Aaron, and Aaron wasn't himself anymore. Nothing was the same anymore.

Chapter End Notes

Tell me what you think!
Nobody Said It Was Easy

Chapter Summary

Setting back into his home life isn't as easy as Aaron hoped it would be.

Chapter Notes

TRIGGER WARNING!! Quite a few mentions of self harm and actions as well.

As someone who deals with depression and self harm it is hard to write but I feel like to stay in character with Aaron this is what would happen.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Aaron had come home from the hospital just over a month ago, he had settled into the Woolpack and his room on the first night, that part was easy. What came next was not. He was stubborn and told his mum that he wanted to go back to work and wasn't going to leave Adam with all of it. Especially with his father dying in the accident. What Aaron didn't realize was all the work he'd have to re-learn over the time, and it was harder for Adam because it didn't even cross his mind to help teach him.

He had been working back at the yard for two weeks now and he had enough, it'd been a long day and a client came in, a regular client he had guessed. She knew Aaron's name, had talked about the last time she saw him and was happy for him when she noticed the ring on his wedding finger. Of course he had no idea who she was, she went on about their last work together and he played along, clearly she hadn't heard about the accident. Aaron got home later that night after staying to look over paperwork and files, hoping to find something, anything that would jog his memory. When he got back he stormed passed Chas and Charity who were working behind the bar and headed to his room. The lights were dark and he didn't bother to change that, he liked the dark, he couldn't see a man he didn't recognise in the mirror and he couldn't look around to see things that belonged to his fiance who he didn't even know. He may not see himself in a mirror, and he may have changed over the years but Aaron knew one thing that would never change, the pain. He pulled out a box from the top of his closet that he put there three weeks prior, he opened it and the moonlight was enough to show what was inside; the same razor he'd taken against his skin a few times since coming back from the hospital. He hid it well though, no one knew the amount of times he locked himself in the bathroom, cried as the razor cut his skin open and he wished it would just all end. It was more common now than it had been years ago. The first night was the worst though. He had come back from a dinner with Liv and Robert and as he listened to his sister explain her day at school and talk about the things she loved he wished he'd had even the slightest clue of all the other times she'd talked about it. He blamed himself because when he had nothing to say he saw his sister and fiance's faces change, like they felt bad for him. He couldn't handle it and when he got home he'd told Robert that he just needed to go to the washroom. But when he got in there he took a long look in the mirror and the tears fell, he looked down at his stomach and noticed new scars, ones he hadn't seen before. Those and the ones across his arm for from the previous year and everything with he-who-shall-not-be-named. He thought about it for a minute, it was stupid, self harming. It was stupid and people would think it was just for attention; that is if they found out. But then he thought some more and he had his reasons. He was living a
life he didn't know, he was about to marry a man who he'd only ever heard bad things about, he'd lost the man who he thought was the love of his life, everyone looked at him like he was glass about to shatter into a million pieces. Maybe he was, just completely broken and far beyond repairs. It was his relief, as he felt the familiar pain through his body everything else just...just went away. He was able to forget, even if only for a few minutes he forgot about all of it.

Aaron didn't get caught then, or the few times after that. No one questioned it, and whenever he'd leave to 'use the loo' they didn't think about it. Not a single person had come close to catching him, that was then though. 'This was now. "Aaron?" He heard Robert ask in a light tone with a gentle knock on the bedroom door to follow. Aaron wiped away the tears and tried to stop the shaking in his voice as he quickly got up and hid the box. He didn't realize that he forgot to lock the door until Robert had opened it slowly and entered the room. "Hiya. Sorry it's been a long day I was just changing into comfortable clothes to relax." Aaron lied, and what he still wasn't aware of was how well Robert really knew him.

Robert looked down at Aaron's arms and realized his sleeves were pulled up, even in the dark he could see the drops of blood rolling down his wrist. Robert had thought that maybe Aaron would go back here, after everything it seemed almost destined to happen but he just didn't want to believe it. "How long Aaron?" Robert asked as he felt tears burning his eyes from the revelation that Aaron really was harming himself again. "What?" Aaron asked confused and shocked all at once with Robert's question.

"How long have you been cutting again?" The words fell along with the tears and Robert walked to the bed planting himself down thinking of where he had to have gone wrong for Aaron to come back to this. But it wasn't him, Aaron self harming wasn't Robert's fault. No one else could be at fault for the pain Aaron felt. It was the way he coped with pain, some people drank, others did drugs, he just chose to cut. "Aaron!" Robert yelled at the man practically begging for a response.

"I didn't mean to start up again it just happened."

"You don't understand what it was like. To hear all those things, feel all those things about Jackson." Aaron growled, he respected Robert. But he didn't love the man yet, not that he knew of anyway, however he still loved Jackson more than any one ever knew and to be told all those things it killed him. "You don't know what it's like to live a life that's a lie. You just don't understand Robert!" He yelled as tears poured down his face and he just couldn't help it anymore. He was hurt, and he was broken.

"You're right." Robert spoke simply, two words Aaron didn't expect to heat at a time like this. "You're right Aaron. I don't know what it's like to hear all those things about Jackson, because I didn't love him. You did." Robert stopped himself before he pushed too far, he didn't want to over step any boundaries with Aaron. Not now, not in such a fragile state. "But I do know what it's like to love you. To think you're dead and have my whole world come crashing down because I know it'd be nothing without you."

"What?" Aaron took a seat beside Robert, this being the first time since their day at Home Farm that Robert had been open in any way with him.

"You may not feel the same way just yet, and you may not know exactly how much I love you. But I do, Aaron, more than you'll ever really know. I did everything I could to make sure I wouldn't lose you in that car crash and when they thought you wouldn't make it. It tore me apart, it's not the same thing. But it's damn well close enough." Robert reached his hand out to touch Aaron's newly marked scars, surprised when Aaron didn't pull away he said, "But I never did this to myself. So please, if not for me then your mum and your little sister, and your best mates with a baby on the way, stop doing this to yourself."

Aaron couldn't just promise he'd never do it again. Because who knew what pain the future would bring, but for now he would shake his head and allow the silence take over his bedroom as he and Robert sat close together with Robert's hand still linger over Aaron's fresh scars and just be together in the darkness.
Please don't hate me for this chapter
But tell me what you think!
Where I Fell In Love With You

Chapter Summary

Aaron and Robert work together to bring back some of Aaron's memories and they're given hope when a memory from only two years ago comes back to him.

Chapter Notes

So I got this up earlier than I was planning but it has been a while since my last update, and I hope you all enjoy.

It was more of the way the words were said than the words themselves. The way his face changed when the memory came flooding back, and the way his body fell to the realization. It shocked Robert to hear, but more than anything it shocked Aaron to remember; to almost feel it. "This is where I fell in love with you."

They were sitting at the table over breakfast with Liv and Chas when discussing what their plans for the day were going to be. Aaron didn't want to work, and Robert had no meetings, both men for the first time in a long time were free for each other. "Can one of you give me a ride to Cece's?" Liv asked as they finished up the food left on their plates.
"We both can." Aaron suggested. Chas and Robert's eyes widened in shock, Aaron was getting more comfortable with Robert lately and as much as it was a good thing no one knew why or how. A month ago he would've said he'd do it himself and shut the other man out. Robert had his ideas, it had been since that night that still no one else knew about. Maybe, Robert thought. Maybe that night changed things for them.
"Sounds good." Liv smiled and stood quickly from her seat to run upstairs and grab her belongings for the day.
"I guess I'll go get the car started." Aaron followed suit and too left the room.
"Okay, cough it up." Chas demanded as she was left alone with Robert at the table.
"What?" He played stupid a lot with her, pretending he didn't know what she meant when they both knew he did. He furrowed her brows at him and gave him that stare.
"This past month he's gotten better with you. What the hell happened?"
"Why don't you just be grateful he's getting better." Robert swore he wouldn't tell Chas about that night, and he needed to prove that Aaron could trust him so there was no way he would go back on that promise. Robert stood from his seat and joined Aaron outside in the car.

After Liv got out of the car at her friend's house Robert was met with a surprise. "Take me somewhere." Of course he thought of it in the wrong way, long before the accident whenever those words fell from Aaron's lips they were meant in a completely different context. One that Robert missed greatly but he had done better than he ever thought he would not being with Aaron in that way for so long. Going on three months now, Robert didn't think he'd ever gone that long. Even when both Aaron and Chrissie had stopped talking to him he found it elsewhere. But he swore he'd be loyal to the man he loved, and that was exactly what he was doing. It took Robert a minute to contain himself as he thought of it differently, Aaron must've known what the other man was thinking because he smiled and said, "My memories. Might as well give it a go while we
have some time."
"Right, yeah. You know, I think I might have a place." Robert admitted with a shy smile.

"The barn?" Aaron asked confused as they pulled up to the beaten down barn with barely any wood supporting it. He remembered it from years ago when he'd travel through the village and break boundaries, something Aaron was very good at back then. But Robert remembered it from a much closer time, when he and Aaron had nowhere else to go so they chose here. A place that would usually stop someone from loving the person who set up the date, it truly was not an ideal date-place but neither one of them had cared. As long as they were together all was good, well, most of the time anyway. Robert and Aaron spent what felt like a million times here together even if it was much less, however during their affair wasn't the last time he stepped foot inside. It was not long before the fatal crash, Robert wanted to give himself and his life to Aaron, this was where he wanted to ask him. In their barn. That's what it was to him, now he wasn't the sentimental type but somehow Aaron pushed all those walls down and brought out the part of him. He always did, and always would.

"Er-yeah. Just uh, trust me I guess." Robert responded, He wasn't sure if Aaron would trust him just yet, but he was hoping he would. If there was anywhere that held a thousand memories it was here.

"I guess I'm going to have to." He chuckled nervously as he un buckled his seat belt and reached for the door handle. Robert did the same and rushed to open the squeaky door for Aaron. They got inside and it looked like Robert had seen it not even three months ago, hay bails stacked nearly to the ceiling and boards falling apart, so many holes that after a storm it would be filled with water. Aaron didn't have the same thought, he didn't feel anything when they walked inside because it didn't hold any recent memories for him. It didn't bring back when the affair was going on and they stayed here together time and time again. He didn't remember the day that Robert chose to stay a little longer even though he promised Chrissie that Lachlan would be looked after, or when he pretended to be unsatisfied with Robert's choice of venue when he didn't even care as long as they were together. He especially didn't remember the taste and feel of Robert's lips against his as they had kissed in this very room many times. "It stinks in here." Robert had to stop himself for a moment as those were nearly the exact same words he spoke to him barely even three months ago before the crash.

Robert wanted to make a smart ass comment like he did that day, but this wasn't the same Aaron. So he just couldn't bring himself to do it. "Yeah."

Aaron took a deep breath looked to Robert, "So, why here?" A question Robert knew was coming but he didn't expect so soon. He hadn't prepared what he was going to tell Aaron, 'oh ya we used to come in here and have sex.' No, he couldn't just come out and say the words. He needed a story to go along with them, a story that could possibly push Aaron to the edge of remembering. Something, anything, that could possibly bring the man's memories back.

"We uh-we spent a lot of time here together." They were the only words he could get out, this wasn't easy. It was absolutely anything but easy.

"Us? Rich boy from Home Farm spent lots of time in this beaten down place?" Aaron sounded like a jackass, and he knew he did, but he didn't care. That was the point, push and push til Robert gave up because he didn't believe he was worth the hassle. But Robert didn't know that, he thought this was just a man scared of the truth, or who Aaron used to be, and sure maybe some of it was. Robert was stubborn, he'd made that fairly clear in the last few months, and he didn't give up easily. Aaron may try hard as hell, but Robert was not backing down.

"No." Robert argued angrily. He calmed himself before continuing, "Not 'rich boy from Home Farm' because that's not me when I'm with you. When I'm with you it's not about the money or the security, it's about this." He pointed to himself and then Aaron. "It's about us." Aaron was left surprised, he didn't expect Robert to fight back like that. To admit that no matter what life he had, whenever it came to Aaron nothing else mattered. He didn't expect it because he still didn't know how much he was loved by the man standing in front of him. "You can try and fight it, but I'm not giving up on you Aaron. Not today. Not ever."

As Robert spoke the most honest words he had since the accident, Aaron turned to him and it all
began clear now. What he'd heard about Robert versus what made him fall in love with the man. Robert was a right jack ass and everyone knew it, but only a few people knew what kind of great man he could be. Aaron happened to be one of those lucky people, even if he didn't know how lucky he was. "Fine." He gave in knowing that he would have to eventually anyway.

"I was planning on proposing to you here." Robert looked away from Aaron afraid of what his face would say, he didn't expect himself to be so blunt about it but they weren't going to get anywhere if he didn't work hard to open up. "Vic was doing my head in about the idea. Said I should just tell you how I felt about ya."

"And how's that?" Aaron selfishly needed to hear it, he needed to know more and more what Robert felt for him. Why he felt those ways about him.

"You're the person I want to spend the rest of my life with. These last few months haven't changed that, nothing will change that." He turned back and took Aaron's hand, "I know it's a lot but I love you Aaron."

"Why?" Was all he could say, the only person who Aaron ever knew loved him was Jackson. But he's been with Robert and he doesn't understand. He doesn't understand how this man who had millions by being with a woman could love him and want him. Then again he never understood how any one could ever want him.

"Why not?" Robert snapped back but when he saw the look on Aaron's face he knew that he was serious. That this was a time when he really needed an answer. "I don't know Aaron. Because somewhere between that first kiss on the lay by and our visits here I fell for you. Every part of you. Whenever we would relax on this very floor and talk about our lives I fell for you more and more. I remember the second I did, it was here, in this room and I couldn't stop myself because by then it was far too late. There is no why besides I love you."

"It was here."

"What?" Robert asked confused.

"This is where I fell in love with you."

The room had been silent for almost fifteen minutes, Aaron stood there confused and unsure of whether or not what he said was the right thing while Robert stood there still eyes wide open and shocked at the revelation. Was this it? Was this really Aaron's memory coming back or was it just one little thing again. "W-what?" Robert stuttered.

"I...I don't know Robert it just, it hit me."

"What hit you exactly?" Robert couldn't tell if he was mad or sad or just plain out confused with the entire situation.

"We were, we were right there." Aaron turned and pointed to the floor in front of the hay stacks. "There we blankets and you didn't have a shirt on." Robert smiled but the side eye from Aaron made him stop. "You needed to go to a meeting but I didn't want you to. I didn't say it though. I just let you go and it sucked." He remembered all of the pain, he didn't know how or why but that day came back to him and it hurt even if he didn't remember all of the before and after. "Robert, this is where I fell in love with you."
Tell That Devil

Chapter Summary

Aaron overhears Liv and Robert talking about Gordon and is once again forced to face that hardship in his life.

Chapter Notes

I can't believe it's already been two months but at this point everyone should know I'm garbage at updating on a regular basis and I apologize deeply. Life has been quite hectic but that's nothing new, hopefully I'll be updating more with my two months off from school but I'm not able to make any promises.

With that said, please enjoy :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It was early in the morning on a Friday, Robert forced Liv to get out of bed because she was a hassle and he didn't want Aaron to have to deal with her today. They'd been making progress lately, and he knew that was hard enough on Aaron let alone dealing with his bratty teenage sister again. Liv liked to rattle Robert, she always had, since the day well more night that they first met. It seemed like her own personal goal to drive Robert mad, but over time they warmed up to each other bonding over their mutual love for Aaron and then eventually loving each other like brother and sister too. As time went on they grew closer and she was more accepting of opening up to Robert, but he knew she was still a child and couldn't know everything he knew. That never stopped her from asking questions though, like today. They were sitting together at the breakfast table and she was more than aware that Aaron was getting his memories back, but one thing they hadn't really discussed was how Liv came into the picture in the first place.

"So when are we going to tell him? If he doesn't already know." She said with attitude, maybe Aaron already knew and they just didn't tell her because she was a child. She hated the idea of all of them keeping things from her because of her age when she'd proven time and time again she could handle hard things. They did keep things from her time to time but that was for her own protection. At least that's what they said, but if Aaron knew about that man finally being sent down for his terrible crimes then that was something they wouldn't have been able to keep quiet. Robert groaned as Liv came him a pissy look, she enjoyed finding any way to fight him. "No, he doesn't know. Honestly I don't know if or when he will."

"When I will what?" Aaron asked slamming the door behind him as he joined Robert and Liv in the kitchen. "What?" He was angry now, they all knew how much Aaron hated not being told everything and the way people went around saying certain things like he was glass about to shatter into a million pieces.

"We were just talking about something that happened last year is all." Robert didn't know how to explain this, how could he possibly approach Aaron about Gordon after watching exactly how hard it was for him to face the facts just a year before. Aaron glared at him and he knew this wasn't going to be let go of. "Liv, give us a minute." She growled because as per usual she couldn't be around for the 'adult conversations' but she also knew that this was a touchy subject and she didn't want to be in the way either.
"So?" Aaron huffed as he looked at Robert who clearly didn't want to have this conversation but knew they had to.
"Your fa-Gordon." He was hesitant to use the name as he didn't know the effect it would have but all he was given in response was an angry look and groaning noise.
"How do you know about him?" Aaron asked eagerly, sure he'd wondered how Liv had come into his life after all these years but he pushed those thoughts away and simply let himself think all the memories would come back. But if it had something to do with Gordon he wasn't so sure he wanted those memories back. "Robert!"
"Can we talk about this later? Please." Robert begged but as he saw no change in Aaron's expression he added, "It's still early and she needs to get to school, I have to meet with clients of the Scrapyard and I promised Victoria I'd go with her and Adam to a baby scan today." Aaron learned things about Robert since the accident, on of those things being that he cared about Liv and Victoria. Not so much Adam but they didn't hate each other either, so much to Aaron's dislike he sighed and agreed.

Aaron spent a good three hours throwing around scrap with Adam while they talked about meaningless crap, and then Adam went on about how terrified he was for the scan today. According to Adam he thought he had a child with a woman named Vanessa and things with the baby weren't easy. And maybe if Aaron remembered it all, maybe if he knew what it was all like he'd feel something. Anything about it. But it didn't make him feel a thing, he just nodded along while all he cared about was knowing what Liv and Robert were talking about earlier that morning. "I just hope it works out well, you know Vic, she's different. I love her more than anything, I've always known it was her I wanted to start a family with." Adam continued to ramble on about his thoughts and feelings while nothing changed on Aaron's end, he half-listened and thought of what they could have possibly been talking about. Yes, his memories were coming back, slowly, but they were. It didn't make it any easier though, he still had a hard time piecing together who was who and how he knew them. Were they friends, enemies, or simply saw each other walking throughout the village? Then there were a few people who he knew exactly how they were in each other's lives and where they stood. Like Adam, they had been best mates since their teen years and apparently been there for each other through a lot including fleeing the country and going to prison. They even had their own business together. But when it came down to feeling something, he felt nothing. Then there was Robert, and of all people he'd be the one Aaron wouldn't want anything to do with. But when he looked at him, he felt some kind of security. Except for this morning, there was a look on the man's face he hadn't seen before. Fear. A look and feeling he knew all too well, and he couldn't shake the feeling that Robert knew something and was holding it back for the sake of Aaron. He was getting real sick of people holding back at his expense. "Aaron? Mate." Adam shook his best mate out of his thoughts. "Yea yea sorry mate." Aaron shook his head and smiled. "Look you should be getting to Vic, I'll take care of things here."

Once it was clear that Adam was gone Aaron left the portacabin and made his way back to the Woolpack. He snuck in through the back door and went up to his-their bedroom. He had no idea what he was doing here, really he no clue what he wanted to look for or what he needed to know but he knew there was something. As he threw around the clothes and curled up comforter on their bed he saw it-Robert's phone. He must've left it here by accident in the morning. There was no password so all Aaron had to do was swipe and he was in. He knew there'd be nothing in the text messages, Robert wasn't stupid enough to leave that lying around. He scrolled through the gallery on Robert's phone and found a screenshot of some information. When Aaron realized who the information was about memories dating back to when he was only 8 years old started running through his mind. It was a file on him-Gordon Livesy. How did Robert have this? But then as he began reading the details he realized this was a file, a police file from early 2016. Sentenced 17 years in prison for sexual harassment charges on a minor. What was this? When did anyone find out? Let alone a court of law. As tears strolled down his face reading the rest of what was on paper, Aaron's statement to the police, what Robert said in court, what Gordon said. All of it was
right there and then-the bedroom door opened. "Aaron?" Robert asked seeing his fiance standing there with his phone and tears rolling down his cheeks. "What is thus?" He screamed throwing Robert the phone. When he realized what was on the screen his heart crumbled, this wasn't supposed to be how Aaron found out. He was going to explain it all later, why did it have to happen like this. "Rob!" "Okay Aaron I was going to explain this. I just-I just didn't know how." Robert placed his phone down and walked closer to Aaron. "Sit, please." Robert's hands were shaking, how was he supposed to tell Aaron what happened. Oh yeah you hated me and your dad showed up then you tried to kill yourself. No, he's been through too much. Could he handle the truth now. Or will Robert destroy him yet again.

"Talk Robert." Aaron ordered.

"Last winter things were tough on ya. Your-whatever I should call him well he showed back up. Was getting close with your mom but you scared and started self harming. I found you bout ready to leave at the Scrapyard. Called your ex up in France and was gonna stay there for a bit." He had to stop himself from talking, just the thought of it all made him hurt in more ways than one. Aaron may not have remembered but unfortunately he did all too well. "The cuts from self harming they got infected. You and I we weren't in a good place at the time but I rushed you to the hospital." He could feel tears burning in his eyes as he thought of how helpless and broken Aaron was then. The ultimate lowest point in his life, it still killed him to think about. "You said something about your dad and then next thing I know you're gone. You left the hospital when you were no where near stable enough. I went searching the village for you." The tears began falling as he remembered that night. Sitting in the house as Aaron curled up on the ground. It was painful and he selfishly didn't know if he could continue. "Aaron can we-" Robert tried to ask if they could take a break, he didn't fall apart like this. He never fell apart like this. It was his job to be strong for Aaron but that didn't seem likely now. "You told me what he did to you growing up." Aaron let out a painful sigh as reality hit him. Someone, apparently everyone knew his deepest and darkest secret. "We fought together to have him put away. He can never hurt you again." Aaron felt himself crumble into Robert's arms as he thought of it all. He spent years hiding that truth only to find out it came out and he didn't remember. This is how he and Robert reconnected, this is how his sister came back into his life. All of these things happened because of that man, his life was like this now because of him and he didn't know how that made him feel. All he knew was that somehow this person still controlled his life and it was like a knife jabbing into his heart realizing maybe he wouldn't be here with little to no memories if the truth never came out. Somehow every little thing was connected and it killed him inside. But Aaron wasn't going to tell Robert that, right now he'd cry until he had nothing left because that was all he could do.

Chapter End Notes

I hope this was worth the wait.

As always, tell me what you think!
Make You Feel My Love

Chapter Summary

Aaron and Robert get to spend a weekend away, but just like everything in their lives it's not that easy.

Chapter Notes

So I was going to make this into 2 parts but decided to make the last chapter extra long. I hope you guys enjoy the end of this story :)

Robert and Aaron had a long day ahead of them. Since Robert told Aaron the truth about Gordon things had changed between the two men and everyone noticed. Chas had agreed to take Liv for the weekend so they could go away. Robert made reservations at a hotel in Hotten and both men got two days off work. This would be the first time they would be away from everyone and everything for the entire night. Actually they're hoping to get the weekend away but who knows what will happen. Aaron hugged his mum and sister goodbye before heading outside of the Woolpack to place his over night bag in the back of the car.

"Oi! Can we talk for a minute?" He heard a female voice, it was familiar but not one where he could place the voice right away. When he turned around though, he recognized her instantly, the younger blonde who sat beside an older brunette in a booth at the pub just weeks before. Did he know her name? No. But he knew her face.

"I'm actually about to head off-"

"With Robert Sugden. I know. That's what I wanted to discuss." Who did she think she was turning up here to discuss Robert with Aaron. He knew it was none of her business and honestly after the last few weeks he'd had, he didn't want nor need to deal with this woman. "Look, he's not who you think he is."

"A man who cheated on his wife with me? Who lied to everyone he cared about but then helped me through some of the hardest times in my life and is still here now." Rebecca looked shocked. "Did you think he'd use this ad a fresh start and not tell me the truth. I guess he's not who YOU think he is." Aaron snarled and was met with Robert standing behind Rebecca confused.

"Rebecca what the hell are you playing at?" He asked angrily. She didn't respond, she couldn't because there was no real answer. So instead she ran off and left the two men alone.

The ride to Hotten wasn't as Robert wanted it to be, he expected a few laughs with some good music and jokes about the other taste in stations. The stuff they used to talk about as they drove through the village and to whatever destination they had. Aaron was perfectly happy before he left the Woolpack, a smile on his face and a man ready for a weekend away. Of course it was when Rebecca stuck her nose into it like she always did. Like her sister was also well known to do. Robert had tried desperately to make conversation but was answered with shoulder shrugs and grunts and moans. No words from Aaron actually made appearance and it was painful. They both tried so hard to get to a good place, and they had for it to be ruined by none other than one of the White's. The country lanes and trees had disappeared as they were now driving downtown Hotten with city lights flashing and people struggling to move quick enough on the sidewalks. Numerous
restaurants, pubs, and shops along the way and before either one of them realized it, they were pulling into the parking lot of the hotel. How they had money for such a beautiful place Aaron didn't know, but he wasn't going to question it either. "I'll go check in and then come out to grab the bags."

"I'm not helpless. I can grab my own bag." Aaron snarled. He didn't know where that had come from, it almost felt like everything was wrong because of one stupid confrontation from one stupid girl. "I-I'm sorry just-just go and I'll grab the stuff." Robert nodded in agreement not in the mood to argue further more with Aaron.

When both men walked into the room they saw a large leather couch in the middle of the room and a hallway that led to a bathroom, bedroom with a king size bed and a kitchen. It was the ideal apartment type place, a dream kind of home for two blokes who had no one else to take of but each other. "Robert, this is amazing." Aaron said as he admired the light white painted walls with black out lining. The floor boards were a light marble that accompanied the black marble fire place in the television area. The TV was a 70" that took up almost an entire wall in front of couch. There was a small glass coffee table and beside the couch on the right was a stand holding up a lamp. Robert was proud. Proud that he could manage to make Aaron so mesmerized by this place, when if he did this two years the men would've argued that this was Robert "trying to buy Aaron." And maybe then Aaron would've been right, maybe then he'd try to buy his way into Aaron's life. But now it was simply because Aaron had been through hell and when he finally got a break he deserved to have the best break a person could dream of. Aaron kicked off his shoes shamelessly and went to sit on the couch. He let his body fall right into it and the look of relief upon his dace brought Robert a greater joy than he could have ever imagined. Robert didn't want to spoil the happiness of the man in front of him so he quickly left the room to put the bags beside their bed without saying anything. What he didn't realize was Aaron noticed, and followed behind him. "So, cough it up." Aaron said as he leaned against the bedroom door frame. Robert turned around confused. "What?" He asked.

"How did you get the money for this place." Aaron had heard the constant chatter between his mum and fiancé. The money he used for the surgery that ended up saving Aaron's life was from Liv's college fund. So how exactly did Robert get the money for a place that looked like it cost a fortune. "When I came back from that meeting a few weeks back, the one where after you found me plastered in the pub." Aaron nodded in agreement as he remembered the night, everything from that night whether he wanted to or not. "I had other things on my mind, it wasn't a celebration drink. But it the meeting gave me a few pounds so I guess it could've been. It went better than I thought it had in terms of money." Aaron didn't believe him, of course he didn't really have much of a concept of how Robert made money. He did know one thing and that was that his ex wife came with a lot of money. By the looks of it so did the blonde who questioned him earlier that day. "Have anything to do with that blonde?" Aaron didn't really know why he was asking, if Robert wasn't going to tell him at first why would he now? If he was hiding something there was no type of nagging that could make him speak up, but why would Robert lie to him? He hadn't thus far, not that he knew of anyway. And if Aaron had fallen in love with him once he had to give the man the benefit of the doubt here. It was just hard when he didn't know the whole truth. "What? Rebecca? God no Aaron. I have nothing to do with her. Haven't for years." And that was true, the last time he'd ever been with her was before they moved back to the village. It may not sound like the best thing but the only person he was with after moving back was Aaron. Rebecca was the past, she'd been the past since Aaron took his heart two years ago. Everyone had become the past once Aaron entered the picture, not just everyone but everything. Sure, it'd taken him a while to realize it but all Robert ever needed was the man stood in front of him right now. Robert looked at Aaron, for the first time in a while truly looked at him and he saw it in the other man's eyes. He was hurt, maybe scared even, and he wasn't hiding it anymore. "Who is she Robert? Who are all of them, the ones sitting in the pub from the night I came home?" He had his ideas, but was sick of guessing and needed to know.
"Rebecca, the blonde, she's my ex wife's sister. The men across from her, the bigger guy is her father, Lawrence and the one beside him is Ronnie. His long lost love or some bullshit like that. Then there's Chrissie's son Lauchlan, he's a lunatic, everyone in the village hates him whether they say it or not. But Chrissie, she was beside Rebecca that night. She's the ex wife." Robert took a breathe, he preferred to not talk about them but he had to now, "She-they mean nothing to me Aaron. Only you and your family mean something to me now. You are what's important to me." Aaron scoffed, he was damn positive Robert had fed those exact lines to that family when he was married to Chrissie. Aaron couldn't do it today, he didn't have the energy or want to continue to this conversation.

"I'm going to watch some tv and order take-in." With that he left the bedroom and headed for the phone sat on the coffee table in the living area.

The food arrived from a Chinese restaurant about an hour later and still no words were spoken, they ate without saying anything as they watched the TV. Aaron chose to put on some re-runs of Fast and The Furious. It wasn't exactly Robert's cup of tea but he was in no place to argue Aaron, and this definitely was not how he wanted to spend the day but he knew there was no way to push and was just going to leave it until Aaron spoke up first. But just like every other event today it didn't happen the way Robert wanted to, not even a mumble or groan came from Aaron's mouth and he didn't know what he could do. Nothing really. Because this wasn't his Aaron, this was the Aaron from long before Robert ever entered the picture, the Aaron who's heart belonged to another man whether he wanted it to or not. And sure, there were moments here and there where he felt like he was with his Aaron, but those were rare and during moments like this he felt hopeless.

"You're the reason she's in the village." Aaron looked up angrily from the tv and glared at Robert. "She came in on a helicopter, you called her. Why would you do that Robert?"

"Aaron, you remember." Was all Robert could get out, all he could think about was the memories returning to the man he loved. But then it hit him, with the memories came the truth and unfortunately for him the truth wasn't pleasant. "I-I wanted Andy back. I needed my brother back." Aaron looked confused, of course, how could Robert be stupid enough to believe he remembered all of it. "I told you, she's Chrissie's sister. I thought if anyone could make Chrissie come clean it'd be her."

"You literally told me not even two hours ago that you've had nothing to do with her for years!" Aaron yelled, he stood up from the couch angrier than he'd thought he was at first. "How do you expect me to believe you. Anything you say when you JUST lied to me!" He snapped before heading out the front door. Robert went to run after him but he wasn't about to start a scene in the middle of a hallway. So he stayed back quietly and went after Aaron once they were outside.

"Aaron please-" Robert began but was cut off by a crying Aaron, "I remember. Okay, I remember a lot more than I've told you. It started when you told me about Gordon, I remembered finding out he died. And then it was like everything was clicking together, I took you back after a conversation in the kitchen, you and I we were so great Robert. Almost perfect, or at least as perfect as people with our lives could get. And then she showed up, because YOU called her." The tears were streaming down his face and he couldn't hold them back. "I didn't tell you because I knew you'd give me that look." Aaron pointed at him, and he didn't even need to say what look. Robert knew, it was the selfish look. Because as much as he'd love to get back the Aaron that loved him, he thought maybe this was a chance to make Aaron love him in a new way, without their pasts hanging over their heads, but that was so far from the case now. "I'm not saying I remember all of it, but I do remember a lot more than I told you. Than I told anyone." Robert felt the tears gathering up in his eyes, he had felt the pain coming long before tears and didn't know what to do. "Just listen to me Aaron, please listen to me."

"NO!" He screamed. "You know," Aaron wiped the tears from his own cheeks but they continued to fall. "I wanted my memories back so bad, all I wanted to know was who I was and what had happened to me in six years. The idea of a fiancé and a little sister, I was overjoyed despite missing Jackson. I thought this might actually be okay, I might have a real shot at something good. But then the truth started coming back, we were an affair, I took you from
someone else, a woman! You thought I shot you, I mean was it really bad enough for you to believe that I'd do that to you?" It was like all the memories coming back were the ones Robert wanted to forget most, like this was God's sick game making everything bad he'd ever done come back to haunt him.

"No, Aaron. Ok, I know I have made my fair share of mistakes." Robert laughed stupidly, "Trust me, I have made more than a fair share. But at the end of the day I've also made some good choices, and even if our affair didn't end up with good results, even if people got hurt including us, I will never say I regret it. There is a very long lists of regrets I have in my life, but you-Aaron you are not one of them." Aaron scoffed, Robert knew he wouldn't believe him. That it would take more than a few declarations of love to win back this man, but he'd done it before. So maybe, just maybe he could do it again. Or maybe this was Aaron's way out, maybe Chrissie was right, it made him feel sick just thinking of it. Maybe she was right, that his memory loss was the way out for Aaron, the memories coming back and he realized that all those choices he made with Aaron were ones he could finally go back on. Maybe Aaron really did regret everything they'd done together, everything they'd been together. But Robert wasn't giving up, no matter what the demons in his head told him he knew there was still a part of Aaron that loved him, because while the memories come and go that love always remained. "I don't know if you remember, but there was this one time that happened between up and it's still stuck with me to this day. The first time I ever told you I loved you, I mean of course I felt it before that-I just didn't want to admit it to myself. There was so much going on with us at the time, but you especially. I was scared for you, I still wasn't ready to admit it to myself, but I did. I loved you so much, I still do Aaron. It was hard to accept at first, but then I thought about it and I know I would've lost you for good if I didn't tell you. It was one of the hardest things I've ever had to do, but it was the best decision I ever made. You are the best decision I've ever made, even though I never really had a choice."

They both chuckled slightly, and it warmed Robert's heart to see Aaron finally letting himself put his guard down a little bit. "You can swear you hate me, because you've done that before. You can push me away, because you've done that before. But you can never make me give up on us, because I love you and will do everything I could possibly ever do to keep you by my side. The hard and messed up times, they're nothing to us. Whether all your memories come back or not, I'm going to be here. When we were eating I thought about us, and that you're not you. Not the man that fell in love with me, but you are. I've spent so much timing trying to make your memories come back and make you love me again, that I didn't realize underneath you've been here the whole time."

"I do love you Robert. That's what scares me, because I'm standing here in a dark alley yelling back and forth with a man who I know I love, but I have barely any memories of us together, some here and there but none good enough to explain how I could fall in love with you. Actually, all pushing me the other way, but somehow I still feel something for you and it makes no sense to me. Then you tell me these stories and it all clicks, of course I fell in love with you, then you lie and it doesn't make sense again. I'm stuck between what I feel and the memories I do have."

"You said we were great. You said you remember us being great." Robert was now letting his tears fall freely, because it was inevitable. "We can be great, I can make up for those bad times. I can't promise I won't fuck up again, because I will. I know I will, and you will too, but we can get it through it together. Like we do with everything else. I told you, I'm not giving up on us."

"I can't be lied to, I can't be in a position where I'm constantly questioning your intentions and relationships with people. If we're doing this-having a life together, you need to be completely honest with me, because the moment you lie again I'm done Robert. I won't stay, I can't go through that."

"I swear Aaron, I will do my best to be a better man for you. I will try not to lie, I'll do everything I can to be honest with you. Ok I swear, I swear. Please try with me." Robert was vulnerable, he was practically falling apart in front of Aaron's eyes.

"Let's just go back inside and see from there." Aaron's tears had finally stopped and he took Robert's hand. "We can talk, and I don't know. Do whatever else needs to be done." Robert
intertwined his finger's with Aaron's.
"Thank you." Robert shyly smiled as they walked to the doors.
"Don't thank me yet." Was all Aaron could say, because he was going to try. He was going to try
really hard to make this relationship work, but it was not going to be easy. Nothing with them ever
was, so he couldn't promise Robert that this would work out. All he could do was try, all either of
them could do was try.

Chapter End Notes

So I know it wasn't exactly a happy ending but I feel like all fics end happily and I
wanted this to be very realistic to who they are as characters.

Tell me what you think.

End Notes

Tell me what you think!

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!