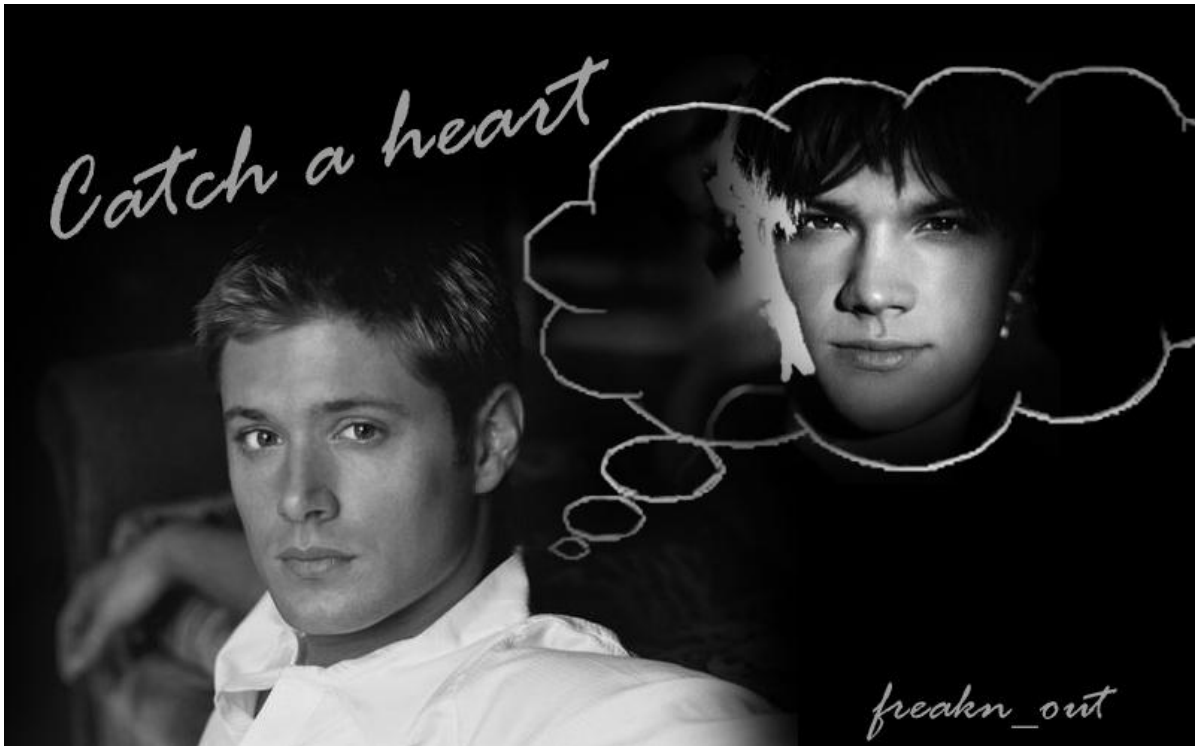


## Catch a heart:



What do you do when the one you love loves another?: *Stealing the silent moment, my eyes constantly slide to his serene features. His smooth, silky lips, soft and delicate, unlike my own thick, puffy ones, make me just want to touch and taste. His unmarred and tanned baby-smooth skin enhances his impossibly young innocence and his windswept hair falls haphazardly into his face, making me want to just reach out and... I drag my eyes back out to the ocean.*

21,000 words, NC-17, dub-con, bottom!Jared, hurt!Jared, hurt/comfort

\*Jared\*

Jared stands in the corner of the room as Marie and David step onto the stage, matching smiles on their faces. The room goes crazy, whooping and cheering, making David smile in that oh-so-familiar way. Jared feels his chest closing up as the perfect pair link hands.

He barely manages to catch the words, his mind desperately focusing on anything else, but he catches the final sentence, "...getting married!" and it's enough.

Wandering blindly through the crowd, he finally reaches the exit and escapes out into the bright sunlight that mocks him.

He doesn't know why he clung to his hope. Why he'd always believed what they had was special. As if it was something more than 'friends with benefits'. How stupid he'd been.

After firmly locking his trailer door, he collapses onto the couch, staring blankly at nothing.

A few minutes pass and he hears someone knocking. When he doesn't answer, keys scrape and then soft footsteps enter the room, the door shutting with a click.

A quiet voice utters words that only tear him up even more. "It was never for real, Jared. We both knew that."

But the thing is, Jared hadn't known that. He had fallen and he had fallen fast.

His hands clench at the cushions, keeping him from falling to his knees and begging David to stay with him, to love him. He can at least retain some of his dignity.

When he replies, his voice is hoarse, "Course we both knew that. We were just fucking around."

"Yeah."

A warm hand lands on his shoulder, sliding around to tilt his head upwards. His eyes slip shut as David's lips press furiously against his, but he allows David's demanding tongue entrance anyway.

He doesn't resist when David pushes him back and flips him facedown. He doesn't struggle when David's hand tugs roughly at his jeans and yanks them downwards. As he feels David's finger probing his entrance, he merely keeps his eyes squeezed tightly shut, tears seeping through and soaking the cushion silently.

David's hand snakes around to grasp his limp cock, jerking him off and making him come with a soft cry. A few more thrusts and then David's load empties inside of him.

But he just feels hollowed out and sucked dry. He's given everything of himself. He's not sure what else he can give.

After cleaning him up, David leaves with the soft snick of the door - a sound that echoes through Jared's mind like a gun.

David's made his choice. Jared's not enough. Jared's never been enough. Tears soak the cushion beneath him..

He doesn't know what to do anymore.

He obviously isn't enough.

Not raising his head from the tear-stained cushion, Jared allows exhaustion to drag him away.

\*

He stands there with a fake grin on his lips, acting the perfect friend. He watches them exchange rings and kisses; he smiles for the cameras; he congratulates the newly weds as any normal friend would do; he barely makes it through the day.

It's only when he's standing on the outskirts, looking back at the festivities that belong to a life he doesn't belong in, that he decides to grow up and accept the facts.

The main fact being that he has no claim over David.

\*

Despite his decision, he still ends up with dark patches beneath his eyes from about a month of sleepless nights. Each time he closes his eyes, he sees the one he doesn't deserve.

He doesn't realise exactly how little he's been eating until it's too late.

While walking through a crowded mall, he feels himself getting light-headed and slightly woozy. He pays no heed to it, putting it down to the fact that he's a bit tired.

But when he comes to, flat on his back, staring up at concerned faces, he vaguely thinks that maybe he should've eaten something.

He blushes furiously in humiliation and immediately tries to scramble to his feet. He sways backwards, but is fortunately caught by the firm arms once again. Muttering embarrassed thanks, he sets off down the walk.

Unfortunately, the guy who caught him decides to follow and check up on him, "Hey, you alright?"

"Yeah, fine. Thank you." He keeps his tone short, not wanting to encourage the man.

"Right, and I believe that. I'm not going anywhere until I see you eat something."

Jared huffs and sends a glance in the man's direction. "What are you, a doctor?"

A wide grin spreads over his lips, "Yeah, how'd you guess?"

\*

The man's name is Jensen, he graduated the previous year and is currently working at the hospital down the road. And, keeping his word, he hangs around until Jared finally relents and agrees to eat something.

Jensen slides into the chair opposite him, his incredibly green eyes twinkling happily, "Knew you'd come over to my side eventually."

Despite himself, Jared somehow manages to tease back, "Only doing this to get rid of you, I hope you know."

He grins cheerfully, "Yup."

A few minutes later, hiding behind his burger, Jared sneaks a peek at the man, wondering what he could possibly have done to draw his attention. Jensen's happily munching his fries,

a random smear of ketchup on his lip. A small smile pulls at Jared's lips but it disappears again with a soft sigh.

\*Jensen\*

I don't know why I'm so obsessed with him. I mean, it's not really my business to want to take all his pain away, but I do. There's just something about him that makes it impossible for me to stop watching him. Like there's something more than just the random, hot dude I passed in the mall. And yeah, he is hot.

But that's not why I keep glancing over at him. If it were just about him being ridiculously good-looking, I'd just go jerk off somewhere. No, it's not about that.

It's just something that I see in his haunted eyes, something that causes my chest to close up; something I can't describe.

It's obvious that somebody hurt him. That somebody is still hurting him. I can see by the exhaustion in his every movement; by the shadows beneath his eyes, by the shadows in his eyes.

I shouldn't want to hurt whoever it is, I shouldn't want to pull him into my arms and shield him from his pain, I shouldn't feel this instinct that tells me to protect him at all costs; it just isn't natural to feel like this for someone I've just met.

He finishes his burger in silence, but it's not awkward, it's just... lacking noise.

"There, happy now?" he looks up at me through his bangs, his eyes weary but brighter than they were earlier.

"Much." I flash him a grin and stop his hand as he reaches for the bill. "No, it's on me."

He scowls and opens his mouth, obviously to argue, but I continue, "I insisted, remember?"

He frowns, but with a soft sigh, he pulls his hand out from beneath mine, leaving my fingers tingling slightly. "Fine, if it makes you happy."

As he gets to his feet, I instantly feel a wave of desperation swelling up, "You know what would make me even happier?"

Looking cautiously back at me, his eyes are guarded as he asks slowly, "What?"

"There's an awesome ice cream place just around the corner, you wanna go?"

He blinks, looking adorably confused and out of his element. Using this to my advantage, I quickly pay the bill and place a hand on his shoulder, steering him out the restaurant, marvelling at the strength vibrating beneath the thin material of cotton.

"So, what's your favourite flavour? Mine's pistachio."

Jared hesitates before answering, obviously still uncertain of what's happening, "Uhm... Choc chip cookie dough?"

I keep the conversation going, eager to keep him from realising that I'm just trying to spend more time with him, "Ahhh, I should've guessed you were the chocolate type. Let me guess, second favourite's the chocolate fudge brownie?"

He shakes his head, "No, I hate fudge. It's the chocolate almond nougat."

For some reason, I find myself filing away these tiny pieces of information, along with the fact that he has yet to pull away from my grasp.

\*

After gorging ourselves on the ice creams, I hi-jack Jared yet again, and convince him (by dragging him) towards the beach.

It's a brilliant idea, as the minute he lies down on the white sand, he relaxes; tension seeping out of him, his eyes slipping shut. Softly, his lips part to murmur, "Thank you, Jen..." His lips slide smoothly around my nickname, catching something in my chest.

I watch transfixed as his breathing evens out and his face falls slack. He looks so young and innocent. Vulnerable. How could anyone hurt someone so beautiful, so precious?

Carefully rolling onto my side and propping my head up on my arm, I watch the delicate curves of his eyelashes flutter and I wonder what he's dreaming about, whether he's in a better or worse place. The soft rise and fall of his chest is so soothing, I find myself matching my breathing to his.

Unable to stop myself, I reach out to trace the strong curve of his jaw, trailing my fingers back into his hair and then down to brush my thumb over his cheeks, desperately trying to erase the exhausted shadows. My hand slides to a halt, palm flat along the side of his face and his breath catches slightly, his head tilting towards me, leaning into the touch endearingly.

What's so special about him? What is it that makes it impossible to look away?

I smirk at myself.

I doubt there's anything that's not special about him.

Disturbed by all my movement, Jared shifts, mumbling something incoherent and rolling closer, pressing his nose to my elbow. It's automatic for me to slide my arm around his shoulders and rest my hand on the hollow of his back, holding him close to me. Turning my head towards him, I bury my nose in his soft curls, breathing in the scent of coconuts and staring up at the flurry puffs of cloud drifting overhead.

\*

I feel him stirring slightly, softly sighing as he curls closer, hands clutching at my shirt and nose burrowing into the side of my neck. I grin slightly, “Come on, Jared... time to wake up.”

Still on the fringes of sleep, he murmurs quietly as he tucks himself further into me, “Love you...”

I freeze up. The words causing my throat to close up and my chest to feel like a ten-ton block is pressing down on it. I know those words aren't for me and that Jared has no idea where he is right now, but dammit I wish he were mine.

“Jay... Jared, come on, wake up.”

His eyes lashes flutter against my skin and he sleepily sits up, “What is-” he cuts off peering down at me in confusion before the day's events swim back to him. He flushes furiously, “Sorry... I... sorry...”

“It's okay.” I smile up at him, wanting nothing more than to brush those tussled curls out of his eyes.

“What time is it?”

I glance down at my watch, “Just past six. Why? You got somewhere you need to go?”

Flopping back down on the sand, he lets out a breath, sadness clouding his eyes. “I used to...” he murmurs softly. Then he stands abruptly, “Sorry, I'd better go.”

“Wait! Jared!” I scramble up, stumbling after him.

When I grab his arm, he jerks around, moisture in his eyes, “What do you want from me, Jensen?”

“Jared...”

He turns away from me, pulling his arm from beneath my fingers, “Please, just go.”

“Is that really what you want me to do?” I reach out again, sliding a hand along his shoulder and pulling him around. “Cause I really don't think it is.”

A single teardrop breaks from his eye; the delicate pearl trickling down his cheek. I catch it with my thumb and his eyes snap up to mine. “What would you know?” he whispers.

Sensing that everything depends on my answer, I think about it carefully before replying, “I know you're supposed to smile more than you do.”

“What?” he blinks at me in confusion.

My thumb slips down his smooth cheek, running down to the curve of his dimples. Locking eyes with him, I stroke over the crescents and smile softly, “You should use these more.”

His lips tug slightly at the corners, “Yeah? You think so?”

“Dude,” I laugh, sliding my hand down the length of his neck, “I know so. I’m a doctor, remember?”

“Right... doc.”

“Yup, and right now, you know what this doctor prescribes?”

“What?”

“Another proper meal. Come on, I’m taking you to Bartley’s.”

“What? No, Jensen, I really should head home now.”

“Oh, come on,” I tug him after me, “It’ll be fun.”

“Jen...” he complains, but I can tell from the whine that he’s already given in.

\*

I manage to get him drunk. Which was both brilliant and absolutely idiotic. Brilliant, because he’s an adorable drunk; idiotic, because I’m not sure that I’ll be strong enough to keep myself from molesting him.

“Jen, can... can you pass... me the...” he waves towards the pretzel bowl, but before I can slide it towards him, he reaches across me to grab it himself. Obviously, being drunk and all that, he misjudges the distance and ends up landing with a soft ‘oof’ in my lap.

It’s not that uncomfortable, so I just grin down at him as he shuffles around to face upwards, “Hi.”

“Hey,” I reply, slipping a hand around to make sure he doesn’t fall off and smash his head on the floor.

I expect him to pull away any second, but he doesn’t, seemingly content to snuggle against my stomach, arms snaking around to fist handfuls of my shirt. “You a nice pillow,” he mumbles softly.

Well, there’re worse things to be accused of. “I think I can live with that.” I down the rest of my beer, “Come on; let’s get you home.”

I nudge him out of the booth, keeping an arm wrapped firmly around him, both to keep him steady and to ward off the approving glances being sent his direction by various men around the bar. It’s not surprising, what with his innocence and youth, accompanied with that body, but I still barely refrain from growling at the men whose eyes stare blatantly and hungrily at Jared’s ass.

Jared, completely oblivious to the wolves, just leans heavily into me, “Where we... where we goin’, Jen?”

“Home,” I reply shortly, relieved when we exit into the cool air.

He stops and pulls away from me, his eyes like saucers, “I don’t... I...” With shoulders hunched, he turns to face the empty road. Then, in a whisper so soft I have to step closer, he continues, “I don’t think... It doesn’t feel like home anymore...”

A shiver moves through him, making me instinctively shift closer, pressing my chest to his back and carefully sliding my hands around his waist, pulling him against me. To my relief, he doesn’t pull away.

“What do you mean?” I whisper into his ear softly.

“He... I... I don’t... I don’t know...” Jared mumbles, sounding so lost and confused that my chest clenches painfully and I hold him tighter.

Burying my nose into the soft, golden-brown curls, I murmur, “Then come home with me.”

Jared sways into me slightly, his hand sliding down to where my arm’s firm around his waist, “Okay...”

\*

I am a saint.

There is no other explanation for how I manage to keep my hands to myself. Somehow, I manage to get him stripped down and bundled into the shower without even thinking about... okay, fine. Without even acting upon the not-so-saintly thoughts racing through my mind.

Once he’s safely behind the closed door, I begin rifling through my clothes, grabbing out some boxers and a soft tee. When I realise the shirt is the one Mac gave me last Christmas, I grin broadly, deciding I couldn’t have picked a better shirt. Take me to bed or lose me forever. And there’s a teddy in the corner.

I pull out a random shirt and pair of boxers for me to wear, and just after I’ve changed, Jared enters the room in a cloud of steam, his chest bare and... oh, holy mother of God... only with a towel wrapped low on his hips. Mouth working like a fish, I stare at him, eyes tracing droplets down the cut muscles and tanned skin. Jesus.

He blinks at me, “Uhm...”

Snapping out of it, I jerkily toss him the clothes and stutter, “You... here, I... I’ll... kitchen...” I drag my eyes away and stumble out of the room. When I reach the kitchen, I press my hands on the counter, trying to get my breathing (and arousal) under control.

My cheeks are flushed at my lack of control; I’ve never been so affected by anyone. After splashing my face a few times, I decide to just shove my head under the spray.

I’m just drying my hair when I hear his soft footfalls behind me, “Jen...? You okay?”

“Yeah, fine.” My voice comes out strained and snappish and I translate his soft gasp as a flinch. Instantly feeling guilty, I spin around to face him, relieved to see he’s changed into the clothes, “Sorry.”

He nods uncertainly, “Uhm... I can... I can go... if you... if you like?”

“No,” I reply quickly, taking a step forwards. “Don’t do that, I was just being stupid. Come on; let’s watch a movie or something.”

“Okay.”

I grab a duvet on the way and toss it over him when he sits down.

“What do you want to watch?” I ask, peering up at him from the movie cabinet and feeling my heart stutter at the adorable image he presents: curled up with the blue blanket tucked up to his chin.

“Anything,” he mumbles softly.

Wanting something funny, I choose *Death at a Funeral* and slip it inside. Once it’s all set up, I turn back to the bundle on the couch, wondering whether he’ll want me to sit near him or if I should take the armchair. He decides for me and raises the end of the duvet.

\*

By the time the movie’s finished, he’s sound asleep, using my shoulder as a pillow and my waist as his teddy. Somehow, I’ve shifted so I’m lying lengthwise on the couch with my head resting on the arm. And somehow, he’s shifted with me, so he’s lying bracketed between the back of the couch and me.

With the light of the TV being all that lights up the room, his skin seems to glow. His hair’s pushed out of his face, making him seem even younger and before I know it, I’m pressing my lips to his forehead, kissing him softly. He’s so obviously a cuddler that it makes me grin.

He lets out a soft sound, curling closer to me, his hands sliding up my sides. I press my lips to his cheek, smiling when he leans into it. Deciding, what the hell, I might as well be a complete perve, I gently slide my lips down to meet his.

With a soft smile and fluttering eyelashes, he murmurs softly, “Dave...”

Who the hell is ‘Dave’?

Well, whoever the hell he is, I’ve decided that I hate his guts and if I ever meet him, I’m going to throttle him and hang him upside down on a cannibal island. I might even salt and pepper him for them.

Because whoever he is, Jared loves him and, although that alone would be enough, I also have a strong suspicion that he’s the one who’s hurting Jared.

My arm tightens around the man who might just be breaking my heart and doesn't even know it.

\*

Eventually my aching back wins the internal battle, and I softly shake him awake, "Hey, Jared... Come on, let's get to bed, yeah?"

His eyes scrunch up tightly and he throws his arm over his head with a groan.

"Come on, buddy."

I manage to get him into a semi-cooperating mode and end up half carrying him towards my bedroom. "You can take this bed, I'll be next door in the guest, okay?"

Jared mumbles as he crawls up the bed and I automatically pull down the covers for him and tuck him in. Just as I'm turning to go, he reaches out, his eyes sleepy and vulnerable, "Stay?"

I don't need to be asked twice and feel a bubble of happiness stirring inside of me as he immediately rolls closer and tucks himself into my side.

It says a lot about him if he can make me feel so happy just by using me as his pillow.

\*

I know the exact second that he realises where he is. He tenses up in my arms, going completely rigid.

"Shhhh, Jared. It's okay, it's just me."

He rolls around, face creased and eyes sleepy, to peer up at me in confusion, "Jens'n?"

I grin at how his hair's sticking out at one side, "Yup. You okay?"

"Yeah," he sits up, palming his eyes like a kid. Then he stops, looking up at me with a frown. "I slept?"

"Well, yeah. Isn't that what you're supposed to do at night?" I'm not entirely sure where he's going with this.

He looks even more lost, "I slept for more than a few hours?"

"Yeah, man. It's nearly eleven. What's the matter?"

"I just..." he rubs his forehead, "I just haven't... slept that... that long for awhile."

No wonder he fainted yesterday. "See, I told you," I gesture to myself, 'Doctor'.

"Yeah," he huffs. "Sure."

I place my hand on his shoulder, “Jay... can... can you tell me...?”

When he tenses and drops his gaze to the duvet, I let out a breath, “It’s okay. You don’t have to.”

“Sorry,” he mumbles, still tense beneath my fingers. “I just... I just...” he looks to the side.

“Hey, it’s okay. Man, you don’t have to tell me shit. I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have said anything.” When he doesn’t respond, I pull his shoulder to tug him closer, “Jay, come on, man. Just...” I pull again and this time he sags, allowing me to manoeuvre him to lie back down beside me.

“Hey...” I whisper softly, “You wanna go fishing today? We could go out in my yacht, make a day out of it.”

There’s silence for a few moments and then he replies hoarsely, “You’re a doctor who owns a yacht, how does that work?”

“Let’s just say, having a dad who own half the business world has a few advantages.”

“Right...”

“So, what do you say?”

He chews his bottom lip, his eyes distant. Then he slips out of bed and begins searching for something.

“What’re you looking for?”

“My jeans...”

“They’re on the dresser.”

He wanders towards it and fishes out his cellphone. After flipping it open, his face falls and he lets the phone drop on the table, Then he turns back to me, his eyes empty, “Sure, why not.”

\*

He’s beautiful.

There is no fucking way that he is real. His eyes are closed, delicate eyelashes splaying over his tanned cheeks and his golden-brown bangs blowing around gently. Such sadness in his every move, in the way he leans blindly into the wind, cheeks smooth and delicate. Beautiful.

He hasn’t yet noticed my eyes on him.

Quietly I step up before him, running a hand lightly over his shoulder. He tenses slightly and his eyes flutter open, locking on me. My heart stutters as he smiles, dimples dancing slightly. “Hey.”

I move closer, “Hey, you okay?”

He breathes in deeply, taking in the salty air. “Yeah... this is gorgeous...” His eyes reflect the ocean as he looks up shyly, “Thank you... you’ve no idea... no idea how much I needed to get away.”

“I’m just glad to have some company.”

Laughing slightly he turns to stare out at the horizon, “Can’t imagine I’m very good company right now.”

Barely breathing, I dare to move closer, close enough that my chest is just brushing against his back.

“I’m glad you’re here.”

My heart jumps as he leans back into me, pressing closer. I tentatively raise my hands to rest at his waist, not sure what I’m allowed to do.

With a soft sigh, he tilts his head back, resting it on my shoulder, his eyes slipping shut. “Why are you so nice to me?” he asks, a small, confused crease lining his forehead.

I pull him flush against me, my nose brushing the back of his neck, “You make it very easy to be nice to you.”

He huffs softly, “Yeah, sure. You don’t even know me. I could be a serial killer for all you know.”

“Well...” I draw it out, “then we’d have that in common too.”

“I knew it,” he deadpans, “You’re an evil doctor who grabs unsuspecting victims and uses them as test subjects for your evil schemes.”

“Yeah,” I laugh, “I always did love Frankenstein.”

He shakes his head, but I can see the smile on his lips.

“So...” I begin, “how’d a good ol’ Texan boy like you end up in cruel L.A.?”

Jared falls still again, his body tensing in my arms. His voice is completely blank when he replies, “That’s just where I ended up.” Then he pulls away, his movements stiff as he moves up towards the bow, lowering himself to sit with his legs dangling over the front of the yacht, the wind sweeping his hair in curtains, hiding him from my eyes.

My chest aches dully.

I don’t know what I did. Swallowing slightly, I head towards the trapdoor and descend into the cockpit. After taking a few steadying breaths, I grab the cooler box and climb back up the deck.

He looks up when I approach and he takes the beer with a small smile. “Thanks.”

“I’m sorry,” I murmur, gesturing towards where we had been standing before.

Frowning slightly, he moves over to make space for me. “For what?”

“Prying. Asking questions you don’t want to answer.”

His distant eyes shimmer as he gazes out at the ocean, “You’ve got nothing to be sorry for... It’s... there’s just a lot that I... that I don’t like talking about... My past isn’t something I want to be reminded of.”

I bite my lip to stop from asking, opting instead to lay a hand on his shoulder, offering him as much support as I can provide.

When he turns to face me, his eyes crinkle warmly at the edges, making me feel like I’m about to burst. Then he looks back at the horizon, sucking his bottom lip into his mouth.

Letting out a defeated sigh, he murmurs, “It’s nothing big or anything, just the old ‘teen tells Dad he’s gay’ story.”

Shifting closer carefully, I ask softly, “He took it badly?”

Jared laughs bitterly and mutters under his breath, “I don’t know if you think taking off his belt and beating me to within an inch of my life means he ‘took it badly’.”

My chest tightens and my teeth come together angrily, “He beat you?”

The kid just shrugs, “Yeah, then he told me to get out and never come back.”

I don’t even realise that my hand is squeezing his shoulder so tightly it must be painful until he shrugs again. Relaxing my grip slightly, I pull him to face me, “You never should have been treated like that. He had no right. He deserves to be-”

“Jensen,” he cuts in softly, his warm hand pressing against my chest, cutting off my angry tirade. “It’s okay. It was a long time ago.”

This doesn’t help in the least, “How old were you?” I demand furiously.

“Sixteen.”

“Sixteen?” He’s so young and innocent now; I can only imagine what he must have been like back then. And he... he... “What about your mom? Surely she tried to stop him.”

Jared’s hazel orbs fill with moisture and he turns his head away, “She died giving birth to me.”

“Godfuckingdammit,” I hiss, yanking him forwards and pressing him to my chest, my arms wrapping around him tightly. The thought of him alone and hurt and young and vulnerable only makes me cling tighter.

“J’ns’n,” he murmurs, his voice muffled against my neck. “J’ns’n.” He tries to push me away, but after a few moments he gives in, his arms slowly sliding around to hug back.

When I pull back, I’m flushing. “Sorry... I just...” I swipe a hand over my face, wondering what the hell it is about him that makes me feel this primal need to protect him. To hurt the ones who hurt him.

He sends me a watery smile. “’s okay.”

The anger flares up again, “No, Jared. It’s not okay. You were a child. He’s supposed to be your father. Unconditional love and all that. He had no right to hurt you like that. To kick you out. To abandon you. Why didn’t you call the cops? Why didn’t you-”

“Jensen,” Jared murmurs tiredly. “It happened, okay? It’s all in the past. I’ve grown up since then.”

I drop my gaze to stare at the swirling water, “I’m sorry... It just makes me angry... As a doctor, I see so many abused children... and I just...” I can’t bear to think of him like that. “I’m sorry.”

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A sudden movement from the side has us both jumping up, running towards where Jared’s line is jerking erratically. “I think you caught something,” I call excitedly. “Quick, grab it!”

Wrapping his hands firmly around the pole, Jared grabs the rod and begins reeling in his catch.

In the water I catch sight of darting grey, “It’s a big one! Come on, pull it in.”

“I’m... trying,” Jared puffs, his arms straining, muscles tightening enough to give me a dry mouth.

I wrench my gaze from him and glance back down. “I think it’s a Sand Bass. Come on, come on!”

With one final heave, Jared tumbles backwards, landing in a heap, the fish soaring right off the hook and through the air, catching me smack in the face. I jerk back, sputtering and it slips through my fingers to land on him. He begins squirming and yelling as it slips between his legs.

I dive for it, but miss, landing instead on Jared, making him groan loudly and roll me off him, while the fish slithers off to the edge and tumbles back into the water, leaving nothing but glistening scales in it’s wake.

Out of breath and panting, both soaked through, we glance at each other and burst out laughing. “Oh, God,” he gets out, “That was such...”

“... a failed fishing lesson,” I complete, grinning widely.

“Hey, I did catch it. Now, if you’d managed to hang on to it…”

“How was I supposed to know I’d be getting slapped by a fish?”

“Oh, man. That was awesome,” Jared laughs.

His dimples are in full play, his cheeks flushed and eyes sparkling. He’s so gorgeous I can barely breathe. Reaching out unthinkingly, I brush a fish scale from his cheek and his breath catches, his eyes locking with mine.

Flushing, I pull my hand away and get to my feet. “Come on, our beers must be getting warm.”

When I stick out a hand for him to take, he grasps it easily, letting me pull him up in a fluid move that seems to work perfectly. He returns my smile and we head back to our drinks, a comfortable air between us.

“So, how old are you, Jared?” I find myself asking, desperate to learn all there is to know about him.

He hugs his bent knees, resting his chin on his arm, “Twenty-one. What about you?”

“Jeez, you’re a kid! I’m twenty-six.”

Grinning, he replies, “Hey, just ‘cause you’re old and nearly turning grey!”

“Fuck you!” I shove his shoulder lightly.

He laughs softly, his eyes slipping shut.

I’m so glad we’re here; so glad I managed to convince him to join me. He seems to be relaxing even more with every passing minute. And he’s opening up to me, letting me know about his past and himself. It’s more than I ever expected.

Stealing the silent moment, my eyes constantly slide to his serene features. His smooth, silky lips, soft and delicate, unlike my own thick, puffy ones, make me just want to touch and taste. His unmarred and tanned baby-smooth skin enhances his impossibly young innocence and his windswept hair falls haphazardly into his face, making me want to just reach out and… I drag my eyes back out to the ocean.

But it’s inevitable that my eyes find their way back to him. Taking in how his shirt’s rising up from him when he leans forward and how his jeans are stretching over his legs, both hinting that his clothes hide an incredibly muscular physique. I tear my eyes away from the sliver of exposed skin at the small of his back.

When I look back again, I nearly jump when I realise his hazel eyes are open. A small smile tugs at the corner of his lips and he murmurs, not raising his cheek from his arm, “Do you treat every stranger who faints on you to a trip like this?”

I shift slightly closer to him, “Nah, guess you’re just the lucky one.”

He grins and doesn't move away. "To repeat your previous question, 'how'd a good ol' Texan boy like you end up in cruel L.A.?'"

Now shoulder to shoulder, I'm slightly distracted by the warmth of his bare skin against mine. "Uhm... well, not really much to it. Just got tired of the small town life, wanted to see the world. Do more than just take over the family practice."

"All your family members are doctors?"

"Yeah, my parents and two uncles and three cousins. Pretty much all except my sister's who's still in high school and my brother, he's a vet, ."

At that, Jared raises his head, "He's a vet! Really? Oh, that's awesome. I love animals. I always wanted to be a-" he cuts off, face falling rapidly as he bites his lip and turns away.

"You always wanted to be a vet?" It suddenly occurs to me that I never asked what he does for a career, how a sixteen year old boy managed to survive after being kicked out of his home. "What do you do now?"

"Oh," a red tinge brushes over his cheeks and he ducks his head, "'m an actor."

"What? Really?" I move my head back and take a good look at him, "What're you in? I'm terrible with movies and stuff."

Blushing even more, he mumbles, "G'm're g'rls."

"Gilmore Girls? Seriously? Wow, my sister's obsessed with that show, it's all she ever talks about when I phone her.... Wait a minute..." I eye him carefully. "Please, dear God, please tell me you're not Dean."

His now maroon face tells me all I need to know. "No fucking way! You're Dean? You're... oh, God," I moan into my hand.

"Jensen?" he asks carefully, his eyes wide at my antics.

"Dude," I get out between my fingers, "every single time I call my sister, she goes on and on about this Dean Forester guy. 'ooh, he's so hot. Ohmygod, you should see his eyes, his hair, he's got dimples. But he's dating that skank. She doesn't deserve him, why can't it be me? And he's so tall and I just... I want him so much.'"

Then I suddenly realise I'm still talking. I peek through my fingers to eye his mortified beetroot look. His eyes are wide and his mouth is slightly open.

"Uhm..." he murmurs. "This is kind of awkward. Not to mention disturbing."

I nod and almost blurt out that I think the worst part of it is that I have the same taste as my sister. That is just not right. "Tell me about it. Dude, that's you. I don't believe it. And why didn't you tell me you were an actor? Huh? That you're too famous for the likes of a measly doctor like myself?"

His cheeks are completely red as he shakes his head furiously, “No, no way. I’m not... I’m not at all... I just...”

“You just happen to be on a really well-know television series, and you just happen to be the heart-throb of millions of teenagers.”

Shoving my shoulder, he grumbles, “Okay, can you just quit embarrassing me?”

I pretend to think about it, “Hmmm... nah, this is fun. I mean, how often do I get to make a Hollywood star blush?”

“You’re an ass,” he gets to his feet, “You want some more beer?”

“That’d be great, thanks.”

I grin at him when he returns. “Man, she’s never gonna forgive me for meeting you first.”

He shakes his head and takes a long swallow of beer. My eyes latch on the movement of his throat and I have to look away when he sweeps his tongue out to catch escaping droplets.

And then it suddenly sinks in: The reality of where he is now. Jared was kicked out of his home at sixteen and yet, somehow, he’s managed to make a success out of his life, managed to get himself known. Managed to do something millions of people with supportive families never manage to do.

Holy shit. How much strength does that mean he has?

Realising I’ve been staring at him for the past few minutes, I quickly clear my throat and turn to gaze at the unending ocean.

I jump when his hand brushes gently over mine, and I look up to meet his soft smile. “Thank you, Jensen.”

“For... for what?” I stammer dumbly, my mind still caught on the fact that his hand is on mine.

“For this, for everything. For catching me when I fainted. For dragging me around and making sure I ate. For giving me a place to stay last night when even my own home didn’t seem like a home. For looking out for a complete stranger and inviting me on a yacht trip. For being awesome and making me laugh for what feels like the first time in years. For... yeah, for everything...” he laughs softly, “even embarrassing me.”

I turn my hand around, closing my fingers around his and squeezing gently. As he meets my gaze, I murmur softly, “You’re welcome, man. I’m just glad I was conveniently positioned to cushion your faint-fall.”

Then there’s a moment. A silent moment, no sound other than that of the gently lapping water, where our eyes are locked and something passes between us. Jared’s eyes widen, the colours dancing as quickly as the sunlight does over ocean water. His lips part slightly and

my eyes drop to follow the movement. Then I raise my eyes again, noticing that his pupils are dilating.

Not daring to breathe, I reach my free hand out, about to brush the bangs out of his face, when suddenly blaring music comes on and we both jump, my hand curling into a fist and falling uselessly to my side. The moment is broken and Jared leaps to his feet, “Sorry, that’s my cellphone.”

He grabs it and walks towards the stern. Even from there I can hear him clearly.

“Hello? ... Oh... hi...” his voice drops, sounding strained.

“What do you mean ‘where am I’?... Why do you care?”

Jared folds himself onto the ground, resting his head in his hand. “I... David... you...”

“No... you... David, no...bye...”

Then he hangs up, burying his face in his hands tiredly.

I make my way towards him and he flinches when I lay a hand on his shoulder, “Everything okay?”

He looks up and tries to smile, but it’s so weak and shaky that I don’t believe it for a second. When he drops his gaze down to his hands, I lower myself behind him, bracketing him between my legs and wrapping my arms firmly around his waist, pulling him tight against me.

Leaning back into me, he tries to get his breathing under control as he clutches at my hands desperately.

“Shhh, it’s okay,” I whisper softly, pressing my nose to his neck. “Whatever it is, it’s okay.”

“No...” Jared shakes his head hopelessly. “It’s... it’s not okay... it’s not okay... it’s not okay...”

Splaying my fingers flat over his chest, I press him further into me. “Shhh... Jare, just breathe. Just breathe.”

It’s not long before he’s shaking against my chest, a silent tear trickling down and onto my arm like a hot raindrop. The tightening in my chest and throat makes me have to swallow heavily before I gently reach a hand around, tilting his head towards me and brushing my lips over his, swallowing his gasp.

“It’s okay, Jared,” I breathe against his skin before pulling away, leaving him wide-eyed and gaping, a flush on his cheeks.

I duck my head against his shoulder, breathing out harshly. I’m not sorry I did that, though there is the chance that he’s going to hate me now.

“Je... Jensen... wha... what...?”

Pulling him closer, I press a soft kiss the nape of his neck and whisper, “I want to be with you, Jared... but I know you’re not ready... I want to wait... when you think you are... I want to keep you in my arms forever....”

Jared’s breath catches in a choke and he twists around in my arms and pushes me away with a soft gasp. He looks at me for a few seconds, his chest heaving, and for a moment I think he’s going to punch me. Then his gaze drops and he falls slowly into me, burying his face in my chest and inviting me to hold him impossibly tightly. So I do.

He’s still trembling slightly, his muscles tense and his clutching desperate. Gently, I begin to run my hands up and down his quivering back, pressing him firmly to me with every stroke.

How he manages to seem so powerful and yet so vulnerable at the same time is something I don’t think I will ever figure out. I can feel his strength, taut beneath his thin shirt, and the grip that he has on me is great. And yet he still seems to fit in my arms perfectly, still seems to fold against my chest easily and mould himself to fit between my legs, hiding himself completely against me.

My fingers grip the back of his head tightly, fingers curling in his golden-brown hair and relishing its coolness in my palm. The water laps gently against the hull of the yacht, nothing around us for hundreds of miles. It’s just us.

I gently move forward, pushing him down slowly and following. His eyes are closed, his lips parted slightly, enticingly. I hover above him for a few moments, sharing his air, then I can’t hold back any longer and with two fingers, I tilt his chin up and press my lips to his, stealing his sharp intake of breath.

For a few moments, he kisses me back and clings to me tightly. But heaven doesn’t last long before his eyes fly open. Quickly, his hands come out to push at my chest, and he shoves me away with a strangled sob.

Breathing heavily, he shifts away like a cornered animal, hugging his knees and folding himself into a ball.

I can’t stop my tongue from darting out to taste him on my lips. He’s like nothing I’ve ever experienced before and I know I’m already addicted.

Turning towards his shaking form, I slide closer, close enough for our shoulders to brush with every movement. He flinches and I can’t take it anymore. Slinging an arm around him, I draw him close, pulling him into a tight embrace. I don’t let go as I breathe out into his hair, “I’m sorry, Jared. I’m so sorry.”

He squeezes his eyes shut and turns to bury his face against my neck, “I want to... I want... but... but...”

“Shhhh, only when you’re ready, Jared.”

“I... I just... it’s David.... I... I love him... I can’t... I can’t do this...” he chokes out and I feel my heart cracking.

So I was right. David does exist. And Jared loves him.

Even though I feel close to breaking, I just whisper softly, “It’s okay, Jared... It’s okay.”

I’m not sure how long we lie there, just holding each other, before we suddenly realise how dark it’s getting.

Reluctantly, I nudge him, “We should be heading back.”

A full body shiver runs through him, but he just nods and croaks back, “Okay.”

The trip back is mainly in silence, both of us sitting at separate sides, both of us drowning in our own thoughts.

I wish I could say that my thoughts were philosophical and life-changing, but they’re not. All I can think of is how good it felt to have him in my arms. How perfectly my two fingers could angle his head. How his lips felt and tasted, smooth against my own.

I think I’m falling for him. Or rather, I know I’m falling for him. Too bad he’s already given his heart to someone else. Too bad.

I feel like a kid who’s waited his whole life for something to show up at the toyshop, but I’ve arrived just as another kid is paying for it. Just a little too late.

Then I feel stupid for comparing Jared’s heart to a kid’s toy when he’s so much more than that.

“You okay?” I ask, just to break the heavy silence between us.

It takes him a few tries before words come out, and he replies, “Yeah... yeah, I’m... no, Jensen.... I’m... I’m... I’ve no idea what to do anymore. I just wish I... so many wishes....”

“Will you join me again next Sunday?” I cut in, wanting to ease his tension, and wanting more than anything else to see him again.

Jared head jerks up, his eyes wide, “I... really?... God, Jensen... thank you.... I don’t know why you’re...” he darts forwards, bowling me over and sending me into a grinning heap as he hugs me tightly. “Thank you. Thank you!”

Laughing, I wrap my arms firmly around his back, stroking down his tense muscles, “I’ll take that as a yes?”

He lets out a soft half-sob half-laugh and doesn’t raise his head, “I thought... I thought after I couldn’t... I... I thought...”

Nearly choking, I realise what he’s trying to say, and I bury my face into his curls, “Dude, just because you don’t want me back, doesn’t mean I don’t want to be friends with you, don’t

be stupid, man. No... I just want you to join 'cause I need someone to catch me some massive fish..."

This brings out the desired effect and he laughs into the dip of my neck, sounding relieved. "You'd better catch them next time."

"Yeah..." I nudge him, "come on, I think there's time for one last beer, what do you think?"

He helps me up with a grin on his lips, "Sounds good."

It's so sweetly ironic, chinking bottles and facing the red, sinking sun on the horizon as it casts its last glow over the cotton-clouds and disappears from view, but even still, I can't bring myself to care.

Water for miles around, glistening in a streak mapping it's way from the slipping sun, stars making their appearances, air cool and fresh, and everything perfect, but I'm not even looking at all of that. I'm just looking at him.

He leans against the guardrail casually, chin resting in his palm, his eyes distant and unblinking. In his thin shirt, he shivers slightly, making me long to wrap my arms around him and keep him warm, but I bite my lip and force myself to look away.

Up ahead, the lights of the city gradually begin to come into view, making me realise that we're nearer than I thought.

"I never thought I'd hear myself say it, but the city's beautiful."

His quiet murmur stirs me out of my thought and I turn back to him and clear my throat, "Wait 'till you get near enough to hear the traffic, then you'll be thinking differently."

His soft laughter warms me and I find myself wanting more than anything to keep that smile on his lips.

"So... how was it being my captive for the day?"

"Day?" he snorts, "More like two days." He falls silent for a few moments before he glances up at me, his voice barely more than a whisper, "It was..." a small, mischievous smirk lines his lips, "It was adequate."

"Adequate?" I play it up, "I'm in shock, utterly astounded. I mean, I drag you around for thirty or so hours and all you can say is adequate? Humf," I pout into the distance, crossing my arms over my chest like an indignant child.

He's laughing as he approaches me, taking me completely by surprise as he throws his arms around me and presses his chest against my back, hugging me. He's so warm, his arms so firm and comforting, all I can do is sink into him. When his lips brush over my ear, I barely manage to hold in a shiver, and he whispers, "It was absolutely awesome.... But you already knew that."

I grin back at him and he presses his forehead against mine, his eyes sliding shut as he rests his chin on my shoulder. Then, with a shaky breath he pulls away, leaving me cold and desperately wanting more. Running a hand through his hair roughly, he laughs hoarsely, “Guess it’s back to the big, bad world again, huh?”

“Yeah...” I bite my lip and return to the steering wheel, preparing to lodge the yacht once again in the harbour.

We’re both silent as the other docked boats slide past. Reaching my spot, I gently ease us in and leap out with a rope, securing the yacht tightly. Grabbing our stuff, Jared jumps off after me.

He stumbles slightly, still unused to solid ground, and my hand automatically reaches out to steady him. He’s blushing as he pulls away, and once again, I feel something tugging in my chest.

Our feet echo on the cement as we make our way through the parking lot, our breaths condensing in the cool air. I unlock my car and we slide in quietly.

After a few moments I clear my throat, “So, where to?”

He swipes a hand over his face and replies hoarsely, “Oakland Avenue. Opposite the most-”

I cut in, “-awesome bar in the world?”

Jared’s eyes are wide as he stares at me in shock, “How did you-?”

“Dude, everyone knows Captain Morgan’s on Oakland.”

Smiling slightly, he nods in agreement. “Best beer in the whole of L.A.”

“Amen.”

Grinning at him, I start the car.

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“Hey... uhm...” Jared shifts slightly, “You... uh... you wanna come in for coffee...” he winces, “Sorry, man. I just, it was such fun and I’d feel bad just sending you on your way.”

Even though I’ve used coffee as euphemism for certain... activities, I know Jared doesn’t mean it that way... Dammit... But I wouldn’t pass up the opportunity to spend more time with him, so I nod, “Coffee sounds awesome.”

He lets us into the electric door with a code and shuts it behind us. I follow him up a flight of stairs and he unlocks a door. We step into... “Wow, this place is amazing.”

Flushing, he flicks on the lights, letting me see more of the interior. “Well, I tried to work with what it was. I had a wall taken out to make it more spacious and,” he goes even redder, “and I’m babbling again.”

“You live here alone?”

He freezes and doesn't turn around, “Not until about six weeks ago. I had a... a housemate...”

“Oh...” I clear my throat awkwardly, wondering whether Jared would feel more comfortable if I left.

Then he laughs shakily, “Sorry, so, do you take milk? Sugar?”

“Some milk would be great, no sugar though, thanks.”

I follow him into the kitchen and lean against the counter as he busies himself with the coffee. “How does it feel to be an actor? I've always wondered what it would be like to have girls swooning at the sight of me.”

He knocks me with his hip as he moves past, “Ha ha, very funny.”

Relieved to have lightened the mood, I continue, “No, seriously. I mean, my sister lives right across the continent and she'd pretty much die from spontaneous combustion the second she lays eyes on you.”

Shaking his head, Jared sends a grin over his shoulder, “Man, you do not even want to know how awkward it gets. I was once just walking innocently-”

I cut in under my breath, but loud enough for him to hear, “striding seductively.”

“-walking innocently, when this girl appears out of nowhere-”

“-out of the swarm of fangirls trailing after you.”

“-and she leaps at me, no, she tackles me-”

Jared pauses for me to try and change that, but I shake my head, “Nope, sorry, man. I'm coming up blank, I can't think of something worse.”

He laughs, “Well, she was trying to eat my face or something, but luckily Da-” he cuts off and the smile dies on his lips, “Uhm... luckily... a... a friend was nearby and he pried her off me.”

The coffee machine lets out a loud ting that breaks the silence, and Jared quickly turns around to pour two cups.

We settle down in the cosy living room, and I find myself having to fight the urge to kick off my shoes and tuck my legs up under me, 'cause that would be plain rude. Jared flops back comfortably, his arm stretched out along the back, his shirt riding up slightly to reveal a toned abdomen, and his feet are kicked out in front of him, crossed casually at the ankles.

As he sips his coffee, which I might add, contains about three teaspoons of sugar and is probably half milk, he eyes me with a small grin. Finally he laughs, “Jensen, man. You don’t need to sit there like a robot. Relax, it’s just my house, it doesn’t bite.”

Realising that I’ve been sitting stiffly, back straight and tense, I laugh slightly, “Sorry, man. Just... just...” then I break, “Can I put my feet on your couch?” I clamp my mouth shut and feel my face burning.

His face breaks out into the widest grin I’ve ever seen and he starts laughing. Even though it’s at my expense, I can’t help feeling as though I’ve won an award or something. He even has to put down his coffee so he doesn’t spill it.

When he finally stops, he looks at me fondly, “Dude, of course you can, man. This is me, I’m like a total slob sometimes. Go ahead.”

Grinning, I kick off my shoes and do exactly what I’ve been wanting to do the whole time, I curl one leg up against me, resting my coffee on my knee and stretch out the other to kick Jared’s side softly.

And that’s how I discover Jared’s got a ticklish spot just... there...

Once the coffees have been put safely out of reach, I decide to fully exploit that discovery, and I dart forwards, fingers moving quickly.

He’s laughing and thwacking me over the head, but he’s laughing and I just want to keep him laughing forever and... the doorbell rings and, still warding me off, Jared gets to his feet and heads to answer it.

The door swings open and I crane my neck around the corner to take a look at who it is, but all I can see is the blood draining from Jared’s face as he takes a step back. Quickly getting to my feet, I move towards him, “Jared, you okay?” I eye the man on the doorstep carefully, taking in his utter surprise at my presence.

“Who is this?” the man asks, stepping into the house.

“I...” Jared takes another step back, coming in contact with my chest. My heart warms when he doesn’t pull away.

The man narrows his eyes and repeats, “Jared, who is this?”

I can hear the quiet click of Jared’s throat as he swallows, and then he replies, “This is Jensen. Jensen, this is...”

“David,” I finish, understanding dawning on me. I examine the man with narrowed eyes, taking in his handsome, yet cold features and the thinness of his lip, the iciness in his blue eyes. A shiver passes through Jared and I press closer to his back, resisting the urge to wrap my arms around him.

“David, what do you want?” Jared asks tiredly, leaning against me.

The man has the audacity to smirk, “Well, I haven’t seen you for a while, you’ve been avoiding me. So, I decided to come visit my friend, only he wasn’t here. Where were you earlier today, by the way?”

“I...”

“He was with me,” I shoot at the man.

“Oh,” David’s eyebrows rise and his eyes flicker between Jared and me. “Anyway, Jared, I just wanted to talk to you for a bit, so, Jason, if you wouldn’t mind...”

"It's Jensen," I growl.

Jared turns to look back at me, and I can see the indecision warring in his eyes, but then he nods, his hand coming to land on my shoulder, “Yeah, I think it’s best if you go. I’ll... I’ll see you soon, okay? And... thank you... I had a great time...”

I nod, “Hold on, let me just get my shoes.”

I leave silently, ignoring David, and trying to offer Jared as much support I can with every brush of my fingers. With a grateful smile, Jared follows me out.

It feels wrong to just say goodbye like this, so I quickly pull him into a tight hug, “Call me if you need anything, I programmed my number into your phone.”

He laughs weakly, “Sneaky.”

Then I pull back and head down the stairs, hearing the soft click of the door behind.

As I reach the ground floor, something just doesn’t feel right. My heart begins hammering in my chest and I glance up at the windows.

My mind made up, I climb the stairs two at a time, stopping at the door again. Uncertain of what to do, I hesitate for a few moments, wincing when I hear shouting from within. Anger begins to spread through me as I realise I can hear what’s being said.

“... you know he just wants to fuck you, don't you, Jared? I could see it in his eyes, he wants you bad.... Would you have let him? Huh? Let him fuck you like you let me?”

There’s sound of movement inside and a loud thud has me nearly deciding to break the door down. But then Jared’s voice yells back, “Screw you! You made your choice, David. You made it, so don’t you come around here acting like you own me! Jensen’s a good guy, he’s done nothing wrong and so what if I like him? And you're wrong... he... he does care for me.”

“You think he’d want you? Huh? You think he’d want all your baggage? Does he know all the things you did? Do you think he’ll still want you when he finds out? Does he know how much of a whore you are that you let me fuck you even straight after announcing my engagement to Marie?”

Jared's voice is choked and shaking, "Just... what are you doing here? Why are you even here? I... David, just get out, please, get out."

"What? You kicking me out? You should be grateful I'm even talking to you!"

Deciding I've heard enough, I press the doorbell and the interior falls silent. Then David swings the door open angrily, "What do you want?"

I give him an innocent smile, hiding just how much I want to bash his face in. "Sorry, I think I forgot something very important, mind if I check?"

Not waiting for his answer, I shove him out the way and head towards the living room. Jared looks up as I enter, his face damp with tears that he quickly tries to wipe away, "Jensen, what... what are you doing back?"

"I..." Kneeling before him, I reach out carefully, sliding my palm over the smoothness of his jaw to cup his face, tilting it up. Then I stretch up quickly, pressing my lips against his in a soft, sweet kiss.

He gasps slightly, his cheeks damp against mine, but he doesn't pull away. "What are you...?"

David lets out an indignant, "What the hell?" but I ignore him entirely.

Reaching out gently, I run my fingers back into his hair, carding through. "I just forgot something," I whisper against his lips.

"What did you forget?"

"You." I thread my fingers in his and pull him to his feet, "Come on, you're staying at my place tonight."

"I..." Jared looks dazed, "What?"

David grabs my wrist and yanks me to the side, "What the hell do you think you're doing?"

Pulling from his grasp and shoving him away, I reply coldly, "None of your fucking business." When David opens his mouth to respond, I step closer to him, "And I am so close to punching your face in, you have no idea. So if I were you... I'd back the fuck off."

David gapes at me, but I just spin around to face a dumbstruck Jared. My face softens immediately and I reach out to ruffle his hair, "Come on, you ready to go? I've got some movies we can watch, and I can probably cook us up something nice, how's that sound?"

"I..."

"Awesome, let's go." I pull him towards the front door.

A few moments later, we're watching as David slams into his sports car and speeds off, and then I turn to face the silent form beside me.

“You okay?” I ask softly.

He jerks, “I’m... yeah, I’m okay... He’s... he’s not usually like that... tonight he was... he was just angry... and I think he’s been drinking a bit...”

My chest aches as I watch the hurt dancing in Jared’s eyes. He must really love the asshole. “You don’t need to make excuses for him, Jared.”

“I’m not-” Jared flushes, “I just... he’s never been that angry before... I don’t think he liked seeing me with you...”

With a soft sigh, I start my car, “You’re okay with staying at my place tonight, right?”

“Are you sure it’s okay, I mean... it’s Monday tomorrow... don’t you... don’t you have to work?”

“Yeah, have to be in by nine, but it’s not a problem. What about you?”

“Oh... uhm, yeah I got to be on set at about eight-thirty... but I can catch the bus or something...”

“No, that’s perfect. I’ll drop you off on my way to the hospital. Oh...” I suddenly realise I dragged him out in a hurry. “You want to fetch clothes to change into?”

Grinning, he nods, “Yeah... I didn’t really want to say anything while you had that ‘you’re coming with me’ thing going, but...” he opens the door and slips out, “I’ll be quick.”

I watch his lithe form racing back inside, and my chest feels tight, like it’s about to explode. Staring down at my shaking hands, I realise I love him. I realise how far past ‘like’ I am, and how much I just want to hold him.

I jump when his door opens and he slides back in, a concerned frown on his face, “You okay?”

Laughing slightly hysterically, I reach out to clap a hand on his shoulder. “Yeah, I’m okay.”

Then I start the car and pull out of the parking bay.

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I get him settled down on the couch with a blanket and a cup of cocoa, and head towards the kitchen to make supper.

He emerges a few moments later, “Hey, Jensen... uhm... can I use your shower... I...”

“Oh, yeah. Sure, man. It’s over there, there should be towels on the rack.”

“Thanks, and you’re sure you don’t need help in here?”

Shoving him towards the bathroom, I shake my head, “You go shower.”

Just as I'm shoving the lasagne in the oven, he emerges, clad only in black boxers and a soft, grey tee, and my mouth goes completely dry and I feel like a starved animal eying a steak.

Then I look up and my breath catches again, my eyes tracking the tiny droplets of water as they trickle down his neck, and down to the skin that the shirt's frayed neckline doesn't cover.

I clear my throat and tear my eyes away. "Dinner should be ready soon, you want us to start the movie now?"

"Yeah, that sounds awesome."

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A few hours later we're slumped side by side, our stomachs comfortably full and our eyes sleepy.

Jared lets out a wide yawn and turns towards me, "Jen... sen... I..." he doesn't manage to finish the rest of his sentence, his head lolling back against the couch and his mouth falling open slightly.

I watch captivated as he quickly falls sound asleep, a soft, snuffling noise escaping him and making me feel all warm and fuzzy inside.

It's because I don't want his neck to be sore that I wrap a hand around his arm and gently ease him towards me, stopping every time he begins to stir. When he's finally up against my chest, I slide my arms around his waist and press him closer, his every breath of air tickling the side of my neck.

I can't believe how good it feels just to have him as a warm, comforting weight in my arms. How good it feels to run my fingers over his back and feel the steady rise and fall of his chest against mine. Smiling into his hair, I let my eyes slip shut.

\*

I'm woken by a loud thud and glance down to see a wide-eyed Jared on the floor beside the couch, rubbing his head and blushing furiously.

"Mornin'" I can't help but grin.

His eyes soften for a second and then he looks away, rubbing his nose like a small kid. "Sorry for..." he gestures between us.

"Using me as a pillow? Or waking me up at the crack of dawn?"

Going even redder, he mumbles, "Both... I guess..."

Laughing, I ruffle his hair, "I think the first was kind of my fault and the second... hmmm... well, I think I'm going to kill you for it."

His expression lightens and dimples come out, “You could try.”

I lunge at him, but he leaps swiftly out the way, leaving me pouting on the floor. Then I heave a sigh, “Coffee... I need coffee.”

Getting up, I stumble clumsily towards the kitchen, feeling the ache in my back from the couch.

“Wow, you’re like a zombie,” Jared’s awed face suddenly appears in view and I bat him away half-heartedly.

Once we’re both sipping coffees, I find myself awake enough to fully appreciate the view. Namely, Jared in boxers and a tee, his hair ruffled and his eyes blurry, makes the most adorable, and yet strangely arousing, image.

“There’s cereal in the cupboard over there, I’m gonna grab a quick shower.”

\*

By the time we’re both dressed and ready, it’s eight, and I find myself wondering how it’s possible to just fall into a routine after one day.

“So... Gilmore Girls, huh?”

He shoves me.

“No, seriously, man. Any famous people you act with that you can introduce me to?”

Now blushing, Jared glares at me.

But when I pull up at the wide plot, he glances over at me shyly, “Do you... do you want to come take a look?”

Glancing down at my watch, I realise I’ve got to get to work else I’m going to be late. “Shit, man. I really can’t. But, I want to.”

I look up and feel my chest imploding when I catch sight of the rejection and hurt in his eyes. He must think I’m brushing him off, when it’s actually the last thing I want to do. He smiles shakily, trying to cover up that fact. “Sure, okay. Bye, Jensen.”

Reaching out, I punch his shoulder lightly, “How about tomorrow? I only have to be at work at ten thirty then, So, I’m all yours.”

Jared looks up uncertainly, as if checking whether I’m being sincere. Then his eyes brighten up, “Cool. Hope work goes well, Doctor Ackles.”

Laughing, I reply, “Same to you, Dean Forester. Don’t go showing too much skin or anything out there, I wouldn’t want my sister’s death on you.”

Grinning he slips out the car, patting the roof twice.

\*

He's just so innocent, everything about him radiates his youth and how vulnerable he is, and yet he's made it through some terrible things. I don't know what David was talking about that night, but the thought of Jared alone and lost makes me feel the urge to smash something.

I am so desperate to look up Jared's dad, so desperate to punish him for hurting the kid like that, and...

"Doctor, are you feeling okay?"

Jerking out of my thoughts, I look up to meet Adelaide's worried eyes.

Smiling slightly, I reply, "Yeah, sorry... I'm just a bit distracted today..." I peer down into my coffee mug, trying to will my blush away.

Not looking convinced, she lets out a sigh, "Come on, lunch's over."

\*

The day passes torturously slowly and by the time I exit the hospital's front doors, I'm exhausted and I'm longing to just curl up with a warm cup of coffee and sleep. But there's something else I want even more.

I pull out my cellphone and text him quickly, 'Hey, hotshot. How's the filming going?'

When he hasn't replied by the time I get home, I feel like pouting and I feel even stupider for feeling like that.

I mean, he's probably in the middle of something and too busy to check his phone and... I let out a sigh as I flick on the coffee machine.

Glaring at my cellphone is probably not the most adult way to do this, but I find myself trying to magically summon a message from him onto the screen. It doesn't work.

Rubbing my nose, I 'm determined not to get upset. Determined not to get upset. Determined not to get ups- Oh, goddammit.

I take my phone back to the living room, setting it down on the foot table and flopping back onto the couch.

Then I realise I've forgotten my coffee and I think about getting up to fetch it, but decide against it. I'm too tired.

With a final glance at the phone, I stretch out over the cushions and scowl up at the ceiling until I finally slip into dreams filled with dimpled smiles and warm skin.

\*

I jerk awake about an hour later, disorientated and blinking blindly into the darkness. My phone's screen is illuminated and my heart leaps.

"Hello?"

"Hey, sorry I didn't reply earlier, we were in the middle of an intense scene and the director wasn't cutting us any slack. How're you? How was your day?"

Despite the fact that I'm grinning ridiculously widely at nothing, I can't help it. "Ahh, it was so long. Every time I thought it was safe to leave, someone else came through the doors with some achy knee or something or other."

"Sounds better than my day. I spent it getting thrown into makeshift walls that are supposed to break easily but actually break your back more than anything else. I can barely move, I'm so sore. Chad had to drag me around everywhere."

I bite down my jealousy, "Chad?"

"Oh, he's another actor here, he's a complete douche, but I've known him for ages. You'll hate him."

I can't help laughing, "That sounds... promising. So... are you done for the day?"

"Yeah, thankfully.... I think I'm about to collapse."

Swallowing slightly and wondering whether I'm seeming overeager, I ask quietly, "You want to come over? I can order pizza."

"I..." he's going to say no. He's going to say no. "Are you sure, man? I mean... I don't want to intrude or anything."

I nearly swallow my tongue, "No, no. Of course you won't, dude. Come on over. Is pepperoni okay with you?"

"Sounds awesome. I'm just going to head home quickly to change. I'll see you soon."

\*Jared\*

Jared stares at the phone, his insides swirling. Maybe he's doing the wrong thing. He can't offer Jensen what he obviously wants; he can't give himself over like that. Not again.

But he so desperately wants to see warmth in the man's green eyes, he wants to be held again, he wants to laugh again.

It seems lately the only time he can do that is when the strange doctor who swept into his life is around.

What if he can't give Jensen enough? Dread settles as a foul taste at the back of his throat and he nearly chokes. What if the older man gets bored and leaves, just like-

Swiping angrily at the dampness in his eyes, Jared silently shows his train card and heads towards a nearby bench, burying his face in his hands.

He doesn't understand his own feelings. He hates that he loves David. Hates that he's not good enough for the man. Hates that he knows once Jensen gets to know him properly, the doctor will probably be running for the hills as fast as possible. It's what David said, once Jensen learns all about the things Jared has done, he won't want a thing to do with him.

Jared shivers as he wraps his arms around himself, hating himself for wanting to see Jensen so much.

\*

When he arrives at his apartment, there's no sense of 'home', no sense of relief or anything positive at all. If anything, it only makes the ache in his chest grow.

Slipping out of his clothes, he quickly makes his way towards the bathroom. The scalding water eases the tension in his muscles slightly and he finds that he's really looking forward to seeing Jensen again. Just something about the man makes Jared just want to hide in his arms forever.

His face burns as he shakes such thoughts from his head, and he steps out of the shower, pulling on his favourite pair of jeans and heading towards the bedroom, shirt in hand.

While he's about to pull his shirt over his head, he crashes blindly into a solid chest and lets out a yelp, quickly wrestling free and moving to attack.

It's David.

Jared's fist falls to the side and he hates the fact that he's only in his jeans; he feels vulnerable under Dave's approving gaze.

He flinches when the man's fingers brush gently over his cheek, and he takes a step back, "What do you want, David?"

"Jared, fuck, I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. I wasn't thinking right, I was drunk, I was miserable when I saw you with him. I miss you, Jared. I miss you so much..."

Jared bites his lip and turns away, blinking away the prickling in his eyes. Warm hands slide over his bare chest and around his waist, pulling him towards the man.

"I want you, Jared. I want you so bad it hurts." Warm lips are pressed to his and David pulls him tightly up against him, "Why have you been avoiding me, Jared? Who the hell is that Jensen guy?" That has Jared's eyes snapping open and he quickly shoves the older man away.

Jensen's waiting for him, he should probably get a move on.

He turns towards the bedroom and continues towards it. Unfortunately David doesn't get the hint and just follows.

Leaning over the closet, Jared tries to take a few deep, steadying breaths, but when David's teeth latch onto the skin of his shoulder, he realises it's possible to both love and hate somebody so much that your skin feels like it's being torn in two.

"Dave... please, ... just stop, okay?"

The man just brushes his lips up Jared's neck, "Why? You love it when I do this, don't you?" He rocks his erection against the younger man's ass, making Jared gasp.

"I... no... David. Stop..." When David shows no sign of stopping, Jared spins around, hurt fuelling his anger. "David, get the hell out of here. What the hell, man? You're married?"

"Didn't stop you last time," David smirks, and Jared just wants to punch his face in.

Last time, Jared was hurting too much to realise how screwed up it was that he allowed David to fuck him, not moments after the engagement announcement.

But now, Jared's thinking a bit clearer. "Get. Out."

David's smirk fades slightly and he steps closer, "But Jared, why are you being like this? Come on, it's just some fun."

"David," Jared looks him straight in the eye. "You're cheating on Marie."

The man's lips pull into a sneer, "Yeah, well, what's new? You never had any issues with that before."

Jared flinches and turns away. Before, Jared had thought David and him were in a relationship. He hadn't realised just how much of an affair it had been.

He fishes through his drawer and grabs a random shirt, pulling it on. David immediately wraps his hands around Jared's waist and he has to struggle away.

All his patience shot, Jared just shoves the man back and says shortly, "I'm going out."

"Where you going?" David follows after him, his voice raised.

Closing his eyes, Jared just shakes his head, wondering how it's possible that the man he loves makes him just want to burst out into tears. He's so tired of all this.

He's saved by the ringing of his phone.

"Hello?"

"Hey... uhm..." it's Jensen. A small smile spreads on Jared's lips as the man continues, "are you still... are you still coming?"

"Yeah, course I am... sorry, I was just showering and stuff. I'm leaving now."

Jensen sounds relieved, "Oh, okay... I'll... I'll see you soon, then."

David yanks his shoulder, “Who was that?”

Jerking away, Jared just heads towards the front door, replying shortly, “Jensen.”

“That pretty boy? Huh? Wow, you really are a slut.”

Jared flinches and his hand falters slightly as he opens the door. “Bye, David.”

\*Jensen\*

The pizza arrived about an hour ago, and I’ve been sitting here, jumping at every noise. It’s kind of pathetic and very funny, but I’m really looking forward to seeing him again.

Outside, a quite rumble of a motorbike dies down, and I let out a sigh as I head towards the kitchen, pouring out another cup of coffee.

He said he’s on his way.

After slipping Chris and Steve’s latest album into the stereo, I flop back onto the couch with a sigh.

The doorbell makes me jump and curse as coffee splashes onto my lap. “Ahhh, coming,” I call out, quickly grabbing a dishcloth from the kitchen and wiping at the burning liquid.

I swing open the door, and it’s Jared. Obviously it’s Jared.

His eyes slide down to the cloth I’m clutching to my crotch and he raises an eyebrow, “Something you want to tell me?”

Laughing, I nod my head inside, “Come on. You made me spill my coffee.”

“Uh huh,” he sounds sceptical. “Yeah, sure, man.”

Grinning, I toss the towel at him, “You can smell if you like.” The cloth hits him in the face and he lets out such an unmanly shriek that I double over laughing.

Holding the dishcloth at an arm's length away from him, he wrinkles his nose, “I am so glad you’re not Chad right now.”

Again, I’m hearing about this Chad guy. My inner animal growls.

“Why?”

“Cause with him, it really wouldn’t be coffee.”

“Oh, man. That’s just gross.”

“Yeah, no sense of hygiene at all.” Jared steps into the living room, “Awesome music, who is this?”

I always feel proud on behalf of my buddies when people like their music, “Chris Kane and Steve Carlson. This is their latest album, they’ve been working on it for ages.”

Jared nods for a few seconds, then he turns around, “Wait, you know them?”

“Yeah, when I first moved here for med-school, I was going to try out the singing life. It was fun, but not what I wanted the rest of my life, you know.”

The kid’s eyes widen, “You can sing?”

Now flushing, I scratch the back of my head. I hate getting attention like this. “I... I’m okay, I guess.”

“Can you sing for me?” When he sees my reluctance, he continues quickly, “Well, I mean... when... if... if you want to sometime.”

“Maybe sometime,” I reply with a smile. “Come on, the pizza’s been tormenting me for the past hour.”

His smile crumbles and his shoulders hitch up, “Sorry about that... I never... I didn’t mean to be so late...”

“Nah, it’s no problem, dude. Did something happen?”

He turns away from me, but in the reflection of the glass door, I can see the glistening in his eyes. “Nothing important, don’t worry.” Then he turns around with a smile, a fake smile, “anyway...”

Deciding not to pressure him, I ask softly, “You want a beer?”

He sounds relieved, “That’d be awesome, thank you.”

When I return, he’s leaning right back, his eyes shut and his legs kicked out under the coffee table. I nudge him, “You look exhausted.”

Sitting up quickly, he rubs a hand over his eyes, “Sorry, I just...” he takes the beer, “Thanks...”

“Was it David?”

From his flinch, I know the answer.

“I...”

“Jared, I don’t know exactly what’s happening between you two... but...” His hazel eyes are pleading with me to stop, so I let out a sigh, “Just...” I reach out to sweep the hair from his face, “Just don’t let him hurt you, okay? He’s... he’s not worth it...”

Jared’s eyes drop to the beer in his hand, and he remains like that for a long moment before his hoarse voice breaks the silence. “He showed up at my apartment today...”

My hands clench into fists. “What is he to you?” I ask, terrified of the answer.

His reply is simple, yet heart-breaking. “I love him. I always have.”

“What are you to him?”

A droplet of moisture lands on the back of Jared’s hand, and he whispers brokenly, “Nothing.”

How can life be this cruel? To Jared? To me?

Abandoning my pizza, I shift closer to him on the couch, tentatively reaching out to rub soothing circles on his back. “Was... is he your boyfriend?” I bite my lip.

Jared laughs, but he sounds like he’s choking, “No... I just... I thought he was... but... anyway, he married his girlfriend.... he’s married now...”

“Then why does he keep bothering you?” I grip the couch cushions to stop myself from getting angry.

“I...” Jared roughly scrubs his face with his hands, “Just... I don’t know... he’s... I don’t know...”

I can’t control my curiosity. “Why do you love him when he’s such an asshole?”

A bitter smile spreads over Jared’s lips, “He saved my life...”

“What?”

“He pulled me out of a gutter... literally... Got me to hospital and everything...”

“Jared...” I want to explain to him that anyone would have done that. I want to explain that the man doesn’t deserve Jared’s loyalty just for doing something that anyone should do anyway. But I don’t. “Jared, he’s using you... Why can’t you see that he doesn’t deserve you?”

He flinches, his shoulders shaking slightly.

Then he shoots to his feet, not looking up, “I should go.”

Before I even have time to stand up, he’s already out the front door. “Jared! Jared, wait!”

I run after him, rounding the corner just in time to see him leaping on a motorbike and speeding off.

That was his motorbike that I heard earlier.

Jared has a motorbike.

Suddenly remembering why Jared’s gone, I kick at a nearby stone, cursing myself.

The second I get back inside, I grab my phone about to call him. Then I figure I don't really want him to have an accident because of talking while on the bike, so I send him a message.

I'm sorry. It wasn't my place.

I wait half an hour before I call him. Obviously it goes onto voicemail. "Jared, man. I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said those things. I don't know anything about your relationship with David. I never meant any harm. I just... I'm just worried about you... If what I think David is doing is actually what he's doing, then he's an absolute asshole and he doesn't deserve your love. If he knows that you love him, but he still sleeps with you randomly, then he's the biggest bastard of the year. But... maybe it's different, maybe I'm not understanding something. Just... just remember that you don't owe him anything and you deserve to be with someone who loves you as much as you love them. You can't have a one-sided relationship. It'll kill you... I'm sorry, Jared... Please, just call me."

\*

I think I've really screwed up everything. I haven't heard from Jared in three weeks. He's not answering my calls. Whenever I swing by his set, they tell me he's sick. But he's not at his house either.

I don't know where he is and I don't know how to get hold of him.

That's why I'm sitting on the top step outside his front door, waiting for him to come back, hoping for him to come back.

Nearby footfalls have me scrambling to my feet, only to come face to face with... "David."

The man's face darkens, "Jensen, what are you doing here?"

"Where's Jared?"

"How am I supposed to know? That bastard's been avoiding me."

Finally, something inside of me snaps and I slam David back into the wall, "What the hell do you want from him?"

"Let go of me, Jensen."

"No, I want to know why you're using him like this. He's just a kid. What the hell do you think you're doing, screwing with him like this?"

David laughs, "I'm not gay, Jensen. Never have been, never will be."

I slam him again, "Oh, really? So, what, you think being with Jared like that doesn't count? Jared's a dude, you're a dude, sorry, man. That means you're gay."

The man's face darkens, "I'm not gay, I'm married to Marie."

"Oh, right. Your wife. The one you chose over Jared."

“None of this is your business. Jared’s hot and willing, I’m not doing anything wrong.”

Bile rises up in my throat as I spit out, “You’re hurting him. He loves you. He fucking loves you, you asshole. And you just use him as an easy lay? Get the hell out of here!”

“Oh, now that’s touching. I think you’ve got a tiny crush on him.”

“So what if I do?” I yell back.

David smirks, “Well, if I were you, I’d avoid him.”

“Why the hell would I want to avoid him?”

“Well... has he told you about his past... his family?”

“Yes, you fucker, he has.”

“Did he tell you what he did to survive after he was kicked out? Didn’t you wonder how he managed to make it to L.A.?”

“I don’t care what he’s done, I don’t care about his past. I care about him! Who he is now, not who he once was! He’s Jared and he’s fucking amazing.”

Laughing softly, David pushes me away from him, “Sweet, how very sweet.”

I don’t even flinch as my fist makes contact with his face, a satisfying crush coming from his nose. Just as I’m pulling back for another punch, a warm hand wraps around my wrist and I spin around.

It’s Jared, his eyes tired and weary, his face shadowed and hollow, and his voice barely there as he whispers, “Stop... please, stop.”

My hand falls to my side immediately and I try to reach out for Jared, needing to check that he’s okay, but a punch hits me on the shoulder and I spin around angrily to face David. “Get out of here, David.”

“You have no right to kick me out, this isn’t your place.”

“No,” Jared murmurs quietly, “It’s my place. David, please get out. Send my regards to Marie.”

A few more angry words later, Jared opens the door and I follow silently behind him.

“Are you okay?”

He doesn’t reply, he just stands in the centre of the room, looking completely lost and way too frail.

“Jared, are you okay?”

Swaying slightly, his eyes meet mine seconds before he begins to crumple in a heap. I slide under him just in time to keep his head from bashing against the ground.

When I hoist him up, it's to find he's way too light, way too thin, way too young and vulnerable. His limp arms hang loosely around my neck, his soft breath warm against my skin. Shifting him closer, I carry him easily towards the bedroom, carefully laying him down and beginning to remove his clothes.

Once he's down to only his boxers, I quickly find my way to his bathroom, dampening a cloth and returning to wipe his face and freshen him up slightly.

I don't know what happened to him this past month, I don't know where he went or who he saw. That scares me.

When there's nothing left to do, I find myself staring down at him, feeling helpless and inadequate. I don't know what to do. After gazing down at him for a few seconds, I feel pathetic, and I turn my eyes elsewhere.

Then I spot a guitar case, peeping out of the cupboard and my heart leaps. I never knew Jared played guitar. After chewing my lip for a few moments, I decide to check it out.

A short while later, I'm sitting with my back against the wall, softly experimenting with the strings. It's in tune and seems to be used frequently.

Gazing up at the beautiful form on the pillows, I feel something in my chest swell, and I know what I'm going to play. My fingers begin to strike at the cords easily.

"I can't believe... how beautiful you are.... And I can't explain... what you mean to me.... But I know you need to hear it.... And if you only knew how I try...." I cough slightly, feeling a deep flush burning at my cheeks. Then I glance up at the gorgeous moonlight-illuminated form, and thoughts of stopping leave my mind.

"But the words don't always come out right... I let them go and they take flight...."

"Cause words will fade like falling stars.... But you'll find me in the meaning of my heart... I can't describe what words can't justify.... And I can't talk to you when you take my breath away.... But I know you need to hear it... And if you only knew how I try... But the words don't always come out right.... I let them go and they take flight...."

When I look up next, it's to see Jared's hazel eyes peering back at me, the blanket pulled up to his chin. Keeping our eyes locked, I continue, my fingers moving easily. "Words don't always mean the most.... Yes, sometimes words just don't get close... Words don't mean the things I do... Don't wait for words to get you through... 'Cause words will fade like falling stars.... But you will find me in the meaning of my heart..."

"So when I get it wrong don't let it scar... Don't let it scar... 'Cause words are sounds that can't even start.... To sing the melody in my heart."

Flushing, I drop my gaze to the floor, afraid to see his reaction. I jump when warm fingers slip through my spikes, and I look up in time to catch the warmth in Jared eyes before he turns away, his lean back gleaming in the dim light.

“Come to bed, it’s freezing over here.”

And then Jared crawls back up the bed, curling up on his stomach, not even checking whether I’m following him.

Of course I will.

After carefully placing the guitar back in its case, I begin shedding clothes quickly, until I’m only in my boxers and tee.

Then slowly, I slide beneath the covers behind him, trying to keep some distance between us. I mean, sure, he invited me into his bed, but I can’t just-

His arm snakes around behind him, grabbing my wrist and pulling it right around to press my palm against his chest, pulling me right up behind him, my chest flush against his back. We fit. Perfectly.

Resting my head against the nape of his neck, I breathe out roughly, “I missed you...”

His fingers thread between mine, pulling me even closer, “I’m sorry... I... I had to go... I needed to sort some things out....”

Tucking my knees up behind his and entwining our legs, I whisper softly, “I was so worried I’d never see you again.... so worried about you...”

Jared’s thumb gently strokes the back of my hand, “I’m sorry.... I never meant to worry you... I just needed some time to... to figure everything out.”

“What did you need figure out? Did you manage to?”

“I don’t want to hurt you... I don’t... That’s the last thing I want to do.... I don’t want to become David...”

“What do you-?”

“I don’t want to use you...”

Closing my eyes, I press my lips against his neck softly. “You’re nothing like David. Trust me.”

There’s a long silence and Jared’s muscled form begins trembling slightly in my arms, “I...”

Hugging him closer, I murmur in his ear, “What is it, Jared?”

“I want us... I want to try... I... Can we try? I... I want to be with you... but... I don't want to hurt you... and I don't want to lie... ever... I'm done sneaking around like a filthy secret... will... will you... can we... do you still want to...? I mean...”

“Jared,” I cut him off, pulling my fingers from his. He immediately tenses up and begins moving away, but I just slide my fingers up to gently grab his chin, twisting it towards me and moving closer, pressing our lips firmly together in a long, yet almost chaste kiss.

His breath stutters and his eyes squeeze shut as I move to deepen the kiss. I pull him around to face me and cradle his innocent face in both my hands, stroking my thumbs over his cheeks, “Jare... look at me... please, look at me...”

Slowly, the hazel eyes slide open, locking with mine. They shimmer slightly, swirling with emotions, hope and terror entwined, cutting deep into my chest, making it ache even more.

Pressing a soft kiss to his forehead, I pull him towards me, rolling onto my back and pulling him to curl around my chest, pressing him close to me.

Jared looks up in confusion, “What... what are you doing? Don't... don't you want... want to...” he looks away, flushing.

He's obviously expecting me to fuck him, now that he's expressed his willingness. Anger bubbles up inside of me as I realise that this must be how David treated him.

Hugging him tightly to me, I heft the blankets up so his back doesn't get cold, and, with a soft kiss to the tip of his nose, I whisper, “Jared, you're absolutely exhausted. You could barely stand upright. We're not in any rush. We're going to take this slowly, at your pace.... Thank you, for giving me this... I love you...”

Jared tenses in my arms, “I... I... I like you... a lot... more... more than normal.... Thank you... for loving me... you don't... you don't know what it means to me... no one... no one...”

Stroking my fingers up and down the bare skin of his back, I lean up to murmur in his ear, “I love you, Jared... I love you, and I don't care about the things you've done in the past... I don't care about anything but you... only you... right here....”

Sinking into me, Jared slides a leg over mine, inching closer. Pressing his lips gently against my collarbone, he kisses me softly, and murmurs, “Love your voice... love your eyes... love it when you hold me... love it when you smile... love it when you look at me as if I matter... love it when-”

I lean up as I tilt his chin up with two fingers, brushing my lips over his as he finishes, “-when you kiss me...”

Smiling up at him, I trace a finger over the contours of his beautiful face and the tugging in my chest only increases as he leans into my touch. “I love you.”

He smiles softly at me before tucking his face in the dip of my neck with a muffled, ‘Goodnight’.

Laughing up at the ceiling, I begin stroking my fingers through his curls of hair, wondering how I got to be so lucky.

Just as I'm about to drift off, I hear his quiet, terrified whisper, "I think... think I might love you too... but I'm so scared it hurts..." and my heart warms even as it clenches.

\*Jared\*

Warmth surrounds him, soft, gentle warmth that he just wants to stay wrapped up in forever. Smiling slightly, Jared snuggles into it, trying to bury himself. A soft chuckle has him frowning, wondering what that sound was.

As he slowly blinks his eyes open, the first thing he sees is a blurred t-shirt. Groaning and lifting himself up onto an elbow, he meets the warm green eyes and feels a hot flush spreading across his cheeks.

Realising he was trying to bury himself into Jensen's side, he flushes even further and manages to croak out, "Hey..."

Jensen smiles, warm and happy, his hands reaching out to rest at the younger man's waist, just holding him close. "Hey, sleepyhead."

Smiling around his pout, Jared grumbles, "Who you calling 'sleepyhead'?"

Laughing, Jensen reaches up to softly ruffle Jared's hair, "Well, you've been out of it for ages. I was getting worried there."

"Aww, you were worried, that's sweet..." Jared grins impishly down at the man.

"No, it's not, I was just worried that I'd have to call the fire brigade to get me out from under you," Jensen shoots back easily.

"Oh," Jared glances down and realises he's still practically on top of the older man. Shyly ducking his head, he begins to slide off, "Sorry."

Huffing, Jensen just snakes his hands around the kid, tugging him down and back into his arms.

After a few moments, Jared relaxes; burying his nose against the side of the older man's neck and breathing in the soothing scent that kept his bad dreams at bay last night.

Jensen's fingers are soothing as they card through his hair, and Jared's lets out a soft sigh of contentment when he feels soft lips pressing against his forehead.

"You're gorgeous, Jay..." Jensen murmurs, lips tickling the younger man's skin.

Despite himself, Jared blushes, turning to bury his face against Jensen's shoulder, hiding from sight.

"And you're adorable," Jensen teases softly, his nose nudging just below Jared's ear.

Huffing, Jared pokes the man in the belly, making him yelp. “’m not adorable,” he grumbles through pouting lips.

“You are. And you’re hot and sexy and my sister’s gonna flip when she finds out I slept in the same bed as you.”

A red-faced Jared laughs and shakes his head, “Then I wonder what she’d do if she saw me doing this to you,” he whispers, leaning down. It’s only the slight tremble in the kid’s bottom lip that lets Jensen know how terrified he is as he presses a soft kiss to Jensen’s lips.

Smiling into the kiss, Jensen strokes his fingers gently through Jared’s hair and keeping the man close as he savours the tentative gesture for what it is.

When Jared pulls back, biting his lip and hanging his head so he’s hidden behind his bangs, Jensen wants nothing more than to bundle the kid up and never let him go. Reaching out to sweep the hair from Jared’s eyes, Jensen murmurs softly, “What’s the matter?”

“I...” Jared looks away nervously. “I... just... I’ve never... I don’t know what to... how to act when... I mean... You stayed the night... is that...?”

Biting down on the surge of anger at David, Jensen gently tugs Jared down, waiting until the kid’s face is nestled against his neck before asking softly, “You’ve never had anyone stay the night, have you?”

“I...” Jared’s hands tighten slightly. “Sorry...” he whispers apprehensively.

“Fuck, Jared...” Jensen tilts his head to bury his nose in Jared’s hair, inhaling deeply. “David was... he was the first person you were with?”

Tensing up, Jared’s grip becomes nearly painful. “No,” he chokes out, sounding terrified. “I... there were... there were others.... But... they never... never stayed...”

Frowning at the ceiling, Jensen tries to piece the puzzle together. When he gets it, he gasps softly. “Jay... what... what did you do after your dad kicked you out?”

Jared curls closer, shaking his head desperately and not lifting from Jensen’s shoulder. “Please,” the kid chokes out, desperation in his voice, “’m sorry, ‘m sorry... please, don’t... please....”

Jensen jerks as he feels moisture seeping through the thin cotton of his t-shirt, and instantly wraps his arms firmer around Jared’s trembling form. Skimming his fingers up and down the younger man’s sides, he whispers softly, “It doesn’t matter to me, Jared... I just want to know so I can understand... Nothing can change how I feel about you... nothing, okay?”

It takes many more soothing words and gentle kisses before Jared finally stops shaking. Curling up into a foetal position that Jensen immediately takes advantage of and spoons him, Jared lets out a soft choking sound as he comes back from the edge.

When Jensen’s fingers thread through his, the younger man presses their hands to his chest, over his thumping head. Jensen softly kisses the bare skin of Jared’s shoulder and waits.

Finally Jared breaks the silence. “When I left, I couldn’t move much... my... my dad had cracked a couple of ribs and had broken my wrist. I only had my one backpack, which had everything important.... That was my first stupid move...”

Jensen presses his lips to the side of the younger man’s neck and exhales softly.

“I walked until the pain got too much, it wasn’t that far... a couple of miles... Found a small bridge, thought it’d be a good idea to stay under there for the night... It must have been about two in the morning when they came.... They grabbed my backpack, when they saw I was awake and I tried to stop them from taking everything, they got angry.

“Then... the pain... I just remember seeing everything as hot-white for a while after that... When I came to, I was lying by the riverbank... I was bleeding... so much blood...” Jared’s breath catches and Jensen’s arms tighten.

“When... when I tried to move... I felt... I blacked out it was so painful...”

“My... my clothes were torn... blood... I made myself walk.... I thought... I actually thought my father... I walked all the way back with broken ribs and wrist and torn clothes... When the door opened and he stepped out, I... I actually felt like I... anyway... he just took one look at me... at the blood on my face and hands and side and clothes... and... and he said... he said...” Jared sobs softly, “He said, ‘that’s what happens to fags...’ and... and he shut the door...”

Jensen closes his eyes and tightens the arms he has firmly wrapped around the shaking form. He opens his mouth to say something, but he doesn’t know what to say.

But Jared isn’t finished. “I went... I went to Kev’s house... my best friend’s house... he...” Jared chokes on a laugh, “He was one of the reasons I realised I was gay... I was so in love with him... I thought... I thought sometimes... the way he held me... maybe he... I showed up... and he... he let me inside... called the ambulance... I thought... I thought it wasn’t that bad... he... he was with me... it couldn’t be that bad....

“When I woke up in the hospital... I was alone... They said... said I’d been out of it for a couple of days... Said my dad had been called... hadn’t shown up... Before they discharged me, they wanted me to go to Child Protection Services, but... I didn’t want to end up like that... I’d heard too much bad stuff...” Jared scrubs a hand roughly over his face, “Stupid mistake...”

“They wanted to know who did it... I couldn’t tell them about my dad... I... my own father hating me that much... I didn’t want them to know about that... I just told them about the other men.

“When I got out, I wanted to thank Kev... so... I found my way back to his house... the door was shut in my face... they’d heard what I was.... Didn’t want me anywhere near them...”

“I went to my school locker... I had some money in there... enough... enough for a bus ticket away.... My... my drama teacher... he saw me there... I... I worshipped that man...” Jared laughs softly, squeezing Jensen’s fingers, “Reminds me of you, actually.... He was... he was so... everything about him... Anyway... he took me to his office... tried to find out

how I'd gotten so beat up... I ended up crying... he was hugging me... so strong... He... he kissed me... he... my first kiss with a man...

"I was... I was so surprised, I stopped crying... he looked so guilty... he kept saying sorry... but... I needed..." Jared breathes in deeply, "I needed to know that being gay wasn't just... pain... I begged him to show me... but he wouldn't do more than kiss... I was still in pain... but... he laid me out across the floor and... he just..."

Jensen is so torn between wanting to knock this teacher out or hand him a beer. His jealousy and ethics aside, Jensen realises that that man was there for Jared when he needed someone most. Maybe Jensen will consider forgiving him for having Jared before him.

"Then... he just held me... asked what I was going to do...he didn't understand why I couldn't go home to my dad... I hadn't told him... When I mentioned needing to get away, he told me L.A. was a good place to try... he told me I should push my acting... said I could get famous..."

Unable to hold back any longer, itching with irrational jealousy, Jensen tugs Jared around, cradles his tear-streaked face between palms and presses his lips firmly against the kid's. "He was right, Jare... Look where you are now..."

Smiling weakly, Jared nods, his gaze shifting down to below Jensen's chin.

"But I ran out of money before I got here.... Got off the bus in the middle of nowhere, with no one I knew, no way to contact anyone... I was just... I sat there... and it started raining... I had nowhere to go... it was so cold... I was so scared... so hungry.... I remembered what had happened the last time I stayed out after dark, so I didn't want to lie down. But my ribs hurt too much... my wrist ached... everything..."

"This car pulled up beside me, the window wound down and the man asked me whether I wanted a lift.

"I should've known better... I kept telling him it was fine... that I could get out there... but he kept saying it was no bother... when we pulled up in front of this house in the middle of nowhere, I knew I was screwed.

"When... when he finally un... untied me... I couldn't move... he dragged me back into the car... dumped me at the stop he'd found me, shoving a twenty in my face and driving off..."

Jared's eyes slide shut and he shudders. "It was enough to buy me something to eat..."

"Jared..." Jensen whispers softly, brushing his fingers lightly over the younger man's cheek. Jared eyes squeeze shut tighter as if the touch hurts him. But Jensen doesn't stop; he presses closer, peppering soft kisses across every piece of skin he can lay his lips on.

"There were others..." Jared whispers brokenly. "I can... I can see them all... when I sleep..."

Catching the younger man's lips in a gentle kiss, Jensen whispers softly, "I'm sorry, Jared... I wish I had been there... I would've... I would've killed each and every one of them... I still would if I could..."

Taking a shuddering breath, Jared murmurs softly, "It was after one of the worst... the men... there had been more than one... had just thrown me out of the car on the side of the highway... I was so sure I was going to die... but... he... Dave... was suddenly there... he got me into the back of his truck... took me to hospital... he was there when I woke up... I started loving him then..."

"He would visit me occasionally, asked me to stay with him for a bit... When he found out I was into acting, he told me he knew someone I should meet... We were friends... good friends... I think... I owe him everything... I would be a long decomposed body by now if it weren't for him..."

"What happened?" Jensen asks, pressing a lingering kiss to Jared's forehead.

"I opened my big mouth again," Jared mutters self-depreciatively.

"You told him you were gay?"

"Yeah... he was... so angry... wanted to know whether I'd played him to get him to sleep with me... I kept telling him that wasn't true, but then... then he grabbed me and threw me on his bed, telling me not to lie to him. He climbed on me... I was trying to get him to calm down, to be reasonable. But... then he started... I could feel... he was hard..."

"He raped you?" Jensen gasps, planning out the best way to kill the bastard.

"No... he stopped when I began crying... said he was sorry... Things... things went back to normal... I thought they did... but it was a month later that he showed up... began kissing me... I didn't know what to do... it wasn't like with my teacher... but it wasn't like with the other men either... when we were finished, he kissed me and left..."

"As time... time moved on... I began relying on him... he was... the only constant... I knew what he wanted... But then... then I realised I was in love with him... I didn't know how to be without him..."

"But... about two months ago... he got engaged to Marie... He... I don't know why it hurt so much... I should've known it wasn't real... But... then he showed up and... I let him fuck me again... he left after..."

"I didn't care about anything anymore... I was just... empty... and then... and then..." Jared's glistening eyes look up, meeting Jensen's as he whispers, "You were there..."

\*

\*Jensen\*

His wide eyes peer up at me, swirling with so much fear that I feel my heart aching painfully. When I reach out to skim my fingers down his cheek, he flinches, as if he's expecting me to hit him.

My throat closes up, and I press my palm flat along the side of his face. His eyes slide nervously down and he gives a shaky laugh, "Yeah, so that's about it. Now you know... Uhm..." he begins to pull away, but I don't let him. Sliding my fingers back into his hair, I pull him closer.

As my lips near his, he ducks his head, causing me to press a soft kiss to the tip of his nose, making me smile and him blush. "I love you," I murmur softly, tilting my head down to kiss him, on the lips this time.

"How... how can you be so perfect? How can you... even... didn't you hear what I said...? How can you...? I can't... even..."

After cutting off his mumbling with a deeper kiss, I breathe against his lips, "Because you're you... you're Jared. And I love you. I love you. I love you so fucking much."

My chest warms as he leans up, pressing his lips tentatively against mine, pulling me down to deepen the kiss.

Pressing a hand down on the mattress beside his head to keep myself from crashing onto him, I slide my other hand down his side, smiling as he shivers. "So gorgeous, Jare..."

"Please..." he murmurs, grabbing my hand and pressing it over his heart. Over his thumping heart.

Kissing the corner of his mouth, then tugging at his bottom lip and nipping it lightly, I trace my fingers over his muscled chest, grinning when his belly flutters at the touch, "Ticklish?"

He grins back, "Never!"

"Oh really? I seem to recall..." I launch my attack, tickling him furiously, making him writhe and twist in a fit of giggles. I think I'm going to explode with how happy I am. His laughter, his dimples, his sparkling eyes, all weapons of mass destruction, headed straight for my heart.

He wriggles and wriggles, nearly upturning us, but he has his hands firmly at my waist, so I know he doesn't actually want me off him. His fingers push up my tee and he grins mischievously before ducking forward, blowing a raspberry on my stomach and making me squawk.

Laughing breathlessly, he presses a gentle kiss to my abdomen and tugs my t-shirt all the way up, blushing yet again.

He's so bashful it's adorable. And I bet the look on my face now is completely sappy, but I really can't help it. I just never want to let him out of my arms again.

"See anything you like?" I waggle my eyebrows at him,

Moving slowly, as if fearful of me pushing him away, he presses soft kisses up my chest, lingering against my neck, before finally, blushing, reaching my lips.

Unable to control myself any longer, I surge forwards to deepen the kiss, shifting to lie flush on top of him, cradling his face in my palms and gently tickling the inside of his mouth with my tongue.

When I let him pull up for air, we're both panting. He grins shyly against my cheek, his hands running up and down my back, pressing me closer.

Just as I move to capture his lips again, a loud grumble comes from his belly and I burst out laughing.

"Maybe we should get something to eat."

He pouts, but it's ruined by another grumble.

Reluctantly pulling off him, I can't resist giving him a lingering kiss on the forehead, curling my fingers in his hair and squeezing my eyes shut tightly, thinking how lucky I am to have him.

When I release him, he raises an eyebrow curiously, making me shrug sheepishly. "I really missed you."

His eyes light up like candles, shining happily as he punches me on the shoulder lightly, "Girl."

"Hey!" I protest, dragging him towards me by the hips, and squeezing his ass, making him squeak.

Grinning up at me, he wraps his arms around my neck, pulling me down to whisper in my ear, "I love you."

My breath catches and my heart stutters, leaving me gaping at him as he slides out from under me, headed for the kitchen.

I grab him before he's taken twenty steps and throw my arms around him from behind, making us both stumble. Luckily my sappy side of my brain is still a bit overwhelmed, and all I can say is, "Come on, Dean, show me your cooking skills."

He gets me in the face with a dishcloth for that one.

\*

"Yeah, and that idiot over there is Chad," Jared points with fond smile that makes my jealous monster growl.

"Hey, I heard that, Pada-whatever," the blonde yells as he makes his way over. "Who's the pretty boy?"

I bristle, but Jared just slings an arm around my shoulders, tugging me to his side. “Jen, this is Chad, ignore his douche-ness, he’s actually a teddy inside.”

Chad grumbles and bitches, but I can see the warmth in his eyes as he looks at Jared.

“Yeah, and Chad, this is Jensen, my...” Jared trails off, glancing at me nervously.

We haven’t actually spoken about labels, but I am so staking claim right now, “I’m Jared’s boyfriend.”

Chad’s eyes widen slightly and he turns to examine me with renewed interest. “You the reason he’s been missing for the past month?”

“Sort of.”

Then, despite our protests, he grabs me and drags me to the side, out of Jared’s hearing.

With his voice low, Chad murmurs, “I don’t know who you are or what the fuck you’re doing to Jared, but thank you.”

About to argue that I’m not doing anything bad to Jared, I cut short, “What?”

“Do you know about the asshole?”

“David?”

More approval shines in his eyes and he nods, “I’ve watched Jared being played by that bastard for years. No matter what I said, the kid was still loyal to him. Still loved him. And then... the wedding announcement... that broke him completely.”

Chad glances towards a pouting Jared, and he grins, “I haven’t seen him look this happy since I first introduced him to Guitar Hero.”

Deciding to take that as a compliment, I nod.

Snapping back to me, Chad narrows his eyes, “But this doesn’t mean I like you.”

\*

I spend a couple of hours exploring the set, being introduced to people and fooling around with the technical stuff. I’ve always loved technology, so this is like my ideal heaven.

Jared grins happily every time our eyes meet, making the director groan on more than one occasion about a spoiled take.

But grumbling aside, it’s clear how much the crew loves the kid. As we’re leaving, numerous people drag me aside to say how pleased they are that Jared has someone who’s making him happy, someone who’s not ashamed of him or our relationship. It’s evident they all know about David and how much he hurt Jared.

It makes me cling to him a little more as we step out into the street, hating the thought of Jared being so vulnerable to such a bastard.

But it's okay now; he's mine. Mine to look after and mine to protect.

As we slide into my truck, he shoots me a shy smile, "Thank you."

"For what?"

"Today was really awesome."

"Dude, I don't think that was down to me, you work with some awesome people."

Jared laughs softly, "They already love you."

"What can I say? I'm a loveable guy." I send him a wink. He just blushes and ducks his head.

"You wanna stay over at my place tonight?" I ask, gently brushing the bangs from his eyes and peering into those stunning hazel orbs that make me just want to lose myself in them forever.

"Well... uhmmm," he bites his lip, "Won't you... I mean, I don't want you to be sick of me..."

"As if," I scoff, "Dude, that's not gonna happen. But... if it'd make you more comfortable, if you want space or-"

He cuts me off, "I'd love to, but can we just swing by my place to get some stuff?"

\*

I never knew anyone could take such a long shower. He's been in there for over forty minutes, I'm sure the water must have run cold by now. I'm already in bed, reading through some of the scripts Jared's agent sent him. Some of these look pretty awesome.

I jump slightly as he steps out of the bathroom in a cloud of steam, glistening water droplets trickling down his muscled body and trailing down to the black boxers that contrasts his tanned skin so perfectly.

He blushes as he notices me perving, "Hey."

Deciding to tease him, I shoot him a leer, "Hey, sexy."

Going even redder, he ducks his head, hiding behind his damp curls in that oh-so-familiar way, making me want to just grab him and molest him to my heart's content.

"Have I told you you're adorable when you blush?"

"Jen..." he whines with a pout, "You're a jerk."

“Hmmm, maybe. But I’m a jerk who belongs to the most gorgeous man in the world.”

His gaze softens and he smiles, “You really know how to talk yourself out of trouble, don’t you?”

“Yup, I had to, else I woulda been grounded half my teenage years.”

When he falls silent and looks away, I feel like the biggest ass ever. I’m just opening my mouth to apologise, when he sits down on the edge of the bed and asks in a soft voice, “Can... can you tell me about... those years...?”

Carefully sliding closer, I loop my arms around his waist, pressing my palms flat against his toned chest and inching closer until my chest flush against his damp back, breathing in with my nose buried in his hair. With a soft sigh, he leans against me, allowing me to drag him further up the bed, burying us under the blankets. Keeping him bracketed between my legs, I gently begin tracing patterns on his abdomen.

Kissing his neck softly, I whisper, “What do you want me to tell you?”

“Anything... Your sister,” Jared laughs softly, “Tell me about her.”

“You mean, besides the fact that she’s almost as in love with you as I am?” I snicker.

Even though I can’t see it, I know he’s blushing. I don’t think I’ve ever met anyone who’s as easy to embarrass. It’s awesome.

“Well, she’s annoying, plays her music too loud, takes over the house, has friends who stalk me and giggle-” Jared interrupts me with a snort, “-eats all the cookies our Grams makes us, wears clothes that make me cringe, has recently discovered make-up, has an idiot boyfriend who’s absolutely terrified of me – with good reason, talks about all the hottest guys, talks about this Dean Forester guy as if he’s the second coming, and,” I take a deep breath, “Yeah, I think that’s about it.”

Jared laughs softly, “She sounds awesome.”

“Ahhh, well. She’s okay, I guess,” I reply with a grin, “speaking of which, can I kidnap you in two weeks time, over the four-day weekend?”

“Yeah, sure. Why?”

I rub my nose playfully against his shoulder, “I wanna show you off to my family.”

“Are you...? I mean... do they... do they know you’re... you know...?”

“Gay? Yeah, told them when I was fifteen.”

Jared falls quiet again, hanging his head slightly, making my chest clench and my arms tighten around him.

“I’m really glad they were cool about it,” he murmurs softly, “I’m glad for you. Glad you have parents who love you enough.”

“Hey...” I interrupt softly, “Parents should love you no matter what... And dude, my mom’s gonna take one look at you and adopt you as her other son. Actually, she’s probably gonna forget I even exist for the whole time we’re there.”

“Are you sure they won’t mind me being there...? I mean, it’s one thing to be cool about it, but-”

“Jay, they’re gonna love you. They’ll be begging you to make an honest man out of me just so they can have you as part of their family.”

A small smile tugs at the corner of his lips, and he asks softly, “Really?”

“Yup, now turn around and let me kiss you.”

He laughs as he complies, kneeling between my spread legs and wrapping his arms around my shoulders, letting me tug him flush against me, pressing my lips to his the side of his neck.

Surprisingly, he’s the one who makes the first move, pushing me back to lie down, crawling up me, peppering me with kisses. When he straddles my thighs, I can’t help the low groan that escapes me.

He grins and rocks against me, letting me feel how hard he is beneath the boxers. Sliding my hands back to squeeze his ass, I pull him closer, stealing his lips into a brutal kiss.

“Want,” he breathes, “Jen... want...”

“What do you want, babe?”

When he shoots me a scowl at the nickname, I just grin and distract him with a bite on his lip until he’s flushed with arousal. Then I reach up to whisper, “What do you want, Jare?”

“You, Jen... want you...”

Silently flipping us over, I press him into the mattress, sliding down his muscled form, kissing and sucking as I go, marking him up as mine.

When I reach his boxers, I grin up at him, “Can I?”

He turns his head to the side, nodding desperately, “Please...”

When I slip the black pants off, I nearly swallow my tongue at the sight of him, “God, you’re gorgeous everywhere....” Glancing upwards, I smirk as I watch the familiar blush spreading over his cheeks.

“Jen...” he whines softly.

“Alright, alright,” I soothe, running my fingers over his trembling thighs.

Licking the tip of his dick, I let out a groan as his strong taste spreads over my tongue. Sucking in more hungrily, I experiment by flicking the slit, making him moan and arch up.

Holding his hips steady, I take his whole dick, sucking strongly. He gasps and writhes, his legs vibrating with the strain of not thrusting. He lets out a shudder as I finger his hole, lifting to give me more room.

“God, Jens... fuck... please... in me...”

I slip my finger inside, gently stretching him, being careful to watch his reactions. The last thing I want to do is hurt him. When I find his prostate, his breath hitches and he half-sobs my name.

Unsure what he wants more, he arches up into my mouth, then back down on my finger, moaning softly as I add another.

He’s about to turn to jelly when I add my third finger, completely lost, flushed and panting. “Please. Want you in me, please, Jen.”

Not one to refuse him, I pull my fingers out and let his dick slip from my lips, moving up to capture his lips, “Are you sure? We don’t have to...”

“Please, Jensen... need you...”

I slip on a condom quickly and grab his wrists, pressing them above our heads with one hand, before gently guiding myself to his opening, nudging in slowly. His eyes flutter and his lips part in a silent gasp.

Once fully sheathed, I wait for him to adjust, “You okay?”

Breathing heavily, he opens his eyes slowly, hazel orbs locking with mine. “Love you,” he murmurs.

Taking that as permission, I seal our lips together, breathing against his, “You too.”

Then I begin thrusting, long, hard thrusts that have him gasping and his breath hitching. As I shift and change the angle, hitting that spot inside of him, he cries out my name, tightening his legs around me.

His flushed face and shiny eyes make me want to break down and cry at how beautiful he is. It’s not fair that anyone can affect me so much, it’s terrifying, but I wouldn’t stop this for the world. “Fuck, you have no idea how hot you are, Jare... Want to keep you... want you... always... fuck, Jared... God, you feel so good...”

He just moans against my cheek, body arching up to meet me.

As I feel myself nearing the edge, I grasp his cock and begin jerking him off in time with my thrusts. But it's only when I whisper hoarsely in his ear, "Come for me, Jare... Let me see you..." that he does.

His orgasm shoots through him, making him tense and tighten around me. The pleasure is too much, with a stuttering thrust, I come, sagging heavily against his chest and pulling out gently and discarding the condom.

We're both breathing heavily when his hands come up to stroke long and soothing caresses down my back, making me shiver and press closer, tucking my nose against his shoulder, "You're perfect, Jay... so fucking perfect... I can't believe you're mine."

He presses his nose to my hair and exhales shakily, "Look who's talking."

"We'll agree to disagree then?" I ask innocently, yelping as he pinches my ass.

\*Jared\*

Jared walks ahead while Jensen ducks behind a nearby bush. As ordered, Jared rings the doorbell, waits for the door to be opened, and then says he's here for Mackenzie.

A few moments later, she appears, stepping out of the house. She stops dead, her mouth falling open. "You're... you're... oh, my God..." Looking as though she's been struck dumb. With a beetroot face, she shifts nervously. "Wow... uhm..."

Unable to hold in any longer, Jensen steps out of the bushes, laughing as he walks towards them.

Mac just glances between them in confusion, looking completely lost, "Jensen?"

Sliding his arms around Jared's waist, Jensen smiles as the younger man leans trustingly into him. Wanting to tease his sister even more, Jensen reaches around to cup Jared's chin, pulling him in for a kiss.

Mac's wide eyes peer at them. "Jensen... what...?"

"Hey, Mac. This is my boyfriend. You might have heard of him."

"No fucking way!" she mutters, clamping a hand over her mouth with a gasp. "You... no way!"

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