

*Summary: Jacques Bonnefoy finally goes on a long-anticipated date. It goes differently than expected. Set January 30, 2016. Published May 13, 2018. Very minor spoilers for Torchwood season 2 and Supernatural seasons 4-5. **Warnings at the end.** Please heed them. **T-rated** for reasons stated in the warnings, which are probably not what you're thinking.*

Though Every Thread is Torn

"I'm glad we could finally do this," Jacques Bonnefoy said. He smiled at his companion.

"It did take a while, but that's the Rift for you," replied Ianto Jones. He had his arm looped through Jacques' and a small, happy smile on his face. "Hard to get a quiet night. Or day, as it were."

"Yeah, it is." Jacques sighed as they turned a corner, then shook it off. "Still, here we are! New Caledonia. Sunshine, fresh air, a great view from the top of that hill...what more could you want?"

"Reality," Ianto quipped, continuing before Jacques could even frown. "Is that Italian? We could—"

Jacques shook his head. "No. Not today, not with you." He turned them firmly away from La Trattoria, heading down the street. "I was thinking we could go to that French place you like."

Ianto turned his head to frown at him. "Isn't that in Cardiff, though?"

"Is it?" Jacques frowned as well. Finally, he shrugged. "Maybe it is. Nakamura's, then? I haven't been there in ages, but people keep telling me it's still good and I should go back."

"Nakamura's, then," Ianto said. They kept walking—ambling, really. It was too sunny a day to move quickly. "Jacques..."

"Hm?"

"How *did* you manage to get us here?"

"What?" Jacques' frown returned. "What do you mean? We just walked out the door—"

"Of the Hub?" Ianto shook his head, and stopped walking. Jacques stopped as well, turning to face him. "We're from different worlds, Jacques. How does this make sense?"

"Does it have to make sense?" Jacques took his hands, stepping closer. "Ianto, we have the day free, and we're together. We're *together*. Why worry about the details?"

"It's my job to worry about the details," Ianto said. He looked around the empty street. A bird flew past. "Jacques..."

"It's *fine*, I promise."

Ianto shook his head. "I've never been here, Jacques."

Jacques chuckled. "Yes, I know. That's why I brought you here, right?"

"Isn't this normally a place with people in it?" Ianto pulled free and put an arm just below his shoulders, turning him. "Look around, Jacques. It's a sunny day, all the businesses are open, there are birds everywhere—but no people. Not even in the shops or the houses. This place is—"

Jacques spun round to kiss him, desperate to keep the sentence unfinished. Every instinct he had screamed at him to stop Ianto from talking, to keep them here, to keep the fantasy—no, the reality—intact...

It didn't help. Ianto swayed toward him when the kiss broke; he was gratifyingly flushed, and his hands had strayed to Jacques' collar, but his voice was perfectly even (if a little huskier) when he spoke again. He continued his sentence as though nothing had happened. "Dead. It's dead here, Jacques." He stepped closer, until they were pressed together. "This is death."

Jacques flinched, and pulled away; Ianto followed him, smoothing a cool hand down his chest. "What—no, it's—this is New Cal—"

"I've never been to New Caledonia, Jacques." Ianto's voice was soft and even. It drifted inexorably into Jacques' brain, each word settling into place like ash. "You've never taken me there. You never will. We're not really together."

Jacques shook his head. He was walking backwards, or maybe Ianto was walking him backwards; it was hard to tell. "No, we are. We *are*. I asked you on a date—"

"That was Jack."

"—and you said yes before I could even—"

"Also Jack."

"—finish talking, will you *stop* that? We've been trying to make this happen for weeks!"

"Also Jack," Ianto said quietly. This time he leaned in for the kiss. It was just a gentle press of lips, warmth and touch that should have calmed Jacques, but it felt—

It was off. Warmth in a distant sort of way, touch that felt subtly wrong, scent that felt like a memory instead of reality.

“You see?” lanto said in that same steady, quiet tone. “This isn’t real. It never was. I’m a shadow, Jacques. The real lanto Jones has no idea who you are.”

“Stop,” Jacques said. His voice faltered. “lanto, please, we—”

“It’s nearly time,” lanto said. They’d finally walked far enough that Jacques’ back hit a wall; to his growing horror, a quick glance revealed it to be one of the walls of his RC. He recognized the console two feet away from him; behind lanto, the New Caledonia street was beginning to turn foggy. “Not too much longer now, *cariad*.”

“Time for what?”

lanto smiled, and cupped his face with one cool hand. “You to wake up. Do you remember?”

Jacques shook his head. lanto’s hand was somehow growing colder. “No. What should I remember?”

“The mission,” lanto said patiently. His other hand came to rest on Jacques’ stomach, making him flinch: it was also cold, even through his shirt. “*Supernatural*. Remember the bad slash?”

“Not my department,” Jacques said. lanto’s hands were still getting colder; he tried to shift away, but the wall kept him in place. “I’m in ESAS—”

“Oh, this one’s definitely ESAS,” lanto said. He sounded amused now. “Dean’s an overpowered replacement, remember?”

“Your hands,” Jacques said. His jaw clenched; he tried to push lanto away, but couldn’t move his arms. “lanto, please—I need you to move your hands.”

“Castiel’s been weakened, though,” lanto went on. He pressed close; Jacques shivered at the slighter chill from the rest of his body, and kept shivering. lanto’s hands, still the main point of contact between them, radiated cold that Jacques was beginning to feel in his bones. “He’s been deferring to Dean all the time, lost his fighting skills, begun to whinge about everything...”

Jacques was shaking. His face and side had passed numb and were starting to burn with frostbite. “Yan—lanto, please—”

“Remember when they killed Sam off?” lanto murmured. He pressed freezing lips to Jacques’ other cheek. Jacques gave a choked cry, but had nowhere left to flinch away to. “Evil in this, of

course, from demonic influences, but he'd still done good protecting people, so he was sent off to the good part of Purgatory. Completely uncanonical, but there you have it." His lips moved to Jacques' neck, and then to the pulse point at the base; he didn't seem to notice the tears, or even that Jacques' breath was catching in his throat. "You're only one chapter out from that. His experience swung from fantasy to hellishly disturbing, remember?"

"So—" Jacques' voice rasped painfully. His entire body shuddered and jerked with the cold. "A-are you—you're saying I-I'm in—"

"Purgatory." Ianto raised his head and smiled. "Well done. What a shame you couldn't reach Heaven: that's still canonical, save for the new version of the angels-only area. You could have hung around your best memories until you came back to life."

"B-better th-an Hell," Jacques suggested. He gritted his teeth; it helped nothing, especially once Ianto stroked a glacial finger down the warmer side of his face. "Ah!"

"Sh," Ianto soothed, and pulled out his stopwatch. Jacques watched the familiar motion, trying to blink his vision clear. Ianto nodded in satisfaction and put it away. "Not long now at all, Jacques." He smiled—wonderful smile, Jack had fallen again and again for that smile—and put his hand over Jacques' heart.

Jacques yelled, his vision blurring over with fresh tears. "Ianto!" He could barely breathe. This had to be worse than Hell: Hell would at least be warmer. Might even send a torturer who didn't wear a lover's face. "Ple—"

Icy lips stole the last of his breath. He was finally allowed to slide down the wall, head rolling back. Ianto went with him; Jacques would have sobbed when his hands finally left, but there was no air—nothing—

Fingers he could barely feel wiped his tears away, revealing Ianto's smiling face. The cold emptiness of space was closing in behind him.

"Hush, love," the young man murmured. His eyes were fond. Jacques' lungs were burning now, too. "Hush. It's time to wake up and save the world."

* * *

Jacques came back to life with a desperate gasp. Everything hurt: sorting it out alerted him to the skin over his stomach knitting together; the ribs over his heart swiftly losing the tenderness he associated with having been shot; the setting cheekbone and healing skin overtop; the—

Jacques turned as far onto his side as he could and threw up. It set everything burning worse, but it would fade. It would all fade. He just needed to finish healing.

“But Dean i cant do something like that” said Castiel’s voice from nearby. He was even more monotone than usual, thanks to the lack of punctuation. **“I don’t have the strength. what if I fail and Lucifer wins”**

“Than I’ll take care of it” That was Dean Winchester, gruff and flat. **“I can kill him with the angel sword of Michael and get Sam to heaven. i mean he is my brother. it was all Ruby's fault he went bad. and And then you wont keep loosing your powers anymore and we can finally get married and stop hunting.”**

Jacques bit back a groan, even though they seemed not to have noticed him. In a minute, he was pretty sure he’d be able to stand.

Angel OCs. He was never going up against one without a helpful ring of holy fire ever again. Especially not ones with randomly appearing evil Hunter henchmen, though somehow he doubted he was going to see that element a second time. Still, he had actually managed a good enough stab to get sparkly wing shadows on the ground, from what he remembered. He’d only have to go back for the henchman...who hadn’t moved into the new chapter with him, but that was fine. He’d just check the Words.

Weirdly, he even seemed to still have all his weapons. He’d half-expected the henchman to loot his body. Must not have had enough character to manage it, in the end; he couldn’t say he minded.

“Alright,” he muttered, getting shakily to his feet. He felt steadier with every passing second; even the residual pain was fading. “Time to end this. And then find a sauna.”

He squared his shoulders, picked up his weapons, and headed off toward the replacements.

***A/N:** Originally written for the prompt “(At least) One of your characters is preparing for/on a date.” Title from Leonard Cohen’s “Dance Me to the End of Love” (the exact line is “raise a tent of shelter now/though every thread is torn”). Mission is entirely invented, but based loosely on general Supernatural canon and badfic trends.*

2018 betaing by Iximaz; 2020 editing by me. You’d think that would be because this needed a lot of tweaking, but the main reason was not being sure how to do the warnings! I don’t write a lot of horror. (It did wind up getting a good bit of tweaking, though, so I guess it worked out!)

Disclaimer: The PPC was begun by Jay and Acacia. Jacques Bonnefoy was created by me (Zingenmir) and Lily Winterwood. Ianto Jones and his home canon, Torchwood, belong to the BBC. Supernatural belongs to... Warner Bros. Television, apparently. I think. That's the distributor, anyway. At any rate, I don't own it.

Trigger warnings: Temporary character death of the Jack Harkness variety. Some description of the injuries responsible. Some associated disturbing imagery with elements of torture (an inside view of the pain being caused, rather than gore).

Major spoiler, highlight to read:

