

Title: At Least Say Hello

Author: Scribblesinink

Rating: General

Characters: Lisa Braeden

Warnings: None

Spoilers: 6.21 *Let It Bleed*

Word count: 1,097

Author notes: Dean asking Castiel to take Ben and Lisa's memories was perhaps well-intentioned, but apparently my muse decided it wasn't one of Dean's smartest moments. Title from the Metallica song *The Memory Remains*. Thanks to Tanaqui for the beta.

Summary: Dean Winchester isn't so easily forgotten.

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When Lisa's finally released from the hospital—several days after she wakes up, although she has no clue why they keep her so long since she's feeling fine—she goes straight to the garage. It doesn't come as a shock to see her car there, in one piece, not a scratch on the paint. Ben says they've been in an accident, but she has no recollection of it.

Inside the house, she finds signs of Matt's presence: cold beer in the fridge, dirty socks on the bathroom floor. But the living room is clutter-free, immaculate, like those rooms you see in style magazines. Her boyfriend himself is mysteriously absent, however, so she takes the car and goes by his place. It's locked up; when she uses her key, she discovers it's bare of furniture as well.

What on Earth...?

Fear grips her: did Matt *die* in the accident? Is that why his apartment is empty, and why he never visited her in the hospital?

But, no. Even as she thinks it, she rejects the idea. If Matt has died, someone would've told her, wouldn't they? Ben, at the least. Ben likes Matt, if perhaps not as much as he liked—. But there her mind draws a blank, and she can't remember which of her boyfriends it was that Ben liked better than Matt.

She goes to the police, to file a missing persons report for Matt, but when they ask her how long he's been missing, she has no answer. She thinks back to the last time she saw him: on the couch, watching the game, and—and then there's nothing. Nothing until she wakes up in a hospital several counties over. The police woman gives her a rueful look, as if Lisa is wasting her time, and Lisa mumbles an apology, even though she has no idea what for, and flees the precinct.

Arriving home again, she finds the insurance statements for the hospital bills in the mailbox. She's about to file them away with the rest of her papers when a word jumps off the page at her: *stab wound*.

She blinks, makes sure that the address is correct, checks the name, her date of birth. It's definitely all her information, so she knows there's not been a mix-up, that they haven't sent her a letter meant for someone else. But, *stab wound?*

She puts down the statements, goes to her bedroom and chucks her clothes. Standing in front of the mirror, she looks herself over. At last, she discovers a tiny spot on her right flank that she doesn't remember getting, and that may or may not be a scar. The mark is too faded to tell, though—and anyway, it's too small to have landed her in the hospital, so she dismisses it. Perhaps, with a chunk of her memory gone, so is the recollection where she got that mark.

Short-term memory loss isn't unheard of in head injuries, of course. She knows that. She's just not convinced that's what happened to her. If she hit her head badly enough in the crash to be out for days and lose her memory, shouldn't there have been a wound? Cuts, bruises, stitches, *something?* But she's sure there wasn't anything like that: she checked herself in the small compact mirror in her purse after waking up.

Downstairs, she makes a coffee and sits at the kitchen table, mulling over the puzzle pieces that don't fit together, no matter how she looks at them. Ben's phone's lying on the table, battery icon blinking, almost out of power; he must've forgotten to charge it after the accident. She reaches for it, planning to take it upstairs so he can plug it in. As she snatches at it, she accidentally hits a button and the display flares alight. *Last dialed: Dean.*

She freezes in mid-motion, half up out of her chair. Dean? Why does the name sound so familiar? Then she remembers: green eyes, freckles, handsome. But dog-tired and wearied, as if he's been carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders. The man who says he hit them.

Can it be the same Dean that Ben has called? It makes no sense, but—.

She walks upstairs, holding the phone in one hand, and knocks on her son's door. "Ben?"

"It's open."

She goes in. Ben's lying on the bed, headphones in. She can hear the tinny squeak of the music from where she stands. "Talk to you for a sec?"

He nods, sits up, removes the small plugs from his ears.

"The accident...?" she starts. Ben's expression turns guarded as soon as she mentions the crash. "Where were we going? Was anyone with us? Was it Matt?"

Ben's gaze shifts away from her, guiltily, and she frowns. "Ben?"

"I—I'm not sure." His voice is a whisper, as if he's afraid she'll be mad.

She sits on the bed next to him. "What do you mean? You remember what happened, don't you?"

He shakes his head, still not looking at her.

"But *you* told me we were in an accident. How...?"

He finally looks up, eyes round and bashful. "That man told me that's what happened to us."

"Who? What man? One of the doctors?" *Dean?*

Ben shakes his head. "The one in the dirty rain coat."

She has no idea who he's talking about and changes tack. "Who's Dean?"

Some of the uncertainty leaves her son's eyes and he sits a little straighter. This is a question he can answer. "The man who hit us." It's not quite the answer she expects, but she doesn't push: Ben looks ready to bolt and she has a nagging suspicion he knows as much as she does.

"Here." She offers him the phone, and he takes it. "You left this downstairs."

He nods his thanks, and she gets up, leaving Ben to his music and his comic books. She heads straight back down and goes to dig her own phone from her purse. Hands shaking a little, she browses through the address book. She doesn't have to scroll far. There he is, under D: Dean. She's only half-surprised to find him there.

She ponders the number in the display. It's unfamiliar but... does it matter? She's alive; Ben's alive; they have each other. That's really all that matters, isn't it?

Before she can change her mind, she hits dial. The phone rings once, twice. It's picked up on the third ring and a gruff voice barks into her ear, "Yeah?"

She closes her eyes, breathes deeply. She needs to know. "Dean? It's Lisa...."

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