

Threads of Fate

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About two young men who just... meet.

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Eighteen-year-old Brian Thatcher looked down at the food line nervously. He'd taken this new lunch job at Mayfield High School because he thought he could handle what the students would throw at him. He looked up at the oncoming crowd as he realized that he wasn't so sure now. Maria, one of the more expert lunch servers, smiled at Brian as she said, "Don't worry, you'll get used to it."

The next forty-five minutes were hell as Brian took orders, put the food together, and served it to each and every student. Many of the students, however, tried their hardest to give Brian a hard time. Comments such as, "Could you put more fries on?", "Could you leave off a little bit of spinach?", and "Can I have just one leaf of salad?" plagued Brian's ears. Brian did his hardest to keep up, and finally sighed in relief when the madness died down. The rest period was next, where he would serve stragglers who were either late getting to lunch, had time to kill before their next class, or wanted a bite to eat before going home for some reason or another. Brian finally collapsed as the final bell rang, signaling the end of rest period, and began closing up the line.

"Wait! Wait for me, please!"

Brian looked up. The young man rushed up to the lunch line, breathless from his apparent sprint to the lunch line. He was slender, a head shorter than Brian, with tousled hair sporting golden highlights. His green eyes scanned up and down the line nervously, then look up at Brian. "Is it too late for me to order some fries, please?"

Brian took no time serving the young man his fries. As he did so, the young man kept staring at him. "You know, I haven't seen you around here before. Are you new?"

Brian nodded. "Yeah, it's my first day. Kinda nervous about it."

The young man shrugged. "You'll get used to it, I guess." He extended out a hand. "I'm Jake. Jake O'Connell." He withdrew his hand as he realized Brian still had on the plastic gloves which were used to handle food.

"Brian Thatcher."

"Didn't you go to school here last year?"

"Yeah, I graduated in June."

"You're the one who they say has a voice of gold in choir, aren't you?"

Brian felt a little flustered at that. "Yeah, I guess. I'd rather stick to my artwork, though."

Jake's eyebrow arched at this. "You draw? I can't really draw, myself. I'd like to try it someday."

Brian shrugged. "It's not so bad, it just takes practice."

The bell rang again and Jake's eyes widened. "Shoot! They're gonna lock down the doors on me! I gotta get outta here. It was nice talking to you!" He rushed down the line, paid for the fries, and took off running yet again.

"Hey, Brian!" Maria yelled from the back. "You aren't getting paid to stand around and chat all day, you know!"

"Sorry!" Brian yelled back. He got back to cleaning out the food wells.