

Four Times Jensen Ackles Is Cool With Being A Bad Friend

And One Time He Is Not

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I.

When Jensen's nine years old, he isn't exactly the most popular kid in school. Or in his neighborhood. Or in his family, for that matter. But he doesn't care. Jensen's cool with being alone most of the time, because other people just start annoying the hell out of you after some time. You have to share your food with them, spend time with them that you would rather spend watching TV and you have to listen to everything they rant on about. And Jensen's not a good listener. Not at all.

Besides, being alone means that he doesn't have to argue who's the super hero rescuing the pretty girl and who is just the sidekick following along. No, Jensen can always be the super hero, every minute of every day. He can't count the times he already rescued Baba, his favorite teddy bear, from the dangerous monster lurking under his bed.

Being alone is pretty damn awesome.

So Jensen doesn't quite understand why Mike, the weird guy living next door, tries to be friends with him so hard. If Mike thinks that Jensen's going to share Baba with him, then he's got another thing coming, that's for sure.

Mike always walks beside him on their way to school and he insists on walking home with Jensen as well. He wants to sit beside him in the cafeteria or play with him on the schoolyard and that's just not cool. Jensen wants to be at home, alone with Baba. And maybe with his mommy as well, but only if she makes him these delicious cookies again.

"Why do you keep following me around?" Jensen asks one day when they're walking home from school, Mike walking beside him and babbling non-stop without even stopping to catch his breath.

He stops mid-sentence and turns to blink at Jensen. "Why shouldn't I be following you

around? That's what friends do. And we're friends."

And that's just enough.

"No, we're not! Jensen exclaims, possibly louder than it is exactly necessary. "We're not friends and I want to walk and sit and play by myself. So leave me alone."

He sees his family's house appearing down the street, so he picks up speed in the hope of getting rid of Mike eventually. No such luck, of course.

"Why do you want to be alone? It's lame." And there's real curiosity in Mike's voice and somehow, this makes Jensen even angrier.

"It is not lame! It's much better than walking around with you all the time. You're annoying. And you have bad breath."

Jensen thinks he won with that, but Mike just wrinkles his nose. "Everybody has bad breath. The cafeteria food really sucks."

Jensen only huffs quietly and comes to a stop in front of his house. "Whatever. Just leave me alone." He turns and walks up to the front porch, and he's sure he finally got through to Mike, when Jensen hears his voice again.

"Okay. Will you still want to be alone in fifteen minutes or do you think you will be ready to come out and play then?"

Jensen grumbles quietly to himself and slams the door shut behind him, ignoring Mike and his mother's questioning gaze as he stomps up the stairs into his bed room. Damn Mike. Damn school. Damn the world.

He snatches Baba from her usual spot on Jensen's pillow and decides that it's time to play knight in shining armor and damsel in distress again. There's no way he's going to spend his time with Mike. Not ever.

The next day, Mike doesn't show up in front of Jensen's house.

Jensen feels nothing but relieved.

II.

After Mike stops trying, Jensen is able to live his life in peace. At least until he's fourteen and this new kid shows up in school. He's too tall and has stupid hair, but he doesn't talk as much and as loud as the other kids, so Jensen doesn't exactly hate him from the start.

They have biology class together and are assigned lab partners, so it's practically inevitable for Jensen to get to know the boy a bit better. Turns out that the gangly kid's name is Tom and his family moved into town a few weeks ago, but Tom still doesn't really feel at home here. He doesn't like the kids in school because they're too

superficial for him, too shallow and too stupid anyway. Tom says that all they're ever doing is talking about sports and make-up and stuff like that, which is way too lame for Tom to even bother with.

And Jensen doesn't want a friend, he *doesn't*, but he can't help liking Tom.

He's surprisingly cool and Jensen and him get along better than Jensen ever imagined getting along with anybody that's not Baba. They don't talk much because somehow they don't need the chatter to understand each other, and Jensen really likes that. Tom doesn't even make fun of Jensen for still keeping Baba by his side, just starts rummaging through his bag until a big and worn stuffed elephant named Mr. Pinkie is staring back at Jensen.

It all goes to shit a year later, when Jensen is being the worst friend one can possibly be. Tom's a gentle and tolerant person, but one thing that he can't stand is lying, so of course the first thing Jensen does when he sees him on a Sunday afternoon is lie right to his face.

Thing is, Jensen's quite sure he's an asshole, at least that's what most of the people he knows tell him all the time. And Jensen knows from TV shows and movies that assholes are drinking beer and smoking pot, so he figured that this is what he's going to do from now on. It may seem stupid, but it's still the easiest choice Jensen made in a long time, so instead of going to Tom's baseball game, he spends his afternoon with a group of five stoned guys from his school whose names he doesn't even know.

It's a shitty thing to do and Jensen knows it, but Tom doesn't care for sports either, just plays baseball because his father wants him to, so Jensen thinks it shouldn't be such a big deal.

It turns into a big deal by the time he apologizes to Tom for ditching him because he had to do homework and Tom sniffs a bit, wrinkles his nose in a disgusted manner and Jensen just knows that Tom can smell the beer and the pot right off him.

They somehow drift apart after this. Tom's not coming over to his house anymore and Jensen doesn't even bother to call; if Tom doesn't want him as a friend, fine, then Jensen doesn't want him either.

When he sees Tom and Mike standing together in the hallway one day, joking and laughing, Jensen's quite sure that the sting he's feeling in his chest is amusement. It has to be.

III.

When Jensen's in LA, he finds in his roommate another person who desperately wants to be friends with him.

It's just a short period in his life-time of annoying friends: Chris is a nice guy all right, who plays guitar and can sing quite well, so Jensen thinks he could manage to get along with him. They spend some of their nights drinking and jamming together,

which is relaxed and cool enough.

It ends by the time Chris brings his new girlfriend home, Jensen thinks she's called Sally or Shelly or something along those lines. She's pretty and has a nice body, but she seems to be quite smart as well, which is weird considering Chris' usual taste in girls. It has to mean that he really likes the girl, enough for her to stay around and talk about politics and the environment all the time without Chris' head exploding.

So, Jensen knows Chris cares for her. And he knows that he's being a bastard, but he can't change the looks that girl gives him or the really nice shape of her breasts under his fingertips, so they get into bed way faster than Jensen actually expected.

He doesn't want to make a drama of it, doesn't think he needs to, because Chris will just get another room and won't talk to him again, just like Mike and Tom had done. He's prepared for the yelling and threats and curses, even for the fist that flies, so he's mostly okay when he stumbles back to his room, drunk out of his mind.

Chris isn't there, of course, but Baba is, stuffed into a small box that Jensen keeps under his bed. He holds her in his arms for a long time, just sitting on his bed and staring at the wall in front of him, wondering why he always fucks things up and trying not to cry when he realizes that Baba is technically the only friend that stayed with him for longer than a year. Not even Tom managed that.

But it's okay. Jensen's cool with being alone. He always was.

IV.

When Jensen turns twenty-six, he has basically stopped trying to be nice to anybody. Of course he's polite and tries to get along with most people on set, but that's only because he has to. Supernatural is the only TV show he ever starred in where his character doesn't die in the same episode he appears, so he's grateful enough to try not to destroy everything this time.

He keeps everybody at a safe distance, doing the expected small talk and friendly smiles, but most of the time, he keeps to himself.

It doesn't stop Jared from trying to get through to him again and again, but Jensen knows better than to give in. He'll just keep on ignoring Jared's efforts at making friends with him and at some point the kid will learn his lesson and give up. Easy as that.

Jensen forgets to think of the Jared-factor.

He finds himself being forced to watch a stupid football game every so often, or he's dragged along into some bar and filled up with alcohol until he's easy enough to actually laugh at Jared's lame jokes. Jensen avoids to think of how he is enjoying the time he spends with Jared, of course.

They're lounging in the living room, Jared's crazy dogs making a mess of Jensen's

sneakers, when he finally snaps.

"Dude, stop it," he says suddenly, eyes still fixed on the TV screen in front of him, and he feels Jared's confused gaze on him the minute he turns his head.

"Huh?"

"Stop trying to be friends with me," Jensen says matter-of-factly and turns to look Jared in the eyes. "Seriously. Stop it."

But Jared doesn't look convinced at all. He just scrunches up his forehead in a really weird way and asks, "Why should I? Do I stink or have some diseases I don't know about?"

"It's not that," Jensen sighs, suddenly feeling awkward in his own skin, as he searches for words to explain his inability of keeping a friend longer than a year. "I suck at being friends. I'm seriously the worst friend you could possibly imagine. I'll grow tired of you or ditch you for a beer and a slice of pizza, hell, probably just for a beer anyway. And it could happen that I'll try to make out with your girlfriend and then you'll hate me, which will make working together really awkward. So, just.. stop it. Okay?"

Jared is silent for a while, just staring at Jensen like he's grown a third arm, and Jensen hopes he got through to him. But then Jared only shrugs.

"No."

Jensen turns to look at him again and quirks an eyebrow. "'No?'" he repeats disbelievingly and Jared just shrugs again.

"Of course I won't stop trying to be friends with you. Anybody grows tired of me because I'm too loud, I'm used to it. If you want a beer, you could just drag me along. And no offense to your prettiness and all, but you're really not Sandy's type, so we can scratch the part about you trying to make out with my girlfriend. See, it's not that complicated. Now stop bitching."

And with that Jared simply turns away and keeps on watching the game, leaving Jensen with his mouth gaping open like a fish out of water. He snaps out of it eventually, but it's still a little slow when he turns back to the TV screen himself.

He knows it's a stupid thing to hope, but maybe Jared's not like the other ones. Maybe he's really going to be okay with Jensen being a bad friend. Maybe everything's going to be okay between them.

V.

Of course there's nothing okay between them. Jared may think so, because they never had a real fight and they're still friends even after four years, which breaks every record Jensen can even think of, but not everything is right. Not from Jensen's side anyway.

Jensen's used to being alone because he scares people off; he doesn't know how to handle someone who stays around for so long. He feels like he's even a worse friend to Jared than he was to Mike, Tom or Chris, because he just isn't able to be there when Jared really needs him.

Jared's insecure about his acting skills - Jensen makes a show of his own. Jared's emo-ing because he thinks the fans like Dean more than Sam - Jensen just laughs and starts bragging about his hotness. Jared's new movie is a disaster - Jensen just tells him to get his act together, he's not the only one with a new movie that is shit.

When Jared and Sandy break up, Jensen really fucks up.

He doesn't know how to handle such a situation, never had to deal with a heartbroken friend before, so he's at a complete loss. And because he doesn't know what to do, he figures it's for the best if he just stays away from Jared for the time being.

Which is the stupidest thing to do, because Jared is hurting and alone and Jensen just keeps to himself again instead of being there for him. Maybe he should take him out for a beer, get his huge ass drunk enough that he will take some stripper home or whatever, anything that will take his mind off Sandy for a few hours.

Instead of this, Jensen moves in with him. He doesn't know why he agrees exactly, but Jared looks lost and lonely when he asks him, so Jensen says yes. It's the most simple thing to do.

Later Jared tells him that he's grateful for the company, because he would hate being alone now, but Jensen knows that this is bullshit. He knows that Jared's only trying to be nice because it's not Jared's thing to shout right into Jensen's face what a shitty friend he really is.

But Jensen's going to change that. He's tired of scaring off everyone who tries to be friends with him and Jared managed to endure him for four years; Jensen's not going to give that up.

He feels a bit stupid standing there in Jared's doorway, but Jared's lying on his bed, back to him and he's so silent and still that Jensen knows he's thinking about Sandy and everything he lost. That's why he doesn't even hesitate to crawl in behind Jared, just lifts the covers up and lays down facing Jared's back. He feels his friend tense for the shortest of moments, then he seems to understand that it's just Jensen, so he relaxes again.

Jensen can't help the relieved smile from appearing on his lips as he scoots a bit closer, close enough for Jared to feel his warm breath on his neck. "I know I was a shitty friend and you don't need to deny it," he whispers, a bit insecure still, but he knows what he wants to say. "But I'm sorry. You're the first one who stayed with me for over a year, I'm not used to dealing with major problems. So I thought I'd introduce you to someone who's much better at this stuff than I am."

Jensen's never felt more stupid in his life as he feels in the moment he presses Baba to Jared's back, but he's helpless and clueless at the same time, and it may sound silly, but Baba is the biggest gift he can give to Jared right now. If this doesn't cheer his friend up, then Jensen doesn't know what to do anymore.

Jared turns slowly around, looking tired as if he hadn't slept right in months, and opens his mouth to say something, but stops when he sees the teddy bear that's held right under his nose: an ear and an eye are missing, the fur is worn and a bit coarse, but otherwise you can see that the teddy was handled with care and love.

Jared stares at Jensen as if he doesn't know whether to laugh or call a doctor on him, and Jensen starts to feel like he's the biggest fool on earth, but then Jared smiles and takes Baba out of Jensen's hands. "Thanks," he says quietly, still smiling without a hint of a smirk around the edges.

They just lie there for a while, bodies so close they're almost touching, before Jared shuffles even closer, enough to wrap an arm around Jensen, Baba lying peacefully between them. "You know, I think you're doing pretty fine with this whole friends-thing," Jared says, smirk now evident in his voice but Jensen can barely hear it over the sound of his own heartbeat.

He's quite sure that if he opens his mouth to speak that something completely stupid and embarrassing will come out, something along the lines of *I'd really like to kiss you now* which would end badly, so he just keeps his mouth shut and lies there with Jared's arm around him, his too big hand stroking soothing circles along his back, as if Jensen's the one who needs to be comforted. He likes it quite fine, though, so he closes his eyes and lets Jared's even breathing lull him to sleep.

Maybe Jared's right. Maybe Jensen isn't so bad at being friends with someone as he thought he was.

He likes that thought.

The End.