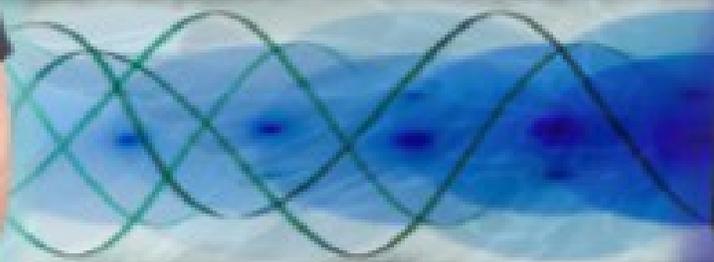


Resonance

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Title: Resonance

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Summary: After Dean and Castiel are hit by the force of a witch's powers gone wrong, Dean is able to hear Cas making odd noises, and he sees things he probably shouldn't be seeing. Dean learns angels communicate in a way humans never could, and that Castiel's trueform is more than Dean could've imagined.

Chapter 1: Resonance

Chirp “Dean, are you okay?” a familiar voice says.

Dean opens his eyes, looking up at familiar blue eyes, and also not-so-familiar colors swirling in his peripheral vision.

“Ugh,” Dean groans, rubbing his eyes and sitting up. He opens his eyes again, and it's only years and years of training and time in Hell that keep him from screaming when he sees it.

“Are you okay?” *Chirp, click* Castiel says again.

At least that's what Dean heard. “I think I hit my head,” Dean says, watching as colors shimmer in and out of his field of vision. He can't pinpoint them, because every time he tries, they're not where he's focused. Instead they're just off to the side in his peripheral vision.

Grunt, hiss “Does your head hurt?” Cas asks, concern in his tone of voice.

“Uhm, it hurts a little, but I'll be fine,” Dean lies. His head doesn't hurt, but he wants to blame any odd behavior on a concussion when Cas sees him trying to watch the shimmers.

Hiss “Is anything broken?” Cas asks, running his fingers over Dean's scalp.

Dean tries to wave Cas' hands away, but when Cas is concerned over an injury, there's no stopping him, so Dean gives up.

“I don't feel anything moving funny, so nothing's broken. I'm fine, Cas,” Dean reassures him with a smile.

Hnnn “Let me help you up,” Castiel says, then holds out his hand, which has a vague shimmering shadow around it.

Dean stares at Cas' hand for a moment. Now that Cas' hand is still, the shimmer is gone, and Dean's chest tightens. It must be a concussion and he's got trailing. Shit. If he tells Cas, he'll be stuck on concussion watch for the next 24 hours. Concussion watch sucks, and it also means no sex. Because Cas is ridiculous like that.

Chirp, uhn “Dean?” Cas says, concern creeping into his tone again.

Dean looks up at Cas and sees that Cas' irides are flecked with yellow bits of what can only be described as light. They don't move. It's as if someone took little slivers of the sun and dusted Castiel's iris with them.

Dean smiles. “I'm okay,” he says, then grabs Cas' hand, the two of them getting him upright. When Dean's head doesn't spin once he's standing, he knows it isn't a concussion. “So, uh, what happened?”

Cas looks around the room, which is now destroyed, Dean sees. There's an odd green hue to the entire room. The walls and every surface in the room almost appear to be glowing green, and Dean chuckles.

“Looks like we got transported to Oa,” Dean says, scuffing the floor with his shoe and watching as the green haze slides around his shoe.

Snick “Oa?” Cas asks, tilting his head to the side.

“Nevermind,” Dean says, walking over to the overturned table.

He really should say something about the noises he's hearing. There's something natural about them, and that in and of itself should be alarming, but he's keeping his cool.

“The witch was working with powerful dark magics,” Cas says, and it sounds as if he's walking over to the window. “When we walked in, something happened. I don't know why her power fluctuated and imploded *hnnn* but there may have been something in this room warding her from angels.”

“And it didn't work quite right because you're not all full up on grace?” Dean asks, running his finger over a broken lamp resting against an overturned chair. The green haze slithers around his finger.

Hiss “I would assume so,” Cas says.

Dean really doesn't know what to think of the noises he's hearing, and it's freaking him out. He's really hoping there was something in the room that's messing with him a little, and that it'll go away soon.

Snick “I felt a large surge of power as we walked over the property *snick* line, then again when we came up the stairs,” Cas says, and Dean knows Cas is working through things in his head, trying to figure out what happened.

“You weren't hurt, were you?” Dean asks, turning around as he realizes he never asked.

Hnnn, uhn “No, I'm fine,” he replies.

The more Dean walks around the destroyed room, the more he realizes the noises aren't coming from just anywhere. They're coming from Cas.

Dean walks over to the spot where the witch had set up an alter and was working on something. “Is she just gone?” he asks, a little amazed that it seemed she just poofed out of existence.

Bleat “It appears so,” Cas says, and now that he's turned toward Dean, Dean sees a bit of a smirk on Cas' lips. “Along with all her paraphernalia.”

Dean snorts. “Paraphernalia,” he says, chuckling. “That always sounds dirty.”

Cuh “As you've mentioned before,” Cas says, though Dean can tell Cas is amused by it.

Dean's phone vibrates in his pocket and he pulls it out. "Sam wants to know if we lived," he informs Cas. "I'm gonna tell him we'll be back to the motel in about an hour."

Eh, whistle "Ask Sam to get us dinner from the restaurant across the street," Cas says. "We'll *uhn* perform a quick search of the house for anything else we need to take care of, then we can leave."

Dean freezes. That was quite a different noise at the beginning of what Cas had said. It sounded different than anything from Cas so far. Dean forms a quick theory in his head, one that he'd never share with anyone else because it sounds insane, but he's got a head injury, damn it. He decides he needs to test his theory.

"I'll tell Sam we're bringing home a power ring," Dean says, looking down at his phone, but keeping Cas in his peripheral vision to see his reaction.

Snick "Why would we do that?" Cas asks, his head tilting.

Bingo. Cas made the same noise both times Dean made pop culture references that went over Cas' head. Dean feels a sense of accomplishment, followed by a short bout of freaking out. He decides to ignore it. Okay, so Cas is making noises Dean's never heard outside the animal kingdom. That's okay. He's still not panicking.

"No reason, Cas," Dean says, sending his text to Sam, adding that he wants Sam to get the same meal Cas had last night because Cas really, really liked it. "Let's sweep the house and get outta here."

Coo "I'll sweep this floor," Cas announces.

"Okay," Dean says, then heads out of the room.

Dean checks out all the first-floor rooms, including the kitchen. He doesn't find anything of interest, which doesn't seem all that odd. If you want to fit in with the neighbors and have people over for dinner, you don't want your hex bags, talismans, and alter sitting out where company can see them.

Trill, uhn "Dean!" Cas calls.

"Yeah?" Dean answers, flinching from the loud noise in the very quiet house.

Uhn "I'm done," Cas informs him as he walks into the kitchen.

"Let's go," he says, smiling at Cas and smacking Cas' ass as he walks by on his way to the front door.

Bleat, hmn

Dean chuckles, then considers the possibility that something in the house affected Cas instead of him. There was a witch implosion. That doesn't happen all that often, though Dean wishes it would happen every time they had to deal with a witch. It was messy, but not that bad, and nobody got hurt.

He's concerned over the noises, but not enough to mention anything to Cas. Cas seems okay, and Dean

will keep an eye on him just in case it's Cas that got hit by something and not Dean.

*

By the time they get to the motel, Dean's having a hard time not laughing hysterically. Cas is usually quiet when they're in the car, but this time there was near constant noise coming from him. It wasn't loud like when Cas was looking for Dean and found him in the kitchen. It's soft and subtle, and it's totally adorable.

Dean tries to categorize the noises, because if animals make certain noises for certain reasons, surely Cas is doing the same, right?

When Dean had started the car and Cas settled down in his seat, Dean heard *mmm.* When Dean reached over to grab a hold of Cas' left hand, like he usually does when they're going to be in the car for more than just a few minutes, Dean heard *uhn, mmm.*

When Dean told a joke, which was really stupid, but he'd told it because he knew it would make Cas laugh, Dean heard *cuh.* When Dean grumbled about another car cutting them off in traffic, Dean heard *grrr.*

And the best one yet was when Dean turned and smiled at Cas, that smile that Dean just knows melts Cas' heart because Dean throws all his affection into it, Dean heard *purr, uhn.*

As he walks through the motel room door, Dean smells dinner waiting for them, and he sees Sam sitting at the table, pulling the food containers out of the bag.

Eh, whistle, hnm, eh

Dean freezes for a moment, not having heard a full string of noises that long out of Cas as of yet. He looks at Sam, but Sam is still getting their food out of the bags. Okay, so either Dean's the only one that can hear the noises or the noises are all in Dean's head to begin with. Awesome.

“Great timing,” Sam says with a smile. “I just got back with the food, so it's hot.”

Eh, whistle, hnm

Dean snorts, and when Sam looks up at him with a raised eyebrow, Dean waves it off and sits down. “I'm starving! Let's eat,” he says, grabbing a plastic fork and stabbing at his beef tips in gravy.

Mmm, eh “Thank you, Sam,” Cas says, sitting down and picking up a fork.

“No problem,” Sam says, opening up his can of flavored tea.

Squeak, eh “You ordered the Reuben on Texas toast,” Cas says happily after opening his container.

“Yeah,” Sam says, grinning at Cas. “You seemed to really like it, so Dean asked me to get it for you again.”

Squeak, mmm, uhn

Dean smiles at Cas, who is looking at him with that adorable mix of surprise and affection. Cas brushes his fingers against Dean's right leg.

“Thank you,” Cas says. *Mmm, uhn*

Dean shoves a forkful of beef tips and gravy into his mouth and winks at Cas. Dean's always been good at the little things. He knows it's the little things that make or break a relationship, even if he's never had an overly long-term relationship.

He wants this one to last. He knows he needs to treat Cas right. If that means doing little things like noticing when Cas enjoys a meal and getting it for him again, Dean's sure as hell going to do it.

“So Dean told me the witch did an implosion thing,” Sam says, prodding Cas for info.

Cuh “Yes. She did,” Cas says. “I felt power when we arrived, and even stronger power as we entered the room. Something must have gone wrong, because once both Dean and I were in the room with her, she imploded, sending out a wave of power, knocking us both down to the floor. When I sat up, her alter was destroyed, her paraphernalia had vanished, and the magics were disintegrating into the surfaces of the room.”

“Paraphernalia,” Dean mumbles through a mouthful of food.

Cuh, uhn “Dean likes that word,” Cas says to Sam.

“Yeah, I know,” Sam says, rolling his eyes.

“So wait,” Dean says. “The green shit was the magic disintegrating?”

“Yes,” Cas says. *Snick* “I didn't think you'd be able to see it, but it must have been strong enough to be visible to human eyes.” *mmm*

Dean feels his stomach clench. If the noises he's been hearing out of Cas weren't enough to tell him something was up, the fact that he was able to see dark magic that he shouldn't have been able to see definitely was.

*

“I'm gonna shower,” Dean says after they've finished dinner and cleaned up. “Care to join me?” he asks Cas with a grin.

Coo, uhn Castiel smiles as he heads toward Dean, already pulling his clothes off as he walks through the room.

“I'm gonna check out the Wi-Fi at the bar next door,” Sam says as he grabs his laptop.

Sam's an awesome brother. They live in motel rooms, and Sam could be teasing Dean mercilessly over his relationship with Cas, but he doesn't. And Sam's great about it. He happily gives them time alone. Dean knows Sam's thrilled about it, and Dean's grateful Sam doesn't get all mushy about it, which Sam could easily do.

Dean turns the water on, getting the temperature right, and by the time he turns around to get his clothes off, Cas is naked. As Dean undresses he hears a rumbling noise come from Cas. It's not a purr, not a growl. It's definitely a rumbling.

Rumble, uhn, rumble

Dean slows down as he reaches for his jeans. He slowly opens the buttons on his jeans, watching Cas' eyes flit down and focus on Dean's hands.

Rumble, mmm, rumble

He makes a show out of it, turning so Cas sees a side profile of him, slowly pushing his jeans and underwear down, then bending over and turning more so Cas gets a good view of his ass.

Squeak

Dean's trying really hard not to laugh. It's just so fucking adorable. He's already recognizing the noises and is matching up some of them with emotions and ideas he guesses fit.

Cas hasn't made the eh noise since Sam left, and he didn't make it in the car. He's fairly sure it's a noise associated with Sam now.

Cas also hasn't made the chirping noise since he was concerned over Dean's injuries in the witch's house. Dean doesn't know if that noise is associated with being scared or a noise of concern, but it's in that general area.

He'd figured out back at the house that *snick* meant Cas was confused about something, and that the coughing noise came whenever Cas probably would have laughed had he been human.

The rumbling is new, and Dean really hopes it's because Cas is turned on, because it's a constant noise now, and Cas even continues the noise when he speaks. Dean assumes the noises are coming from someplace other than Cas' mouth or else he wouldn't be able to talk when he makes them.

Dean steps out of his pants and underwear, then gets into the shower, pulling Cas in with him. They get under the spray of water, and Dean wraps his arms around Cas' waist.

Mmm, uhn Castiel leans in and kisses Dean. *Rumble, mmm, rumble*

As soon as Cas deepens the kiss, Dean forgets about the noises ever being funny. The rumble coming from Cas gets a little louder and starts to take on a staccato effect. Dean assumes that's a good thing because Cas' dick is hard and poking into him, Cas' arms are pulling him in closer, and his tongue is pushing into Dean's mouth.

Dean moans into the kiss, and he's surprised when Cas makes a similar noise of *mmm.* He's heard it before, and suddenly Dean wonders if the noises he makes mean something to Cas other than the obvious. What if this whole time he and Sam have been around the angel, the noises they've made every day have meaning like words?

The thought thrills Dean. He wants to ask, but he doesn't know if this is something he's supposed to be hearing. He doesn't want to upset Cas, and he doesn't want this blown out of proportion. He also doesn't want it fixed. He's loving this.

Cas' rumbling stutters when Dean wraps his hand around Cas' dick. He reaches around behind Cas with his other hand and grabs Cas' ass cheek. Cas pulls back from the kiss, his eyes dark with arousal and those beautiful flecks of sunlight shining.

Dean hears Cas grab the tube of lube from the shelf in the shower and flick it open. He grins at Cas and pokes Cas with his own very hard dick.

“Fuck me, Cas,” Dean says, knowing Cas likes dirty talk. “Fuck me so hard I come all over the shower tiles, then make me lick it up.”

Mmm, uhn, rumble Cas' eyes fall closed for a moment as he lets the words sink in.

Cas turns them both, pushing Dean face first against the wall of the shower, wrapping his left arm around Dean's waist to hold onto him. He shoves a slick finger inside Dean, making Dean moan happily.

Cas nuzzles Dean's neck. *Dook*

Another new noise. Dean has no idea what it means, but Cas is very gently mouthing and kissing at his neck as he pushes a second finger inside him.

“C'mon, Cas. I'm ready. Fuck me. Please fuck me,” Dean says, spreading his legs and pushing his ass out at Cas.

The rumble gets louder than ever and Cas pulls his fingers out of Dean. Then Dean feels Cas' hard cock pushing in. He groans and pushes back, trying to get Cas in faster.

Once Cas has bottomed out, he wraps his other arm around Dean, this one around Dean's upper chest so he can play with Dean's nipple.

Rumble, uhn, mmm

Dean doesn't know why, but the noises seem to be doing something for him. Now that Dean's sure it's a language all by itself, and now that he's understanding a few of them, he's seeing a side of Cas he's never seen before. He wants more. He feels it inside him in a way he doesn't think is normal, but he doesn't care. He needs more.

“Love you so much, Cas,” Dean breathes as Cas fucks him.

Dook, uhn “Love you, Dean,” Cas says, then continues nibbling and kissing Dean's neck and shoulder.

Dean's chest tightens, and he feels a swell of happiness and contentment. Not only because of the words Cas just said, but because he really thinks Cas just translated his own noises for Dean. Dean doesn't think Cas knows he can hear them, but Dean's heard the *uhn* enough that he's certain it has something to do with him, and now that Cas has said his name just after using that noise, Dean's certain it's his name or at least it refers to him.

Dean gasps, his chest so tight that he wonders if Cas will think he's upset. He's not upset. This is opening up another world to him. Dean's brain spins with information he's learned over his lifetime. If animals communicate by noises like this, why can't angels?

He knows it's not audible to Sam, and Cas did say they shared a profound bond. Dean feels a thrill of excitement as he realizes whatever happened when they stepped into that room took everything to the next level.

The lights and shimmering he saw had to be a small glimpse of Castiel's true form. The noises have to be a part of how Cas communicates in his true form. The fact that Dean can see that, can hear that has to mean something huge.

He thinks of the handprint. The bond Cas has mentioned. Cas' diminishing grace. The flash of power in the room that only happened when the both of them were next to each other. The magics disintegrating all over the room after the implosion.

They're linked. They're bonded. Whatever it was in that room, it's boosted whatever it is they already had, and the power behind it was enough to destroy a room, yet the two of them were fine. He doesn't know if Cas protected them somehow, but he thinks maybe it never would've hurt them in the first place, because it bound them in a way that they never would've been unless something immensely powerful had a hand in it.

“Cas, fuck, Cas! Fuck me!” Dean yells, feeling a swell of emotion and excitement that Cas has to be able to feel.

“Dean,” Cas says into Dean's skin. *Dook*

It's love. He's fucking telling Dean he loves him in a language no other humans have ever heard. Dean is at once humbled and turned on, filled with so much love that he feels as if he'll burst. This is better than the Enochian Cas has recited poetry in. This is Cas' true self speaking to him.

Dean doesn't care if the noises sound like an animal. No way in hell would he ever find them funny ever again.

The rumbling turns into a whine, and Cas starts fucking him faster and harder. Dean pushes back in time with Cas' thrusts, using his hands on the tile to give him more power to his movements.

“Cas! Cas! Oh, fuck, Cas! Cas!” Dean screams, his body tensing as he comes all over the wall of the shower.

Squeak, uhn, wheek

“Cas,” Dean breathes, letting his head rest on the tile, looking down at his come dripping down the tiles, realizing he just came without either of them ever touching his dick. “Mmm, yeah, come for me, Cas,” he moans.

“Dean,” Cas says, his voice scratchy and deeper than normal. *Mmm, uhn*

“C'mon, Cas. Come inside me. Wanna feel it leaking outta me,” Dean groans.

“Oh! D-Dean!” Cas yells. *Uhn*

The noise is so loud that Dean hears the window in the bathroom rattle, but it doesn't hurt his ears. Dean realizes he's heard windows and glass rattling before when they've had sex, but he's always assumed it was Cas' power that was doing it. He never knew it was Cas' true voice causing it as he made noises for Dean, telling him he loved him, calling his name in a voice Dean never heard before.

He feels Cas coming inside him, Cas slamming into him with his arms wrapped tightly around Dean's chest.

Uhn, dook

“Yeah, Cas, yeah,” Dean moans, smiling as he feels Cas slowing down, resting his head on Dean's shoulder.

Cas kisses Dean's skin, his head still resting on Dean, his hands sliding over Dean's body, and a purring sound coming from deep within him.

Dean decides then and there that he wants to find out what every noise means. He wants to hear every single one of them. He wants to make Cas scream his name in his own language and purr. He wants to learn what noises mean Cas is upset so he can see what's wrong. He wants to learn what sound Cas makes when he's scared, so he can kill anything that threatens Cas.

He wants to tease the shit outta Sam because Cas' noise for Sam sounds a little whiny.

*

Snuffle, uhn

Dean wakes up with a smile on his face. He knows one of those noises means his name. He's not quite sure what the other one means, but considering each time Cas has made that noise, he's been kissing and nuzzling at Dean, Dean decides to call it his snuggling noise.

“Hey, Cas,” Dean says, his voice deep and scratchy from a good night's rest.

Eh, wheek “Sam left us alone again,” Cas says, wrapping his arms around Dean from behind.

Rumble

Dean chuckles. He decides the rumbling has to mean that Cas is sexually aroused. It didn't start until Cas mentioned that Sam was gone, and last night in the shower it didn't start until they were definitely about to have sex.

“My brother's awesome like that,” Dean says.

Hic, eh “He is,” Cas says.

Another new noise. It has something to do with Sam because he used Sam's noise, and Dean assumes it's good because he Sam left for them to have time together. Could it be appreciation? Maybe it's affection.

Wheek, uhn “I'd like to fuck you,” Cas says. *Rumble*

“Mmm, yeah, Cas,” Dean says, purposely moaning at Cas. He's not sure, but he thinks the moan has something to do with happiness or being comfortable.

Wheek, rumble “Yes,” Cas says, moving so fast that Dean can't follow.

One second Dean's the little spoon, and the next instant he's on his back with a very horny Castiel looking down at him, the flecks of light in his irides shining. Dean gets lost in Cas' eyes for a moment. He smiles up at Cas when he realizes Cas is just watching him back.

Mmm, uhn “You're beautiful,” Cas says softly.

Dean usually has a hard time accepting compliments, and he kind of loves how Cas sneaks them in while they're close like this because Dean's defenses are down.

Dook, uhn

“I love you too, Cas,” Dean says, blurting it out before he thinks about it, then hoping Cas thinks it's just a spontaneous declaration of love instead of an answer to Cas' noises.

Cas just smiles down at Dean. *Purr*

“Got lube?” Dean asks, raising one eyebrow.

Rumble Cas smirks as he shoves a lubed finger inside Dean.

“I take it that's a yes on the lube,” Dean says, spreading his legs more, moaning as Cas quickly adds a second finger.

Cas leans down and kisses Dean, pushing a third finger into him. *Uhn, snuffle*

Dean loves kissing Cas. Cas puts his all into a kiss, even when he's doing other things to Dean's body. He enjoys feeling like the center of Cas' universe, which is how Cas treats him when they're together.

Dean's always treated his sexual partners well, but that hasn't always been reciprocal. Not that people have treated Dean like shit, but he's never had someone put their all into him like this.

Uhn, rumble Cas pulls his finger out and pushes his cock inside Dean.

Dean's surprised by the urgency with which Cas pushes into him, but he likes it. He gasps and wraps his legs around Cas, hanging on for the ride, because he knows Cas is going to fuck him hard and fast.

Wheek, mmm Cas wraps his arms around Dean, his body blanketing Dean as he fucks him so Dean's dick gets friction as they move.

“Mmm, yeah, Cas,” Dean says, wrapping his own arms around Cas and kissing Cas' left temple. “C'mon, fuck me. Mmm.”

Snuffle, wheek “I'd like to make you come without either of us touching your cock again,” Cas says. “It doesn't have to be now, but I enjoyed when that happened in the shower, and I'd like to do it again.” *Mmm, purr*

Dean chuckles. “I enjoyed it a lot myself. Does getting off on rubbing my cock all over your stomach count as touching?” he asks, writhing beneath Cas to try and get even more friction.

“Mmmyes,” Cas says, and Dean is surprised that the word and Cas' noise melded together the way they did.

Dean hasn't heard the noises doing that before. Come to think of it, Cas' voice sounded different when he said yes. It was deeper. No, not deeper. It was if it was in surround sound. Everywhere around him and even inside of him.

His body tenses as he realizes the only other time he's felt that sensation was when he was in the gas station just after crawling out of his own grave. It's Cas' true voice, and it wasn't overwhelming. It was subtle, but it was definitely the same sensation, and it's not hurting his ears.

Dean smiles. He can't help it. He's so fucking happy that he's grinning like an idiot. Cas sits up, a rumbling noise going through the both of them, filling up the room and all of Dean's senses. Dean looks up at Cas and yelps, his eyes wide and his breath catching in his throat.

Cas instantly stops fucking Dean. *Chirp, click, uhn* “Are you okay?” Cas asks.

Dean fully understands both Cas' words and the sounds this time. He knows for a fact the chirp was fear and concern. He completely grasps the entire meaning of the click. It's not just being inquisitive, but there are other emotions in there like some concern, a little bit of alarm, and there's a hint of love in there as well.

And Dean knows the real meaning of what he thought was his name. It's not simply his name, although

that's a part of it.

Uhn encompasses mate, lover, soul bond, and owner of Castiel's emotional and figurative heart, and it's all tied to the root meaning of his real name, which is valley, and it even includes more subtle hints of hunter, protector, and older brother as if those swirl around his name, yet are connected.

Without even hearing it again, Dean knows *eh* means so much more than Sam's name. It's darkness, triumphant light, warrior, brother, loved one, knowledge, balance, seeker, wanderer, strength, brother-in-arms, and a kind of love that encompasses everything but a sexual aspect.

Dean's speechless. He knows Cas is concerned, but he can't tell him why he's so blown away. He can't tell him it's because he truly understands what Cas is saying now, and he certainly can't tell him it's because he can see Cas' wings.

They're so beautiful that Dean's eyes well up with tears. He's never seen anything so breathtaking, so amazing, so strong. He never wants to stop looking at them.

Grunt, uhn, chirp "Breathe," Cas commands in his true voice.

Dean takes in a gulp of air, coughing when his chest stutters with the effort. "Oh, Cas, fuck!" he breathes.

He knows now that *grunt* is a mothering noise. One Cas uses just for Dean, and it's so much more than mothering. It's caring, concern, well-being, healing tinged with love.

Now that Dean is breathing, he's hyperventilating. The wings are swirling about the room, and that isn't even the right term for what they're doing, but Dean can't come up with a better way of describing the fractionated groups of light roving about that are making up Cas' wings.

They scream of power and justice and righteous vengeance, and they're singing of it as well. Dean can hear them. It's the most beautiful thing Dean has ever heard.

They're dark and look like feathers, but at the same time they're light and sound and fire and crackling of ozone, and Dean's mind can't even comprehend how such a thing is possible.

"Humans weren't meant to have this ability," Cas says.

The noises Cas has been making ever since they woke up in the witch's room are no longer there, and Dean immediately misses them. He craves them. He wants them back. He'd do anything to have them.

Cas reaches up, his fingers moving toward Dean's forehead. Dean already knows Cas is going to knock him out.

"No! Wait! Don't take it away!" Dean screams, trying to push Cas' hand away, but he can't, and then all he knows is darkness.

*

Dean wakes up slowly. It's so gradual that he feels like he's pulling himself through mud. He remembers what happened, but it's a gradual remembrance. It doesn't come flooding in. It's not overwhelming.

The memories aren't scattered or out of order. It's just as if they're slowly brightening, a sun coming up over a distant horizon.

He tries to open his eyes, but he can't move. He's not scared. He knows Cas is there. He feels him. He also hears a noise that resonates throughout his body and mind. It's a humming noise, and it means calm and safe and loved and protected.

Dean knows Cas is keeping him in this state of mind. It's for his own protection. Like Cas said, a human wasn't built for this. But Dean isn't a normal human. He wasn't so normal to begin with, but he's died, more than once. He's spent forty years in Hell. He's in love with an angel. He's bound to an angel in a more permanent and tremendous way than he'd ever dreamed.

Cas is in his head, in his heart, in the very cells that make up Dean's body, and Dean can feel him there. He knows what Cas is doing, and he could never express how much he appreciates it. He could never repay Cas for this.

“The flash of power in the witch's house was a mix of dark and light magics, but it also involved the grace of another fallen angel,” Cas says, filling Dean's body with the words he's speaking.

Dean pushes his love and appreciation toward Cas, knowing Cas feels it. He tries to speak, but his body won't cooperate, and his brain doesn't seem to have the ability to speak the way Cas is speaking to him. Cas can read his mind, though, so Dean figures Cas knows.

“The combined powers were too much for the witch to handle. They amassed and pushed her out of existence. You would've been killed had you not been bound to an angel,” Cas explains.

Dean's eyes open, and he thinks he's the one that forced them open, but he's also fairly certain he'd been trying to the whole time to open them and wasn't able to. Cas is lying down next to Dean in the bed. They're face-to-face, and Dean breathes a sigh of relief when he sees the flecks of light in Cas' eyes.

“I didn't realize it at the time, but I would've known had my grace been at full power. It was only when you reacted to seeing my wings that I knew what had happened. I apologize for putting the whammy on you,” Cas says with a grin, knowing Dean will be amused by his choice of words. “If I would've let you continue, your mind would've broken.”

“What did you do?” Dean asks, and he knows his words are slurred, but he hopes it gets the message across to Cas.

“I gave you some of my grace,” Cas replies.

“Cas! You didn't have to—,” Dean starts, but a finger over his lips stops him.

“I'm fine without it, and if it means that much to you that you're able to see and hear these parts of me, then it's worth giving up,” Cas says, running his fingers over Dean's skin.

“You don't have to. I can live without it,” Dean says, concerned for Cas because of his already-dwindling grace. “I mean, I really like it, but I can't take that from you.”

“You didn't take it. I gave it to you of my own free will,” Cas says.

Dean feels a soft push of an emotion connected to 'I wouldn't have known the pleasure of free will without you' coming through whatever connection he and Cas have.

Dean's chest hurts. He wants to fix Cas so badly it hurts. “How can you give me a part of something that's...,” he trails off. He can't bring himself to say Cas' grace is dying away.

“I would've given it to you anyway,” Cas says, his fingers running through Dean's short hair and over Dean's scalp in an intimate gesture, “but something else happened when we walked into that room. Something we need to talk about because you need to know the whole truth.”

Dean thinks he should feel scared, upset, or even a hint of worry, but he doesn't. It might be Cas keeping him calm, but he doesn't think so. He knows Cas isn't upset over what he wants to tell Dean. In fact, Cas seems excited. That makes everything okay. Dean knows it.

“What is it, Cas?” Dean asks.

“The connection we shared before going into that room was fairly strong,” Cas explains, and Dean can feel the sense of wonder and happiness coming from Cas. “When the combined powers and magics met, my grace flared, and it sought out my mate.”

Dean's eyes widen. He learned that part of his own name in Cas' language meant mate, but he hadn't realized Cas already viewed him as that.

“It fully bonded with your soul because both of us were willing and we already shared the connection that had been building ever since I pulled you from Hell,” Cas says softly.

Dean can feel a small bit of anxious uncertainty coming from Cas, and he knows it's because Dean hasn't said anything yet. Cas could easily read his mind, but Dean knows even now Cas is respecting his wishes and keeping out of Dean's head. He can't speak. He's working his way through everything Cas has said so far, and he has so many questions, but he can't bring himself to say anything.

Instead he pushes reassurance through to Cas, and Cas immediately stops feeling anxiously uncertain. Dean pushes some love and encouragement through to Cas, thrilled over the ability to do so. Cas grins, and it's so adorable that Dean smiles back.

“I'm keeping the connection down to a minimum right now,” Cas says. “Now that I know what's going on, I can open it gradually so your mind can adapt and cope with it all. If I would've known, I would never have let that happen, Dean.”

Dean snorts. "I was scared you'd take it away from me," he says, his voice getting a little stronger.

"I'd like you to be honest with me in the future," Cas says, a very small amount of power behind his voice, but enough to let Dean know Cas is extremely serious.

Dean wants to say he'll promise to never lie or hide things from Cas ever again, but he has a feeling it would be a promise he'd break. He doesn't like that part of him, but it's true.

"Is this going to make you lose your grace faster?" Dean asks, his stomach clenching even as he says it.

"That would be the other part of what has happened since we walked into the room," Cas says, a spike of excitement coming from him. "Because my grace connected and bonded itself to your soul, my grace is growing stronger. I didn't realize it until you saw my wings. It's a slow process, but when you saw my wings, your soul pushed a spike of power into my grace."

Dean's jaw drops, and he gapes at Cas for a few moments. "I'm fixing your grace?" he asks, his voice breathy in a way that Sam would tease him about if he were here.

"Yes," Cas says. "Souls hold an enormous amount of energy, and I could've used your soul at any time as a boost, but I would never do that to you, especially without your knowledge."

Dean frowns. "I would've given it to you," he says, feeling an ache, knowing he could've helped Castiel, but Castiel never gave him the opportunity.

"I know you would've," Cas says softly, squeezing Dean's shoulder. "But the way I would've had to go about it before wouldn't have been pleasant, it would've weakened you, and it doesn't last. The way my grace is connected to your soul now, we feed off each other in a way, both of us building the other up rather than one draining the other."

"Is this permanent?" Dean asks.

"No one but us can break it, and even then it's not easy," Cas says.

Dean feels a small spike of fear from Cas, and Dean matches it with one of his own. Neither of them want to break the bond, and they both realize it at the same time.

Dean moves forward, pushing his face between Cas' neck and shoulder. "I can have this? We can have this?" he asks.

"Yes," Cas says, then kisses Dean's head.

"How long will it take for me to be able to handle everything?" Dean asks, wanting everything now even if he knows his mind and body can't take it.

"I have no way of knowing," Cas says, and Dean lets out a groan of frustration. "Is there something in particular you'd like me to open up to you first?"

Dean huffs into Cas' shoulder. "I want it all. I want every bit of you. But if I have to choose, I'd really like to be able to hear the noises you make," Dean requests.

Dean gasps as he feels the connection they have pull back to the point where he doesn't feel anything from Castiel. He digs his fingers into Cas' arm.

"You'll get that part of the connection back again in time," Cas says, and Dean knows he's talking about the emotional connection. *Coo, nih*

Dean lets out a bark of laughter. It's not funny, but the relief he feels at hearing Cas' noises pushed it out of him.

"I wanna learn what all of those mean," Dean says.

"You will," Cas says. *Nih* "You know that each sound has layers of meanings from when we were connected before, but until that connection is opened more again, ask me and I'll tell you anything you want to know.

"*Uhn* is my name, I realize that now, but what does *dook* mean?" Dean asks, though he's already pretty sure. He wants to hear it.

Cas squeezes him closer. "It means all forms of love, devotion, affection, and that I care for you with everything that I am."

"It's way more awesome than saying I love you," Dean says with a goofy grin.

"Humans don't have the capacity to form and use a language as complex as what angels use, but whenever you say you love me, I know it means more than the words," Cas says.

Dean feels emotion swell in his chest. "I do love you," he says.

Purr "And I you," Cas replies.

Dean chuckles. "Can I call you my Kitty Cas?"

Cuh "You may call me whatever you wish," he says.

Dean flat out refuses to giggle like a girl, holding it in with sheer will, but instead he chuckles and snuggles in closer to Cas.

"Thank you for letting me have this," Dean whispers as he closes his eyes.

Hahs

Dean's eyes open again. That one was new. He's got to start writing these down. He grins and closes his eyes again, listening to Cas purring.

Chapter 2: Sensory Deprivation

Summary: Castiel wants to try sensory deprivation. Dean agrees to it just because Cas wants it, but quickly finds out how it focuses his attention on Cas' touch, on the noises Cas makes, and he realizes how intimate the whole thing is.

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Castiel had come up with the idea, which had shocked Dean at first, but then he remembered who introduced the use of handcuffs into their sex lives and realized it was silly of him to be shocked.

He wasn't all that thrilled over the idea. He didn't object to it, but being tied down and blindfolded didn't sound all that fun. But he'd agreed to it because Cas had asked, and Cas didn't ask for much.

So now Dean's tied down to the bed on his back, his legs and arms spread wide and cuffed to the four bedposts with soft material-lined cuffs. There's a bandana tied around his head, covering his eyes. He's naked and hard.

Grrr

Dean shivers. It means protection, but so much more than that. It's the willingness to die for the one being protected. It's love of the protected one. It's a warning to anyone who would dare challenge any sort of claim to the protected one.

He fully believes Cas would die or kill for him before letting anything happen to him. Dean had been nervous about being tied up, but the soft growling reverberating throughout the room, vibrating through his body is a reminder that Dean doesn't need to be scared of anything or anyone as long as Cas is here.

Dean wants to touch Cas. He wants Cas to touch him. But Cas asked for this, and Dean's willing to try anything once, especially if it sounds fun.

He feels something trailing over the top of his left foot. It doesn't tickle, but he can't tell what it is. It has a rough texture like burlap, but Dean doesn't know of anything they have that would feel like that. He wonders if Cas went out and got things just to use them on Dean, and it thrills him that Cas put so much effort into planning this.

The material scrapes along his instep, then his toes. It leaves his skin and is replaced by a warm puff of breath. Dean feels Cas kiss the top of his foot and can't help but smile. When Cas decides to do something, he goes all out. This is going to be fun.

Hum

The meaning is more of the same, but with a different message to it. The growl was a warning to others, and some reassurance to Dean, but the hum is safety, calm, and an offer to let go of the things Dean's worried about.

Cas licks Dean's left knee, making Dean moan. He can't tell where the touches will come from, and the surprise is as much of a turn on as what Cas is doing.

Dean can't hear Cas moving around the room, and it's a little disconcerting when Dean feels a puff of warm air on his right wrist, not realizing Cas had moved to the other side of him. He tells himself to relax. It's Cas here with him. Cas has already reassured him he won't let anything happen to him, that nothing will get to him without a hell of a fight.

He relaxes into the bed, his muscles losing some of their tension. He lets out a breath he'd been holding.

Coo, uhn

Dean smiles. That noise is more than a yes, more than agreement. It's positive reinforcement, and being used with the noise for Dean's name, he's telling Dean he's done well, that Cas is proud of him.

He relaxes even more. He doesn't like to think about the fact that he craves approval and praise. Cas knows he does, and Cas doesn't have a problem with it. Dean's the one who doesn't like it. Cas gives it to him anyway, but without belittling Dean about it.

Cas sucks Dean's right index finger into his mouth, and Dean's cock twitches so hard he gasps. Cas moves slowly, sucking hard and using his tongue to tickle the underside of Dean's finger. Dean wants that mouth on his cock, and Cas has to know that or he wouldn't be teasing him like this.

Cas pulls back, Dean's finger slipping out of Cas' mouth with an obscenely wet noise that makes Dean moan.

Hnn, uhn

Dean's chest swells with affection. Combining *hnn* with his name brings more meaning to it, tells Dean that he makes Cas happy down to his very core.

He feels a light sensation on his stomach. "Cas!" Dean yelps, trying to twist away.

Cas knows Dean's ticklish. Whatever he's trailing over Dean's stomach is soft and has just enough pressure to make Dean's muscles jump.

Cuh

Dean chuckles, twisting the opposite way in an attempt to get away from the tickle torture. "Ah! You're enjoying this way too much," he says as he grunts and chuckles.

Cuh, uhn

"I'm so happy you're amused by me," Dean says, then yelps and twists the other way, the right side of his ribs getting the same treatment his stomach got.

It stops, and Dean lets out a sigh. He relaxes back into the bed. He hopes Cas won't tickle him anymore, but he has no idea what Cas has planned.

Snick

“Yeah, I'm okay,” Dean says, answering Cas' mildly concerned check on him.

If the connection between them was fully opened, Cas wouldn't need to ask. He'd be able to fully read everything from Dean. It's too much for Dean yet, so that's not an option, but Dean can't wait for that to happen.

Dean feels Cas crawl onto the bed, over his right leg, and settle in between his legs. Dean moans, wriggling his hips as much as he can to get Cas' attention focused on Dean's dick, hard and waiting.

Mmm, uhn

Dean feels that swell of affection in his chest again. It means Dean is the reason Cas is fully content. The contentment isn't as simple as the word implies. It's complete. It's implying nothing else is needed to keep Cas happy forever.

“Oh, shit!” Dean yells as Cas licks a stripe up the underside of Dean's cock. “Cas,” he groans.

Whistle

Dean chuckles. The inflection Cas uses while making the noise gives it a lighter tone, so instead of meaning Cas is merely physically or emotionally hungry, it's teasing Dean that Cas is hungry for what Dean can give him, namely his hard cock.

“It's all yours. You can suck on it all you want,” he says with a grin.

Cuh

Dean squirms as Cas gently runs a finger over the head of Dean's cock. His dick is so hard, he wants to demand Castiel suck it, but making demands in his position wouldn't be advisable, so he keeps quiet.

Cuh, rumble

Cas' finger runs down the underside of Dean's cock, then gently rubs his balls, still teasing. Dean tries to spread his legs even more than they already are, but he can't. Cas tied him securely.

“Cas, please,” Dean moans, his thighs shaking.

Ah, uhn

Dean's heard that noise before, but he's never asked what it means. Cas uses it when they fuck sometimes, but not every time, so Dean didn't really pay much attention to it. He's been slowly

working his way through all Cas' noises.

“What's that one mean, Cas?” Dean asks.

“Shhh,” Cas says. It's not one of Cas' noises. He's using his vessel's mouth to shush Dean.

“Fine. Toppo control freak,” Dean grumbles.

Cas pinches Dean's inner right thigh, and Dean flinches and grunts. Yeah, he should've expected that. He shuts his mouth.

Dean feels a puff of warm air on his the head of his cock, then Cas' finger is pushing between his cheeks. There's lube on his finger, so when he pushes into Dean's hole, it goes in easily. Dean moans, forgetting for a moment that his arms are restrained and pulling on his cuffs.

“Mmm, yeah, Cas,” Dean breathes. He knows Cas only shushed his questioning, not anything else.

Cas loves to hear Dean, whether it be noises or Dean's voice. Cas likes to know if Dean's enjoying something or not. Dean had some trouble getting used to being that vocal in bed, but he's done it for Cas.

Dean's always been the one pleasuring his lover in bed. He's never passively laid back and relaxed while a sexual partner took care of everything. He's always enjoyed vocal partners, so when Cas asked that he make noise in bed, Dean wanted to do that for him.

“Oh, fuck, Cas!” Dean yelps as Cas sucks Dean's cock into his mouth, warmth and wetness surrounding his cock.

He whimpers as Cas finds his prostate with his finger, starting a gentle massage that Dean knows will have him begging very quickly.

Rumble

“Cas, fuck! Cas!” Dean yells, always amazed that though the rumbling noise isn't coming from Cas' mouth, he can still feel it in his dick when Cas is blowing him.

If that weren't awesome enough, Dean can feel it in his prostate, and Dean has no clue how that happens, but he loves it.

Cas slows down, sucking Dean too gently to make Dean come, and Dean lets out a whine of frustration.

Rumble, uhn

“Oh, Cas,” Dean breathes, the alternating noises doing incredible things to his prostate and dick.

“Wanna come. Cas, please let me come,” he begs.

He doesn't even know if he really wants to come so soon, but he figures Cas knows Dean is asking that sometime tonight he'd like to be able to come, even if it's not right the fuck now.

Cas chuckles with his physical mouth, so Dean assumes he's amused by Dean's enthusiasm. That's fine. Whatever gets them both of and means fun is had by all is good with Dean.

Uhn, dook, uhn

“Nnnh,” Dean says stupidly.

He wants to laugh in the face of all those love songs that speak of feeling someone's love. This is beyond anyone else's imagination. Dean feels his name pulse throughout his body from the center of his pelvis to his scalp and down to his toes.

When Castiel tells him he loves him, he feels it as waves rushing through him, and Dean knows Cas is opening up just a little bit more of the connection because he feels some of the emotion along with the noise.

Cas has done this twice now. He's opened up just a small amount of the connection to let them feel each other during sex. Dean assumes it's because Dean's mind is so wasted on the arousal that he's not focused on the connection and so he won't get overloaded on it or push for more.

Dean wants to tell Cas how much he appreciates it, but he's enjoying the feeling too much to speak. Then he remembers that the connection is opened, so he sends a quick pulse of love, appreciation, affection, and devotion through the connection.

Cas moans around Dean's dick, and the loop between them intensifies for a moment before calming down again and the connection closing. Cas sucks harder, moves his finger faster inside Dean, and Dean's back bows.

“Cas, please, yeah! More! Fuck, Cas. Wanna come. Please,” Dean begs, lost in sensation and the feeling of being surrounded by Cas.

It's the best kind of mindfuck there is. His physical body can only feel the sucking, the rubbing, the waves and pulses of Cas' noises, but his soul craves this, wants more of Cas, and the closer they get, the more Dean experiences Cas and loses his logical brain functions to arousal, the more his soul pulls at Cas.

Dean squirms, pulls on his restraints, moans, pants. He's babbling, but he has no idea what he's saying. His thighs are shaking, his dick is throbbing, and his hips are pushing up toward Cas' mouth, then down on Cas' finger.

Coo, uhn

Dean doesn't think it'll ever get old that Cas tells him to come this way, the inflection meaning more than Dean realized until this moment. Dean can tell there's a desperate edge to the noise, like Cas is begging him, wants him to come.

“Cas! Oh, Cas, fuck, Cas!” Dean screams, coming hard and pulling at his restraints.

His whole body is trembling as Cas keeps the stimulation just this side of pleasurable, making his orgasm seem longer because it's just that good. Cas slows down and gentles his touches when Dean's body suddenly relaxes into the bed, all spent and sated.

“Close your eyes,” Cas says, his voice sounding strained.

Dean does as he's told, and he feels Castiel straddle his chest, not resting his whole weight on Dean, but now that he's there, Dean can tell Cas is naked. He feels Cas pull the bandana off, and Dean squints, wanting to see Cas, letting his eyes adjust to the light from the bedside lamp.

Cas' eyes are shining bright, the sunlight slivers alight with energy. Cas holds his very hard dick up to Dean's lips, and Dean opens his mouth, totally wasted from his orgasm, but happy to let Cas use his mouth to get himself off.

Dean can see a faint swirling in his peripheral vision, and he knows it's Cas' wings, but Cas is keeping them mostly hidden from him. Dean doesn't try to look right at them, knowing Cas will shut the connection down more if he knows Dean is aware enough to seek out the wings.

Cas pushes his dick into Dean's mouth, and Dean sucks him in, moaning around Cas' cock. Cas groans, leaning forward to fuck Dean's mouth. Dean lets him, keeping his teeth out of the way and keeping up some suction to make it better for Cas.

“UhnDeanUhn,” Cas says, the vessel's voice and Cas' sound pushing out, through Dean's body, through his head, through the bed, through the walls, shaking the windows and setting off a car alarm in the parking lot.

Dean knows Cas should pull back the connection a little, keep himself more in check, but he loves this. He wants all of Cas. Wants it so badly he can taste it.

“DeanUhn,” Cas says, this time the vessel's voice having no contribution, and all of it is Cas as Cas comes down Dean's throat.

The television turns on, then off again. The can of soda sitting on the table splits and fizzes all over the table, dripping down to the floor. The lights flicker, and someone pounds on the wall from next door.

Cas doesn't hurt him, doesn't leave his dick deep in Dean's throat. He pulls back so Dean can breathe, panting and gazing into Dean's eyes like Dean hung the moon.

“Did you enjoy yourself?” Dean asks with a smirk.

“Heh,” Cas laughs, clumsy and imperfect like a human, and it's another sound Dean instantly loves.

“I'll take that as a yes,” Dean says, feeling pretty cocky for someone tied to a bed, an angel on his chest, and a spent cock dripping onto his neck.

Ah, uhn

“Okay, I really wanna know what that means,” Dean says. “And you can untie me while you tell me.”

Cuh “Demanding,” Cas says with affection as he climbs off of Dean, slipping the quick-release pins on Dean's cuffs for his wrists, then his ankles.

“Yep, I am. Now tell me before I have to throw a temper tantrum and spoil your afterglow,” Dean says, wrapping his arms around Cas as soon as all the cuffs are off, pulling Cas down next to him and snuggling up close.

“Beautiful,” Cas whispers, kissing the side of Dean's head.

“Oh,” Dean says, feeling slightly embarrassed now that they're not right in the middle of sex.

“Beautiful, handsome, pleasing, fascinating, perfect in my eyes, charming, and cute,” Cas mumbles into Dean's neck.

“Wait. Cute?” he says incredulously.

Cas snorts into his neck. “If you'd rather, I could change it to adorable.”

Dean huffs. “I could do adorable.”

Mmm, purr “Yes, you do.”

Chapter 3: Occupational Hazards

Summary: Dean, Castiel, and Sam are hunting a werewolf at night in Washington State when Dean hears Cas calling for help through the forest.

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Honk

“Sam, Cas is in trouble!” Dean hisses, then takes off through the forest even though it's dark.

Honk, trill, uhn

Dean doesn't bother to look behind him to make sure Sam is following. Cas needs him. Cas is calling out for Dean, and there's no way in hell Dean would ignore it. His flashlight keeps him from falling, but he's running fast enough that even being able to see a few feet in front of him doesn't keep him from stumbling a few times.

The moon is full, but the sky is full of clouds that are keeping all but a small amount of light from peeking through. Between the clouds and the trees, it's near pitch black.

Dean doesn't hesitate as he comes upon them. When he gets within firing range, he pulls out his gun, aims, and shoots the werewolf in the head. The body falls half on top of Cas.

“Cas!” Dean yells, scrambling over to Cas quickly and pushing the dead body off him.

Dean takes the time to shoot the werewolf in the heart before turning his attention to Cas. He's not going to take the chance the thing isn't dead.

Uhn, uhn, uhn “I'm okay, Dean,” Cas says. “It's just a small wound.” *Uhn, uhn, uhn, uhn, uhn*

Dean assumes Cas is reassuring himself by repeating Dean's name over and over again. And he doesn't trust Cas' assessment of his own injuries, so he gets down on the ground and rips Cas' shirt open at the collar.

He growls when he sees the werewolf has bitten Cas. He hears Sam running up to them, then sees him crash to his knees on Cas' other side. Dean is a fast runner, but Sam's no slouch. For him to take that long to get to them, Dean must've been running on sheer adrenaline.

“He okay?” Sam asks, breathless and concerned.

The blood is running down Cas' neck and soaking his shirt. The blood loss is already slowing from when Dean first got a look at it, but the wound is deep and wide.

“Open the connection a little,” Dean demands, looking Cas in the eye.

Hiss, squeal

“Huh?” Sam asks.

Hiss “I can't,” Cas says, a frown on his face, his breath coming out in little huffs that have nothing to do with Cas' huffing noise. He's in pain. A lot of pain.

Dean wants to shake him, force him to do what Dean's telling him. “Yes, you can,” Dean insists. “Open it enough to get what you need. I'll be okay,” he says with as much authority as he can push into his voice.

Hiss, squeal

“What the fuck are you opening?” Sam asks, sounding frustrated by being out of the loop.

“Shut up, Sam,” Dean barks, still looking at Cas, and he hears Sam grunt his begrudging assent.

Nih Cas winces. “The wound would be fatal for a human, but I'll be okay,” he says, his voice strained.

“You're so fucking stubborn!” Dean growls. “Open the fucking connection, take what you need to fix your neck, then close it down again,” he says, trying to force the connection between them open even if he knows he can't.

Chirp, uhn

Dean snorts. “Yeah, I know you're worried about me, but I'll be okay,” Dean says. “I know the only reason the werewolf was able to hurt you was because you were using so much of your grace to keep the connection to a minimum that you didn't have enough to kill the fucker. I'm telling you, open it the fuck up or I'm going to find a way to do it myself.”

Cuh

“It's not funny!” Dean barks. “You know me. I'll find a way.”

Snuffle “I know you will,” Cas says, his eyes closing in frustration and pain.

“Then do it,” Dean says, then gasps as he feels the connection open.

He's pretty sure it's because Cas is in pain and injured, but the connection is opening in a way that Dean can only describe as like someone hammering a nail. It's opening a little, then a rush, then a little more, then a rush. It's nothing like the way Cas opens it when they're alone together, smooth and gentle.

Dean's not completely overwhelmed by it, but he has to concentrate on keeping himself calm, focused. The pain is bleeding through their connection, as is the feeling of inadequacy, the fear, the feeling of stupidity and shame that Dean wishes he could wipe away.

He uses a splotch of blood on Cas' shirt to focus, keeping his mind from spinning, pulling, latching onto Cas as hard as it wants to when he feels more of the connection. He can hear things throughout the forest he knows he wouldn't be able to if he weren't connected to an angel so intimately.

Dean knows how many animals are in a one-mile radius around them. He can categorize and name all of them. He knows there's a body of water one hundred and fifty-three feet north of their location. He knows how many gallons of water are in the small lake, how many fish are in there, how many years the lake has been there.

He knows the lake was formed seven hundred and forty-nine years ago when a mild earthquake shifted the surrounding earth, creating a crater and forcing a river that has long since meandered outside of the one-mile radius Dean can sense to overflow and fill the crater, creating the lake.

Dean gets a spike of pain in his neck that shoots up to the top of his scalp, but he keeps still, not wanting Cas to be distracted by anything. If Cas knows the pain is bleeding through their connection, he'll close the connection before healing himself. Dean won't accept that.

He sees the cells in Cas' vessel's body, and Dean gasps when he realizes Cas is telling each cell in the vessel's body what to do, how to heal itself. Dean's mind spins, and it's hard to keep upright. He feels an itchy sensation in his nose and on his upper lip, and he wipes at his nose because he knows it's a small trickle of blood.

Dean sees the cells, feels them working together, obeying Castiel. He knows they're not sentient, but that they have a purpose, a set course, and Cas is manipulating them, but they're doing what he wants though it goes against their nature.

It's happening fast, and Dean hangs on for the ride. He tries to focus on the splotch of blood on Cas' shirt again. He knows he'd lost focus for a moment, but he's getting it back. The cells knitting the wound are becoming background noise and a tingly sensation throughout his body, an echo in the back of his mind.

Then the connection closes down to a very small trickle again, and Dean looks up at Cas to see that the wound is gone.

“What did you do?” Sam asks, his voice a mix of surprise, awe, and concern.

Dean figures Sam never saw Dean's nosebleed, because it seems as if Sam has been staring at Cas' wound. Good. He would've said something to Cas had he seen it.

“We'll tell you on the way back to the motel,” Dean says, helping Cas up, smiling like an idiot because Cas is fine again.

Cas hugs him once they're both standing, and Dean feels Cas sending a pulse of something warm throughout Dean's body. Cas is checking him out, seeing that he's okay, and he probably already knows about the nosebleed, but he doesn't say anything to Dean. No noises of concern.

Cas doesn't need to hug Dean to check him out. Dean knows the hug is not only because Cas loves him, but it's because opening the connection and closing it again is hard for both of them. They both crave it, but Dean's not ready for it to be fully open yet.

A hug is reassurance for them both and a connection they can have here and now. It'll never make up for the connection, but it still feels great, and it grounds them both after everything they've felt in the last few minutes.

Dean hears Sam getting up and heading back toward the car. He's grumbling as he's walking, and Cas chuckles into Dean's neck.

“He's going to want an explanation,” Cas says as they break apart.

Dean smiles. The stronger bond they've had since the witch's power hit them has made Cas take on so many more human traits that it thrills Dean. He's more casual in his movements than he used to be, seems to fit in his own skin.

Dean doesn't think it's because of some sort of bleed-through from Dean's personality or Cas losing something of himself. Rather Dean believes it's because Cas is relaxing into his life, enjoying himself, letting more of what he is come through his vessel as he learns to do things humans take for granted like having a shoulder to shrug when they're stumped over something someone has said.

“Yeah, yeah,” Dean says, smacking Cas on the ass as he starts walking toward the car. “Promise me you'll knock him the fuck out if he freaks out and starts rattling off questions and won't shut the hell up.”

Eh, hic “I'll take care of Sam,” Cas says, so much affection in his voice and the noise that Dean feels his chest tighten.

Dean never dreamed he could have someone who loved him so deeply, let alone someone who also loved his brother, would do anything for Sam, and would feel just as much affection for him as Dean does. It warms his heart and makes him feel like the luckiest man alive.

Chapter 4: Bored of Boredom

Summary: Dean is bored. So is Cas. Sam's not impressed.

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Dean's learned that Castiel's noises never have a single meaning. They're more complex than any human word is capable of being. He's also learned that, though he's getting an idea of a good number of the noises, they can change their meaning slightly when they're used with other noises or in a string of noises.

Which is why Dean's having a hard time not laughing hysterically in a library. Cas is going to get them all kicked out. Well, he's going to get Dean kicked out. Sam can't hear anything from Cas, has no clue what's going on, and Cas could put Clint Eastwood to shame with his poker face.

Huff, trill, huff, huff

Dean covers his mouth with his hand as he continues pretending he's reading some kind of book that Sam set in front of him and told him to skim. Dean doesn't even know what the book is about. And he doesn't care at the moment.

While the trilling noise is normally a call out to someone, followed by the noise specifying who Cas is calling out to, using the trilling noise in conjunction with the huff they carry the meaning of Cas calling out to anyone who will listen that he's very bored.

Trill, huff, huff

Dean glances over at Cas, but Cas is stoic, looking at the book in front of him. Dean doesn't know if Cas is reading it or just pretending because Cas is just that good.

Huff, chi, huff

Dean can't help it. A noise one might expect to hear coming from a wounded buffalo breaks free from him. Sam's head snaps up, a scowl on his face, and Dean flaps his hand in Sam's direction.

“Sorry,” Dean whispers, then goes back to pretending he's reading something very interesting, which is very hard considering the book wouldn't even be interesting if he was actually reading it.

Chi refers to death and/or dying. The subtle inflection in *chi* lets Dean know that Cas is joking. Which is something else that's new to Dean as of late. Dean has discovered that Cas is damn funny.

He's learned that angels aren't humorless dickbags. For the most part. It's just that they're more subtle about their humor. And sometimes very sarcastic.

Like right now. Cas is calling out to anyone that'll listen, complaining about how he's so fucking bored he's going to die of said boredom. Dean knows the feeling, but the fact that it's coming from Cas and

that Sam has no clue what's going on is tickling Dean's funny bone.

Chiiii

Dean lets out a bark of laughter, and this time there are several people around them who shush him. He manages to cover his mouth, but his shoulders are shaking and he's trying to think of something really un-funny to stop the laughter. It's not working.

Not only is Cas cracking him up, but he's in a library, and knowing he's not supposed to be making noise always makes it harder to keep from laughing like an idiot over even mildly funny things.

“Dude, what is so funny?” Sam hisses at him.

Dean shakes his head no, his eyes still on his book. If he looks at Cas now, he'll laugh again, most likely even louder than before. He knows Cas would look at him like he's completely surprised Dean is acting like such a child in the library.

Sam rolls his eyes, huffs, and goes back to reading his own book. Dean nearly giggles at Sam's huff. If Sam only knew what his huffs mean in the language of angels, he'd pull an epic bitchface.

Eh, chi

Dean buries his face in his hands, snorting and shaking with laughter, his stomach, chest, and throat burning with the effort to keep quiet.

“Either knock it off or leave, jerk,” Sam hisses, his eyes wide.

Huff, eh, chi

There are tears leaking from Dean's eyes. He's making a wheezing and whining noise, still trying not to laugh, but failing miserably at even keeping remotely quiet.

Dean loves that Cas is this comfortable with him. Telling Dean that his brother is so fucking boring that they should kill him is such a refreshingly fun thing to do, and Dean almost wishes other people knew this side of Cas.

“Dude!” Sam hisses even louder.

“Come with me, Dean,” Cas says, and Dean would jump in surprise at how suddenly close Cas is to him, but he's too busy laughing.

Dean feels a hand on his right upper arm, and he stands up, letting Cas lead him out of the library, people giving him dirty looks as he stumbles along. Dean lets out some pent-up laughter once they get outside.

“You got me in trouble on purpose,” Dean accuses through heaving laughter and giggles.

“Did what?” Cas asks, all wide-eyed and innocent.

“Earned us a few hours of alone time while Sam slaves over a hot stack of books,” Dean says, grinning and wrapping his arms around Cas.

Cas blinks at him. “I don't see why you're accusing me of purposely getting you in trouble when you've gotten what you wanted in the first place, and now I get to take you back to the motel room and do very fun things with you.”

Dean's eyes widen and his dick twitches. “Fuck, yeah, let's do that!” he blurts, pulling out of the hug and grabbing Cas by the arm, dragging him toward the car as Cas just grins.

Chapter 5: Family Matters

Summary: Sam, Dean, and Castiel have just gotten back to the motel after a hunt when someone or something comes to the door.

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Grrr, uhn-hum-grrr, uhn, grrr

Dean spins around. He's never heard that many noises strung together like that from Cas. They meshed into nearly one sound, and there's an urgency and force to the sounds that shocks Dean with their viciousness. They come so fast that Dean feels a little dizzy for a moment. He's sure he only picked out a handful of the noises, and the inflection on some of the noises is beyond his comprehension.

Cas' eyes are wide, and he's looking toward the door of the motel room. *Coo-dook*

Dean's never heard Cas' noise for love used in that way before. He has no idea what it means. Sure, it sounds as if he's saying good love, positive love, but Dean isn't following. And he's a little freaked out over the way Cas is taking a protective stance, moving between Dean and the door.

“Cas?” Dean says, keeping his voice low in case Cas wants him quiet.

It's obvious Cas knows what's on the other side of the door, so he'll let Cas lead on this. Dean hears Sam getting up from his spot on the bed, and he knows his brother is grabbing a gun. Just as Dean wants to kick himself for not having a gun in the back of his jeans, Sam presses a second gun into Dean's hand from behind, and Dean wraps his fingers around it.

Grunt, nih, dit

Dean's stomach clenches. Those noises didn't come from Cas. It has to be an angel. Cas said demons don't use this language. But what shocks Dean is that he didn't realize until this moment that he could hear other angels, and he feels his body tense, ready for a fight.

He doesn't care that the first noise the other angel made means a mothering reassurance and concern. It could be a trap. Cas isn't a dickbag, but in Dean's experience, plenty of other angels are. And Dean's never heard the last noise in the series. It could mean anything.

Click Cas says as he tilts his head, his body still shielding Dean from the door, but the tension in his body lessens somewhat.

Eh-hic, dit-hic, coo comes through the door, each sound clear and enunciated, as if the angel on the other side of the door is talking Cas out of storming through the door and smiting. There are a few other noises coming through the door that Dean's never heard before, but he can't ask Cas about them now.

Cas' body deflates, but Dean's still freaking out. He heard his name followed by the form of love Cas

usually uses when he references Sam. The noises are coming faster than they do when Dean hears them from Cas, and it's a little confusing. And Dean still has no idea what *dit* means.

Squeak, hnnn Cas says, then walks to the door and opens it.

Dean splutters for a moment, and he hears Sam gasp from somewhere behind him. "What the hell?" Dean blurts.

Gabriel stands there, smirking. "Things are a little too tense in here, little brother," Gabriel says, stepping through the doorway.

Cas backs up, still keeping himself between Gabriel and Dean. Dean has no idea why Cas is being so protective. Sure, Gabriel messes with them, but he's never really done anything so horrible Cas needs to throw himself in harm's way.

Okay, well, beside killing Dean over and over again to teach them a lesson. But it wasn't permanent. And Gabriel did have a good reason for doing it.

Gabriel walks up to Cas and hugs him, and Dean tries not to chuckle out loud when he sees Cas stand stock still for a moment, stiff in Gabriel's arms. Gabriel just holds on, then Cas slowly wraps his arms around Gabriel. Dean hears Sam snort behind him.

"I'm proud of you, little brother," Gabriel says, looking over Cas' shoulder at Dean. "I'm not here to challenge anything, I promise," he says, pulling out of the hug and ruffling Cas' hair.

Snick Cas says, and Dean swears the questioning noise sounds hopeful.

Uhn, coo Gabriel says, then leans in and kisses Cas' forehead. *Hic, dit*

Dean knows the first part means that Gabriel approves of him, and he finds it a little odd that Gabriel would say something like that. He figures Gabriel must know about their relationship, but what the fuck does Gabriel mean by approval of Dean?

Purr comes from Castiel.

Dean is a little jealous that somebody other than him managed to make Cas purr. He knows it means Cas is extremely content, but he's only ever made that noise for Dean, and now Gabriel just waltzes in and gets the noise out of Cas?

"We good?" Gabriel asks, looking Cas in the eye. *Click*

Hnnn "Yes," Cas says, and Dean can hear the smile in Cas' tone of voice.

Uhn, coo Gabriel says as he walks up to Dean. "So who made the first move, Dean-o? Did my little brother finally get the balls to declare his undying love or did you throw him down and have your way with him because he wouldn't stop mooning over you?"

The smirk is firmly in place, but there's something else in Gabriel's eyes that Dean can't place. In anyone else, Dean would call that look affection, and it looks odd coming from Gabriel. Dean gapes at Gabriel for a moment.

“C'mere, bro-in-law,” Gabriel says enthusiastically as he reaches out and pulls Dean into a crushing hug.

Dean's hands flutter at his sides for a few moments while his brain catches up. He hears Sam chuckling, and he wishes his arms weren't stuck at his sides so he could smack Sam upside the head.

Wait a minute. Bro-in-law? Dean squirms in the embrace, but then stumbles when Gabriel suddenly lets go of him.

Whistle comes from Gabriel, and it's not a wolf-whistle made by the vessel. It's the noise Cas makes when he wants something, like food or Dean's dick. The way Gabriel is kind of leering at him, Dean thinks it means the latter.

“Hey!” Dean barks. “I'm not a piece of meat. Or, well, I'm not a piece of your meat. Or something like that,” he says with a frown. He shakes his head, quitting that line of reasoning while he's ahead. Or something. “I'm his,” Dean says, pointing at Cas.

Cuh comes from Gabriel.

“It's not funny, asshole,” Dean grumbles, giving Gabriel the stink eye.

Gabriel's smirk drops from his face abruptly. “You heard me,” Gabriel says rather than asks, his eyes widening. He turns to Cas, then looks back at Dean, pointing at him. “He heard me,” Gabriel says, as if Cas did something to Dean that needs addressing, and Gabriel's the one to do it.

“He did,” Cas says, straight-faced in a way he hasn't been for weeks now.

Dean immediately misses Cas' easygoing way. He doesn't know why he's acting like this around Gabriel, but it might just be that Cas is behaving in front of another angel.

“What happened?” Gabriel asks, looking at Cas. “Did you bond fully without inviting me?” he asks, his voice sounding so betrayed that Dean feels a little guilty even though he's done nothing wrong.

Squeal “No, it was a spell mixed with uncontrollable power that completed the bond,” Cas says, still stoic.

“But it's a good thing, right? You guys are happy?” he asks, sounding concerned, and the tone Gabriel uses is so different than his normal cocky and teasing tone that it makes the situation feel surreal.

“I love *dook, uhn* him,” Cas says, the word melding with the sound in a way that warms Dean's heart.

Gabriel launches himself at Cas, hugging him so hard Dean hears a squeak that comes from the

vessel's throat. Dean's eyes widen, and he feels Sam smack his arm. He turns to look at Sam, and the two of them share a confused look.

Hic, coo, dit Gabriel says, holding Cas tight, shoving his face into Cas' neck.

Cas' eyes close as he melts into Gabriel, his arms going around Gabriel. Dean gasps as he feels the connection between them open enough that he gets a quick blast of feelings, explanation, and knowledge.

“Oh, fuck, it's his name,” Dean breathes, amazed that he now knows something so simple yet so meaningful.

“What is? Who's name” Sam asks, not able to hear what the other three can.

“*Dit* is Cas' name,” Dean whispers.

The name means so much that Dean feels his chest ache. It's baby brother, student, strength, warrior, trusted one, one who fell for humans, fiercely protected one, a love that encompasses everything but a sexual aspect, wrapped up with the meaning Angel of Thursday.

The feelings associated with the name include some of the same things Dean feels for Sam; being the older brother, being the one who watched him grow, took care of him, protected him, loved him more completely than anyone else ever did or ever could, the one who taught him what he knows, the one who watched him leave the nest, sad because of that loss, but so proud because he had a significant part in what that brother became.

Dean realizes he's not breathing and takes in a gulp of air. He had no idea Gabriel and Cas had that kind of relationship. It instantly changes his entire idea of what Gabriel is.

Kra Castiel says, and Dean's knees feel weak.

It's Gabriel's name. It means older brother, vast knowledge, nearly incomparable and raw power, light and dark that has formed a beautiful amalgamation, amusement, strength, warrior, every kind of love possible to have including something Dean can only describe as a sort of a schoolboy crush, weaving through the meaning of Gabriel's name; God is my strength and messenger of God.

Dean's never been the little brother, so the feelings that filter through are all new to him, and he can only hope Sam feels the same way for him. There's so much appreciation in the emotion that Dean's jaw drops. There's a strong devotion. There's a little bit of idolization, like one would give to someone who has mentored them, made them realize their dreams, and loved them no matter what.

A background feeling rocks Dean's world yet again. It's something he's never felt, even more so than the other feelings he's read from Cas so far. At first he mistakes it for Gabriel being Cas' crutch, but it's not that.

No matter what Castiel does, how long they're apart, what they say or do to each other, Cas knows without a doubt he's got his older brother. Even when Gabriel does things Cas doesn't understand,

things someone else might see as destroying their relationship, hurting Cas on purpose, Cas has no doubt that Gabriel has a good reason, that he'd never give up on Cas, that he'd never deny him.

Dean can do nothing but stare as Cas and Gabriel end their embrace and turn to him. He feels numb. No, it's not numb. He feels like he's been pulled through an emotional roller coaster. He feels hypersensitive, and he stupidly had mistaken it for numbness.

Gabriel smiles at him. Really smiles at him instead of smirking or teasing. Dean stands there staring as Gabriel walks up and manifests a handkerchief, then gently wipes at Dean's cheeks.

It snaps Dean out of his shock, and he pulls back, frowning at Gabriel as he wipes at his own face. He's embarrassed he'd been crying. He feels raw. He feels exposed in a way that normally would scare the shit out of him, but for some reason he can't express, it's okay.

Hum, nih Gabriel says, then claps a hand on Dean's shoulder. "I don't have to give you the talk about treating Cas good, then threaten to beat the shit out of you if you hurt him, do I?" he asks, smirking at Dean.

After all he's seen and felt in the last few minutes, it takes Dean a moment to pull himself together. Dean's grateful that Gabriel is giving him time, not teasing him.

"Uhm, no, you don't. I love him," Dean says, a wobbly smile on his lips. "I'll probably hurt him sometimes because I tend to fuck up, but I'll do my best."

Coo, uhn Gabriel says, and Dean knows it's full of approval. "Great answer," Gabriel says with a smile.

"Ahem," Sam says, startling Dean. "Anyone care to fill me in?"

Gabriel chuckles. "I got this one, guys," he says loudly, obnoxiously, and with a leer in Sam's direction, then snaps his fingers, disappearing along with Sam.

An hour ago, Dean would've freaked out if Gabriel had flown off with Sam, but knowing what he knows now, he's only mildly concerned.

"He has a crush on Sam," Cas says, walking to Dean and wrapping his arms around Dean's waist.

He kisses Dean gently, as if he knows Dean's still coming to terms with everything. When he pulls back, Cas opens up the connection enough to send calm and love through, then closes it down to where it was before Gabriel walked in.

"TMI," Dean grumbles as he lets his forehead fall to Cas' shoulder.

Cas chuckles. "All I said was he had a crush on Sam. I didn't tell you what he wants to do to Sam."

"Dude!" Dean yelps. "No details!"

Bleat "I'm sorry," Cas says, obviously trying to keep from laughing.

"Yeah, I know what that noise means. The sincerity of your words underwhelms me," Dean grumbles.

"Yes, I've been bad. I should make it up to you by helping you find something else to focus on," Cas says. *Rumble*

Dean barks out a laugh. "Sex would help. Though you might have to keep me focused for a long time to keep the image of Sam and Gabriel out of my mind until I recover from the horrific mental images."

Cuh "I'll get started right away," Cas says, pushing a hand into the back of Dean's jeans, teasing a finger between Dean's ass cheeks.

"Mmm, yeah," Dean moans, already forgetting about whatever it is Sam and Gabriel are doing. "Hey, wait," he says, pulling back to look Castiel in the eye.

Snick

"Why can I hear Gabriel? He even seemed surprised by it, so what's going on?" Dean asks.

Wheek Cas says, a smile on his face. "It's never happened with a human before," he says, excitement oozing from him.

"Uhm, okay," Dean drawls, not seeing the significance. "That doesn't seem all that odd since there's not a whole lot of angels hooking up with humans, right?"

Wheek, hnnn "There have been some angel and human relationships before," Cas says, and Dean swears the slivers of sunlight in his eyes are even brighter than normal. "There have even been some who have bonded, but never has the bonding allowed the humans to have abilities of their own."

"What do you mean?" Dean asks. "I didn't have this ability before."

"There's never been anyone like *uhn* you," Cas says. "I pulled you from Hell, and we bonded then, soul to grace in a direct way that would never have happened had you been in a human body. Your soul grabbed onto *grunt* me, and it refused to let go."

"Oh," Dean says, his head spinning with what Cas is telling him.

"You already carried my mark, we'd begun a full bonding process that would've taken time and effort on both our parts to complete," Cas says. "When we were hit with the power from the witch's spell, it changed you on a cellular level, the grace of the fallen angel suffused through your body and soul, making it possible for your body, soul, and mind to withstand these things that a normal human would never survive. And you survived the suffusion because again your soul reached out for me and wouldn't let go."

"My soul kind of likes you," Dean says with grin.

Hnnn Cas says with a smile. "The abilities you have displayed since then have come from you, not because of our connection."

"Huh?" Dean says, feeling rather stupid.

"The connection we share allows us to pass things between us freely like emotions and thoughts, and that's because of our bond, but it doesn't give you the ability to hear other angels in their true language, see other angels in their true form" Cas says.

"So it's coming from me, not you?" Dean asks, his chest feeling tight with excitement and a healthy dose of fear.

Hum comes from Cas, a noise he continues making as if to gently and slowly calm Dean. "What you describe as opening and closing our connection is actually me muting your abilities as well as the connection we share because your mind isn't ready for it all yet," Cas says.

"Uhm, so I have superpowers?" Dean asks, feeling silly, but totally blown away by what Cas is saying.

Cas smiles. "Yes. Beside being able to perceive angelic sounds and see the true form of an angel, you also have telekinesis, improved strength and speed, the ability to dull another being's power, and you're able to perceive objects and beings that aren't visible to humans, which is why you saw the magic disintegrating in the witch's room."

"But," Dean says, searching for what he wants to say, trying to wrap his brain around everything, "I haven't been able to do any of that stuff."

"Because I've muted your powers," Cas says patiently. "Do you remember when you ran through the forest and pushed the werewolf off me?"

"Yeah," Dean says, shivering a little at the reminder of that day.

"Sam is a faster runner than you," Cas explains. "Yet you got to me quite a while before Sam did, and then you pushed the werewolf off of me without much effort."

"I thought it was adrenaline," Dean says.

"It was more than that," Cas says. "When the werewolf attacked me, I lost part of my control over your powers, and because you were worried about me, you didn't notice."

Dean chuckles. "I was scared out of my mind that it was going to kill you," he says.

Hnnn Cas says with a smile. "You saved me. You were there just in time and killed it before it could do more damage."

"So when you un-muted my powers to fix the wound in your neck, was all that me? Was I the one that was reading the forest and the animals? The knowledge of the lake wasn't you?" Dean asks.

“It was a little of both,” Cas says. “Your powers were magnified by my grace after I stopped suppressing your powers and, in human terms, leaned my grace on your soul to fix the wound.”

“What does that mean?” Dean asks.

“In a metaphysical way, I rested my grace on your soul *mmm* so that I could focus on mending the wound,” Cas explains. “I used your soul to ground me, to protect me, and to channel and boost my energy.”

“But I didn't feel drained afterward,” Dean says.

“We don't drain each other. We build each other up,” Cas says. “Had it not been for the bond, you would've passed out from fatigue for days after what I'd done.”

“Uhm, wow,” Dean says, then chuckles. It's not funny, but he doesn't know what else to say, what reaction to have to all this. “So I know you've said I'm not ready for all of this, but if I have these powers, they're coming from me, then why can't I handle them? I thought you were closing the connection because a human couldn't handle what I thought was coming from you.”

Snick “I should've explained it more fully to you, but a lot of what's been happening to you is new to me, and I'm not even fully able to explain it all to my satisfaction,” Cas says, frowning a little.

Dean winces. “Yeah, I suppose it's hard to explain.”

Squeak “What we were exposed to, the witch's power, it should've never happened to you, and even though a lot of this is coming from you, from your abilities, it doesn't change the fact that a human mind and body were never meant to have these abilities.”

“Will I ever be able to have them?” Dean asks.

“Yes,” Cas says, and the certainty with which he says it reassures Dean. “I've been slowly giving you more control ever since I first muted them. You wouldn't have been able to hear Gabriel's language just one week ago, and I didn't allow you to see his true form yet.”

Dean huffs. “I hadn't even thought of that. But now that you say it, I should've realized I couldn't see anything different about him.”

“You had other things on your mind,” Cas says.

“Yeah, kinda,” Dean says, rolling his eyes. “Oh!” Dean says suddenly, his eyes widening. “Is that why you're letting me hear and see more of you when we fuck?” he asks.

Cuh Cas says as he chuckles. “Yes. Your physical body can handle an angel's true form, true voice, and can hear our language, so allowing you that when your mind is focused on sex is okay because it's your mind that I'm protecting when I suppress your abilities.”

“Cool,” Dean breathes. “Hey, does Gabriel look different than other angels because he's an

archangel?" he asks excitedly.

Snick "All angels appear different, just like humans appear different from one another," Cas explains. "Gabriel has much more power than I ever did, and you'll be able to see that difference, but we also have other differences that you'll understand when you see him."

"Awesome," Dean says with a grin. "Oh, fuck, you just reminded me of Gabriel, and that reminds me of what he and my brother might be up to right now," he grumbles, frowning again.

Castiel laughs, and it's a beautiful sound because both his vessel's voice is involved as well as Cas' true voice. Dean wants to make Cas laugh like that over and over again, and he doubts that sound will ever get old.

Cas pops the buttons on Dean's jeans, allowing his right hand to have more room as he pushes his middle finger into Dean's hole. "Then I had better give you something else to focus on, as I'd promised earlier when you whined about it."

Dean moans, his dick twitching with renewed interest. "What did I whine about?" he asks with a grin.

Rumble Cas reaches into the front of Dean's pants, pulling Dean's cock out. "I'm so good at distracting you, you've already forgotten," he says with a smile.

"Mmm, yeah, but I think fucking would totally wipe it from my memory," Dean says, grabbing Cas' arm and leaning backward in the direction of the bed.

Cas takes the not-so-subtle hint and starts walking the two of them toward the bed. *Wheek* "Then I'll have to fuck you," he says, then shoves Dean down onto the bed.

Chapter 6: Won't Let Go

Summary: Dean and Castiel are on the case of a missing child, having been sent to investigate by Bobby because of a tip from another hunter.

Warning: Case fic. Some disturbing thoughts/imagery with regard to a MOTW and a kidnapped child who has been traumatized by what she's seen, some vague reference to Dean's time in Hell, but nothing worse than what you'd see on the show.

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Squeal

Dean glances at Cas, trying not to smirk. The woman they're speaking to is the picture of innocence with a sincere look on her face, wide brown eyes, and a smile that she pulls out easily. Though she looks to be in her late thirties, she's dressed like a businesswoman in her late fifties. The hairstyle even makes her look older than her skin tone would suggest.

She's invited them in for tea, which she had conveniently just made, and the pot and cups are sitting on the kitchen table between them. Cas doesn't reach for his cup. Dean takes his lead and doesn't touch his either.

They'd come to the small, upscale neighborhood not only for a missing child, but because Bobby had said a hunter tipped him off about a creature he'd been hunting. The creature had turned on him, injuring him badly, but hadn't killed him. The hunter was recuperating, but he was fairly certain the creature lived in this neighborhood and that it had been responsible for two missing children over the last six months. Another child had been reported as missing just days ago.

“Are you sure you've never seen Abigail, Ms. Calder?” Cas asks, pushing the photo a little closer to the woman.

“I don't remember ever seeing her,” she claims again. “But I don't go to the neighborhood functions, so I wouldn't have met her unless she came over with her parents to attend one of my dinners.”

Cuh, coo

Dean keeps a straight face, even though Cas just very sarcastically agreed with Ms. Calder's claim. “Well, she's gone missing, ma'am,” Dean says, keeping his tone light instead of accusing, “and a couple of your neighbors mentioned seeing her playing in your driveway a few times over the last few weeks. In fact, Mr. Hanson from next door said he saw you sharing a glass of lemonade with her just two days ago.”

Her face screws up as if she's trying to think back over the last few weeks. “Oh, yes,” Ms. Calder says, her eyes widening even more, her index finger in the air as if the light bulb suddenly lit up over her head. “That was Jenna. She's Carol and Frank's daughter. Jenna helped me prune the bushes out front, and it was a warm day, so we shared lemonade.”

Hiss, squeal

Yeah, Dean knows she's lying, but it's nice to have Cas helping. Dean goes by instinct, gut feeling. Cas can really read people, so even if someone is a very accomplished liar, Cas isn't fooled.

“So, just between us,” Dean says, leaning in and lowering his voice, “what do you think happened to Abigail?”

Ms. Calder sighs, biting her lip and faking nervousness. “Off the record?” she asks.

Cas and Dean nod. “Just between us,” Cas says, and Dean nods in agreement when she looks at him.

“Greg and Anna, Abigail's parents, are going through a rough patch with their marriage,” she says in a hushed voice. “Greg took off to go stay with his brother for a while, but he was very broken up about leaving Abigail behind,” she says, eyebrows raised as if implying so much more, yet acting as if she doesn't want to say the rest because it's awful.

Squeak comes from Cas, obnoxiously loud.

Dean works hard at not laughing, giving Cas a quick look that says 'dude, if you make me laugh, I'll find a way to pay you back,' then turning his attention to Ms. Calder again.

“So you think Greg missed his baby girl a little too much,” he says, acting as if they're sharing something super secret.

She shrugs. “I don't want to speak badly of Greg, but he's impulsive, and he really was torn up over leaving Abigail behind,” she says, overacting on the concern.

Cuh

Just as Dean's about to give Cas a look that says 'maybe we should come back later tonight,' Cas stands up, the kitchen chair scraping along the hardwood floor. Cas opens the connection a little more than usual, and Dean feels a rush of fear, sadness, hunger, and longing, but it isn't coming from Cas. Dean knows without a doubt it's coming from Abigail, who's just awakened from a drugged sleep in the basement and is crying softly.

Grunt Cas walks out of the kitchen, and even though the connection closes down to normal again, he knows Cas is going to save the girl.

Ms. Calder stands up. “Where are you going?” she asks, then turns to Dean. “Where is he going?” she says, sounding as if she's trying to cover how nervous she is.

Dean pulls out his knife, and Ms. Calder's eyes flash with a purple that doesn't change the color of her eyes, but instead gives a purplish glowing effect.

“Don't touch her,” Ms. Calder says with a very inhuman, scratchy voice. “She's mine!” she says, then her tongue strikes out, hitting Dean's neck before he has a chance to move.

Dean's vision becomes hazy, and even though he's not in pain, his body isn't moving the way it should. He watches Ms. Calder stand up and stalk toward him.

“Little Abby has nearly given up hope of being rescued already,” Ms. Calder says, her eyes glowing brighter. “They taste so good when they're full of despair and heartache.”

Dean notices her cocky stance, and he knows she thinks she's won, that whatever she injected him with is going to send him to the ground in a matter of moments. He lunges at her, his knife quickly and smoothly arcing up through her throat and into her brain.

She looks surprised, and Dean grins at her. “Oh, did you think your venom would stop me?” he asks innocently, twisting the knife and watching the glow fade from her eyes. “It didn't,” he says as the glow dies out completely.

His knife slips out of her as she falls to the ground. He steps over her and heads toward the constant noise coming from Cas.

Hum, grunt, hum comes from Cas, and even though Dean knows Abby can't hear or feel the noises, it makes Dean feel better, because he knows Cas is using comforting and mothering sounds instead of shock or sorrow over the loss of a life. The girl must be alive.

Dean finds them in the basement, Abigail's legs wrapped tightly around Cas' waist, her head on his shoulder, and Cas' arms wrapped just as tightly around Abigail's body.

She gasps when he reaches the bottom of the stairs, her fear-filled eyes focused on him, and he hears Cas calming her with soft words that he can't make out. She relaxes, her head resting on Cas' shoulder. Whatever Cas said must've let her know Dean was safe, not a threat, and she believed him without question.

“Let's get her home, Cas,” Dean says.

She looks so small in his arms. She's six, a normal size for her age, but she's so scared, squeezing Cas so hard and melting into his body, and it makes her look smaller, more fragile.

“Do you want to see you mommy again, Abby?” Cas asks.

Dean's throat tightens. He's never heard Cas interact with a scared child before, and he sounds so at ease, so comforting. Dean shouldn't be surprised. Cas cares so much about everyone, is ready to protect the innocent, and he's even more protective of people less able to defend themselves.

But watching him cradle Abigail, looking determined, almost fierce, well, it moves him. He loves Cas so much it hurts, and this only makes him love Cas more.

Abby doesn't answer Cas. She doesn't even nod. She's upset, and he knows Cas doesn't need a response from her, but was only making small talk to calm her down.

“She prefers Abby,” Cas says as he walks by Dean.

“Abby it is,” Dean says with a reassuring smile directed at Abby. She watches him closely over Cas' shoulder on the way up the stairs, but Dean is pleased to see she doesn't look scared of him.

Abby doesn't live very far away, so Dean pulls around the corner with Abby and Cas in the back seat. He stops the car and puts it in park. Dean leans his head back against the seat, getting ready for what's about to happen.

Nih “Everything's going to be okay, Abby,” Cas says softly.

Abby still doesn't say anything, and Dean knows it's because she's traumatized. He feels Cas' grace leaning on his soul. He can recognize it now that Cas has done it a few times. Cas' grace has recovered some, but it still isn't strong enough to mess with Abby's memories without draining him significantly, and Dean's more than willing to help.

Dean flinches as Cas opens their connection. He sees everything that has happened to Abby in the last few days in a flash that's nearly overwhelming. It's not horrific, but from the eyes of a child, everything was terrifying. She wasn't given food, and when she was thirsty, Ms. Calder gave her just enough to survive.

Ms. Calder had revealed her true self to Abby, and it was more than Abby could take. She'd pulled herself in, hid inside her own mind to get away from what she'd seen. Dean's seen plenty of monsters, but even so, he flinches when he sees the real Ms. Calder.

Cas works his way in, refreshing Abby's body a little as he goes to help her with the dehydration, but mostly focusing on her mind.

Dean feels as if he's floating above all of them, watching as Abby's soul reaches out to Cas, trusting him even though she's only known him a few minutes. Her mind opens for him like Dean has never seen happen with an adult. She practically drags him and Cas into her, wrapping them around herself.

He's no longer floating above them. He feels the fear, the hunger, the craving for good attention and love, and he wants his mommy so badly it hurts. He wasn't a bad girl, and he doesn't know why Ms. Calder was so mean. She invited him in for cookies, and he likes cookies.

Ms. Calder had told him he'd been bad, that mommy was mad at him and asked Ms. Calder to keep him locked down in the basement because he was such a bad girl. He cried, begging to be let out, that he'd be a good girl, but Ms. Calder had ignored him.

Ms. Calder called him Abigail. He doesn't like that name. Mommy and Daddy and his best-friend-ever-in-the-whole-world Dana calls him Abby. Only the teachers and that creepy Mr. Jenkins who lives down the street calls him Abigail. Mommy keeps him away from Mr. Jenkins, but mommy should've kept him away from Ms. Calder too.

He'll never be a bad girl again. He's sorry he lied to mommy when she asked how the lamp got broken. It was him, but he was scared mommy would be disappointed. He'll never play with a ball in the house again if mommy just comes back and gets him from Ms. Calder's basement. He'll be such a

good girl that mommy will never even think about locking her in Ms. Calder's basement ever again.

As soon as he gets home, he will say he's sorry for breaking the lamp. Abby never meant to break it in the first place. He knows she tries to be good. He can see she loves her mommy and daddy, and as soon as her daddy moves back home, everything will be just right again.

Dean gasps as he realizes he's being pulled out of Abby's head by Cas. He's shivering, his stomach aching, and his head throbbing. It's going away quickly, and he thinks it's mostly sense memory rather than his physical body actually hurting.

He shakes his head, trying to get rid of the sensation. He turns in the seat and finds Abby smiling at him.

“Are you going to take me home now?” she asks.

Dean's more relieved than he could ever express. She looks fine. She's not scared. “Yup, we're taking you back to Mommy,” Dean says, smiling at her. He turns around, starting the car and heading toward Abby's house.

“Mommy won't be mad at you,” Cas says to her. “But what did we talk about?”

Abby giggles. “You said I shouldn't go on any more walks without Mommy because Mommy had to ask policemen to bring me home,” she says.

Dean remembers being told that. He remembers Cas explaining that little girls shouldn't wander off. Cas said it was a very good thing Policeman Dean and Policeman Cas were there to find her and take her home to Mommy, but that there are very bad people out there who take little girls like her away from their mommies, so she should always stay where her mommy can see her.

Abby never did wander off, but she doesn't know that now. As far as she remembers, she chased after a cat, got lost, and the nice policemen found her in the park, where she'd been looking for the cat for a couple days, sleeping on the park bench at night and eating the apples from the tree she'd found.

Dean tries to get his head on straight. He'd fully immersed himself in Abby's head. He'd become her, and he'd left it up to Cas to have to fish him back out again. He feels a little silly, but it had been so easy. Abby had grabbed onto him. She wouldn't let go.

He sits in the car while Abby and Cas get out. Abby walks up to his door and waves. He rolls down the window.

“Bye, Policeman Dean!” she says with a big grin.

“Bye, sweetheart,” he says, waving at her.

Dean watches Cas knock on the door, sees Abby's mom squeeze her so tightly that Abby squeals with laughter, and watches Abby's mom thank Cas repeatedly for bringing her daughter back safely.

Cas walks back to the car, gets into the passenger seat. They sit there in silence for a few minutes. Dean's still shaken by the experience, but he feels better having Cas beside him.

“When you latched onto me in Hell, *uhn*,” Cas says, “it was even stronger than that.”

Dean feels goosebumps rise on his arms. He knows the story. Cas has told him more than once. “Sorry I let myself get sucked into Abby like that,” he says, reaching over and grabbing hold of Cas' hand.

Nih “I let you do that because Abby needed it,” Cas says. “I was fixing her mind, but she needed someone to keep her safe, take away the fear as I changed her memories. I apologize for how you feel right now, but I assure you it was what she needed, and I assumed you'd have agreed to it if I had asked.”

Dean snorts. “Well, yeah, when you put it that way, I have no problem with it. I mean, I feel funny and all, but if she needed it, it's okay.”

“I couldn't push you away when you wrapped yourself around me,” Cas says softly.

Dean chuckles. “I pulled the octopus routine on you, huh?” he asks with a smile.

Cuh Cas smiles. “You assume you were too far gone to be worth saving, but a demon would've never wrapped itself around an angel for comfort and insisted upon being rescued.”

Dean turns to Cas, feeling raw and broken open. “You fought for me. I thought Hell and pain and torture was all I had left, but you fought for me.”

Cas leans in and kisses Dean so gently it nearly makes Dean cry. Cas always puts his all into a kiss, and this time is no different. Even though it's gentle, a soft press of Cas' lips to Dean's, Cas reassures him and comforts him with just the kiss.

Uhn, dook “I knew you'd be worth it,” Cas says.

Chapter 7: Motive and Opportunity

Summary: At the end of Family Matters, Gabriel whisks Sam away, telling Dean and Cas that he'll explain the situation to Sam. This is what happened after that.

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Sam's still gasping, trying to orient himself. He has no idea where he is, and given that it's Gabriel who's kidnapped him, he could be anywhere, even Heaven. He forces himself to calm down, to look around.

They're in a field of ankle-high grass. It's daytime, the sun high, so Sam assumes they've traveled at least seven time zones, if they're still on Earth.

It's a beautiful place. The sky is clear save for a few white, puffy clouds, the sun is shining brightly, but it's not too warm. There are trees off in the distance, and they look like very old elm trees. Sam does some quick thinking, putting everything together, and he thinks they might be in the UK, but again with Gabriel, who knows where they are.

Speaking of which, Gabriel is grinning at him. Sam sighs. Gabriel looks pleased with himself, and considering Sam is frustrated and wants to know why the hell he's in the UK, the look on Gabriel's face irritates him.

"It's beautiful here, isn't it?" Gabriel asks, gesturing around them, his arms out expansively.

Sam feels a flare of anger go through his body. He knows if he doesn't play along at least a little, Gabriel might leave him here or worse, so he forces a smile.

"Yes, it is," he says, and it comes out more harsh than he'd meant it to be.

"Lighten up, Sammy-boy," Gabriel says. "I didn't hurt you. Dean and Cas are fine. I brought you here to explain things, and as far as places to discuss our brothers' love lives, it ain't too shabby," he says with a shrug as he looks around.

Sam deflates a little. "I suppose," he says.

"C'mon, Sam. Give me a chance, huh?" Gabriel says.

Sam thinks he hears a bit of longing in Gabriel's request, but Sam would be lonely if he was an asshole like Gabriel. Tricking people can't get you much good company. "So explain," he says.

Gabriel snorts. He holds out his hand, palm up, and Sam is surprised to find a pile of gummy bears in Gabriel's hand. Gabriel's eyebrow raises.

"Uhm, thanks," Sam says, taking a few pieces and popping them in his mouth. They're really good, but Sam doesn't want to say so.

Gabriel shoves the rest of the gummy bears into his own mouth and chews loudly. "I like this place," he says with food in his mouth.

Gabriel's mouth is full of multicolored, partially-masticated gummy bears, and Sam is reminded of the many times Dean has talked with a mouthful of food. It irritates him when Dean does it, and he's finding he feels the same about Gabriel.

"It's very nice," Sam says, taking another quick look around. It really is gorgeous. Everything smells fresh and natural in a way you don't get unless you get really far away from a city, and even then it doesn't get this fresh.

"See that place over there?" Gabriel asks as he points to Sam's left.

Sam turns and sees a Tudor-style cottage house maybe a quarter of a mile from where they're standing. Sam decides that yes, they're in the UK because the colors and style are a match for old English style. "Yeah," he drawls as he turns back to Gabriel.

Gabriel smiles, and Sam would call it a wistful smile. "I come here when I feel like relaxing, like living a calm and laid-back life," Gabriel says.

It surprises Sam. When he'd imagined where Gabriel would be when he wasn't with them or tricking people, he assumed Gabriel was in more exciting and busy places than a cottage home in the middle of nowhere. Gabriel reminded him of someone who would be comfortable in someplace like a Las Vegas casino hotel or a bustling city like New York. Someplace that never sleeps with things to do twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

The thought of Gabriel hanging out and relaxing in a little cottage, surrounded by a beautiful landscape warms Sam. He has an urge to see how Gabriel has decorated the place. Has he chosen comfortable pieces or furniture that looks stylish? Does he have a bed? Does he sleep in it? Does he use his kitchen? Does he have a television? Does he take baths in a giant claw-foot tub?

And then Sam pulls himself out of his daydreaming. He really doesn't need to think about Gabriel naked in a bathtub. He's been kidnapped by Gabriel, most likely because Gabriel wants to teach him a lesson or mess with him in some way.

"Walk with me," Gabriel says, then starts a slow pace in the direction of his cottage.

Sam's jaw drops, and he gapes after Gabriel for a moment. He shakes himself out of it, then shrugs. What the hell. He follows Gabriel, catching up so that he's walking alongside him.

"What has Cas told you about the bond he and Dean share?" Gabriel asks as they walk.

"It was actually Dean that told me," Sam says. "He told me they got hit by a surge of power on a hunt, and now they're angel-married."

Gabriel snorts. "Sounds like Dean," he says.

Sam chuckles. "Yeah, but he also told me he hears noises from Cas now. That they're like animal noises only with loaded meaning. He said he can see Cas' wings sometimes, and I've seen them open the connection so Cas can heal himself," Sam says.

Sam knows the fear over that whole incident is coming through in his tone of voice, but it really did scare the shit out of him.

"After that happened," Sam continues, "Cas told me about how humans weren't meant to see and hear these things, so he's protecting Dean by keeping it to a minimum."

"Good so far," Gabriel says, nodding. "Anything else?"

Sam snorts. "Dean over-shares sometimes," he says with a smile. "So I also know that Cas opens their connection more when they're fucking, and Dean gets a huge kick out of it."

Gabriel laughs. "Again, sounds like Dean. So is that it?"

Sam nods. "Yeah, other than the things that I've noticed between them, like how they seem in tune with each other and with their surroundings. I mean, Dean has always been really observant. You have to be in our line of work or you wouldn't last long, but there's a difference since the connection."

"So neither of them told you the power is coming from Dean?" Gabriel asks.

Sam stops, and Gabriel stops after a few more steps, turning to look at Sam. Sam stands there frozen, his jaw dropped.

"Excuse me?" Sam says, eyes wide. His stomach feels fluttery and weird.

Gabriel chuckles. "Yeah, I don't even think Cas realizes the full potential yet, but Cas is suppressing Dean's abilities, not just closing down a connection between them."

"So, uhm, you're telling me my brother is a superhero?" Sam asks, his nose scrunched up.

Gabriel barks out a laugh. "Sort of, I guess," he says with a shrug. "The witch was using the grace of a fallen angel along with dark magics. When I look at Dean, I see the grace all throughout him in a way that just shouldn't have happened."

"What do you mean?" Sam asks, concerned. Something that shouldn't have happened is probably that way for a good reason.

"Normally when an angel takes a vessel, it's like we're possessing them. Kind of like demons do, but different," Gabriel says, gesturing toward his body. "With Dean, the grace is everywhere. It's like the grace exploded, and Dean's cells absorbed them, transforming and mutating. It's even been absorbed into his soul, blending and becoming something more than before."

Sam feels his stomach clench. "This has never happened before, has it?"

“No, not that I know of,” he replies.

“It won't hurt him, will it?” Sam asks.

Gabriel snorts. “If anything, he's healthier than ever before. He has the ability to see an angel's true form without his eyes burning out, hear an angel's true voice without his ear drums exploding.”

“So that's a good thing,” Sam says with relief.

“Yeah,” Gabriel said, nodding.

“But why is Cas suppressing his abilities?” Sam asks, confused look on his face.

“The human mind wasn't built to have any of those abilities,” Gabriel says, shaking his head, “so Cas is slowly letting up on the clamp he's used to suppress Dean's abilities. Dean is adapting. He's already able to mentally handle a conversation between angels, for the most part.”

“For the most part?” Sam asks, eyebrow raised.

“We were talking kind of fast there for a minute in the motel room. He got a little dizzy,” Gabriel says with a smirk.

“Dean heard you,” Sam says rather than asks. The thought is new to him, that Dean can hear other angels beside Cas, but with the new information Gabriel has given him about the powers coming from Dean, it seems logical.

Gabriel nods. “He started to get a little overwhelmed, but I think that's mostly because Cas was distracted, let up a little too much on the clamp, and Dean saw what Cas and I really mean to each other, which hit some emotional buttons for Dean.”

“And what are you to each other?” Sam asks slowly, wincing as if Gabriel's about to say they're fuckbuddies, maybe even describe a few encounters. Sam doesn't want to hear it for more than one reason.

“Cas is my little brother,” Gabriel says with a proud smile.

Sam chuckles. The look on Gabriel's face reminds him of the look Dean gets on his face when he talks about Sam and his accomplishments, the way Sam's a good hunter, and sometimes even when Sam does research and gives Dean the run-down on it. It warms Sam's heart, and he forgets for a moment that he thought Gabriel was an asshole.

“I can show you what Dean saw if you want,” Gabriel offers, his voice soft as if he knows it's a huge offer.

“I thought the human mind couldn't handle it. I wasn't hit with the witch's power,” he says, shaking his head.

“I could do it without damaging you because I have more experience and I'm much more powerful than Cas, especially right now when his grace is recovering with Dean's help,” Gabriel says.

“He's what?” Sam blurts loudly. His body tenses and he takes a step toward Gabriel. “Dean promised me it wasn't draining him when Cas used him to fix his wound. Did he lie to me?” Sam nearly growls.

Gabriel holds his hands up in a calm-the-fuck-down gesture. “Whoa, hang on,” he says. “Souls are special. They're pretty much a ball of energy, and on extremely rare occasions humans have offered to let an angel recharge their grace, so to speak. It's painful, intrusive, and it takes days to recover from the fatigue it causes. This isn't what's happening to Dean.”

“It better not be,” Sam says gruffly.

“Like I said, souls are special,” Gabriel says with a grin. “Because of the bond, Dean and Cas are connected much more intimately and on a baser level than an angel using him as a battery. Dean's soul and Cas' grace reach out to each other, feed off each other, and each of them get stronger because of the other one instead of draining each other.”

“Uhm, oh,” Sam says, instantly deflating. He doesn't know what he would've done to Cas had he been siphoning off Dean, but Sam would've had to do some damage. “So Cas' grace is repairing itself and Dean is getting power from it?”

“Yes on the first part, but kind of no on the second part,” Gabriel says, his hand out flat and tilting side to side. “Dean has his own power, his own abilities, and when the connection between them is uninhibited, Dean boosts his own powers by using Cas like an antenna. He can tap into Cas' powers and abilities too, but he can't control Cas' them. It's hard to explain in human terms, but Dean has his own abilities and powers, Cas has his own abilities and powers that they can use interchangeably to a certain extent or separately.”

“Which is why you wanted to dump some stuff into my head, right?” Sam asks.

“I'm offering. You don't have to accept, but I know you're a curious kind of guy, and I know both Cas and Dean mean a lot to you,” Gabriel says.

“Does it hurt?” Sam asks. He really doesn't care if it hurts. He's interested. Very interested. He's also nervous about what he'll see, what all this could mean, so he's stalling to psych himself up.

“Nope,” Gabriel says.

Sam can tell by the way Gabriel is being patient, the way he's looking at Sam that he knows full well that Sam's scared. Gabriel is giving him his space, giving him time to work himself up to it. Sam's annoyed just as much as he's grateful for the concession.

“Okay,” Sam says, sounding more confident than he feels. “Let's do this.”

Gabriel walks up to Sam, standing close enough that it wouldn't take much to lean in and see if Gabriel's a good kisser. Sam feels himself blush a little, and he really hopes Gabriel wasn't reading

his mind just then.

Gabriel rests his hands on Sam's hips, a gentle and grounding touch. Sam doubts Gabriel needs the contact to do what he's about to do, and he's pretty sure Gabriel's doing it just to reassure Sam.

“Ready?” Gabriel asks softly.

Sam looks Gabriel in the eye, remembering all the times he killed Dean, wondering if he's insane for letting Gabriel do this. Then he reminds himself that Gabriel could do whatever the hell he wants to any of them at any time, yet Gabriel seems to be offering instead of just pushing this on Sam.

“Yes,” Sam says, nodding.

Sam doesn't notice anything right away. And he's about to ask if Gabriel's going to start when he feels a warm sensation at the base of his skull. It's not uncomfortable or painful. He feels something wash over his mind in a way he'd describe a gentle breeze caressing his naked skin. It's slowly building, but not disturbing.

It feels good. He wants more of it. He wants to wrap himself in it. He feels a love like he's never felt before. It's strong and it's directed toward Castiel, but it's not jarring. He feels the pride of nurturing a beloved someone, watching them turn out better than you'd ever expected, even though you knew they'd be wonderful anyway.

He feels devotion, a fierce desire to protect Cas from anything or anyone who would ever threaten him in any way. The love grows in intensity, and Sam realizes it means so much more than humans think it does. He feels it for Cas. He'd do anything for Cas.

The feeling shifts abruptly, and he feels that same love plus a little something different for Gabriel. He's not sure what it is until he tries to remember if he's ever felt it before, because it seems familiar. And then he remembers being eleven years old, having a crush on his science teacher, giving her a flower after recess, the smile she'd given him in return.

He has a crush on Gabriel. No, Cas has a crush on Gabriel. Then Sam feels other familiar emotions, ones that he feels for Dean. He feels the easy nature of camaraderie, the confidence of knowing you've done well and have the approval of the one you most want it from.

Gabriel and the field of grass fade away and he sees Gabriel holding Cas, embracing him in a hug that's full of affection. Sam realizes Gabriel has shown him this in a way he would understand, that the shared moment he's seeing didn't happen in their physical vessels, didn't happen on a plain blacktop street in the middle of a small town on Earth.

Sam watches Gabriel showing Cas how to use his powers, teaching him like one would a child, but he sees it tailored for a human mind. Gabriel uses his hands to push a boulder across the blacktop, and Sam knows Gabriel could do it faster because the boulder is no match for Gabriel's strength, but that's not the lesson. He knows it because he can sense what Gabriel's motive is.

Castiel's turn is next, and Sam can feel Cas' excitement to show Gabriel what he knows. Cas puts his hands on the boulder like Gabriel had and pushes, but the boulder flies across the street, crashing into a tree, knocking the tree over, the boulder cracking and falling apart into three sections.

Castiel frowns, and Sam feels the disappointment, the strong desire to have done well, but the dejected feeling of failure. But then Cas looks at Gabriel, and Gabriel smiles at him, says it's okay, that this is why Gabriel is here.

Gabriel manifests another boulder in front of them, then puts his hands on it. He explains that even though you have the strength, it's not always appropriate to use your full strength.

He pushes the boulder a few feet effortlessly, then steps back, gesturing for Cas to try again. Cas shakes off his disappointment, then puts his hands on the boulder. Gabriel reminds him to be gentle, then nods at Cas, and Cas starts pushing. He moves it, and though it's slower and more controlled than last time, he moves it over ten feet. Sam knows Cas had been trying to move it just as little as Gabriel had, and he feels Cas' disappointment again.

Gabriel smiles, hugs Cas, tells him he did so much better than last time, reassures him that it takes time and patience to learn how to use all these powers, and that Cas is doing even better than Gabriel could have expected. There's love, reassurance, pride in the surge of emotion and feelings being shared with Cas from Gabriel.

It's so much more than a student and mentor relationship. It's more than a father and son relationship. It's more than a sibling relationship. It has aspects of all of those relationships, yet it's not any of them, and it's more than those could ever be.

Sam blinks and he's back in the field with Gabriel. He's shaken by what he experienced, but he's glad to have had seen it, felt it all. It's told him so much more about angels in general, so much more about Cas and Gabriel than he ever could've imagined.

It's told him more about Gabriel, rounded him out in a way that appeals to Sam so much more than before. Sure, Gabriel can be a pain in the ass, but he's never seen this side of Gabriel. He really likes it.

“Thank you,” Sam whispers, his legs feeling a little wobbly.

“No problem,” Gabriel says with a smile. “That wasn't exactly what your brother saw, by the way. I have much more finesse and style,” he says, smirking and nearly leering at Sam.

Sam chuckles. “Is that how Dean sees and feels things or did you totally manufacture that for me?” he asks. He's not even sure what he'd rather the answer be.

“It was just for you,” Gabriel says with a smile that Sam can only call adorable. It's a mix of pride for doing something that Gabriel realizes Sam enjoyed and a bit of 'aww shucks.' “What Dean experiences is closer to the way angels experience things. There's a good reason why Cas puts a clamp on Dean's abilities and keeps their connection to a level Dean can handle. Even with his

mutated body and soul, he still can't take it full force.”

“There's a dirty joke in there somewhere,” Sam says with a smirk.

Gabriel laughs. “I knew you had a dirty mind,” he says, eyes alight with mischief.

Sam realizes they're still standing close, Gabriel's hands on Sam's hips. It wasn't uncomfortable until he realized there was no reason to be standing that close anymore, but now he feels funny. He takes a step back.

“Are you going to show me your house?” he asks.

Gabriel has an odd look on his face that Sam can't place, but then he looks toward his house. “I think you'll like it,” he says with a nod, then starts walking.

Sam doesn't know what just happened, but he feels kind of bad about stepping back as if Gabriel's hands burned him. He's not all that sure about his feelings for Gabriel, and he has no idea what Gabriel feels for him. He catches up with Gabriel again, but the odd look on his face is gone.

“I like to be comfortable,” Gabriel says. “And I'd like it if you were comfortable in my home, so if there's anything you'd like, let me know.”

“Okay,” Sam says, finding the conversation bizarre. It's like he's spending the night as a guest in someone's home and he's been asked if he wants an extra blanket. But this time it's an archangel's house, and the archangel has casually offered him a blanket.

Sam brushes off the feeling. He thinks about what he'd learned in the field with Gabriel. He's still wrapping his head around it. Gabriel is like Cas' older brother, and while the idea is new to him, he's intrigued.

Sam had underestimated Gabriel's emotions, and he feels a little bad about it. There had to be a reason Gabriel had helped them more than once. He'd tried to get Sam to see that their odd devotion to each other would cause problems on a grand scale.

Sure, he was a trickster. He was sarcastic, cutting, and abrasive. But there was a part of it Sam liked. That smirk was more than just annoying, it was also endearing in a way that had confused Sam.

And what Sam had experienced in the field had poked holes in his theories about Gabriel. Big holes. He had known Gabriel wasn't completely callous, but what Gabriel felt for Castiel went miles beyond a job, beyond a duty to train a young angel. And what Castiel felt for Gabriel was more than mere affection.

Sam smiled, remembering the crush Cas has on Gabriel. It's cute, and Sam can't help but smile. Dean must've felt it by now, must know about it. He doesn't think his brother will see it as anything but cute, just as Sam sees it. Sam was able to clearly see the feeling for what it was, that it was an innocent crush, so surely Dean saw that too.

“I can't ever hear the noises you guys make or see anything that Dean sees, can I?” Sam says, feeling a void in his chest. He knows it's silly to want it, but there's some jealousy and curiosity about it all.

“If you were to bond with an angel, you'd be able to experience a small portion of it, but without a bond the most I can give you is something like I just showed you out in the field,” Gabriel says as they get to the stone pathway leading to the front door of Gabriel's cottage.

Sam feels a flutter in his stomach, and it's not just because Gabriel said a bond would allow him some of what Dean has. The way Gabriel said it, well, it makes Sam think of the possibilities. He's only just learned a whole hell of a lot more about Gabriel, but nearly his entire view of him has changed.

Gabriel opens the front door and gestures expansively with his right hand. “Welcome to my home,” he says with a smile.

Sam steps inside, letting his eyes adjust to the low indoor light. It's pleasantly warm, and he feels carpet under his feet that's so soft it feels fluffy even though he's wearing his shoes. Looking around the living room they've stepped into, he's impressed by the normality of it all.

It's comfortable. The walls are a muted beige, the carpet a few shades darker. Directly to his left there's a sectional couch that's bigger than Sam remembers ever seeing in a house. It's upholstered in a very dark brown material that looks soft and inviting. The pillows strewn about on it are a lighter shade of beige with deep red accents.

The coffee table has legs of white-washed wood, the top of the table a natural aged wood. The side tables match the coffee table. He sees a few overstuffed chairs in a deep red material with off-white throw pillows on them.

Sam notices that instead of art on the walls, there are objects that seem to fit with the style, though they're eclectic, and like pieces most people wouldn't have put on the walls in a room like this, but they fit and match what he now knows of Gabriel's personality now.

“They're things I've picked up over the years,” Gabriel says, gesturing at the wall hangings.

Sam sees a large piece of driftwood on the wall over one side of the sectional couch. It's beautiful. It has a natural gray wash, like it had been sitting out in the sun for a long time, bleaching the color of the wood away.

He looks around at the other objects, smiling when he realizes that when Gabriel said 'picked them up,' he meant it literally. Every piece looks as if he'd been walking through different lands all over the Earth and picked up things he'd found interesting. More things are falling into place, more pieces of what makes up Gabriel. Sam likes it.

“Your home is beautiful,” Sam says, turning to Gabriel and smiling. He knows his dimples are showing, and he's doing it on purpose. Shamelessly.

“Thank you,” Gabriel says, and Sam sees him check out said dimples. “I feel like dinner. Are you hungry?” he asks.

Sam is surprised by the change in conversation, but he goes with it. “Yeah, I could eat.”

“Awesome,” Gabriel says, then heads off through the archway to Sam's right.

Sam shrugs and follows him, assuming Gabriel's heading for the kitchen. If Gabriel wants to play the good host, Sam's up for it.

As he walks into the kitchen, Sam's surprised by how everything looks well used instead of brand new. There are high-end appliances, but the decor makes it seem comfortable and inviting in a way that one wouldn't normally expect from industrial appliances.

There is a gas stove top in the middle of the kitchen with an island surrounding it and bar stools to the far side of the island. Sam takes a seat on a bar stool and watches.

The pan Gabriel fishes out of his drawer has been used gently. It strikes Sam as odd that they would look used when Gabriel could keep everything looking new if he wanted to. It makes the kitchen seem more comfortable like this, more lived in with the obvious use.

Gabriel sets the pan on the stove top, lighting the burner and setting it on high. He starts up another burner that has a griddle plate on it.

“What are you making?” Sam asks.

Gabriel smiles as he walks over to the refrigerator and pulls out a plastic bag full of sliced cheddar cheese. “Grilled cheese and soup,” he says.

Sam chuckles. He doesn't know if he was expecting a gourmet meal, but it's funny that Gabriel chooses something simple yet tasty.

Sam watches as Gabriel moves around in his kitchen, obviously at ease with it. He grills up the sandwiches with the perfect amount of browning on the bread, and just as the tomato soup starts to steam, Gabriel turns the gas off.

He uses a spatula to plate the sandwiches and then pours the soup into mugs. He sets a plate and mug in front of Sam, then gets onto the bar stool next to Sam, setting his own plate and mug down as well.

“This smells great,” Sam says, his stomach growling.

“Dig in,” Gabriel says. “If you finish that and you're still hungry, I'll make us sundaes.”

Sam chuckles, then moans when he bites into his sandwich. “This is awesome,” he says with a mouthful of food, then blushes when he realizes what he's done.

Gabriel laughs. “Thank you. I enjoy cooking. And it's even more fun when there's someone to share

the food with,” he says with a soft smile.

Sam feels something in his chest. He's felt it before, but never imagined he'd feel it for Gabriel. It's affection, and though he's been attracted to Gabriel, the cocky attitude made Sam feel other things beside affection for him. Things that made rough sex sound like a hell of a lot of fun.

“So why'd you really bring me here?” Sam asks nonchalantly, though he watches Gabriel closely for a reaction.

Gabriel doesn't disappoint. His eyes widen and he stops chewing for a moment. He recovers quickly, but Sam's already seen the 'shit, I'm caught' look on his face.

“I needed to explain Cas and Dean's situation to you,” Gabriel says, breaking off a piece of his sandwich and dipping it into the soup.

“You could've done that anywhere, including another room at the same motel we were staying in,” Sam says, still keeping his tone light. He doesn't want Gabriel to feel attacked, but he does want to make Gabriel say the reason behind his kidnapping.

“I wanted to brag about my beautiful house and awesome cooking skills,” Gabriel says with a smirk.

Sam lets his face fall, going for unhappily surprised. “Oh,” he says, his tone low and a little sad.

Gabriel has a funny look on his face, and if Sam is reading the situation and the way Gabriel is acting right, he thinks he can push this. If he's wrong, he'll probably just get zapped back to Dean and Cas in striped pajamas or something. But if he's right, this could be fun.

“So you didn't invite me here for a sleepover?” Sam asks sweetly, looking a little hopeful.

Gabriel freezes, the sandwich most likely forgotten about and soggy. “Uhm, I,” he says stupidly, and then his eyes narrow. He drops the sandwich, the soup sloshing over the side of the cup. “I underestimated you. Congratulations, that doesn't happen often,” Gabriel says, looking impressed.

“Did you just cheat and read my mind?” Sam asks, setting his sandwich down and turning on the bar stool so that he's facing Gabriel.

“No, but I –,” he starts, but is cut off when Sam lunges forward and smashes their lips together.

It's a rough kiss, and Sam reaches up, grabbing Gabriel's face in his hands to angle his head better, then deepens the kiss, slows down some, and nibbles Gabriel's lower lip as he pulls away.

“That's too bad,” Sam whispers. “You would've probably seen a few of the things I wanna do to you,” he says with a grin.

Sam watches as Gabriel's mouth hangs open. Gabriel squeaks, and it's an adorable sound. Sam's not stupid enough to think he's suddenly hearing angel noises, but he is pretty thrilled that he got a squeak out of Gabriel's vessel.

Gabriel snorts as he recovers. "I really, really underestimated you," he says, and then a grin blossoms on his face. "But I like it."

Sam raises an eyebrow. "Would you rather finish giving me the tour of the house by showing me your bedroom or do you wanna finish lunch?"

"I don't have to buy you flowers?" Gabriel asks, his eyes lighting up with amusement. "Dean said you needed to be courted."

"Nah. You already bought me lunch, and I put out on the first date," Sam says with a shrug.

Gabriel makes a strangled sound that probably was meant to be a laugh, but arousal got the best of it. He stands up quickly, the bar stool falling over behind him. He grabs Sam's wrist and starts dragging him to the hallway.

"Bedroom's back here," Gabriel says.

Sam yanks, standing his ground just a few feet into the hallway. Gabriel lets himself be pulled back, pushed against the wall. Sam knows it's only because Gabriel's being careful with him, having been around humans far longer than Cas, and it has nothing to do with Gabriel being weak or Sam overpowering him. It sends a thrill through Sam that Gabriel is letting him do this.

He pushes his body up against Gabriel, pressing him into the wall. He leans down, brushing his lips over Gabriel's neck, then bites down.

"Oh, fuck!" Gabriel yells, his fingers finding Sam's belt and getting it undone, then working on Sam's jeans.

"Yeah," Sam growls as he gets his hands up underneath Gabriel's shirt, wanting skin on skin. "Wanna fuck you, Gabe. Can I fuck you?" he asks as he licks and bites at Gabriel's neck, his jaw, his earlobe.

"Hell, yeah," Gabriel says, shoving Sam's pants and underwear down without finesse and grabbing Sam's cock with his right hand.

Sam moans, wrapping his arms around Gabriel and lifting him. Gabriel wraps his legs around Sam's waist, and it's one of the hottest things Sam's ever experienced. Sam slides his hands down Gabriel's back, over his ass, and he squeezes each cheek in one hand. His cock is already so hard it hurts, and dragging against the fabric of Gabriel's pants is only making him harder.

"Clothes, fuck," Sam growls, thrusting up against Gabriel, shoving him into the wall, his cock sliding roughly against Gabriel's pants between his ass cheeks.

Then Sam gasps when suddenly his cock is sliding against skin. He stops thrusting and looks Gabriel in the eye, surprised but too aroused to figure out what happened.

"Forget who you were with?" Gabriel asks, a cocky grin on his face, completely naked while Sam's pants are around his ankles and he still has his shirt on.

Sam snorts and starts thrusting again, pulling Gabriel's ass cheeks apart and running the top side of his cock between them.

“I'm all lubed up too if you wanna fuck me instead of just rubbing your dick all over my ass,” Gabriel says.

Sam feels a flare of irritation, and he remembers why he's imagined fucking Gabriel fast and hard. The cocky attitude turns him on, and he wants to throw Gabriel around, fuck him hard, and leave him screaming, spent, a sweaty mess.

Sam snorts. “Maybe I'll just get myself off rubbing all over your cute little ass and leave you with a case of blue balls,” he threatens, thrusting harder.

“Oh, please. Like you'd give up the chance to fuck my tight ass,” Gabriel says in a mocking tone.

“So fucking cocky,” Sam says, using the fingers of his right hand to push his dick into Gabriel's hole.

“Ah!” Gabriel yelps, nails digging into Sam's shoulders. “Yeah, fuck me,” he says, his shoulders pushing back into the wall for leverage.

Sam pushes in, not giving Gabriel time to adjust. He's tight, but Sam knows Gabriel won't let Sam hurt him, so as soon as he's bottomed out, he starts fucking. He licks at Gabriel's lips, then bites them. Gabriel is clenching around him, almost riding him even though the position he's in shouldn't give him the maneuverability to do that.

Gabriel grabs a handful of Sam's hair and yanks his head closer, kissing Sam and moaning, making it a messy kiss. He's panting into Sam's mouth, and Sam loves it.

“Harder,” Gabriel growls, then bites Sam's neck.

Sam yelps, shocked by the bite, but also aroused even more from it. He fucks Gabriel harder and faster, grunting with the effort, thankful that Gabriel can stand being smashed into the wall because it feels fucking awesome.

“Knew you'd love my ass,” Gabriel says, grinning up at Sam.

Sam snorts. “Cocky fucker,” he growls, then fucks Gabriel even harder when Gabriel pushes against the wall, arching his back and making it easier for Sam to fuck him.

They're both sweaty, and Sam has no idea how he's been able to hold Gabriel up this entire time. He's strong, and Gabriel isn't a huge guy, but he's still substantial. Sam wonders if Gabriel is helping with that. For all he knows, Gabriel could be helping support the wall so Sam doesn't literally fuck him through the it. Sam pushes his forehead against Gabriel's shoulder, panting onto Gabriel's skin and grunting.

“Yeah! Fuck, yeah! Sam!” Gabriel yells.

Sam feels Gabriel's asshole clenching around his dick. He's writhing against the wall, shoving down on Sam's cock, and whimpering at the end of each exhaled pant. Sam realizes Gabriel came just from getting fucked and rubbing his cock on Sam's stomach. It all pushes Sam over the edge and he comes moments after Gabriel, growling and biting and fucking into Gabriel until he's spent and his legs feel shaky.

He yelps as suddenly he's lying in bed with Gabriel curled up next to him, his right leg thrown over Sam's legs and his head tucked up against Sam's chest. It takes him a few seconds to recover, and in that time he realizes his cock isn't sticky or wet, the two of them aren't sweaty anymore, his clothes are all gone, and there's a warm blanket over them.

Sam laughs. "No cleanup or effort to get into bed with wobbly legs," he says, his words a little slurred.

"Yeah, and you could already be asleep if you weren't warbling like a drunken sailor," Gabriel says, and he sounds as if he's half asleep.

"Can we do that again?" Sam asks, his eyes falling closed.

Gabriel snorts. "Yes. Later," he says. "Now shut up and go to sleep before we start talking about our feelings and braiding each others hair."

"If you wanted me to braid your hair, all you had to do was ask," Sam says with a grin.

Gabriel's head pops up, and he gives Sam the stink eye. "Sleep. Or I'll send you back to the motel room naked with sex hair."

Sam smiles as Gabriel's head drops to his chest again. He fully believes Gabriel would send him back in that state, and he knows Dean would take one look at his sex hair and realize what happened.

He drifts off to sleep with Gabriel's breaths warming his skin and a stupid grin on his face.

Chapter 8: Wrapped Around You

Summary: While investigating reports of odd lights in the forest, the guys stumble into the unexpected. Oh, and poor Sam needs some brain bleach. There are tentacles in this fic, but no sexual contact of any sort is had with them.

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“Dean!” Sam yells from somewhere off to Dean's left.

Dean spins toward the scream, and it takes him a moment to realize what he's actually seeing. Not a long moment, because hey, they're hunters. But it's not every day you see your brother hanging from his ankle ten feet off the ground.

Sure, they've gotten caught in vines before. This job is full of the unexpected. The difference is the vines they've been stuck in before never purposely grabbed one of them and pulled him up into the air.

Dean's gun is in the back of his pants and the only blade he has is in his ankle holster. They hadn't expected attack vines. They'd come out here to investigate what the locals claimed was bright flashes of light.

As Dean reaches for the knife, he's grabbed around the waist and lifted about five feet off the ground. “Fuck!” he yells, his stomach not liking the quick change in altitude nor the fact that he's being swung around like a rag doll.

“Cas!” Sam yells.

Dean assumes Sam is calling for Cas' help, but when he hears a cackle and a yelp from Cas, he knows it's because Sam was warning Castiel about something. Dean can't see what's going on even though he keeps twisting his body about, and by the time he's able to catch a glimpse of him, Cas is out cold on the ground.

That's when Dean realizes the vines aren't really vines. “They're fucking tentacles!” Dean yells.

“No shit!” Sam yells back.

Dean struggles, but the tentacle wrapped around his waist is thick and strong. Unfortunately, the knife strapped to his ankle is now covered by the tentacle wrapped around his legs. He uses his fists to beat on the tentacle at his waist, but instead of letting go, Dean hears a moaning growl.

“Hey, don't hurt my baby,” a woman says in a teasing voice.

Dean tries to locate the woman, and when he sees her, he lets out a screaming growl of frustration. “A fucking witch! I'm so sick and tired of fucking witches fucking with me!” he yells as he flails around, hitting the tentacle around his waist and trying to pull his legs out of the tentacle around his ankles.

The witch snorts. “How do you know I'm a witch?” she asks, leaning against a tree as nonchalantly as if she were resting after a leisurely stroll through the forest.

“You summoned this thing,” Sam says as he points at the tentacles wrapped around him, already sounding nearly as irritated as Dean.

“I'm a sorceress, you imbecile,” she says, and it sounds as if she's said it many times and she'd really like it if people would get it straight.

Dean chuckles. “Different name, same game,” he says as if he's bored. He's not really bored. He's so sick of shit like this that he wants to strangle her.

“Whatever,” she says, tossing her long brown hair over her shoulder with a well-manicured hand.

Dean feels a tingling at the base of his skull, a pulsing throughout his body. He hadn't noticed it before, but now that it's getting worse, he realizes it's been there since just after the tentacle grabbed him. He doesn't know what it is, but he's pretty sure it's something the witch has done to him. Witch, not sorceress.

“Now that my baby has captured you, I can do whatever I want to this yummy ball of hotness over here,” the witch says, and Dean sees her walk over to Cas.

“Don't touch him!” Dean barks.

“Aww,” the witch coos, “but his power is so yummy!”

“Don't fucking touch him or I'll kill you slowly instead of quick and painlessly,” Dean growls.

The tingling becoming distracting. He suddenly realizes he can't feel Cas. He's become so used to being connected to Cas, getting constant input from him, that it's jarring to have it gone. It's like he's missing a limb. It hurts in a very non-physical way.

The witch laughs. “I'm scared. Really,” she deadpans. “Actually, I'm getting a little tired of listening to you run your mouth. I think I'll have my baby kill you now,” she says, then she says a few words in Latin.

Dean feels the tentacles holding onto him shiver around him, and he hears a groan off to his right. When cranes his neck, looking to his right, and his jaw drops. He hadn't seen it before because it looks like a large tree at first glance. The creature is huge. It's easily fifteen feet high and seven feet wide with tentacles stretched out everywhere. Dean can't even count the number of tentacles.

“I said kill them already,” the witch growls, then gives the order in Latin again.

The tentacles holding him shiver more this time, and the moan turns into a whine. The whine reverberates through his head, making the tingling that's already in his head turn into a spike of pain. He gasps, putting his hands on his head and pushing against his skull as if it'll stop the pain.

“Ah!” Dean yelps, the pulsing in his body getting stronger.

The witch is going to kill them. He doesn't know what she's going to do to Cas, but he doesn't want her touching him. Cas is defenseless. If she kills him and Sam, Cas won't stand a chance unless whatever she did to him wears off.

Dean's getting dizzy, but he doesn't think it's because of the pain or the fact that the tentacle is squeezing his waist.

“Stupid tentacle monster,” the witch yells. “You can't get good help these days,” she says, then stalks over to Cas.

“Leave him alone!” Dean says, the sound of his voice making his head hurt even more.

“He's all mine, sweetheart, and my stupid tentacle monster can do whatever the hell he wants with you,” she says, obviously dismissing the creature and kneeling down on the ground next to Cas.

“No! Leave him alone!” Dean screams, his entire body tense and ready for a fight.

The spike of pain intensifies to a level that fills Dean with the fear of dying. He can't die. Cas will be left alone with the witch. He has to save Cas.

He hears screaming. It's the witch screaming. It sounds as if someone is tearing her to shreds. He's only heard screams like that coming from souls he's tortured in Hell.

He wants her gone. He wants her to never be a threat to his mate ever again. It consumes him, and he gets lost in the sounds of her screams, the gurgling that comes from her neck as her vocal cords stop working. They've disintegrated.

When he realizes she's no longer a threat, he seeks out Cas, mate-lover-bonded-beloved, and looks him over for damage, for any sign the witch hurt him. He can see the spell she used to knock him out. He can taste it, and it tastes wrong, evil, and like nothing that should ever touch the light that is Castiel.

He pushes it out, safely away from Cas, burning it so that it falls to the ground as ashes. He immediately turns his attention back to Cas-mate-lover-bonded-beloved, and he calls to him.

“She's gone, Cas. It's okay. You can wake up now,” he says softly. He cradles Cas-mate-lover-bonded-beloved in his arms.

He wants Cas to wake up, and he can tell that Cas is trying, but something is clouding Dean's mind, and he feels the stench of the witch's power in the air, suffocating him, permeating the land, the trees, the flowers. The ground is screaming, the trees are choking, the flowers are shrinking back. He has to help them too now that he knows Cas is okay.

But Sam is there. He's saying something, but it's like he's speaking a foreign language. He sounds concerned, and Dean tries to tell Sam he's okay, but Sam's words get louder, more urgent.

He knows Sam's fine. No one will hurt him, so Dean focuses on the forest. Everything is calling out to him in its own way. They're not sentient beings, but it doesn't mean they don't turn to him like he's the sun and they're starved for what he has the ability to give them.

Lights are flashing. Colored lights. They're everywhere. He tastes love and affection. He smells fear. He hears strength building. His head hurts. It hurts. It hurts more than he remembers anything ever hurting, including anything Alastair did to him in Hell.

That strikes him as very funny. He wishes he could shove this pain in Alastair's face, let him see that there are worse things than what he did to Dean in Hell, and Dean has still survived. At least he thinks he can survive it. He's not dead yet, but it hurts in an all-consuming way.

Cas can save him. He knows it. He believes it with his entire being. Cas knows what to do. He has to.

Cas-mate-lover-bonded-beloved, cool-warmth-affection, calming-tranquility. Cas.

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Dean feels as if he's wrapped in a cloud. It's fluffy and warm and holds him without smothering him. It's singing to him. He doesn't know the song, but he knows it means safe.

Awareness comes slowly, and he wants to stay wrapped in the cloud forever, but the cloud says he needs to wake up. He tells the cloud he doesn't need to. He's fine right where he is. The cloud sends him warm affection. The cloud thinks he's adorable. Dean smiles. He is adorable, and he knows it.

Dean says he's comfortable. He likes this. The cloud says he has to wake up anyway. Dean grumbles, but the cloud just gives him a quick hug and slowly lets go.

He opens his eyes and sees hideous wallpaper. It's a splotchy yellowish color with giant red flowers that are faded and ripped. He sees a stain on the wallpaper that makes the wall look even worse, if that's possible.

He turns his head, and he's so relieved to see Cas looking down at him that his chest tightens, his breath catches in his throat, and for a moment he almost thinks he'll cry, but he pushes the feeling down, controls himself.

Hum

The noise reassures him even more. If Cas says everything's okay and he's safe, then everything's okay and he has nothing to worry about at the moment.

“Cas?” Dean says, his voice a little scratchy. His throat doesn't hurt, but his voice sounds as if he's had a very long, good night's rest.

“Hey,” Cas says softly, reaching up and running his fingers through Dean's hair, scratching his fingernails gently on Dean's scalp. *Snuffle*

“Is he okay?” Sam asks.

Dean turns his head toward the voice, sees Sam sitting on the other bed, worried expression on his face. Dean's jealous that Sam must've had time to take a shower already because he was wearing a red flannel when they were on the hunt, and now Sam's wearing his button down gray shirt. Dean would really like to take his turn in the shower now.

Coo “He's okay,” Cas says, his face beautiful, his eyes shining with those familiar slivers of sunlight.

Dean wonders why Sam asked if Dean was okay, but then he remembers they were on a hunt. A forest. A witch. A real-life fucking tentacle monster.

“Did we waste the bitch?” he asks.

Sam snorts. “You wasted the bitch,” he says as if Dean's too slow on the uptake. “Then pushed something out of Cas that burned and blew away. You turned the tentacle monster into a puddle of goo and made every flower, bush, and tree in a twenty-foot radius double in size.”

“Uhm, huh?” Dean says intelligently, his face scrunched up.

“If you ever call me the freak of the family again, I'll punch you in the face, you freak,” Sam says, rolling his eyes. “You scared the shit outta me,” he says, exasperated and pissy.

Hum “Calm down, Sam,” Cas says, turning to give Sam a look.

Dean can see from Cas' side profile that he's giving Sam the stern shut-the-fuck-up-and-chill look. Dean doesn't childishly stick his tongue out at Sam, but he wants to.

Sam deflates, his shoulders dropping and a sigh coming out of him. He runs his fingers through his hair, then drops his arms at his sides. “He's really okay?” Sam asks, looking Cas in the eye.

Coo, hum “He's really okay,” Cas reassures him, “but it's a very good thing he woke me when he did.”

“Why?” Dean asks.

Grunt, hiss “Your mind was becoming overloaded by your powers,” Cas says. “When you awakened me from the spell the witch had used on me, I suppressed your powers again by making you sleep, but the entire time I was unconscious, you had nothing *squeal* controlling them but you.”

Dean feels a thrill of excitement and fear run through him. Back in the forest, the things that were happening seemed hyper-real, but thinking back on them, it seems like a dream. If he really did everything he thinks he did, he's more powerful than he imagined.

“After you turned the tentacle monster into a puddle,” Sam says, “you fell to the ground, not moving, and your nose and ears were bleeding.”

“Oh,” Dean says in surprise, his eyebrows raising. “I remember holding you in my arms,” he says, looking at Cas.

“It wasn't your physical body that held me,” Cas says. *Snuffle*

Cas smiles at Dean. It's a happy smile, and by the look on his face and the noise he just made, Dean realizes that Cas really liked behind held by Dean's power. It's hard for Dean to wrap his head around it, but at the same time, with everything they've experienced over the years and the things he's seen and heard through his connection with Cas, it's falling into place and doesn't seem strange at all.

“Your eyes were open,” Sam says softly. “I thought you were dead.”

Dean turns to Sam, noting that his brother looks very shaken. He's pale, and Dean can see that even just remembering the incident is upsetting Sam quite a lot.

“I'm okay,” Dean says, smiling up at Sam.

“Yeah, I know that now,” he says with a huff.

Cuh

Dean chuckles. “Cas thinks that's funny,” he says.

Sam's jaw drops and he looks at Cas, then back at Dean. “Is he laughing at me with his little noises?” he asks, pointing at Cas.

Dean snorts. “Pretty much,” he says with a grin. He doesn't feel dizzy, and he's glad that nothing hurts. He grins as Sam smacks Cas upside the head. Dean loves that the two of them are close enough now to do thinks like smack each other. It warms him inside.

“He scared the shit outta me. Its' not funny,” Sam says with a pout.

Bleat comes from Cas, and Dean chuckles when he sees that Cas has his poker face in place even though, by the noise he just made, if he were human, he'd be laughing so hard he would be clutching his stomach.

“Now he just thinks you're funnier,” Dean says with a chuckle.

Sam sighs. “You're an asshole,” he grumbles at Cas.

Bleat comes from Cas again and Dean laughs.

Sam finally cracks a smile, and then the dimples come out as he chuckles. “Next time warn me when you fake dead, kill the bad guys, and practice your gardening skills,” he says as he flops down on his bed.

“Big baby,” Dean says affectionately.

Cas stretches out next to Dean, wrapping his left arm around Dean's middle and resting his head on Dean's pillow.

“Did I scare you?” Dean asks softly, looking Cas in the eye.

Snuffle, uhn “Never,” Cas whispers, then kisses Dean, gently at first, then deepens the kiss.

When they pull apart, Dean grins. “Should I ask Sam for something to eat from that place on the other side of town?”

Cas smiles, obviously knowing Dean's intentions. He tosses his left leg over Dean's legs. *Cuh*

Sam snorts. “You should let Sam rest after the heart attack you gave him,” he says.

“Aww,” Dean whines pathetically. “But pie fixes everything, and they had so many flavors!”

Cuh, uhn

“You need rest,” Sam grumbles, “not a forty-five minute roll in the sheets.”

Cas chuckles, reaching between them with his left hand and cupping Dean's cock through his clothes. Dean moans, loud and obnoxious as he pushes his cock up against Cas' hand.

“Pie!” Sam yelps, scrambling off the bed and snagging the keys from the table. “I'll get pie!”

“Two different kinds!” Dean yells after Sam, but the slamming door is his only reply.

Rumble “We really should be careful. You've been through a traumatic experience,” Cas draws.

Dean grins. “I need plenty of bed rest and I shouldn't do anything strenuous?” he asks.

Uhn, mmm “Yes, so I'll have to do all the work and take care of you,” Cas says as he gently rolls them, getting Dean onto his back and sliding his legs between Dean's, spreading Dean's legs as he goes.

“Is coming too strenuous? 'cause that would suck,” Dean says innocently, blinking up at Cas, then grinning when the rumbling noise turns to a constant sound.

“I'll watch over you,” Cas says, a completely serious look on his face as he pushes himself up to his knees.

Dean can hear the promise in those words even though they're both flirting with each other. Dean spreads his legs wider as Cas reaches down and undoes Dean's button, pulls down his zipper. He flops his arms out to his sides, letting Cas do whatever he wants. He knows he'll enjoy whatever Cas has in mind.

Cas slowly peels Dean's pants and underwear over his ass, then pulls up, using the material of the

jeans to lift Dean's legs in the air and get the clothes off him. Dean lets his legs fall to the bed, his knees falling to the side and leaving him completely spread open to Cas.

Dean pushes his love, affection, and thanks through their connection and feels the love and affection come back to him as well as feeling that Dean has felt after a good hunt, the feeling they all get when there's a job well done.

Cas scoots down on the bed, lying down on his belly. Dean grabs another pillow, sits halfway up, shoves it behind his head, and flops back. He knows he's going to want to watch this.

Dean moans appreciatively when Cas blows warm air over his cock and balls. Cas grins, leaning down and pushing his face into the crease between Dean's right leg and his balls. He licks and mouths at Dean's skin, working his way around to Dean's outer thigh, then over the top of his pelvic area, then down Dean's left thigh and into the crease.

Cas noses at Dean's balls, pushing at them like he's snuffling his way down to Dean's hole. He reaches up and cradles Dean's balls in his left hand, holding them out of the way and teasing Dean's hole with the tip of his tongue, just flicking up and down.

Dean sighs contentedly, letting himself forget everything but Cas, the connection, the here and now, the way Cas is looking back up at him, the look on Cas' face when he knows he's succeeded in getting Dean to focus on nothing but the here and now.

Mmm, uhn, hnnn radiates throughout Dean's body, used in conjunction with Dean's name because Cas is saying Dean's the reason he's content and happy. *Uhn, whine, coo*

Dean's eyelids had been drooping, but after those last noises, his eyes widen. He raises one eyebrow and sends a big old 'huh?' through their connection.

Cas closes his eyes, pushes his face down into Dean, and uses the flat of his tongue to lick Dean's hole with firm pressure. Dean closes his eyes and arches his neck as he senses life, breath, vitality, existence, soul, spirit, and grace as Cas whines again.

Dean can't help but grin as the entire sentiment comes through their connection now that Cas has shown Dean what the new noise means.

Uhn, whine, coo Dean, lover, bonded, the reason my existence is so good, so right

Dean gasps. He's never felt that connection to the words before. He's learned a good amount of Latin in his life, but it never connected in such a way as to substitute the English words and thoughts in his head.

When Cas used those noises, it was as if Cas' physical voice was saying it in sentence form, and even though Dean knew it wasn't English, it was as if his brain understood it, fully integrated with the meaning from the noises instead of their English equivalent like had happened every time he'd heard them so far and every time Cas had told him what the noises meant.

Instead of hearing the noise and associating it with an English word or a feeling he'd use English to describe, it was pure and unadulterated language.

Cas sucked one of Dean's balls into his mouth, and Dean looked down at him, surprised and excited over what had just happened and nearly forgetting that Cas was sucking on his balls.

Cuh came from Cas as he rolled his eyes. Cas sent the image of a soul and grace intertwining and swirling around each other, the colors of each never changing, never losing anything of themselves, but the grace and soul so tightly and intimately connected that they might be mistaken for a single mass.

“Is that why I heard you? Why that –,” Dean flounders, not knowing how to say it, what to ask, so he sends it through their connection, his confusion and his excitement, asking for some reassurance that it was really as cool as he thinks it might be.

Bleat he says as he lets go of Dean's balls. “I'll have to close down the connection back down if you don't focus on other things, like the way I'm going to shove my tongue in your asshole and make you scream,” Cas drawls. Actually fucking drawls.

Dean moans. If anybody would've told Dean when he first met Cas that the angel would be awesome at dirty talk, he'd have laughed so hard he would've hurt himself. It wasn't necessarily what Cas said, but rather the delivery, the intent behind it, and the look on his face.

“I'm focused,” Dean breathes. “Totally focused on you licking my ass,” he says with a grin.

Cas growls with his physical mouth as he shoves his tongue into Dean. Dean yelps, trying to spread his legs wider, to get more of Cas' tongue inside him. Cas wriggles his tongue, starting up the rumbling again.

“Fuck, yeah,” Dean groans, tilting his hips up as Cas pushes a finger in beside his tongue. “Cas!” he says with a strained voice, writhing on the bed as Cas finds his prostate and pushes, just enough pressure, just enough friction to make it amazing.

Cas licks long strips from just below his asshole, up over it and his finger, over his perineum, over his balls, then tickling the base of Dean's dick, flicking it with the tip of his tongue. Dean tries to hold still, but it feels too good. He grabs handfuls of the sheets as Cas mouths at his balls, the pressure on Dean's prostate increasing as Cas gets him higher and higher.

“You're too fucking good at that,” Dean hisses, panting as his cock leaks all over his stomach.

Dean feels pride and amusement coming through the connection. Yeah, that's Cas. And Dean loves him. Loves him so much it scares him sometimes.

“Cas!” Dean yelps, as Cas sucks his cock into his mouth, his tongue swirling along the underside of Dean's cock. “Yeah, Cas, yeah!” he moans, whining toward the end of his words.

Coo, rumble come in my mouth

Dean gasps, his head coming up off the pillow as he meets Cas' eyes, surprised and blown away by what he heard, what he felt. It's dirty. It's amazing. It's like nothing Dean has ever experienced. He doesn't care if anyone thinks it's an over-share or TMI. He wants to tell everyone he meets from now on he's heard and fully grasped dirty talk in the language of angels.

Coo, uhn c'mon, Dean-lover-bonded-beloved-center of my world, he says as he looks Dean in the eye.

Dean's orgasm hits hard. So hard that he chokes on it, sputtering instead of screaming something out, like Cas' name or a big old 'yes.' And by the time he gets the use of his mouth and throat back, all he can do is moan pitifully as his body shudders and twitches. His limbs are useless to him as Cas sucks him clean, so he just gazes down at him, panting and gasping.

Cas lets Dean's cock slide out of his mouth as he pulls his finger out of Dean's ass hole. He gets to his hands and knees, climbing up Dean's body until he has a hand on the bed to either side of Dean's torso.

Dean can't break eye contact. He's never felt something like that. Nothing in his experience could come close to what just happened, and a little grin tugs at his lips because, hell yeah, that was the most awesome sex ever.

Cas slides his cock into Dean's hole without urgency, though he's very turned on. Dean can tell by the little crease between Cas' eyes that he's holding himself back to make this pleasurable for Dean instead of hammering away when Dean's recovering from an epic orgasm.

"I-I'm okay," Dean says, trying not to slur his words. "Fuck me," he says with a nod that turns out to be more like his head flopping about.

Cuh, uhn he says with a smile, then leans down to kiss Dean.

He's so gentle that Dean feels his eyes burn. He's teased Sam about crying his way through sex, but he thinks maybe he should do that when he's this close to crying himself.

Cas licks into Dean's mouth, and Dean tastes himself on Cas' tongue. He loves that. Loves that Cas is here with him, that Cas loves him. He squeezes his eyes shut, trying to focus on the stretch of Cas' cock inside him instead of the burning in his eyes, the gentleness of Cas' lips and tongue.

Dean hears a background noise, almost like the ticking of a clock. He doesn't remember ever hearing one of Cas' noises like it's not to the forefront before. It's subtle, almost like Cas is making the noise without meaning to, like someone tapping the end of a pen on a pad of paper, even though Dean knows that's not the case, knows Cas means it with all his being.

Dook, dook, dook, dook, dook

Dean reaches up and wraps his arms around Cas, pulling him closer. Cas lets him, his arms giving out from under him so he falls onto Dean, his cock pushing in deeper and Dean's cock getting the

stimulation and pressure of Cas' belly over it.

Cas moans into the kiss as he starts fucking Dean. It's gentle and lazy, just a shifting of his hips back and forward, but it feels great, and Dean's cock gets even more stimulation from the muscle movement in Cas' stomach.

The rumbling noise from Cas is the noise that's in the forefront, but Dean can still hear the background noise. He wraps his legs around Cas' hips, shoving his tongue into Cas' mouth, chasing after him as he lifts his head off the pillow.

Cas fucks him faster, grunting and breathing hard through his nose. The kiss is getting messy, and Cas licks over his lips, mouths and licks at his jaw, nibbles at his neck.

“Cas,” Dean moans loudly. “Fuck, Cas, fuck me. C'mon. Fuck me,” he says, using his heels to push Cas' ass cheeks, make Cas move faster, deeper.

you're bossy

Dean laughs, his right hand sliding up Cas' back, his fingers tickling the back of Cas' neck. “You love it,” he says.

Coo, uhn

“I knew it!” Dean laughs. “You love it! I knew it!”

Cas bites Dean's neck and Dean yelps, then he laughs more because he knows Cas did it in playful retaliation for Dean calling him out.

Hnnn-uhn-hnnn

Dean smiles so big his face hurts. He wants to be that for Cas, wants to be the reason he's so happy. To hear Cas confirm that makes his chest feel like it's going to explode in a good way.

Cas licks at his neck as he fucks him harder, the bed creaking and the headboard starting to hit the wall with every thrust. Dean tries to shift his hips, to thrust up into Cas as he's fucked, but Cas has him pinned to the bed. He nips at Cas' shoulder instead, the fingers of his right hand gently scratching over Cas' scalp, his left hand caressing Cas' back.

Dean feels as if he's close to coming again. He just needs a little more stimulation to his cock and he knows he could come. He turns his head and sucks hard on Cas' neck. He sends a desire to see a mark on Cas' neck through their connection and gets a *wheek* of excitement in return.

It thrills Dean to know Cas will make sure the hickey stays there for a few days. Dean plans on touching it as often as possible, kissing it, and insisting Cas wear T-shirts instead of button-up shirts so he can see it whenever he wants.

Rumble goes through Dean's body, filling his head, the room, the bed, and the walls.

Dean doesn't care if anyone else can hear it, doesn't care if they get pissed, but he knows Cas either is keeping others from hearing it or he knows no one is in the rooms surrounding them. Cas hates being interrupted during sex, even if it's the neighbors knocking on the wall and yelling at them to keep it down.

A swirling noise starts up, and Dean doesn't even know how he could explain noises swirling to anyone else, but that's what it's doing. *Dook, uhn, hnnn, rumble, uhn* is all over the room, getting louder and softer as if they're physical beings getting closer and farther away.

Dean hears the window rattle, and he smiles, knowing Cas is getting close. He looks up and realizes Cas' wings are the source of the swirling sounds. Dean's jaw drops.

“Oh, fuck!” Dean breathes.

Now that he's watching them, he can sync the sound to the movement. The feathers that aren't really feathers are shimmering, and the light that isn't really light is flashing. As Cas' wings move, Dean hears the noises coming from different parts of Cas' wings as well as from deep inside Cas.

He'd heard them make noise before. He'd heard what he thought was singing. It had been more than that. Cas can communicate with every part of his being.

Dean watches Cas' right wing tip curl, and it tells him how good it feels to be this close to Dean. He sees Cas' wings shiver as they both tell him he's Cas' mate, that Cas knows it without a doubt. The wings aren't a separate being, but in a way that Dean can only relate to a cat twitching its tail, they're showing Cas' thoughts and emotions.

Cas fucks him harder, and Dean tries not to let himself get lost in everything, to focus on what Cas is doing him and take in everything else like it's background noise. It's hard, but he knows if he lets his mind gravitate toward everything, Cas will have to suppress his abilities, close down the connection, and he doesn't want that.

He closes his eyes, burying his face in Cas' neck. He feels a tingling sensation on his skin, and when he realizes it's Cas' wings tickling him, he growls into Cas' neck. It's so fucking hot that Dean nearly comes right then.

come with me

Dean moves both hands to Cas' back and holds on tight, his heels digging into Cas' ass cheeks, his panting breaths warming Cas' neck.

“Cas, fuck, I fucking love you,” Dean gasps into Cas' neck.

The noises intensify, but Dean's too far gone to focus on them. Cas is letting out strings of noises too fast for Dean to figure out, but he feels them. He hears something crash on the other side of the room, but he doesn't give a shit.

Uhn Dean, Cas screeches as he comes.

Dean knows it would've deafened him had he been human. Instead it's an all-consuming sound that fills him with the multiple meanings behind it, the word and the noise becoming one in his head, in his soul.

His back arches as his asshole clamps down on Cas' cock. He comes so hard he sees stars, or maybe he's just squeezing his eyes closed so hard he's seeing them. It doesn't matter.

Dit, Dean says, and he hears something shatter on the other side of the room.

He doesn't care what broke or why. He's shaking apart, his hips are jerking as much as he can manage beneath Cas, and he can feel his cock sliding between with his come slicking the way.

“Oh, fuck. Fuck! Cas! Oh, fuck yeah,” Dean groans as he comes down from his orgasm.

Cas is mouthing lazily at his neck, gently thrusting in and out of Dean as if he's spent, but just can't help but be inside Dean a little longer, feel him.

Dean snorts. “Not to give you a big head or anything,” he mumbles, “but you do realize you've completely ruined me for anyone else, don't you?”

Oh comes out of Cas like an aggressive bark from a dog.

Dean's eyes open and he grabs Cas' head with his hands, holding him up so he can look in Cas' eyes. “Explain,” he drawls.

Cas pokes him in the side, making Dean let out a very unmanly giggle as he flinches and lets go of Cas' head. Cas rests his head on Dean's shoulder again.

Dean's breath catches in his chest as Cas pushes very strong emotions and ideas at him. Mine, no one else, mine, only yours, only mine and a spike of possessiveness that stuns Dean with it's fierceness.

He turns his head and kisses Cas' temple. “Only yours, Cas. I promise,” he says.

Purr

Dean smiles, gently running his fingers over Cas' back. “Hey!” he says as he remembers what had just happened. “I said your name, didn't I?” he asks, knowing he doesn't need to explain what he's asking.

Mmm, purr “It was the most beautiful sound I've ever heard,” Cas says, then kisses Dean's shoulder.

Dean can't help but smile again, and really, his cheeks are hurting here. “I thought I couldn't make the noises.”

“Your soul did,” Cas says.

“How?” Dean asks.

“Your soul is teaching itself how,” Cas mumbles, sounding half asleep, the purring very soft.

“Uhm, huh?” Dean asks, suddenly feeling a little more awake.

“The grace your soul absorbed knew how to do it,” Cas says. “Your soul and your powers are working together, learning from the grace and from me how to do it.”

Dean feels as if someone has punched him in the stomach. He can't relate it to anything that makes sense, and it almost sounds as if his soul is a baby, mimicking its parents without knowing what its saying, but he knew what he was saying.

“It's not like that,” Cas mumbles.

Dean snorts. “Then what's it like?” he asks.

Cas' cock has softened, so when he shifts his hips, it slips out of Dean. Cas wriggles halfway off Dean, leaving his right leg over Dean's right leg and his right arm across Dean's chest. He rests his head on Dean's shoulder as Dean flips the blanket over them.

“In human terms, you're using reverse engineering,” Cas says, his thumb caressing Dean's skin. “It's like you've been given a car, and you have no idea how it works, but instead of someone teaching you everything about the car, you take it apart yourself with no idea how it works, teaching yourself as you go what each part does, how everything fits together, and once you've rebuilt it, I sit next to you and help you learn how to drive it.”

Dean huffs. It sounds so bizarre when he relates it to using a language of angels, but it does make sense. “Did I say it right?” he asks.

“Mmm, you have a cute accent,” Cas mumbles into his shoulder and Dean chuckles. “But yes, you said it correctly. Eventually you will add your own inflection to it, changing the meaning of my name to be more personal to you.”

“Wow,” he says. “Okay, that makes sense since the thing I said was Gabriel's name for you. Gotcha. Oh, can I use it with other angels without them knowing I'm human?” he asks.

“Not yet,” he says. “I'm not sure if you ever will be able to do it, but only because this has never happened before, not because I doubt you. You've done plenty of things no one else has ever done. If anyone can do it, it'll be you.”

“You're not just saying that to make me feel better, are you?” Dean asks, even though he knows better.

Cas pinches his nipple. *Squeal-cuh*

Dean scoffs. “Hey, I'm very funny. Hilarious, even. Admit it.”

Squeal comes from Cas, the inflection he uses turning the no into a very childish 'uh-uh, no way.'

“Fine,” Dean grumbles.

He sighs, relaxing into the embrace, enjoying the quiet moments before Sam comes back and they have to clean up and eat lots of pie, and hopefully some burgers and fries from the same restaurant if he and Cas didn't traumatize Sam too badly.

“You seemed to like it, but I just wanna make sure,” Dean says. “When I use the noises, do you li-oomph!”

Cas' mouth is on his mouth so fast Dean actually chuckles into the kiss. Cas shoves his tongue, tickling the roof of Dean's mouth, pulling back and nipping Dean's bottom lip as he breaks the kiss and drops his head back down on Dean's shoulder.

“Hmm, I'll take that as a yes,” Dean says with a grin.

“If it wasn't a good enough answer,” Cas says, then throws a spike of love it, love you, want more, want you at Dean.

Dean chuckles, sending back the feeling of how adorable he thinks Cas is. He hears a knock on the door and groans.

“Can I come in or should I give you guys another twenty minutes?” Sam asks through the door.

“You won't need brain bleach, but you'll need to open a window,” Dean warns.

Coo

“That I can do,” Sam says as he opens the door. He stops in the doorway, looking down at the carpet. “Uhm, we don't have the money to pay for that TV,” he says, pointing at the floor.

Dean chuckles. “Oops,” he says, sounding very unapologetic.

Cas grunts. “The bathroom mirror *cuh* is shattered as well,” he says.

“You guys really got around. Should I avoid touching any surfaces?” Sam asks as he sets the bags down on the table, then thinks better of it and picks them back up, a sour look on his face.

“We didn't leave the bed,” Cas says. “Dean was trying out his new voice.”

“I said Cas' name,” Dean says with as much enthusiasm as he can muster.

Sam rolls his eyes. “I'm so proud of you, Dean,” he drawls.

Dean sighs. “No, you dork. The noise. I made the noise that means his name,” he said flapping his right hand around like it'll force Sam to understand it quicker.

Sam's jaw drops, his eyes widen, and he lets out a puff of air like he's been punched in the stomach.

Dean grins at him.

“H-how?” Sam asks.

Dean groans. “I'm too tired. Cas, show him the quick way, would ya?” he says as he nudges Cas' head with his shoulder.

“Oh, hell no!” Sam yells, holding his hands out in a defensive posture, the bags swinging wildly from his left wrist. “Don't show me!”

Dean chuckles and Cas sighs. “He's not going to show you what we were doing when I said his name, but that was an awesome reaction,” Dean says, then sits up, dropping Cas behind him.

“Oh, yeah, uhm, okay,” Sam blurts, his cheeks turning pink.

Sam's body tenses and he flinches, his eyes focusing as if on something over by the lamp, but Dean knows he's getting something from Cas, so what he's seeing isn't in the room. It's quick. It only takes about five seconds and Sam's body relaxes again.

“Oh,” Sam breathes. “That's, uhm. I. Ah, wow,” he says, clearly at a loss for words.

“Yeah, pretty much,” Dean says as he stands up, the blanket falling from his body as he goes.

Cuh comes from Cas, and Dean grins when Cas sends a spike of amusement through their connection because Sam is so blown away by this new information that he either doesn't notice Dean's walking through the room naked and covered in come or he doesn't care at the moment.

“I'm gonna take a quick shower, then we can eat,” Dean says, then walks into the bathroom, bending down and using the bathroom rug to brush the slivers of mirror into the corner so he doesn't step on them.

“Dean!” Sam screeches. “Fuck, that's not something I needed to see! Oh, fuck! Cas, erase the last few seconds from my brain. Please!” he practically wails.

Bleat

Dean smirks. Okay, so maybe Sam hadn't been too blown away to notice the come running down his leg. “Cas, wipe Sam's brain,” he sing-songs as he gets into the shower and turns the faucet on.

“No!” Sam yelps. “Yes! I mean, wait! No, don't mess with my head! Fuck!” he growls.

Eh, bleat

Dean chuckles as he gives himself a quick rinse, then gets out and towels off, tossing it onto the edge of the tube as he walks out into the room. Sam is taking the food out of the bags and setting everything on the table.

Dean clears his throat as he pulls on a pair of sweatpants. "I really didn't think you'd look, Sam. I'm sorry," he says, feeling kind of bad about the whole thing.

Sam snorts. "I know. I should've known better than to look, but my mind was still kinda blown from the whole shove-info-in-my-head thing, and I turned my head when I heard the mirror shards clinking," Sam says as he unwraps the plastic forks from the napkins.

Nih "I can erase the memory," Cas offers, standing naked at the end of the bed.

Sam shakes his head, but he doesn't look at Cas. Dean doesn't know if it's because Sam knows Cas is naked or he's too scared to find out.

"Thanks, Cas, but no," Sam says, dropping into a chair at the table. "I'll live."

Dean shrugs at Cas and Cas heads off to take his own shower. Dean sits down at the table, opening the Styrofoam container in front of him.

"I really am sorry, Sammy," Dean says, then a giggle escapes before he can stop it.

He covers his mouth with his hand as Sam's head snaps up, his eyes wide as he looks at Dean. Dean can't take it. He starts laughing, his shoulders jumping as he tries to keep from flat out guffawing in Sam's face.

Sam's lips twitch and a squeak comes out of his mouth, then he starts chuckling, rolling his eyes as he opens his own container. "You're gonna be sorry one of these days when I repay you with some really disturbing shit," he threatens.

Dean snorts. "You're the one who's all shy about this shit. I could walk in on you and Gabriel fucking in the middle of the room and I'd just say sorry and walk out again. Almost everybody has sex, Sam," he says with a smirk and a wink.

Sam squeaks again, then sputters a bit, his eyes wide and his mouth hanging open. A bit of a guilty look comes over his face.

"I'm happy for you," Dean says, poking the back of Sam's hand with his spork as Cas walks back into the room, grabbing a pair of boxers and sliding them on.

"I thought you didn't like him," Sam says, shoving a French fry in his mouth.

Dean shrugs. "I didn't know him."

"And you know him now?" Sam asks.

Dean nods. "Kind of. Cas showed me some stuff. But even if he hadn't, the smile on your face, the way you grin when you think I'm not looking every time we talk about Gabriel, and the way you just seem happier means I at least gotta give the guy a chance," he says, then shoves five French fries in his mouth at once.

Sam gets a look on his face that warms Dean. He knows Sam, and Sam wanted Dean's approval, wanted Dean to see it as a good thing. Now that Dean says he not only approves, but he also likes what the relationship is doing for Sam, Dean knows Sam is relieved and thrilled over it.

“You don't have to hide it,” Dean says. “I'm not saying let's double date or anything, but –,” he starts, but is cut off when Cas sits up straight and gasps. Dean turns to look at him, as does Sam.

Squeak, wheek “I've never been on a date,” Cas says, his eyes wide.

Sam chuckles as Dean groans. “Aww,” Sam coos, “he's never been on a date, Dean!”

Dean can feel the excitement from Cas through their connection. Dean sighs. He can't ignore that. He loves Cas, adores him, wants to spend the rest of his life with him. Cas is worth the trauma of dating even if they're already considered angel-married. Cas is worth a lot of other things Dean has never done for one-night stands and even fairly steady girlfriends.

“Okay,” Dean drawls. “What do you wanna do?”

Snick Cas tilts his head, frowning at Dean. “You've never been on a date either, but Sam has,” Cas says, turning to look at Sam.

Sam looks like a deer caught in the headlights. “Uhm, well, I suppose you guys could do dinner and a movie,” he says with a shrug.

“Gabriel has also been on dates,” Cas says with a grin.

Dean groans. “I should've known that was coming,” he says with a wince. “I swear you two plan shit like this for me to walk into!”

Sam shakes his head. “I could claim that we meant to do it, because that would've been cool, but no, we didn't plan it.”

Dean snorts and takes a huge bite of his burger. “We'll try it. If Gabriel tries to kill me and bring me back for entertainment purposes, I'm out,” he says around a mouthful of food.

Hnnn

He looks over at Cas and decides the smile on Cas' face is totally worth it. He'd even put up with Gabriel killing and bringing him back for entertainment purposes if it meant Cas smiled like that again and again.

Chapter 9: Closed Circuit

Summary: Sam decides a relic needs to be destroyed, and Cas isn't that happy about it. Now they've lost something that would've helped them kill the creature that's been attacking men on hunting grounds.

-
closed circuit

n. a complete electrical circuit around which current flows or a signal circulates

Dean hears a loud smashing sound, followed by the sound of wind rushing, and even though he'll deny it later, he also hears tiny ringing bells for a few seconds.

He tugs his pants up, wincing when he shoves his dick into his pants a little too fast in his hurry to get out into the room where Sam and Cas are. His relaxing shower can wait until later, and he doesn't need his shirt to fight whatever it is out there. Or his shoes. Or his socks.

He throws the door open, his gun in his hand. Sam is standing on the far side of the room, pieces of what Dean assumes made the horrendous noise all over the floor in front of him. Castiel is standing in the middle of the room, but his back is to Dean.

“What's going on, guys?” Dean asks, quickly taking in the surroundings just in case there's something else lurking he needs to shoot.

“I had to do it,” Sam says calmly, looking at Cas.

“No, you didn't,” Cas says, and the tone of Cas' voice has Dean moving before he Cas finishes his short sentence, setting his gun on the table as he goes.

Cas sounds really, really angry, but in that controlled way that means he's just barely hanging onto that anger. When Dean sees the look on Cas' face, he tries not to freak out. Yeah, Cas is pissed.

“It was dark magic. A lot of it,” Sam says.

Bark

“Ah, wait a minute. Huh?” Dean asks, face scrunching up in confusion as he turns from Sam to Cas.

Cas looks like he's about to smite someone, and Dean's never seen that look directed toward Sam before. He's a little nervous. He's also never heard that sound from Cas before. He'd chuckle and call him a cute little puppy if it weren't for the tense situation.

“You shouldn't have done this,” Cas says with a growling tone to his voice, the slivers of sunlight in his eyes flashing.

Dean feels goosebumps rise on his skin. He feels like apologizing and begging for forgiveness, and he wasn't even the one that got them into this mess.

“I did what I had to do,” Sam says.

Bark comes from Cas and he takes a step closer to Sam.

Dean assumes the barking means Cas is really fucking pissed. “Whoa, hold on! Hold on,” Dean says, stepping between Sam and Cas, putting his hand on Cas' chest.

Cas' lip twitches. “You have no idea what you've done,” he says with an eerie calm, and it doesn't even seem as if he knows Dean is standing there.

“Cas, look at me,” Dean says, trying to direct the attention away from Sam.

His brother fucked up, but they can deal with this. He's pretty sure there's about to be some smiting, and while Cas' grace isn't strong enough yet, Dean knows Cas can tap into his power and use it. He doesn't think Cas would do that, especially to smite Sam, but Cas seems really pissed.

“Cas, c'mon. This isn't the end of the world,” Dean says, trying to keep his words soft, keep the situation under control. “We've seen worse. We've done worse.”

Bark, grrr

Seriously. Dean would be laughing hard enough to make his stomach hurt if he weren't worried Sam was about to die. Barking and growling is just too good to forget, though it can wait until later.

When he first learned what the noises meant, he didn't think he'd ever find them funny, but at the time, he wasn't presented with a barking Castiel. He amended his earlier internal declaration, deciding he could find some of the noises amusing, but he just wouldn't tell Cas about it. And he sure as hell wasn't going to laugh out loud.

“We could've used the power it contained, but you destroyed it,” Cas says, and Dean shivers.

Cas is about as close to using his true voice as he's ever been in the presence of a human beside Dean. Dean moves his right hand from Cas' chest to his left upper arm, holding tightly enough that hopefully it'll get Cas attention.

“It was too powerful,” Sam says, and Dean's impressed by how fearless Sam sounds.

“Cas, let it go,” Dean says. “We can't do anything about it now and we'll figure something out even though we don't have it.”

Grr and the noise is constant now.

“It was dark power,” Sam says. “How many times have you tried to convince me of the difference between dark and light power.”

“Shut up, Sam,” Dean says. Sam's not helping. Dean can feel Cas trembling, and he knows Cas is keeping himself in check.

Finally Cas looks at Dean. “I can't fight a bicorn,” Cas says.

Dean sees the fear in Cas' eyes, feels it through their connection. He'd thought Cas was simply mad at Sam for destroying a powerful relic. But it's more than that.

“I'm not..., *tick, tick, tick*” Cas starts, but then sighs, the trembling in his body finally going away. “My grace isn't strong enough to keep the two of you safe from this beast, let alone destroy it,” Cas says.

Dean's caught between wondering what yet another new noise from Cas means and wanting to comfort him. He also kind of feels like congratulating his brother on creating a situation where Dean has heard Cas made not one, but two noises he's never heard before. Sure, Dean hasn't had this ability long, but it's still an accomplishment on Sam's part.

He'd felt a strong sense of confusion, a feeling of being overwhelmed when Cas made the noise, so he adds it to his mental list of noises, this one with the idea of someone standing there spluttering, tongue-tied.

“We'll be okay, Cas,” Dean says, a reassuring smile on his face. “We'll figure things out. We always do.”

Chirp “I can't protect you,” Cas whispers.

He doesn't blame Cas for being scared. Dean doesn't even know everything a bicorn is capable of and he's nervous, but Dean's faced a lot over his lifetime. He won't be taken down by something as stupid-sounding as a bicorn.

Dean wonders if bicorn's shoot dual rainbows out their ass. Then he shakes his head. He can't be thinking about rainbows shooting out of anything's ass when Cas is upset.

“We'll be okay,” Dean repeats, pushing some reassurance through the connection.

Hiss “Bicorn's use dark magic, and their horns are used to make things like this relic,” Cas says as he points at the pieces on the floor.

Dean's relieved Cas seems to have calmed a bit. “Then we'll find another way to kill it,” Dean says. “What if the dark power inside the bicorn would've made the relic turn on us?”

Bark “It wouldn't have,” Cas nearly growls again. “Light and dark magics were used to create it, and there were runes carved into it that kept the power from being used against the one in control of those magics.”

“Okay, okay,” Dean says, sending more calm and reassurance through the connection. “But Sam's done research. We're not going into this blind. You know using dark magic can backfire. Sam knows

that. If we have to find another way to kill this thing, maybe that's a good thing.”

Sam clears his throat. “One of the protection runes is demonic,” he says. “The research I did suggested it's closely linked to a form of possession.”

Grrr “I know what it means, and it's not possession in the form you think it is,” Cas says, sounding frustrated. “It means all-consuming or in entirety. It was part of the dark magic behind letting only the one in control of the relic use the power of it.”

“Oh,” Sam says softly.

“But it's still dark magic!” Dean says. “Should we have fed Sam some demon blood and handed him the relic?” he asks, knowing he's pushing it, but he's making a point, damn it.

Squeal-bark

Dean gives himself a figurative pat on the back for getting Cas to use the new-to-Dean noise of the bark in conjunction with the noise for negative. Sam may have gotten Cas to bark, but the negative combined with it gives it much more force.

He feels a spike of frustration coming from Cas, though, so he feels kind of bad about it. He doesn't want to hurt Cas or be the cause of his frustration, but what's done is done. Dean's been handed shit in his life plenty of times, but he's done what he could with that shit. This will be no different.

Dean decides to make a bold move. He figures Sam will forgive him later for the 'I need brain bleach' moment. He brings his hands up, putting them on either side of Cas' face and pulling him closer, then gives Cas a soft kiss, just a gentle brushing of their lips.

He feels Cas' body deflate under his hands and against his chest and stomach. “It'll be okay, Cas,” Dean whispers, looking Cas in the eye and feeling quite happy with his bold move when the slivers of sunlight in Cas' eyes go back to their normal sparkle and the tense anger coming from Cas calms.

*

The next morning they get an early start. The day before they'd driven sixteen hours, so after showers and some dinner, they'd all slept well.

“They feast at night, but hunt during the day,” Cas says. “We should find it easily.”

“And it'll be drawn to Dean,” Sam says in a fake fit of coughing.

“Huh?” Dean says, looking at Cas in the rear view mirror at the same time Cas makes a noise like an angry cat.

Fff

“Oh god,” Dean says as he laughs. Yeah, he really decided way too soon on Cas' noises not being

funny in any way. Because this? Was funny.

“What?” Sam asks just as Cas starts in with, “I do not *squeal* continually criticize and give orders to Dean *ffff, eh.*”

Dean tries not to drive off the side of the road while he laughs. “What the hell are you two talking about?”

“What noise is he making?” Sam demands, scowling.

“Tell me what you meant first,” Dean says, wiping at his eyes. He's having a hard time not guffawing because Cas is still making intermittent *ffff* noises.

Sam lets out a growl of frustration. “Fine. The bicorn feeds on henpecked husbands who are loyal and enduring,” Sam says with a grin, quickly forgetting his frustration over not knowing what noises Cas is making in favor of teasing the shit out of Dean.

Dean chuckles again. “Okay, you showed me yours, I'll show you mine,” he says, letting out a sigh and a couple more little chuckles. “You know that sound cats make when they're mad and spitting at you and arching their backs?”

“You mean *ffff*?” Sam asks.

“Yahtzee,” Dean says, then looks at Cas again in the rear view mirror and starts laughing all over again at the petulant look on Cas' face.

Sam snorts. Then he chuckles. Then he laughs. As if he's realizing in stages just how funny and adorable it is. Dean enjoys it thoroughly.

Sam turns in his seat to look at Cas, then pokes Dean in his side. “Ooh, you're not getting laid tonight,” Sam sing-songs.

The smile drops from Dean's face. “Shit, I didn't mean to tease you, Cas. I thought it was cute,” he says, trying to catch Cas' eyes in the rear view mirror.

Huff “There's a rather uncomfortable-looking chair in the room. I'm assuming you'd rather sleep there than on the floor tonight,” Cas says, looking out the window.

Dean cringes. Perhaps Cas adopting more human behaviors wasn't all fun and games. “Fuck, Cas, really. I wasn't teasing or trying to humiliate you. I'm sorry,” Dean says, wondering if he should pull the car over to try and convince Cas of his sincerity.

Cas uses his vessel's throat to make a harrumph sound. “As far as apologies go, a very long, very messy blow job will suffice,” Cas says, then lets out a *bleat.*

“Dude!” Sam yells at the same time Dean starts laughing again. Sam never heard the *bleat,* but Sam is beginning to realize Cas has a sense of humor, and he also knows when he's been punked. “That

was mean. Now I need brain bleach,” Sam whines.

Cuh “You deserved it,” Cas says, his lips twitching into a smile.

“A little brother never deserves to hear shit like that about his older brother,” Sam whines, louder than before.

“Suck it up, you big baby,” Dean says as he whacks Sam's arm with the back of his right hand. “You started it.”

Sam grumbles, but when Dean glances at him, there's a smile on his lips. Dean loves that Sam and Cas have a good relationship. There are things that test it, but for the most part they get along well, and Dean knows they care about each other.

“All right, time to get to work,” Dean announces as he parks the car.

They're in a designated hunting zone, signs posted with bright yellow backgrounds and black lettering. They get out of the car and grab their weapons out of the trunk.

“You sure it'll be around here?” Dean asks. “If they're after henpecked and faithful husbands, shouldn't we go to a mall and watch for men carrying purses a few steps behind their wives instead of hunting grounds?”

Sam snorts and Cas lets out a *cuh*

“As if you didn't know,” Sam says, “bicornes don't fit in with the mall crowd, so they have to improvise.”

“They look kinda like panthers, right?” Dean asks.

Coo “It'll be thin because it's hungry. It will have the appearance of a black panther, but will be different enough you'll recognize it as something out of place,” Cas says.

“So,” Dean drawls quietly, “it would look a lot like the thing lurking in the bushes thirty feet behind you.”

The three of them are experienced hunters, so all of them act as if they've never noticed the beast and remain calm.

“Two horns, one coming forward and one pointed toward its rear,” Dean mumbles.

“Yes,” Cas says with words rather than a noise.

Dean has gotten used to Cas using his noises on a hunt, so he knows it must be deliberate. “It can hear you?” he asks.

“Yes,” Cas replies. “It can't understand them, but it can hear the noises I make and would become

alarmed.”

“Gotcha,” Dean says.

Cas takes a step toward Dean, putting his hands on Dean's wrists, wrapping his fingers around them. “I'm going to need to use your power, but at the first sign of the power, the beast will use its magic. I'm going to have to use a fast spike of the power you used to kill the witch and tentacle monster, so focus on that power as soon as you feel me call for it.”

“Should I do anything?” Sam asks.

Cas glances at Sam. “Your gun won't kill it, but it will slow it down because it feels pain. If this doesn't immediately work, start shooting it and don't stop until it's ashes on the ground.”

“Ok,” Sam says, and Dean can practically feel Sam brace himself.

“Ready?” Cas asks him.

“Yup,” Dean says.

He doesn't know what he thought would happen, but it wasn't this. The spike of power is immediate, hot and bright in a sense that has nothing to do with his eyesight. It feels like he's holding fire without the burn, and then he realizes it's the feeling of holding a ball of power.

Raw power flashes from his midsection, flaring out, bypassing Cas like a stream of air and heading straight for the bicorn. It happens fast. So fast that he thinks there's a good chance all Sam will see is a small flash.

By the time the bicorn realizes something's wrong and directs a flash of dark magic, Dean's power overtakes it, incinerating it and turning it to ash. A mass of purple and green haze is left behind that hangs in the air where the bicorn used to stand.

Dean is about to turn it to ash as well, like he did the witch's spell and power, but it looks different than her power did. The purple is mixed with the green in a way that catches Dean's attention. He's curious, so he touches it, his power reaching out like a finger to swish through the haze.

It tastes of power, but it also tastes of strength, knowledge, immortality, and something else he can't quite place. But he knows he wants it. He could use it. Sure, he's got his own power, and with the help of Cas, one day he'll be able to use it on his own, but this power is something he could have now, and he could use it to make sure his physical body and mind could handle all of the combined power.

It's right there for the taking. He sniffs it, and it smells like sawdust, gunpowder, fire. It doesn't smell wrong. It doesn't taste wrong. It's just available power, and Dean knows he can handle it. Cas will probably give him a hard time about it, but Dean can handle Cas too.

He spreads his power out, wrapping around the haze of purple and green. It's swirling as if it's

excited to come to him, even though he knows power by itself isn't sentient. It sticks to his power, changes the color of it. He hadn't expected that to happen, but it doesn't feel wrong, so he pushes downward, squeezes, pulling it toward him.

A hot poker of fire spears through his midsection, up through his body and up the center of his brain. He thinks he's screaming, but he can't hear himself. All he sees is green and purple and red and yellow and death and destruction and pain.

Blackness smooths over everything like a thick oil, rolling over his senses, snuffing them out and weighing him down. It shouldn't be happening. It wasn't supposed to be like this. It hurts. It burns everywhere. It's too heavy.

He reaches out for Cas, for Sam. He can't see anything but blackness. All he can hear is a million voices screaming. He feels nothing but sorry for what he's done.

Dean knows he's fallen to the ground, that he's writhing about, screaming and grasping for help. The blackness is turning gray, and it thins out slowly until he can see Sam's face hovering over his, a worried look, eyes that show fear, no terror.

He sees Cas, his true form and nothing of his vessel. Cas' wings are spread out. The light and sound and power of them blanketing the three of them, but it's not blocking the light, or maybe they are the light.

Cas is in pain, and Dean wants to help, knows Sam is trying to help, but Dean can also see that Cas is taking care of it himself. Cas has suppressed Dean's power and is leaning on his soul harder than he ever has. It feels suffocating in a way that has nothing to do with his physical body.

He allows Cas to have whatever he needs, and Dean doesn't even try to stop Cas when he reaches out and takes hold of Sam's left shoulder, completing a circuit between the three of them since Dean's already holding Sam's right wrist and holding Cas' grace with his soul.

As soon as the circuit is closed, there's a white flash of light that stuns him and Sam. It feels like wind and rain are going every which way, ruffling Cas' feathers and Sam's hair, making it hard to breathe with its force.

But then Dean realizes the pain is gone, that the purple and green that had overtaken him are fizzing out of existence. They're going up in steam and disappearing on the wind.

All at once everything stops. Sam flops back on the ground and Cas slumps onto Dean. He can hear all three of them panting, so he assumes everyone's alive. That's a good thing. The amount of power he felt could've burned them and half the city and forest away.

“Ouch,” Sam whines.

Dean coughs. “Yeah, ouch,” he groans.

*Click-uhn, click-eh *

“Yeah, I think I'm okay, Cas,” Dean says. “Sam, you all right?”

“I think so,” Sam says, sounding exhausted.

Dean doesn't need to ask about Cas because he feels Cas through their connection, but he's been a human too long to change his ways now. He feels a need to ask. “You okay, Cas?” he asks.

He hears a whimper that comes from the vessel instead of Cas. “Yes *coo,*” Cas says, and it's melded into one sound.

“Can we take a nap here?” Sam asks.

Dean feels like shit. He knows this was all his fault. He thought he could handle it. He knew he could until he had it in his hands. He pushes apologies and regret through their connection.

“What the fuck is that?” Sam yelps, his limbs flopping about as if he was trying to get up but just couldn't do it.

“What the fuck is what?” Dean asks, trying to look at Sam, find out what his problem is.

“The, it's, f-fuck! I can feel how fucking sorry you are!” Sam says, his voice laced with urgency and a little fear.

Dean can't even work up the energy to share Sam's fear. “Fuck,” Dean groans.

Hiss

“Oh, fuck!” Sam yelps even louder.

“What?” Dean asks, getting a little annoyed even though he really should be freaking out right along with Sam.

“I fucking heard him make those fucking noises!” Sam wails. “I mean I heard those funny clicking noises a minute ago, but I thought it was kind of like my ears ringing after a concussion or something, but I can fucking hear them!”

Cuh

“What did that one mean?” Sam asks, sounding nearly hysterical, his legs flopping about.

“It means you're being a dork,” Dean grunts. “We completed a circuit where there was a shitload of raw power, dark power, and Cas had to use his grace and my powers along with both our souls to get us all out of the fucktastrophe I just got us into,” he says, not caring if he sounds pitiful and pathetic and really fucking sorry.

Cuh, coo

“But what does that have to do with me hearing your boyfriend make fucking animal noises?” Sam asks, and yeah, that’s definitely hysteria setting in.

Hiss “They’re much more complex than animal noises,” Cas grumbles.

Dean huffs out something that could’ve been a laugh if he’d had more energy to do so. “It means that you’ve got residual power running through you and that we’re gonna be connected for a while until it wears off.”

“Fuck,” Sam breathes.

Dean snorts. “I thought you were all jealous of me. You said you wanted to hear the noises. Well, now you can hear the noises,” he says with a grin.

Teasing your little brother is so much more fun when you can feel how pissy you’re making him. He can also feel amusement coming from Cas, so he figures Cas is getting a kick out of feeling the interchange as well.

Then the feeling changes. “I can hear the noises,” Sam says, as if he’s just realized it was something he actually wanted. Wanted really badly, in fact. “I, I can feel you guys,” he says reverently.

“You big nerd,” Dean says with a smile, but he knows Sam feels the affection Dean has for him.

Cluck

“Huh?” Sam asks.

“Yeah, that one’s new to me too. What the hell, Cas?” Dean says.

“Fucking tired,” Cas mumbles into Dean’s stomach, and Dean can feel the fatigue coming from Cas.

Sam chuckles and Dean smiles as he reaches down and runs his fingers through Cas’ hair. Cas pushes contentment through the connection as a low *mmm* starts up.

Dean realizes Cas is teaching Sam what his noises mean the way he teaches Dean, and it makes his chest tighten with emotion. Anybody else might be jealous, but Dean falls even more in love with Cas because of it.

“There is no brain bleach for this shit,” Sam grumbles.

Cas huffs a laugh into Dean’s stomach and Dean chuckles. The forest floor doesn’t feel all that good on his body, so he wriggles beneath Cas.

“I wanna go to the motel,” Dean whines.

Coo comes from Cas, and at the same time Dean feels Cas pushing his wholehearted agreement through the circuit. He also feels a thrill of excitement coming from Sam over learning a new sound.

“Let's go before Sam has a nerdgasm,” Dean says, pushing gently at Cas' shoulder.

Cas moans into Dean's stomach, then pushes himself up. Sam sits up and Dean flops about, but that's about it.

“Will this teach you to refrain from eating dark magics?” Cas asks. *Mew* comes from Cas, followed by the feeling of having one-upped someone, the feeling when you've zinged somebody really good.

Sam guffaws, laughing so hard that he starts wheezing. “Wow. I don't know which is funnier,” Sam says, barely able to speak between the laughter, “the amazing verbal bitch-slap he just gave you or the fact that Cas was meowing like a kitten while he said it.”

Dean snorts. “If it helps you make a decision, Cas uses that noise a lot when he uses sarcasm on you and you're clueless about it. Now get me up.”

Cuh “That's very demanding for a man who can't get up off the ground,” Cas says, but gets himself to his feet and reaches down to take Dean's hand.

Sam stands up and grabs Dean's other hand, and they manage to get Dean on his feet. He feels a little shaky, but they don't let go as the three of them walk to the car.

“Hey,” Sam says as they get within a few feet of the Impala. “Is this like a close proximity thing? If I, say, get myself a motel room on the other side of the street, will we still be connected?”

Cas grunts as he opens his car door. “No. Dean and I are too strong. You'd most likely maintain the connection even on the other side of the planet.”

Sam grimaces, and Dean feels something coming from Sam that he can only describe as stomach pains, as if he's sick to his stomach. He also feels a strong sense of wrong or no or something Sam really doesn't want. From what Dean can tell, Cas is confused over Sam's feelings.

Dean didn't think he had the energy to laugh, but apparently he did. He rests his arms on the roof of the car so he doesn't fall. Sam scowls at him.

“What?” Sam snarls.

“Dude, are you seriously scared Cas and I are gonna fuck while we're all connected?”

Bleat

Sam blushes. “Look, I know you two do things while I'm in the next bed asleep sometimes. And I try to be a good brother about it. We're in tight spaces, and even though you tease me about it, I'm not a complete prude. But I'd rather not know how it feels to fuck my brother.”

Dean laughs so hard he has to rest his forehead on his arms. He can hear Cas bleating, and this time there's even some chuckles coming from the vessel.

He feels a spike of anger coming from Sam along with embarrassment, and he feels a little bad about it, but he can't stop laughing. That is until he feels a wave of love and respect flowing out from Cas and enveloping the two of them. Dean knows it's directed at Sam, but Cas must want Dean to feel it too.

It's almost like a slideshow of images with emotions instead of pictures. If Dean were to describe it, he would use visuals because they're that strong and specific.

He feels the embrace of friendship, camaraderie, the respect one has for a brother in arms who has served alongside you for years, sacrificing just as much as you have. He feels something he knows he usually senses coming from Cas when Cas watches he and Sam getting along well or sharing a joke.

He feels the unwavering confidence Cas has in the both of them. He feels the love of someone who has been accepted as a brother, closer than blood, closer than what humans would feel for one another. He sees Sam the way Cas sees him, and it sends a thrill of emotion through Dean, one of his own making that brings tears to his eyes because it's what he'd hoped, what he'd have requested had anyone ever bothered to ask him what kind of relationship he'd like Sam and Cas to have.

Hic, eh comes from Cas, and just as he did some of the other noises, Cas teaches Sam what it means, what Sam's name encompasses, and what the form of love Cas feels for Sam fully means.

Dean wipes at his face as the connection dies back down to a normal level. Sam has tear tracks on his face, and he's standing there staring at Cas as if he's never seen him before, like he's seen an angel for the first time, even though Dean knows Sam hasn't seen his true form.

"That's, uhm," Sam says with barely any power behind his voice. "Uhm, my name, and..." he trails off, at a loss for words.

Cas smiles at Sam, then ducks into the car and sits down, closing his door. Sam turns to Dean, his eyes wide.

Sam huffs out a laugh. "Now I feel like an asshole for ever even thinking you'd fuck while we're connected," he says with a blush.

"Hey, it was a valid concern because you know me," Dean says, shrugging.

Sam snorts. "Yeah, I guess," he says, then smiles, his dimples showing. "That was intense."

Dean chuckles. "Yeah, it takes some getting used to, but it's pretty amazing."

"Yeah, I don't think it's something that gets old," Sam says and Dean grunts his agreement. "Kinda like hearing Cas' wings sing. That can't ever get old," he says as he ducks into the car.

Dean smiles, then freezes, his eyes widening. He's never told Sam he could hear Cas' wings sing.

Chapter 10: Open Circuit

Summary: Sam is hearing and seeing things he's shouldn't be able to, so they call Gabriel in to help.

-

open circuit

n. an incomplete electrical circuit in which no current flows

“All right! All *fffft* right,” Gabriel says after finally appearing in their motel room. “What's the big deal? You do know you don't all need to call me at the same time, right?” he asks as if they're a bunch of four-year-olds and they've called him away from something very important.

Sam gasps, and Dean knows it's because Sam has never heard Gabriel's noises before. Sam's not quite over being able to hear Cas' noises yet.

“Are you okay, kid?” Gabe asks, looking Sam over.

“Gabriel,” Cas says, then a flurry of noises come from Cas that make Dean's head spin.

Sam groans and holds his hands over his head as if it'll stop the noises from bouncing around inside there. Dean knows there's no way in hell Sam can tell what's being said. Dean can't catch more than a few noises and meanings. Cas is making noises Dean's never heard before, and Cas isn't taking the time to share the meanings with Dean or Sam.

“Oh,” Gabe says once the noises stop, his eyes a little wider than normal. He turns to Sam, and Dean can tell he's looking deeper than skin this time. “Oh,” he says again. *Grunt* comes from Gabe as he walks up to Sam, reaching out and touching his forehead.

“No!” Sam says, pulling away.

“Hey, calm down,” Gabriel says, his hands coming to rest on Sam's forearms in a gentle and calming gesture. “I wasn't gonna whammy you.”

Sam stills, looking relieved, but still a little freaked out. “Oh, okay,” he says.

“You can hear Cas' wings?” Gabriel asks, his right hand reaching up to Sam's forehead again, this time brushing his fingers over Sam's skin, and Dean thinks it looks adorable with the height difference between the two of them.

“Yeah,” Sam says, looking nervous.

“Can you see them?” Gabe asks.

Sam squints, looking toward Cas, then shakes his head and looks at Gabriel again. “When I'm not looking directly at them, I can see something shiny in the corner of my eye, and now that you're here, I

see something a little darker, but more, ah, I don't know, substantial? I can't see it when I'm looking directly at you," he says.

"Sam!" Dean barks, a flash of worry for his baby brother going through his body like an electrical charge.

"What?" Sam asks, sounding exasperated.

"You're supposed to share these things!" Dean says, his arms out at his sides, shocked that Sam hadn't told him this.

"You knew I was getting residual from you guys!" Sam says defensively. "I don't get what the big deal is!"

Cuh Gabe says as he shakes his head. "Dean was changed by the power and grace that exploded all over his soul. That gave him the ability to see an angel's trueform without going blind."

Click, eh Cas says. "Even though you're connected to us right now, you shouldn't be able to see my wings."

"But what about the noises?" Sam asks. "Why is it okay for me to hear them but not see your wings?"

"The noises are on a frequency that humans can't hear," Gabriel says. "If humans could hear them, it wouldn't deafen them. Dean's powers and the grace absorbed into his soul give him the ability to hear them, which you're tapping into right now kind of like you'd be moved by the waves if Dean' did a belly flop into a pool two feet away from you."

Cas shakes his head. "The ability to see an angel's trueform without your eyes burning out of your head is different than just tapping into Dean's power or being moved by the waves."

"Uhm," Sam says, looking around at them all. "Is this a bad thing?"

Wheek Gabe says, bouncing on the balls of his feet a little. "No, I just didn't expect it."

Dean huffs. "So what does it mean?" he asks.

"It means," Gabriel drawls, "that I underestimated our brothers."

Click "What do you mean by that?" Cas asks.

Dean hadn't spent much time around Gabriel, and he doesn't know why he's realizing this now, but Gabriel doesn't use as many noises as Cas does. Cas uses them before he uses his vessel's voice, almost as if he speaks as an afterthought. He also inserts them in between words. Gabriel has only made a few noises. Dean has no idea why, and he hopes he remembers to ask later.

Gabriel chuckles. "When our brothers choose vessels, they really don't play around."

Squeak Cas says, and Dean feels the wave of surprise and a little fear coming from him.

Dean's getting impatient. This is his brother they're talking about. "I'm going to need more than a squeak to tell me what's going on."

"Sam," Cas says, sounding desperate, sounding devastated. "I'm so sorry."

Okay, that's it. Dean wants answers. "Somebody explain," he yells.

"Calm down, Dean-o," Gabe says. "I see something in Sam that I haven't seen before. And now that I'm looking, I can see it in you. I believe our brothers not only bred you two to be vessels, but they built a little something inside you that only activated when you were bonded with an angel. When Cas rebuilt you, as he pulled you from Hell, I think he didn't realize that he'd rebuilt that part of you because he didn't know what it was."

"So," Dean says, "I've had the ability to see and hear you guys all along, it just wasn't activated?"

Gabriel nods. "Until you were fully bonded," he says. "The full bonding didn't happen until you reached for each other in the explosion."

"Uhm," Sam says, "what does that have to do with me?"

Zzz, eh Cas says, pushing apology and regret and shame through their connection. "I reached out for you when Dean started to absorb the bicorn's power. I didn't know you were reaching out for me, that we were close enough, loved each other enough, and were desperate enough to bind ourselves together."

"What?" Dean breathes, feeling as if he's been punched in the gut. "You two are angel-married now?" he asks, flapping his hand back and forth between them, pinning Cas with a hard look. "Did we get a divorce or is this now a threesome? Oh, fuck, I'm a polygamist!" he yells, running his fingers through his hair and tugging.

"A four-syllable word," Gabe says. "I'm impressed, Dean."

"Shut the fuck up," Dean barks as he points at Gabriel.

Dean knows the love Sam and Cas have for each other isn't sexual. He's never had a reason to question either one of them even before he could feel what they felt. It's still a shock to hear your brother angel-married the one you're already angel-married to.

Zzz Cas says. "I didn't mean to make a bond with you, Sam. I'm sorry."

Gabriel snorts. "It never would've happened if you two hadn't been close to begin with. Add in the fact that Dean thought he could absorb dark magics without any consequences and you were trying to save him, then yes, a bond formed out of desperation and the need to save a loved one."

"So," Sam says, looking around at them all, then meeting Gabe's eyes, "what do we do now?"

Dean can feel the hurt coming from both Cas and Sam. He can feel just how much Gabriel means to Sam already and how this whole thing feels like a violation. Dean can feel Cas' misery at causing the situation. He can feel Cas berating himself, and he knows Cas feels like a fool.

Just as Dean is ready to let them feel his own regret over causing the situation, he realizes the whole thing is ridiculous. He snorts. "Not to break up the pity party or anything," he says with a grin, "but you do realize the two of you love me so much that you angel-married to save me, right?"

Cas' head tilts and Sam's jaw drops. Dean hears Gabriel's *bleat* and Dean thinks possibly he may have stopped the emotional roller coaster that Cas and Sam were about to take them all on. Dean gives himself a mental pat on the back for a job well done.

Sam's lip twitches, then he smiles. "You're such a jerk. I don't know why we saved you," he says as he shakes his head.

"Because you love me. And the two of you are giant girls," Dean says.

Gabe snorts. "Says the polygamist married to his own brother," he says.

Bleat says Cas as Sam lets out a bark of laughter. Dean chuckles, shaking his head at Gabriel.

"But, no, seriously," Dean says, looking between Cas and Gabriel. "Did this do anything to my bond with Cas?" he asks, trying to sound unaffected, but he's kind of freaking out over it.

"No," Cas says confidently. "You and I still have a bond. It would only be broken if one of us died or we both wanted to break the bond, and even then it is difficult."

Dean feels a surge of pain and worry laced with sorrow coming from Sam so strong that both he and Cas turn to look at him.

Sam huffs out a bitter laugh. "I'm sorry. I know you guys felt that," he says, shaking his head.

Gabriel rubs Sam's arm in a comforting gesture. "It can be fixed, Sam," he says softly.

The way Gabe looks at Sam, the way he's gentle and obviously concerned, the way Sam melts just from his touch, and the way Sam feels relief just from that little interaction warms Dean's heart. He'd had a hard time picturing what the two of them had before, but he's having no trouble with it now. He feels happy for Sam, happy for Gabriel.

Zzz "It's not easy," Cas says.

"What about life is easy?" Gabe says with a snort.

Dean nods. "It can't be harder than the worst we've faced in the past, right?" he asks, fairly confident, but he'd still like some reassurance.

Cas looks at Gabriel. "There's something that makes it easier," he says.

Squeak, squeal Gabe says as he shakes his head. "Don't, Cas," he says.

Dean's surprised by the lack of emotion on Gabriel's face. By using those noises in combination, it means Gabriel is really not happy over what Cas is trying to say, and he's freaked that Cas would mention it. Dean assumes Gabriel is keeping his facial features in check so Sam doesn't realize how freaked out he is.

"Don't what?" Dean asks.

Nih, Kra Cas says, and Dean swears he can taste the encouragement coming from the words. He's never thought he could say he tasted encouragement, but he's done a lot of things lately he never thought were possible.

Honk comes from Gabe, his eyes wide.

"Okay," Sam says, turning to Gabriel and fixing him with a determined look, "I know what that noise means. Tell me what you're freaking out over. Now."

Dean tries not to chuckle, and he manages just a smirk. It's awesome to see his brother standing up to an archangel. It's even more awesome when Gabe's shoulders drop and he sighs, giving in.

"The process of breaking a bond is painful in more than just a physical sense," Gabriel says. "It's like losing a limb on an emotional, spiritual, and metaphysical level. Cas is wrapped up with your soul right now."

"I can take pain," Sam says. "It's survivable, right?"

"Yes," Gabe says, throwing a quick look at Cas that Dean would describe as 'are you really gonna make me do this?'

Nih, coo Cas says.

Gabe sighs again. "Bonding with another angel, letting both angels transfer the bond from one to the other would be much less of an ordeal," he says, and Dean can nearly feel the grimace even though there's not one on Gabe's face.

"Let's do it," Sam says with a nod, completely confident and radiating it almost palpably.

Gabriel snorts, and it sounds sad. "Sam, you don't know what you're say-oomph," Gabe says, cut off by Sam darting forward and kissing the shit out of him, a rough kiss that's possessive and demanding.

Sam reaches up and cups Gabe's face with his hands, and Dean smiles as Gabe's hands flutter at his sides for a moment before reaching up, his fingers gripping Sam's shirt and holding on tight. Sam pulls away from the kiss, grinning down at Gabe.

"I know you like me," Sam says, "so quit being an idiot and angel-marry me."

Gabe laughs like it's been punched out of him. "You suck at marriage proposals," he says, but he's smiling, his eyes bright with excitement.

Dean flinches as Gabriel's eyes flash a dark red, flaring a little, then dying down yet not going away completely. Dean's jaw drops, seeing the same slivers of what Dean calls sunlight in Cas' eyes now in Gabe's eyes but in the same dark red that had just flared. Dean feels stupid for having never wondered why Gabe's eyes didn't have slivers of light, and he's taken aback by the different color. He wonders why it's different.

"Beautiful," Sam breathes, looking into Gabriel's eyes. Gabriel smiles, and it's nearly bashful. "Why didn't you show them before?" Sam asks softly.

"I've been around humans for so long that I suppress a lot of my trueform even though I don't need to," Gabe says, shrugging.

Sam frowns. "Is that why you don't make as many noises as Cas?" he asks.

Gabriel huffs out a laugh. "Yeah," he says.

"Suppress," Sam says, like he's mulling over the meaning of the word. "Does that mean you have to work at it?"

Gabe nods. "Yeah."

"Stop it," Sam says, and it's said with such authority and confidence that Dean almost feels like obeying even though it wasn't directed at him. Sam's not requesting. He's demanding it.

Gabriel smiles as if the weight of the world has lifted off his shoulders. Dean gasps as he sees a dark presence come over the room. It's all around them, and Dean instantly knows it's Gabe's wings. They're behaving like Cas' wings, but they're so different that Dean wants to run his fingers through them, learn them, and see their power.

Sam reaches up and brushes his fingers over the wing closest to him. Like Cas' wings, they're swirling in a way that has nothing to do with swirling. They're fractionated groups of light, but even though Dean could never name all the colors, they're not the same as Cas'. They're darker, and the power that screams and sings from his wings is deeper, stronger, and carry a fiercely protective feel.

The dominant colors in Cas' wings, if Dean was pressed to pick, would be the yellow like the slivers in his eyes and the blackness of depth. Gabe's dominant colors are the red like the slivers of his eyes, the blackness oozing the experience of innumerable millennia, a power that's bigger than the room they're standing in, bigger than the state they're in.

The tips of the feathers are silver, and it reminds Dean of the tips of very sharp blades. As they move through the room, Dean gets the sense they're slicing through the physical world and touching things Dean can't see even with his powers.

Dean suddenly remembers that Cas usually suppresses Dean's ability to see everything because it

overwhelms his brain. “Dude! Put those away!” Dean barks, his eyes wide, and he knows he's sending fear through their connection.

Everyone turns to look at him, Gabe's wings dimming out of his field of vision. Sam looks pissed, and he sends annoyance out through their connection directed at Dean.

“What?” Sam asks, sounding frustrated.

Dean realizes Sam doesn't seem overwhelmed at all. In fact there's nothing but bitch face looking back at Dean. Dean turns to Cas. “What the fuck? Why can he handle it?”

“Sam has been exposed to powers since he was a baby,” Cas says. “He's used telekinetic powers as well as telepathic and he's received visions since the age of six months.”

Dean growls, ignoring the fact that Sam has different powers than he does for the moment. “You're saying he can handle this because that bastard fed him demon blood?”

“Calm down, Dean-o,” Gabe says. “Sam can handle it because he grew up with powerful abilities. The only thing the demon blood did was activate a small amount of his powers and taint him with some darkness.”

Sam holds up a finger. “I thought you said we needed a bond to activate our powers?”

Gabe nods. “Yes, to fully activate them, but what Azazel did was the equivalent of hooking a triple A battery up to a Mack truck. Sure, it'll put out a little bit of power, but instead of starting the truck, you might be able to use the battery to turn on one of the headlights,” he says with a shrug.

Nih Cas says, a small smile directed at Dean. “This proves that eventually you'll be able to use your powers on your own, without me suppressing them. Sam grew up with them, his brain adapting. I'm helping you do the same thing by slowly giving you more control over your powers.”

“Awesome,” Sam says, grinning at Dean like only a little brother could. It's a look that says 'I get to do the cool thing before you do' as well as just plain being thrilled about everything they've been saying.

Dean snorts. “As long as you don't break his brain, I don't have to break your neck,” he says to Gabe.

“I believe you'd find a way to do that,” Gabriel says with a smirk. “So are you done freaking out? Can I show my new mate my wings without you crying like a little bitch?”

Dean's jaw drops, then he chuckles. “You're an asshole.”

“Does that mean my shitty marriage proposal was accepted?” Sam asks, smile so big his dimples are showing.

“Hell, yeah!” Gabriel says.

“Great,” Dean says, grabbing Cas' arm and dragging him over to Gabriel. “Let's get you guys divorced.”

Gabe smirks. “Don't like sharing?” he asks.

“No,” Dean growls.

Dean feels a swell of affection from Cas, and he tries not to roll his eyes as he feels a distinct 'aww, that's cute' from Sam.

“What do I do?” Sam asks.

“Do you want my help?” Dean asks.

Gabe shakes his head. “You don't need to help, but when we do this, try and keep from reaching out for me, huh?”

Dean snorts. “I don't like you that much,” he says with a grimace.

“Oh, please,” Gabe says, rolling his eyes. “You think I'm awesome and you totally love me because of how happy Sam is with me.”

Dean frowns. “You're not awesome,” he grumbles, though he doesn't deny anything else Gabe said.

“All right, all right,” Sam says, smacking Dean's arm with the back of his right hand. “Knock it off. No fighting on my wedding day,” he says with a grin.

Dean snorts. “You didn't ask for my blessing,” he says with a teasingly haughty tone to his voice.

“You already gave it to me!” Sam says, his eyes wide.

Dean thinks back to his conversation with Sam, sitting at a table in some random motel, letting Sam know he'd known about the two of them getting together, that he was happy for them, happy for Sam.

Dean chuckles. “Well, apparently I did. I apologize, Sammy,” he says with a grin.

Gabriel looks at Dean with such a mushy expression on his face that Dean nearly feels the need to insult him just to knock the look off his face.

“Okay, Sam,” Gabe says, looking up at Sam. “When me and Cas start doing this, it's going to feel wrong. You're going to want to hold onto Cas, but focus on grabbing me, reaching out to me, and I swear it'll feel better once it's done.”

“Okay,” Sam says, the confidence in his voice saying that he accepts Gabe's words without a doubt in his mind.

Dean feels the difference immediately. Gabriel pushes out, and Dean can feel him reaching out and

grabbing something, something that he'd swear was a physical part of Sam's body, yet he'd be unable to name the body part. It reminds him of the power he'd sent out to grab the bicorn's magics, like a finger, only Gabriel's finger is bigger, stronger, more solid in a non-physical way.

He feels it through Sam, not himself, and he remembers he's still connected to Sam. Dean feels Gabe yank on the part of Sam he'd grabbed. It hurts. It's not the worst pain he's ever felt, but it's uncomfortable and wrong in a way he can't describe.

Dean forces himself to remain calm, to not fight what they're doing, and he can feel Sam doing the same. He feels Cas grabbing onto him, almost like the feeling of Cas leaning on his soul, but Cas isn't using his powers or supporting himself. Cas is holding him so he doesn't lose him, so their own bond doesn't break.

The yanking and tugging is a horrible feeling, and Dean knows Cas is holding onto Dean partly because he wants the comfort. He can feel Sam getting upset, the wrongness of the feeling getting to him, but then he feels Gabriel sending out another pulse of power, one that wraps around Sam, hugs him, asks for permission, begs for trust, promises safety and protection, even if it kills Gabriel.

Dean feels the connection between Sam and Cas retracting from Cas' grace, slithering away reluctantly, but he can also feel the trust Sam has in Gabe, the willingness on Sam's part to let go because he knows Gabriel will be there for him.

Cas pulls on his own grace, almost as if he's gently shaking Sam free. Dean feels Gabriel's love for Sam, feels Gabe's grace connecting and wrapping around Sam's soul like Dean knows Cas' grace is wrapped up with his own.

The connection cries out, as if this non-physical part of Sam's body, his soul, is scared, is floundering, is crying out for help. Gabriel's grace spreads out from Sam's soul, wrapping itself around the connection in a comforting way, and instead of yanking, this time it sings, letting Sam know it's okay, that he can let go. Everything's going to be okay.

Dean is jarred by the severing of Sam's connection, and he can feel the loss in his own soul as well as the pain of the loss from Cas. Dean reaches out for Cas, comforting him and shoving himself into all the places Sam had been, healing the loss, and reaffirming his bond with Cas, that it's Dean's, that he'd never wanted someone else to have a part of Cas, and he fiercely insists that not happen again.

Cas allows it, his grace quivering with joy and affection. Dean wraps his physical arms around Cas, pulling him in tight and shoving his face into Cas' neck.

“I love you, Cas,” Dean breathes into Cas' skin.

“Love *dook* you,” Cas says, his voice sounding wrecked.

Dean looks to where his brother and Gabe had been standing and flinches. He refuses to let go of Cas, but he's shocked that they're gone.

Cas chuckles. *Hnnn, Eh, Kra* “They’re consummating their bond,” he says, not letting go of Dean, sending his nearly overwhelming joy over the fact that Sam and Gabe have found each other, that they’re happy, that the two beings that mean the most to Cas and Dean are happy with each other.

“I’m so fucking glad that connection broke before they started the consummating,” Dean says with a shiver.

Bleat

“You think it’s funny, but I would seriously need you to wipe my memory if I ever felt and saw that shit,” Dean says.

Snuffle “I think we should re-consummate our bond,” Cas says.

Dean chuckles, his dick already letting him know it’s on board by twitching. “You have awesome ideas,” he says.

Rumble comes from Cas as their clothes disappear.

Dean laughs as Cas shoves him onto the bed, loving that playful side of his mate that warms him to the core. He feels as if he’s got everything he ever wanted, and for now he lets himself bask in the glow of everything being right.

Everything could go to Hell at any time, but right now he’s holding the love of his life, his mate, who is smiling down at him as if Dean’s the center of his world. And Sam has found happiness with someone who can actually give just as good as he gets, someone Dean will reluctantly admit is a really decent being and deserves happiness himself.

Dean couldn’t ask for more.

End

Chapter 11: Glossary

Summary: An alphabetized list of the noises angels make and their meanings. This is a list of the basic meanings, but as Dean finds out, the meanings can change slightly if they're used in combination with other noises. The list includes spoilers for some of the parts of Resonance 'Verse.

-

ah – beautiful/pleasing/lovely

bark – pissed/angry

bleat – very amused/laughing

chi – dying/death

chirp – fear/concern

click – inquisitive/concerned

cluck – tired/worn out

coo – positive/agreement/encouragement

cuh – amused/chuckling

dit – Castiel's name

dook – love that's all-encompassing including sexual

eh – Sam's name

ffft – annoyed/angry

grrr – protective warning

grunt – mothering/nurturing

hahs - gratitude/thanks/appreciation

hic – love that's everything but sexual

hiss – unhappy/upset over something

hnnn – happy/happiness/joy

honk – alarm/something's really wrong

howl – sad/dejected/disappointed

huff – bored

hum – calm/safe/loving protection

kra – Gabriel's name

mew – sarcasm/I'm right/in your face

mmm – content/happily sated

nih – reassurance

oh - possessiveness

purr – extremely content

rumble – excited sexually

snick – inquisitive/questioning

snuffle – snuggling/together noise/affectionate snuggling

squeak – surprised

squeal – negative/doesn't want

tick – overwhelmed/confused

trill – calling out for someone

uhn – Dean's name

wheek – excited

whine - life/existence

whistle – hungry/wants something/craving

zzz - apology/shame/regret

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