Summary

After butting heads with a powerful witch, Dean is sent 700 years back in time – right into the bedroom of the devastatingly handsome Scottish laird Castiel Brodie.

Castiel’s clan is in the middle of preparing for a battle that will shape the fate of Scotland for centuries to come. On his way to join his brothers in the fight, Castiel has to decide if he can trust the intruder… and the undeniable attraction between them.

Notes

This fic was written for the Destiel Harlequin Challenge, for which we could choose one out of a hundred cheesy romance novel summaries to base a story on. I settled for this one:

*A Warrior Of Immortal Powers*

He was a mighty Scottish warrior who lived in a world bound by ancient laws and timeless magic. But no immortal powers could prepare the laird of Castle Brodie for the lovely accursed lass who stood before him. A terrible trick of fate had sent her 700 years back in time and into his private chamber to tempt him with her beauty—and seduce him with a desire he could never fulfill. For this woman he burned to possess was also the woman he had foresworn to destroy.

*A Woman Caught In The Mists Of Time*
When Lisa felt the earth move under her feet, the fiercely independent 21st-century woman never dreamed she was falling...into another century. But the powerful, naked warrior who stood glaring down at her was only too real...and too dangerously arousing. Irresistibly handsome he might be, but Lisa had no intention of remaining in this savage land torn by treachery and war. How could she know that her seductive captor had other plans for her...plans that would save her from a tragic fate? Or that this man who had long ago forsaken love would defy time itself to claim her for his own....

Thank you to all the mods for this wonderful challenge. I had a lot of fun! And, as always, my biggest thanks to my awesome beta Marie for your fluff expertise and your encouragement!
Chapter 1

What is this?
I dare not name it
We move in secret
Ways

(...)

And oh
I’m speechless
As we undress without a sound

I don't know what to say
Or I don't know how to say it
But I can't walk away from this
Right now

(Solstice, The Unwinding Hours)

Dean’s on his back and there’s a naked man looming over him.

He’s been in this position before. A few details are new though. For one, a knife is held to his throat and a hand on his bicep presses him down. And yeah, he likes being manhandled now and then but this seems a bit extreme. Cool blue eyes bore into his, and a pink mouth is tugged into a nasty sneer. The man’s dark hair is ruffled and curls over a forehead creased in a threatening frown.

“Who are you?” The stranger’s voice is gravel deep, and Dean gulps down a sudden surge of fear. Which is stupid, of course, he reassures himself.

“D-Dean Winchester.”

Shit, he should have cut back on the mead with Charlie at the renaissance fair. It’s not that he hasn’t found himself in some really weird situations on their roleplay weekends before, but this just might take the cake.

The candlelight throws the features of the man above him in stark relief. High cheekbones and a strong jaw, a sensual mouth and a straight nose give him an aristocratic look, as if he’s fallen through time. This guy doesn’t need costume to rock the look of a warrior. Dean’s eyes flick down to the toned chest with shadows of dark hair. He’s built like someone who fights for a living.

Speaking of… He still has a blade pushing against his jugular. The hand on his arm squeezes and a moan slips from his lips uncensored. The whole situation is a serious turn-on and he hopes no-one’s standing around to watch this, because he will be showing signs of liking this scenario a little too much – soon.

“How did you get into my room?” His naked attacker seems completely immersed in his role. Dean appreciates that, it’s rare even amongst the most dedicated LARPers he knows. He just wishes he could remember how he got into this scene, so he could play his part accordingly and maybe find
out why they agreed on the apparent lack of clothes on the side of his partner. He wriggles with excitement at the thought of that. While he plays just for good clean fun most of the time, he’s not averse to taking that fun to another level from time to time.

“I…” His mind scrambles for a good explanation. He doesn’t want this to be over, doesn’t want to disappoint the handsome stranger, so he grabs the first idea and whispers in a shaking voice: “It’s an ancient curse. A witch sent me here.”

The eyes of the man go wide and his grip loosens, but he keeps the blade in place. The rage transforms into contemplation, the angry stare is replaced by a thoughtful squint. His lips even out and fill back up, plush and pink and made for kissing. The hard lines and edges dissolve and leave angelic features, a face that would fit a Renaissance painting. It’s such a contrast to the harsh behavior that Dean is mesmerized by the transformation. He’s still staring at the stranger’s mouth when he talks again.

“Are you here to kill me?” The voice is still deep but softer now, like he’s genuinely curious.

Dean never lifts his gaze. He licks his lips and his stomach tightens when he sees the motion mirrored an inch above his face. Distractedly he murmurs, “no”. Then he slowly lifts his head, careful to not nick his skin on the knife, and captures the stranger’s bottom lip between his own. To hell with whatever plan they agreed on, he wouldn’t be able to play along anyway without a clue how to proceed. All he can think of is the way that wide expanse of skin is begging to be touched, and how that enticing mouth will taste.

A shocked groan vibrates against his lips and they both freeze for long seconds. Dean hold his eyes open, so he can see the pupils swallow the last sliver of blue in front of him and pinpoint the exact moment instinct takes over. He’s pushed back down and the knife vanishes with a metallic clank before the empty hand is back and closes around his throat possessively.

Dean bares his neck and opens his lips, invitingly, and is rewarded with another filthy sound that echoes in the large room. The stranger licks Dean’s lips open and then pushes his tongue past Dean’s teeth with more hunger than finesse. He tastes like whiskey, wild and dark and male.

Dean whimpers when their tongues meet and he starts giving back, plunging deep and exploring with the same wanton need. It’s perfect. His right hand grabs a handful of hair and he tugs to get the other man closer and angle his head where he wants it.

Their teeth clash with the force of the motion and they both gasp, and heat pulses through his veins like molten gold. His left hand trails down the muscled back, brushing over wilts and lines he can’t make sense of, down until he can sink his fingertips into the skin of the man’s ass and pull him down where their lower bodies meet. He has a split second to revel in the feeling of their lengths aligning and the promise of perfect, heavenly friction, and then the stranger’s gone.

Dazed, Dean opens his eyes to find him on the other side of the room, panting and running his hand through his hair as if he wants to rip it out. He looks like he’s in the middle of a panic attack, which works like a bucket of cold water on Dean’s raging desire. He lifts his upper body for a better view.

“What’s wrong?” Dean asks and his throat is raw from all the sound he made in the last five minutes. The guy straightens. He looks like he’s in the middle of a panic attack, which works like a bucket of cold water on Dean’s raging desire. He lifts his upper body for a better view.

Dean has no clue what brought this reaction on, but the man is obviously distressed, so he wracks
his brain for an explanation and a way to reassure him. Maybe Dean has been too aggressive? It
sure seemed like the other one had been on board. Or maybe the stranger has a partner and let
himself be carried away by the moment, just to regret it now? Dean curses his blackout again. He
should have told the guy he didn’t remember anything instead of going with it.

The stranger lifts his head and there’s a level of disgust and mistrust in his eyes that seems
overboard even if this was something they didn’t consent on beforehand. The man had been in
control of the situation from the beginning, so he could have stopped this at any given moment.

“Dude, seriously, what’s wrong?” Dean goes for a level, calm voice but can’t hide the fact that
he’s starting to get upset by the display. “I honestly can’t remember how this started so let’s sort
this out together, okay?”

The stranger huffs and it’s a mean, sarcastic sound. “You want me to believe that you just appeared
in my castle out of nowhere, and when I’m able to overwhelm you by sheer chance, you start
behaving like a needy bitch just because you are overcome by a sudden desire?”

Dean would love to come up with an eloquent response to that, but has to settle for: “Uhm…
what?”

“Here is what I think: you are either here to kill me or to rob me or to spy on me. Whatever it is – I
won’t play your games.” The stranger has calmed down visibly and there’s bitter acid in his tone
that stings despite the circumstances.

Dean’s mind reels from the utter ridiculousness of the accusation as much as from the fact that this
psycho can’t take a hint when to stop the act. Dean pushes up to stand and dusts off his clothes,
because he wants to buy some time and because they’re really filthy. This place could use a good
vacuuming.

He takes in his surroundings and can’t help to be impressed by the level of attention detail that
these people put into the room. They must be in one of the old warehouses where a few bigger
groups set up their stages.

Charlie and him mostly use the tents dispersed on the fields around the main fair. They have a few
wooden chairs and a large table and a bunch of sheepskins to give it all a rustic touch, but this is
something else alright. The fireplace seems made from solid stone and that’s definitely a real fire
in it. A massive wooden bed takes up about a fourth of the room and if he still had any doubts
that’s telling a lot about the kind of play going down here. Dean has to smile a little. He’s not
judging, but that’s kinda kinky even for him.

He’s wearing his favorite costume, light brown leather breeches and cocotte, light chain mail over
it, solid boots and a soft linen undershirt in dark green. It’s not authentic to the last stitch – he
wouldn’t be able to afford that – but it looks real enough on first glance and it’s comfortable
enough to wear even on longer days.

“Look… ah… I don’t even know your name…?”

The naked guy twitches like he’s forgotten Dean’s there. He goes over to a chair in three long
strides and tugs on a pair of black woolen pants and a wide off-white linen shirt. Dean thinks it’s a
wise decision to continue their discussion with both of them clothed but there’s still a pang of regret
on seeing all that skin vanish under fabric. The man turns and Dean is unable to stifle a shocked
gasp at the scars branding the stranger’s back. Three welted lines he can see on first glance, one of
them looks barely healed. Either he had been in some near fatal accident or these are the best fake
sword wound scars he’s ever seen.
Then the shirt falls over his back and blocks the view. The man turns.

“Castiel Brodie. But I’m sure you knew that.” His tone is cold, stand-offish, controlled and Dean can’t believe it had been only minutes since he heard the same voice hoarse with lust.

He walks by Dean to the door. “Gordon.”

A minute later a tall man enters the room. His eyes flit to Dean before concentrating back on… Castiel… apparently.

“This man found a way into the castle. I’m not sure if he’s a spy or a killer, but I plan to find out. Take him to our guest room. The one with the lock.”

The man nods, “Yes, sir.”

“Give him something to eat. I’ll interrogate him myself tomorrow.”

An eyebrow shoots up at that but the guard keeps his mouth shut. Dean only has time to whisper “what the fuck” before he’s shoved out of the room and finds himself on a wide stairway overlooking a freaking medieval hall. The grip on his arm tightens and Gordon pulls him down the corridor to the left, not waiting for Dean’s feet and brain to catch up. It’s only when a door as thick as his arm falls into the massive lock behind him that his mind is able to form a single coherent thought.

This is not the renaissance fair.

It’s a real castle.

He’s completely and seriously fucked.
Cas paces the length of his room for what feels like hours, going through the events of the evening again and again. He had been alone, undressing to get into bed, when he had heard a crash and found the stranger on the floor next to his bed.

His visitor had dropped out of nowhere – the room lies high above the well and is only accessible through the door or the slim embrasures. The man – Dean – could never have fit through the latter with those broad shoulders. And he could not have come in through the door with Cas inside. The old hinges creak and whine with every motion. Slipping by him would have been impossible.

That means he had to have been there already when Cas came into the room after dinner. He rubs his neck and cards his fingers through his hair in an angry motion. It’s not easy to get past the defenses and the guards, but it can be done, especially with half of the clansmen already in the south to await the English army. And Dean has shown his willingness to do anything to fulfill his mission. To think that Cas almost fell for it… He shudders with the memory, cursing his body to betray him like that.

He wipes roughly over his lips to erase the feeling of those perfect lips on his. It does nothing against the memory of the needy moans and whimpers that had urged Cas on or the rapid pulse under his palm stumbling with every twist of his tongue, nor does it make him forget the image of blazing green eyes looking up to him through long lashes, hungry and lust blown. Dean had undulated under him as if he couldn’t help himself.

It has been way too long since Cas had another body in his arms, hot skin to explore and shared desire to get lost in. No surprise he hadn’t been able to resist at first. Only when the hands of the intruder had become too straight-forward, his defensive instincts had kicked in. Nobody had touched him like that in years – so to think someone broke into his home just to follow that desire had been a clear sign that something was wrong. All that leads to one conclusion: Dean had been sent by an enemy. Now Cas has to find out by whom and why.

After long hours of tossing and turning he finally gives in to that low hum of want beneath his skin. He reaches down to wrap his hand around his straining erection and tugs on the soft skin covering the hard length. He bites his bottom lip to keep from groaning. The castle walls are thick and no one will hear him, but it would feel like defeat if he let himself be carried away. He brings himself to completion with a few angry strokes while flashes of green eyes and wet lips race through his mind. The orgasm that tumbles over him reminds him of stale beer – enough to quench the thirst, but completely unsatisfying.

Cas sinks into an uneasy sleep. When the first rays of sunlight reach his bed and wake him, his whole body aches with fatigue. He washes his face with the ice cold water on the drawer next to the door and dresses with clumsy hands.

He goes down to the kitchen for a hasty breakfast – a bowl of porridge that simmers on the stove most mornings. He burns his tongue but doesn’t slow down. Mrs. Mooseley, the good soul and true sovereign of Castle Brodie watches him from behind the massive work table but chooses not to comment. He leaves as soon as his bowl is empty, hurries up the stairs and catches his breath in front of the third door.
It opens after he turns one of the keys on his belt in the solid lock. Dean jumps up from the bed and stands in front of it in a defensive stance, feet wide, hands in loose fists at his sides, chin thrust forward. Cas had wondered if his senses had fooled him last night but no. Dean is every bit as handsome in the clear morning light, maybe even more so.

Forest green eyes gleam with determination. Dean had the whole night to ponder his next steps just like Cas. They stand a few feet away, sizing each other up, and Cas has a distinct feeling that he met a worthy opponent. He should not underestimate Dean. And he will be careful after he had a taste of Dean’s acting skills.

Cas loves the passion plays staged in the church in Nairn every Easter. He always marvels at the talent of the monks taking on different roles and bringing the stories from the bible to life. He has to remember some people can make you believe anything – even if it’s all lies. He squints at Dean and promises himself not to fall for him again.

“Winchester. That’s not a common name around here. Where do you come from?” Cas takes a few steps to the window to have an excuse to break the intense eye contact with his prisoner. He doesn’t dwell on the sudden sense of loss.

“I’m not from around here. I guess. Where exactly am I?”

Cas huffs. He doesn’t know what game Dean is playing, but he decides to indulge him and hopes for him to slip up. Maybe Dean will give away something about the people who sent him if Cas acts as if he believes him. “Ah yes, I remember, the witch curse. You must be quite confused after that experience. This is castle Brodie, home of the clan of Brodie.”

Cas hears a shocked gasp behind his back and forces himself to stay put.

“Like… in Scotland?”

“Yes, Mr. Winchester. We are in Scotland. Moray, to be exact. What did you think?”

“I …” a long pause follows. “What date is it?” There’s a tremor in the deep voice now, a hesitant note that Cas doesn’t like. He liked that voice better when it uttered sounds of pleasure. Trying to pry his mind away from the memory of last night – again – he answers: “It’s May 13th, year of lord 1314.”

The bed squeaks behind him and Cas turns against his will. Dean sits on the edge of the mattress. His face is white and his gaze darts around the room as if he searches for a way out. The hands in his lap tremble visibly.

This man has smuggled himself through the defenses of a well-guarded fortress, has been caught in the bedchamber of a seasoned warrior, almost seduced said man and stayed calm after being held prisoner with an uncertain outlook on whether he lived or died, and the mention of the date makes him panic? Cas watches the silent break-down, stunned. Dean Winchester is a mystery. And Cas wants to solve it.

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Freaking 1314. Dean pinches his arm as soon as Castiel is gone, but no dice. He’s still awake, still here, still locked into a room in a fucking castle in fucking 1314. How the hell did that happen?
Fuzzy memories about a red-haired lady at the fair bubble up, Rhonda, Rory… right, Rowena. Rowena MacLeod. She had a small booth at the back of the market square, tugged between the mead stand (never again) and some tables full of handmade trinkets.

Dean might have made a few jokes about witches and complained about their unhygienic practices. He vaguely remembers the face of the witch contorting with disdain, and how she beckoned him over with a thick Scottish accent. The rest is hazy.

Huh, she must have been really, really pissed.

He rubs his hands over his face and back through his hair. The situation is all kinds of crazy but he has to postpone freaking out and try to come up with a plan instead. Castiel is the boss around here and while he is built like a swordsman who won’t hesitate to fight any man standing in his way, he seems level-headed enough to let Dean live a few days more – if Dean manages to not make him any angrier.

Castiel led in a hurry after Dean nearly broke down in front of him. Dean guesses he couldn’t stand the sight of a grown man losing his cool like that. Castiel, Dean is sure, has never had a moment like this in his whole life. He probably killed his first man before he was ten years old.

Dean catches spiders with a glass to take them outside.

His shirt is still drenched in sweat and his fingers dig deep into the meat of his thighs. He can’t give in to the need to scream now though, not if he wants to survive this.

What does he know about Scotland in 1314? Actually, just the plot of Braveheart. The Scottish clans will fight a much stronger British army and defeat them against all odds. The battle took place – will take place, he reminds himself – in the middle of June, so it’s still over a few weeks away. He is confident that he can remember some of the names if he concentrates. That might come in handy.

Dean will need Castiel’s help to find a witch who can bring him back. Maybe he can trade the few bits and pieces he knows about the coming events. He has time to cobble them together over the next hours until Castiel’s return.

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The afternoon sun paints triangles of light onto the stone floor when the door opens again and Castiel enters. Dean is standing by the window and turns to take his captor in. He is a few inches smaller than Dean but makes up for that with an aura of authority that seems as much a part of him as the riveting blue eyes and the unruly dark hair.

Dean lets his eyes trail down the body of the man standing in front of him – clad in dark linen pants and a simple white shirt that billows around his frame. Dean doesn’t need his imagination to envision what’s underneath. He’s already seen every inch of that gorgeous body. And if they had met in any other circumstances, he’d be all over that body right now.

As things stand, he has to quench that impulse and ignore the tug in his groin that follows the memory of last night. He needs Castiel’s help and to get that, he can’t let personal feelings get in the way.
Castiel puts down a plate with two slices of bread, some bacon and cheese. “You should eat.” It’s not an invitation.

Dean walks over and sits down at the table. The bread is fresh and tasty and he realizes how starved he is as soon as he washes down the first bite with a cup of water. Castiel watches him closely from the other side of the table, but stays silent until Dean finishes his meal and leans back.

“So who sent you? The English? Mowbray and his scum?”

Dean cringes at the venom in Castiel’s voice. It has lost all the gravelly-warm timbre Dean had loved the evening before, when lust had softened the harsh commanding tone. Now he looks up at Castiel and tries to hide the effect it has on him. He should never forget that Castiel is a warrior and won’t hesitate to kill him if his answers aren’t satisfying. Dean just shakes his head, because he doesn’t trust his voice right now.

The squint that transforms Castiel’s features into a mask of distrust deepens. And there’s even more disgust in his tone when he spits out “Campbell.”

Dean’s brows shoot up at that and he realizes too late that he just gave away that the name means something to him. Castiel takes a step closer and leans over the table into Dean’s personal space with a menacing glint in his eyes. He’s close enough that Dean feels his breath on his face and can see each and every of his perfect dark lashes. Their gazes lock and Castiel’s eyes search his for long moments. Dean’s throat constricts with fear and his heart is pounding against his ribs in a frenzied staccato. What should he say?

Before an answer presents itself Castiel is gone from his vision. He’s pacing the room again. “No. Winchester is an English name and even if you lied about that, you most certainly aren’t a Scot. Campbell wouldn’t stoop that low.”

Dean tries to not be offended and keeps his mouth shut. Who knows if he’s even related to these Campbells. There must be hundreds of families. His ancestors came to America in 1760, and they lived in Stirling before that. But Dean has no idea which part of the family tree Castiel is talking about here and he never followed the lineage so far back anyway.

While Dean ponders the connection, Castiel carries on. “You made no move to kill me the other night, so you must be here to spy on me.” His head snaps up and Dean finds himself in the center of that cold blue stare again, but Castiel doesn’t elaborate.

Dean schools his features and goes for a calm tone. “I told you, I’ve been cursed. And now I need to find a witch to make it right again.” He has no idea if Castiel will buy it but he has to count on the fact that these people were extremely superstitious. And he’s lucky – Castiel’s eyes go wide and he whispers: “Are you a witch too?”

All those LARPing weekends pay off now because the lie falls from his lips without any barriers. “No, but I have a gift. I can predict the future.”

He sees that Castiel doesn’t fully believe him, but he seems intrigued. The cogs are turning in his brain and Dean can only hope he will come to a conclusion in Dean’s favor. “Can you prove that? What do you see in the near future?”

Dean uses the first thing that comes to his mind. “The English army will come north to rescue Stirling Castle.” As soon as he says it, he realizes his mistake. A sour smile contorts Castiel’s face.

“I knew that already. And you would too if you are an English spy. You don’t need supernatural
abilities for that.” He turns to go to the door. “I will think about your demand. You will stay in this room until then.”

The door closes with a gloomy boom that makes the dishes rattle on the table.

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Cas leans against the wall next to Dean’s door and takes a deep breath. His mind is whirling with what he just learned. He feels that Dean doesn’t tell him the whole truth but he can’t for the life of him pinpoint where exactly the lie begins and ends.

Dean’s almost certainly a threat, the idea that he landed in this castle by chance and magic is slim. He’s dangerous and capable to get under Cas’ skin, so Cas has to be extra cautious. He has to decide what to do with his prisoner. Word to march south can arrive every day now and he doesn’t have time to waste on Dean.

But what if? A small voice in the back of his mind whispers. What if Dean was really sent here by a witch, what if he really can see the future. Cas has seen and felt things moving in the dark, he knows witches are powerful and vindictive, and a man with the Gift at his disposal would be worth the trouble in these uncertain times.

The Scottish clans have fought against the British occupation for years. Their numbers are much smaller and the British are much better equipped. More so, there’s fighting between the chiefs, some of which pledged themselves to the British or debate staying neutral in the battle looming on the horizon. If Dean’s a spy or if he has a gift, either way he’s valuable to Cas, he might even hold the information that decides their fate.

He can’t let him go, he realizes, and a shiver of nervous excitement shoots along his spine that has nothing to do with Dean’s value as an asset in the ongoing war. He closes his eyes for a few seconds and all he sees is Dean on the floor of his room, moving under him, and Cas has to adjust his pants at the memory. Having Dean close and not giving in to that desire will be the hardest thing he had to do in a long while, maybe ever.

But he can’t trust Dean, and Cas is quite sure that Dean is fully capable of using his charms and his seduction skills to get what he wants. If all this is part of a ploy, either to wring information from Cas or even make him switch sides… Cas has no way to know for sure. And that means he has to keep his hands off of Dean, tempting as it may be.

He opens his eyes and sets off to the kitchen. If he wants to indulge Dean and find a witch to help him, he knows just who to ask.

Missouri is up to her elbows in a big bowl of yeast dough for the weekly batch of bread. Cas washes his hands and shoos her off to take over the hard work. She thanks him warmly and cleans her hands on a rag. The kitchen falls silent. Crossing her arms, Missouri leans against the large work table and waits for Cas to talk. Sometimes he thinks Missouri has magical abilities herself with the way she seems to see right through him. Most of the time he tells himself she just knows a lot about human nature.

Cas kneads and debates what to tell her. As he hesitates, she huffs and goes over to the hearth to stir the pot and keep herself busy.
“Yesterday I found a man in my room.”

“Well, congratulations,” she smiles.

Cas can’t help but smile back. “The circumstances weren’t quite as pleasurable as you seem to expect. He might be a spy.”

Missouri hums into the large black cauldron. “He might be?”

“He says a witch sent him here against his will and that he needs to find another one to send him back. I should help him with that.”

“Do you believe him?”

Cas takes the lump of dough out of the bowl to knead it on the flour-dusted hardwood. He always loved spending time in the kitchen, the warmth and the smells and the easy banter with Missouri stood in stark contrast to the cold and stiff relationships with his parents and his older brothers.

“No, but I will play along to find out what his real motives are. So I came to ask you if you knew of any witches that could do such a thing.”

“Send a man to another place you mean? That needs a great amount of power.” She rummages around the kitchen while she thinks. “I once knew a powerful witch, down near Killiecrankie. You could ask her.”

Cas thinks about that. He’ll have to head south soon anyway to meet up with his brother and discuss their strategy if the rumors are true and the British army is on its way to save Stirling Castle. His men would follow under the command of Gordon. He’d have time for a stop in Killiecrankie, which lay halfway between Brodie and Stirling.

The prospect of travelling a hundred miles with Dean, just the two of them, lets his heart pick up speed as if he’d been running. He isn’t prone to blushing (not like Dean, whose skin will flush whenever Cas looks at him for longer than a few seconds, his brain supplies unhelpfully), but Missouri’s gaze lands on him all the same. He concentrates on forming equally big loafs of bread and sets them in neat rows to rise a second time. He still feels the scrutiny of the woman that has been more of a mother than his own ever was.

“What?”, he grates out, not looking up.

She sighs. “You’ve been alone for a very long time…” She lets the sentence float there and with it all the things it carries underneath the surface like a stream takes sharp tumbling rocks from one point to another.

“I don’t want to talk about it,” he grouses, and straightens to meet her gaze. “I don’t mind being alone.”

With that he turns and leaves, but he hears her whispered answer all the same: “You keep telling yourself that.”

Cas, at the age of 27, has given up hope to ever find someone he wants to spend his life with. He courted a young heiress from a befriended clan when he was 19, but she decided she liked his older brother Michael better. They had been married for seven years, and were raising two wonderful sons.

He had a few short-lived hookups with soldiers and friendly widows in the village, but he lacked
the charm his brothers had, and his sarcastic, clipped demeanor didn’t exactly draw people to him. Cas likes being on his own, he spends most of his free time reading, and he has been content with it for the most part. If he would have agreed to marry someone, it would have been for practical reasons, to bind another clan to them or combine strengths. His sisters and his brothers took care of that, mostly, and most of them even loved the partners their parents had chosen.

So he’s free to live on his bachelor’s live, carry on his brother’s command over the 60 men that made up the regiment preparing for another battle right now. *It’s better this way* – he can concentrate on strategizing without the weight of a family of his own that he might not come back to. In his book, returning to an empty and cold bed at night is a small price to pay for that.

*That’s* what he tells himself.
Chapter 3

They set out a week after Dean found himself in the bedroom of Castiel Brodie and in the arms of one of the most handsome men he’d ever seen. That fact hasn’t changed since then and Dean’s hopes that he would find Castiel less attractive when he got to know him better have been crushed repeatedly.

Castiel is tight-lipped and grouchy most of the time, but Dean’s drawn to him nonetheless. Maybe it’s his confidence, his physical presence, the way he seems in control of the situation in the most improbable circumstances, and maybe it’s the small glimpse of what he could be like if he let that control slip.

As much as he yearns to feel Castiel’s body on his again, his appeal goes beyond that sexual attraction. Castiel is well-read and from what Dean gathers from his short encounters with the other inhabitants of the castle, he’s a competent and fair leader, and works hard to care for his clan. Dean can relate to that – family is important and his respect for Castiel grows with every detail he learns about his captor.

And more than that – even if Castiel doesn’t trust him and is not convinced Dean isn’t a spy, he asked around for a witch that might be able to help Dean and is willing to visit her. They will be travelling south to Killiecrankie, a small village 80 miles away, and meet up with Castiel’s brothers who lay in wait with the other clan chiefs near Stirling.

Dean attributes the nervous flutter in his stomach to the prospect of returning home and not to the fact that he will spend at least three or four nights alone with Castiel in the wilderness.

They travel on foot with light luggage, because the clan’s few horses are needed on the fields and Castiel thinks it “unnecessary to use them for distances under 100 miles”. Dean is okay with that – he doesn’t know how to ride on horseback anyway and thinks he can manage the distance. Castiel looks breathtaking and like something that sprang out of his more colorful fantasies in his dark green kilt – a long piece of woolen fabric that’s wound around his body and held by a brooch on his right shoulder. His constant sex hair, the light stubble dusting his jaw and the way he holds his shoulders give him an aura of a sexy brigand and it’s not helping with Dean’s crush in the slightest.

Missouri, the good soul of the castle – Dean met her when she brought him dinner the other day – packed them provisions and sends them off with her hands clasped and a worried frown on her face. And then they are on their way.

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Spring colors the landscape of the highlands in broad strokes of light green, white and brown. The weather is mild and dry. The gentle hills, the creeks and lochs stretch to the horizon without another living soul in sight. Dean and Castiel take small paths or just follow Castiel’s estimation of direction instead of using the bigger roads. That means they’re on their own most of the time, and they won’t pass any inns for the night.
Castiel brought a small tent – nothing more than a piece of cloth to hang over branches – that will keep away the cold and the rain in the night. They stay silent for most of the first day, Castiel most likely brooding about strategies against the nearing English army, Dean lost in thought about the fantastic situation he’s found himself in. He never believed in much, least of all in things he can’t see, can’t touch and verify with his own hands. His family isn’t highly religious, but his mother used to believe in angels and his father had a superstitious streak. Dean never ruled out the possibility that there are things beyond human comprehension; he just never put much stock in trusting those powers to work in his favor.

And magic? Most of his friends were nerds, and that had always put him in the periphery of people claiming they had gifts and could commune with nature, but he had mostly laughed about them and brushed it off as a weird hobby.

Now he knows better. Although there is still a small chance that he fell into a coma and is dreaming all of this (he doesn’t know if he would prefer that explanation), after nearly a week full of experiences he could not have made up if he tried, he is almost 100 % sure he has really fallen through time.

He’d like to know why that witch sent him here and to this time, though. His clothes might have given her the idea. Or maybe she had an interest in him landing exactly here. Or maybe it didn’t work that way and the spell was unpredictable, choosing a place and a time at random. Or she made a mistake. He could dwell forever on these questions, but without any further information that’s a waste of time.

He falls in step with Castiel after a while. The highlander uses long efficient strides, almost but not quite a jog, that Dean finds hard to follow in the beginning. Two hours later he has internalized the unfamiliar motion and sees the appeal. It’s easier to cover large distances this way, conserving energy.

They are mostly quiet, and Dean’s glad about that because he has to concentrate on where he steps and he needs his breath to keep up. Castiel points out landmarks as they go – a hill, an old tree, a creek where he went fishing as a kid. Dean can’t help but be impressed by Castiel’s knowledge of the land and its history. He listens and tries to see it all through Castiel’s eyes – nature that can kill you if you come unprepared and don’t know how to survive, but also forests and plains and fields that have been a home for his family for hundreds of years. He can’t imagine the responsibility that entails, for the people living here, for his family’s heirloom and their name.

Dean wonders how Castiel thinks about their encounter, and if he wants to repeat it. He wonders what would happen if Dean instigated something, and if he will ever forget how his whole body aches for another touch from the man next to him. He dares to peek over and nearly sighs: the afternoon sun lies gentle on Castiel’s tanned skin and plays with shadows along his strong jaw and straight nose. He’s freaking handsome, and Dean only averts his gaze when Castiel’s blue stare meets his, brows drawn in question.

After hours of walking at this fast pace, Dean’s leg are numb and heavy. He’s going slower now and Castiel doesn’t say anything, but slows down too and starts scanning the area for a place to stop. That’s what Dean hopes anyway.

They set up camp near a small lake; Castiel won’t call it loch, it’s too shallow and insignificant. Dean is sent off to search for dry wood while Castiel finds a few larger branches for their tent. When Dean comes back, his arms full of twigs, he stares at the small cloth-covered tent for a minute or two. Castiel clears his throat and looks up inquiringly. Dean lets the fire wood fall and turns to search for the cooking pot to get water for their porridge. He will not be the one to point
out the obvious: them sleeping next to each other in the tiniest tent ever is a Bad Idea.

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He hadn’t thought this through. He should have, he knows that now. Dean’s body is pressed against his back from chest to thighs, a long line of warmth. His scalding breath meets Cas’ neck with every slow exhale and makes him shiver. Castiel should move away from the temptation but every fiber of his being screams at him to get even closer. He holds himself back, but barely.

His arm goes limp from lying on it for too long and he wonders how Dean can sleep with both his hands tied behind his back. It’s a precaution Cas had to insist on, since they started out south ahead of his men.

As much as Cas enjoys Dean’s company, he can’t forget Dean’s his prisoner and he can’t trust him. Exasperated, he turns. Another mistake. Dean’s beautiful, sleep-melted face is only inches away and the early morning light casts shadows from his lashes all over his high cheekbones. His lips lay softly on each other, begging to be kissed. Dean mumbles something Cas can’t quite make out and then shuffles closer as if he’s chasing Cas’ warmth. Good lord. In one fluid motion Dean wedges a thigh between Cas’, pressing against his filling dick, and Cas’ resolve chatters. He groans.

Dean’s lips part and his pink tongue darts out to wet them. It’s a slow and lazy motion and Cas follows it, enraptured. When he looks up again, he finds Dean’s gaze on his own mouth, and suddenly, he can’t remember any of the reasons why they shouldn’t be doing this. He moves his head slowly to give Dean time to say something, anything, or to turn his head, but Dean just keeps watching and waiting.

When their lips finally meet, it’s soft and tender. Cas maps out the texture of Dean’s lips before he licks them open. Dean makes a small needy sound and Cas wants to hear it again more than anything. Their tongues meet and, against all odds, Dean invites Cas in. It’s heaven or maybe the slope to hell, Cas doesn’t care either way. Cas’ hands shoot up to tangle in Dean’s short hair and pull gently. He’s rewarded with another one of Dean’s delicious little noises, so he does it again and pushes his tongue deep into Dean’s mouth, and all the pent-up want of the last days sweeps over him with a force that takes his breath away.

Dean’s thigh moves and brushes Cas’ hardness again, so Cas thrusts forward to find some friction. They both move at the same time and they both groan when Cas lower body comes close enough for their erections to meet. It’s hot and glorious – and not nearly enough.

Dean snaps his hips shallowly while their kiss becomes heated, full of teeth and tongue and harsh breaths. Dean pulls back and fixates Cas with nearly black eyes. “I’d do something about this,” he underlines his words with a sharp thrust of his hips and a smirk on his full lips, “but it seems my hand are tied.”

Cas nods. He never leaves Dean’s eyes when he open Dean’s pants and his kilt and wraps his hand around them both, surprised by his own boldness. Dean looks confused only for a second – he clearly thought Cas would free his wrists – but then moans at the sensation. Cas attacks his mouth at the same time he starts moving his hands.
Dean’s cock twitches in Castiel’s hand and leaks drops of precome into his moving palm. It’s filthy and hot and he groans his pleasure into Castiel’s smooth, pushes his tongue against Castiel’s while his hips thrust into to tunnel of Castiel’s hand. Castiel’s breath goes ragged and his movements lose their rhythm: he’s already close and chasing his climax.

Dean watches Castiel’s eyes fall shut, a crease between his brows, his swollen lips open around broken gasps and moans. He’s beautiful like this, lost in his desire, and Dean realizes with a start that he is falling fast for this man.

“Fuck,” he grates out, as every single one of his muscles constricts. He knocks his forehead to Castiel’s and captures his lips once again. And then he comes, hard, over Castiel’s hand and his stomach, pulse after pulse, as Castiel keeps pumping his fist over both of them. It’s almost too much and Dean bites down on Castiel’s bottom lip to keep in the shout that’s building in his chest.

When Dean is finally spent, he starts to tell Castiel off when he feels his cock swelling against his own and he looks down just in time to see him spilling and adding to the mess Dean left. The image burns itself into his mind and he’s sure he will never be able to erase it. Castiel loosens his grip and starts “I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have…” just when Dean murmurs “Let me taste it.” Castiel’s eyes go wide but he complies and lifts his fingers to Dean’s mouth who licks a long stripe along his palm, gaze unwavering.

“Dear god,” Castiel pants, before he crashes his lips to Dean’s again and Dean pushes his tongue deep to give him a taste of their combined release.

Dean’s wrists are swollen and raw when Castiel finally frees him with an apologetic look. Dean thinks he would trade the discomfort any day for having Castiel’s naked body to wake up next to. He’d even let Castiel tie him up just for the fun of it. He smiles while Castiel gently touches his skin. Despite the cold and the tasteless food and the constant hiking, he already enjoys this trip a lot.

They stay silent for the half of the next day. Then Castiel haltingly starts to talk. He tells Dean about his family and Dean tells him about his. They both leave out all the important bits, but Dean listens rapt all the same.

Castiel doesn’t have the best relationship with his family but loves them fiercely. He has a deep sense of loyalty, what Dean admires and understands, and a rebellious streak and a love for his freedom that Dean finds mirrored in himself. They both had to take on responsibility for others at a young age. But other than this, their lives are nothing alike.

Castiel knows death and war from his early childhood, and he’s ready to put his life on the line for his clan and his king without thinking twice. He’s hardened, and Dean’s sure last night was the first time in a long time that Castiel allowed himself something good for himself. His shock at Dean reciprocating so willingly was real, and Dean had reveled in the fact that Castiel lost control
like that just from watching Dean. His mind travels back to the scene again and again. Castiel was mesmerizing when he came apart – Dean can’t wait to see that again.

“I will sleep next to fire.” Castiel built the tent while Dean made dinner and now stands awkwardly next to the thing. “It’s not right. You are my prisoner, most likely a spy.” He looks like he’s trying to convince himself more than Dean, and Dean can’t help but smile.

“If you’re telling me you took advantage of me last night, I gotta tell you that’s bullshit. If my hands hadn’t been bound I’d have been all over you hours earlier.”

Castiel’s eyes go wide at that. Dean’s bluntness still catches him by surprise. And no wonder, Dean thinks. How many guys in this time would be okay with being tied up and manhandled by a warrior? How many of them would get off on the idea of doing it again? And even if they did, Dean’s quite sure they wouldn’t talk about consent and their desires over empty porridge bowls with the man that could very well be an enemy.

It’s dumb and irrational, but he trusts Castiel. He even thinks about telling him the truth, and he would if he had any hope that Castiel would believe him. But he can’t risk that Castiel declares him a lunatic, a lost cause, that isn’t worth the effort to bring to this witch. No, he has to keep that secret to himself, and he has to keep in mind that if things go as he hopes, he will leave this place in a few days and never see Castiel again.

He swallows to loosen the sudden lump in his throat and takes the bowls to go over to the lake and wash them. Maybe Castiel is right. They should not share the tent again.

“I will sleep outside,” he says without looking up.

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Cas watches Dean go. He doesn’t know what he thought. That Dean would argue and beg him to spend the night with him again? He curses himself. Of course not. His mind is playing tricks on him because being with Dean made him forget everything that’s looming over him at the moment, he made him feel good, and that’s always a sure sign that he should be careful.

He will bring Dean to his witch and bargain for more information. And then their ways will part, and he will be able to think clearly again. He knows clansmen who lost their focus over lust, who mistook desire for a real bond. He will not make that same mistake.

He tosses and turns the whole night while he lies close enough to the tent to hear that Dean’s not sleeping either. He stops himself from getting up and closing the few feet between them about ten times. It’s more than just the desire for his captive that hums under his skin constantly now - he is aching to have Dean close and feel his warmth, and he hates the cool distance that appeared between them. His mind knows that he can’t trust Dean - his heart has long since made the leap. Castiel is not used to his feelings wandering away from his control like that and he feels untethered, as if he’s stumbling blindly through the mist.

The first light of dawn is creeping over the horizon when he falls into an uneasy sleep. When Dean wakes him two hours later and asks him to untie him so he can take a leak, Cas is grumpy and sore and cold. He frees Dean’s hands and rubs a thumb over the red marks on his wrists. Dean snatches them away as if Cas burned him and stalks over to the edge of the forest to take care of his
business. The next days will be long and uncomfortable.

Their route will bring them to a small village that has an inn for travelers. Cas doesn’t tell Dean, because he wants to make up his mind about the question if they should spend the night there or not. There are good reasons for both options, sleeping outside and at the tavern: one is cheaper, the other more comfortable. If he’s honest with himself, these are not the arguments that really keep him on the fence, though. One will hold an easy opportunity to spend another night in the tent, the other holds other opportunity of a bed.

Cas has to remind himself of his resolution that it wouldn’t happen again. But that had been before he had to walk behind Dean for half a day, as they found their path through the rocky hillside, a path too narrow to walk next to each other. Dean’s broad back, his round ass, his muscled thighs had been in his line of sight for hours, and more than once, Dean had to climb a steep incline and give Cas a hand to help him up. Even those small and practical touches had made Cas skin tingle and memories flood his mind.

Yes, he would not be able to resist if Dean showed even the slightest interest in spending the night with him again. Might as well get comfortable then. Cas sighs and points west. “We’ll go this way. The next village has a tavern. We’ll stay there for the night.”

Dean doesn’t say anything, but Cas can feel his gaze on him, full of questions that Cas couldn’t answer if he tried.

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“I’m sorry, laddies, you’ll have to share.” The stout woman walks right on to bring two cups of beer to a group of travelling soldiers. Dean’s mouth waters at the sight and the smell of heather and malt. He’d give a lot for a beer right now.

Castiel is grunting something unintelligible next to him and Dean chuckles. Maybe he didn’t think about the fact that they would have to share when they stopped here, even if there had been more than one room. If he still didn’t trust Dean not to kill him in his sleep, he could never have let him alone by himself. Or maybe he wanted to lock Dean in?

It didn’t matter now. They would have to bunk together.

In a small room.

With a bed.

His stomach tightens at the thought and he looks over to his left to see a beautiful blush creep up Castiel’s face. So he’s thinking about it too, god help me. Dean’s mouth goes dry and his mind whirs with the possibilities. He needs that beer real bad.

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Cas spends more money than he wanted to on beers and their dinner. He drinks enough to drown his resolution to stay away from Dean, enough to not forbid himself to look at him over the table in the tavern and let his eyes wander over Dean’s handsome face and his inviting neck and his strong hands.

Their knees knock together now and then and Cas lets his fall against Dean’s after a while, and then Dean stretches his leg and leans his calf against Cas’ so he has to open his thighs wider. When Cas gasps at that simple gesture, and Dean smiles like a cat, Cas knows he won’t make it.

Dean catches his gaze and holds it while he swallows the last third of his beer and stands. He turns to the stairs without looking back. Cas finds himself behind him again, eyes on that gorgeous ass. He’s suddenly sure that the whole room knows what’s happening, and he couldn’t care less.

A rough voice stops them. “Taking your English whore to bed, huh?” Cas turns to find the red face of a drunken farmer in the corner of the room. The other men laugh uncomfortably but with an asserting, unfriendly undertone. Dean tenses beside Cas, but stays silent. He is a stranger here after all, and what reason does he have to think the crude remark doesn’t fit Cas’ intentions?

Cas’ stomach drops with the thought of Dean thinking that low of him. He moves before he can think, and feels Dean’s hand slide from his sleeve where he grabbed Cas to prevent what’s happening next. Cas crosses the room in four strides, has the sloppy drunk by the lapels of his shirt and drags him up to scowl menacingly at him. “Do you want to repeat that?”

The man’s eyes roam unsteadily over his face. It’s clear he didn’t anticipate Cas to stand up for the honor of an English prisoner, and Cas is surprised by the force of his reaction, too. What Dean thinks of him has grown to be a lot more important to him that the opinion of his own people. He can’t stand anyone talking about him like this, even if he still doesn’t know what Dean’s true motives are. His every instinct tells him that Dean is good and loyal and honest at least in the moments when they don’t share words, when only their bodies speak for them.

The man dangling from his grip shakes his head, and the laughter around them dies down to leave only dead silence. Someone clears his throat. Cas loosens his hold and lets his charge fall down on the bench again with a thump, before he turns and locks eyes with Dean.

The adrenaline from the almost fight pumps through him, mingles with the low hum of arousal from the last hours and days as well as the pleasant buzz from the beer. Dean watches his every move like he’s a wild animal, and his eyes glow with desire and something else, a possessive glint that echoes Cas’ own feelings and makes him fastening his steps until he reaches Dean and takes his arm to shove him up the stairs.

They find the room and step inside. Dean closes the door behind Cas and crowds him against it without missing a beat.

“That was pretty hot. Good thing I had two days to form a plan.” Dean’s voice is low and warm, casual almost.

“For what,” Cas asks, and he can’t quite keep a tremor out of his own.

“For what I’ll do if I get you in a room with a bed. What I’ll do with my hands free.” He holds them up for Cas to see before he cups Cas’ face with his palms. Dean’s hands are steady and sure, and Cas does not know when their roles reversed like this. He’s not sure who’s the captive now, the helpless one. His knees are weak and he leans heavy against the door. Dean comes closer
slowly, and even in the fading light, Cas can make out his freckles and the specks of gold in his eyes. And then Dean’s close enough that it all becomes a blur, and their lips meet.

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Castiel hums under him and opens his lips slightly. The kiss is slow and sweet and Dean did not anticipate that. He still frames Castiel’s face and tilts his head to deepen the kiss. There’s something warm and heavy moving in his chest, and it makes panic bubble up in him, because he can’t fall even more for his man.

He planned for fast and urgent, and now it’s anything but. Castiel’s tongue sweeps over his lips tenderly and careful, and Dean feels cherished in a way he can’t process right now. He pushes his whole body against Castiel, presses close and invades the wet mouth under him with his tongue and little nips and teasing bites.

And there it is. Castiel groans and grips his hips to turn them and slam Dean against the door. Dean can feel him hard and hot against his thigh and he opens his legs to accommodate him. The kiss dissolves into frantic licks and sucking and Dean can think of nothing else than the sudden need to get his mouth on Castiel’s body. He struggles out of his shirt and pants, loses his boots and steals glances at a dumbstruck Castiel standing in the middle of the room, eyes blown, focus never leaving Dean.

“You just gonna stand there and gape?”, Dean gripes, and Castiel starts moving at that, opens his kilt and lets it fall before he tugs his wide shirt over his head.

Finally, they’re both naked, and Dean doesn’t waste any time. He pushes Castiel onto the bed, and sinks down on the floor in front of him. Castiel’s cock is huge and uncut and leaking, and Dean can’t wait to taste it. Cas’ scent fill his nose, all male, salt and earth. When he closes his lips around the tip, Castiel falls back on his hands and chokes out a filthy groan.

Dean grips the base and licks a long stripe along the underside of Castiel’s cock. He’d love to make Castiel beg and squirm but after this long day of heated looks and flirting, he’s impatient. Dean closes his lips around Cas before swallowing him down in one go.

A broken cry is all the reward and encouragement he needs. Castiel’s thigh trembles under his left hand and his hips begin to move to meet Dean’s mouth in small involuntary thrusts. Dean can feel him getting close fast, as Castiel’s rough pants and groans fill the air around them.

Dean knows he’s good at this and he’s using every single one of his best moves to bring Castiel to the brink in record-time. Castiel shouts his name, again and again, and hearing it in that fucked-out, raw voice nearly does Dean in, too.

Dean hollows his cheeks and scrapes only a hint of teeth over Castiel’s sensitive skin. Castiel seizes under him, and then crests and spills over Dean’s tongue. Dean tries to swallow as much as he can, but some of it trickles from his mouth, the sour tang coating his tongue. Castiel is still breathing hard, his body still shaking from the force of his orgasm. Dean watches him come down.

The position is hell on his knees, so Dean stands to stretch, his neglected erection bobbing obscenely. Castiel looks up and licks his lips. Dean holds his gaze steadily while he imagines that sinful mouth on himself. He bites his lip. Should he ask? Castiel seems to catch the drift just fine
and sits up.

“I want to taste you, too,” he says, and something in it makes Dean sure it will be the first time.

Dean stays where he is, close to the bed, and waits while Castiel shuffles closer, sits on the edge, grips Dean’s hips. Dean takes his cock in hand and brushes the tip over Castiel’s lips without pushing inside.

“Open up,” he says, and Castiel does. Dean cradles his head gently and watches his dick disappear into the wet heat of Castiel’s mouth. He groans when the pink lips close around him. Castiel looks up through long dark lashes, blue eyes dark with want, and Dean is not sure he will ever be able to walk away from this. And then Castiel starts sucking, lightly at first, experimenting with his tongue and lips, and coherent thought flees from Dean’s mind with every single motion.

He fights to keep his hips still and not thrust into the welcoming warmth. His fingers tangle in Castiel’s hair and Dean does his best to not tug too hard. It’s torture of the best kind, giving Castiel the chance to explore and find all the ways to make Dean moan.

Dean won’t last long.

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Sex has been a trading good all his life. The maids at the castle, his fellow clansmen, arranged marriages – one was in the position to ask for it, the other gave it, for a price. For protection, as a way to show loyalty, for political reasons.

He had never forced any partner he had, but he can’t say for sure if they enjoyed the hasty encounters for itself. He never met a person like Dean, who made him want to bring him pleasure more than finding it himself.

Cas loves the helpless sounds Dean makes when he licks along his length, when he sucks the naked head and swallows the drops of precome he’s coaxing out of him. He didn’t know sex could be like this, and he’s shocked by the sudden urges running through him.

He wants Dean to let go, to lose control and buck into his mouth, he wants to hear him scream with pleasure, and he wants to taste Dean’s release on his tongue and know that he did that. Cas groans around the girth filling his mouth and Dean reacts to the feeling with a sudden jerk of his hips. Cas repeats the sound, and Dean stills before he starts to rock gently into Castiel’s mouth. A question asked and answered without words.

Cas lets his jaw go slack – this is what he wanted, everything Dean has to give – spit dribbles down his chin and he loosens the grip on Dean’s thighs. Dean grunts over him, a helpless sound, “Shit, Castiel, you …” He doesn’t finish the sentence, instead pushes deeper and when Cas looks up, he sees Dean letting his head fall back and close his eyes tightly. The muscles of his arms and his chest and his stomach are working in unison, the tendons on his neck standing out. Sweat covers his skin and shines in the low light. It’s glorious.

Cas’ cock is fighting to fill out again and he drops a hand to his groin to stroke it in time with Dean’s thrusts. He reaches around Dean’s body with the other to grip his ass. The tension in Dean’s body finally snaps – like a cut string, he’s curling over Cas and buries himself deep in his mouth.
Cas nearly chokes and feels the pulses of come shooting down his throat, but he wouldn’t stop this if he could. He moans with every jerk of Dean’s cock, swallows and licks along the softening length, lost in the sounds and scents of Dean’s release.

Dean untangles himself and strokes his thumb along Cas’ jaw, massaging the aching joints and muscles. He looks down at Cas with a warm and tender smile blooming all over his face, open and beautiful. “That was unexpected,” he whispers.

“For me too,” Cas answers, and suddenly all the reasons he should have never given in to this come rushing back. He turns away from Dean’s hand and misses it instantly.

A cold shiver runs down his spine at the thought that however the next days will go, Dean will leave his life soon. Part of him hopes it turns out Dean stumbled into this like Cas, so the building trust he feels is not misplaced, but another selfish part of him hopes that Dean is a spy, so that Cas can hold him captive a while longer. He’s disgusted with himself for even thinking that, but he can’t help the surge of want at the prospect of keeping Dean by his side and in his bed.

He lies down and faces the wall, wills down his erection, and closes his eyes. Dean is rustling behind him and Cas can imagine all too clearly the confused frown on his face. A thump indicates when Dean lays down too, but there’s no movement on the bed next to Cas. Dean’s sleeping on the floor and Cas’ chest feels hollowed out with every careful breath he takes.

He debates getting up to lock the door and keep the key, but can’t bring himself to do it.
The witch lives outside the village of Killiecrankie, home to a hundred souls. Her small cottage nestles between two hills, and large birches surround it like silent soldiers. Cas walks up to the door and knocks.

Dean stands to the side, not meeting his eyes. They haven’t talked all morning, and Dean’s shoulders are drawn up with tension. Cas wants to reach out and smooth the wrinkles between his brows, he wants to touch Dean again and kiss him, but he knows that wouldn’t lead anywhere.

A man like Dean will look back on the last nights as a nice change in scenery at best, as a way to get Cas to spill his secrets at worst. Dean will know nothing of the ache that builds in Cas’ chest whenever he thinks of Dean leaving, or the warm flutter behind his ribs whenever he looks at him.

The door opens with a solemn creak and a small red-headed figure appears. Dean gasps. “It’s you”, he croaks, “the witch from the fair.”

“And a good morning to you too,” she bites. “I don’t know what you’re talking about, but my parents taught me to greet before I throw accusations.” Her vocals are even broader than Castiel’s, her “about” an “abooot” and a melodic lilt to her sentence that makes it hard to grasp the meaning.

“I’m sorry. Good morning.” Cas nods to her and tries the smile that has been called charming on occasion. It hurts his cheeks.

She waves her hand. “What can I do for you?”

Cas looks at Dean who still seems to be in shock. Why doesn’t the witch remember him if she’s the one that cursed him? When Dean doesn’t say anything, Cas takes it on himself to clear up the situation.

“This man insists that he has been cursed by a witch who sent him to my bedroom. While I still find that hard to believe, I chose to give him the benefit of the doubt. We are here to ask if you can send him back to where he came from.”

She eyes Cas, suspicion clear on her face. “And you are here to find out if he lied.”

Dean’s gaze flicks over to him. “Yes,” Cas admits.

“Come in, this is a matter that needs to be discussed sitting down and with a cup of whiskey.”

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It’s her. That’s all Dean can think.

How is that even possible? She must be 700 years old now – in his own time. The long red hair, the small slim figure, the piercing eyes: it’s all there. The witch, Rowena, wears a dark green gown
that hugs her tiny waist and brings her hair in even starker contrast.

She leads them inside the house to a table in front of a fireplace. Dean slumps down into one of the chairs and tries to calm his whirling thoughts.

Castiel walks around and inspects the interior like the warrior he is. He doesn’t like being caught by surprise, Dean figures. Dean had learned that yesterday. Hell, what had he been thinking, rushing things like that? Castiel had completely shut off after that amazing blowjob, both amazing blowjobs, and Dean had seen his walls go up again, the distrust creep back into his features.

*It’s 1314, Winchester, you can’t go around sucking dick and hope for a love confession afterwards.* Castiel must be appalled at Dean’s neediness. It’s possible he gave in without thinking and let himself be swept away by curiosity. Embarrassment makes Dean’s stomach drop, and he suddenly can’t wait to leave this place, this time behind.

The witch comes over to stand next to Dean, and tells him that she has to touch him to find out more. He nods. She reaches out to lay her palm along is cheek and closes her eyes in concentration. Images bubble up.

Dean sees the fair and Charlie’s laughing face, the booth next to them and then Rowena, furious, mumbling.

He sees Castiel’s bedroom and the owner looming over him, eyes dark with anger and lust.

The connection ends when Rowena takes away her hand, and Dean’s vision clears to see the cottage once again.

Rowena sits down next to fire, stares into the flames and taps her index finger against her chin. Dean dares a glance at Castiel who seems deep in thought. Dean can’t stand the silence, and blurts, “So it’s you. Can you get me back?”

Rowena turns and fixates him with a calculating look. “I could. But from what I see I had good reason to punish you.”

She stands and putters around with cups and a bottle. While she pours some of the amber liquid into a wooden cup, she muses, “I’m glad you showed me some of my future though.” She drinks and looks over to Castiel. “And from what I saw in your mind, sending you back might be a punishment, too.”

Dean’s heart jumps at that and beats faster against his ribs. What did she see? That he falls for Castiel the more he learns about him? That he’s sure already that he will never forget the time they spent together? Can she see the tiny part of him that considers staying in this dangerous and foreign world because he’s sure he will never meet a person like Castiel again, who makes him feel safe and excited and wanted all at the same time.

“How is she talking about, Dean? Are you in danger at your home?” Castiel inquires, and warmth blooms in Dean’s chest at the thought that Castiel worries about Dean even if he doesn’t trust him. “You could stay longer and go back when it’s safer.”

Rowena gasps. “You haven’t told him, have you?”

“No. He wouldn’t have believed me and would have thought I’m mad, maybe killed me on sight.”
Castiel growls. “What didn’t you tell me?”

Rowena’s chuckle is full of evil glee and goosebumps appear on Dean’s forearms at the sound. “He is a time traveler. He came from the future. And when I send him back, you’ll never see him again.”

Castiel says nothing, only stares, a deep frown between his brows. Dean can see him going through the memories of the last days, piecing things together. Three days ago, Dean is sure Castiel would have called him a liar and a lunatic and thrown him out into the night. But now, Castiel’s strategic mind takes over and weighs the possibility against all the odd things that happened between Brodie and this place.

“That’s why you know about the battle?”

“Yes,” Dean says.

“And you are not a spy?” Dean can’t be sure but he thinks he sees a glimmer of hope in Castiel’s eyes, despite everything.

“No, I’m not. I’m Dean Winchester. I was born in 1979 in a country that will be discovered by Europeans in the next century. I was sent here by this witch because I was rude to her and now the only chance to ever see my family and my friends again is her sending me back.”

“You family… so there is someone waiting for you?” Castiel looks down at his hands. Dean cannot believe that this is the part of his story Castiel is hung up about.

“Yes, my brother, and my ma and my dad… Wait, what… no, I don’t have a family of my own, if that’s what you’re asking.”

“Oh my,” Rowena sighs. “Looks like my plan worked better than I thought. Poor lads.” She comes over to pat Dean’s cheek. “I will give you the spell that will bring you back. You’ll have to use it tomorrow night, at the full moon, when the magic of the land is strongest.”

Dean watches her, dazed, as she puts together herbs and grinds bark and chants the whole time.

When she’s done Rowena puts the ingredients in a piece of cloth that she binds with a string.

“I’ll give you this, but you need to give me something in return. Knowledge. Just a few dates and details, whatever I can use to make my coming 700 years worthwhile. I am sure you understand.” Her smile is predatory and gives Dean the chills, but of course he understands. He never thought she would help him out of the goodness of his heart.

So he tells her. About America, about the Inquisition, about the great wars. He keeps to the big dates in history, the ones he can remember, and then he opens his hand and closes it around his ticket back home.

Five minutes later, they stand on the path to the cottage. “Maybe this is all a dream?” Castiel murmurs, more to himself than directed at Dean.

Dean answers anyway. “I thought so too, for quite a while, but it’s not, believe me.”

“I do.” Castiel looks at him, stern. “I do.”
Cas will meet up with his brothers in Stirling and they decide to go on in that direction since there’s not much else they can do. The day is cloudy and cool, and Dean’s mood gets sourer by the minute.

Cas keeps quiet to give him room, and tries to grasp what he learned today. Dean came to him from another time, so far in the future that he can’t even imagine it. He wants to know more about it, about the machines and inventions Dean mentioned. And he wants to know about Dean’s life. How dull and simple all this must seem to him.

Cas can read and write, yes, and among his clan he is seen as educated. To Dean, he must seem like a slow-witted barbarian. Cas cringes at his own thoughts. What does it matter? Dean will be gone tomorrow and Cas will go on with his life, quite probably die at the battle Dean told him about. At least the clansmen will win and send the English back south. The thought gives him some solace.

But how long will that victory last? Cas wants to ask about that too. Will his people keep their freedom? What will the highlands look like 700 years from now?

The sun is slowly setting to their right and Cas can’t tear his gaze away from Dean’s profile. The golden light brings out the copper in his stubble and his short hair, and it makes his eyes glow in the colors of moss and green leaves. Cas is reminded of the cool silence of the forest on hot summer days, when the sun sprinkles through the canopy and teases new life out of the earth.

Dean’s the most beautiful man Cas has ever met. And he has the most gracious, kind and empathetic soul which makes him even more beautiful to Cas. Thrust into this time, Dean faced his situation bravely and put up with Cas’ aggression and suspicion. Cas wishes he had overcome his distrust earlier. They could have had so much more time together.

Cas finds a place to set up camp and steers them in the direction of a small cope.

“Let’s stop here for the night,” he tells Dean, and begins to go through the motions. They still don’t talk, but the atmosphere between them changes. They both think about the coming night, their last one. They set up the tent, build a fire, eat in silence.

“We came past a small lake a while ago. I’ll go back and wash up.” Dean stands and looks down at Cas.

“I’ll go with you.”

Dean knows it’s a massively dumb idea, but he doesn’t stop Castiel from following him.

They reach the water and start to undress. Dean steps out of his pants and tugs his shirt over his head. Both are in dire need of washing. Castiel opens the needle on his shoulder and lets his kilt drop to the earth, then shucks his shirt down his body.
Dean lets his gaze wander over the firm muscles and tan skin, Castiel’s pecs and stomach, his thick thighs and powerful arms, and everything in him screams to get closer, feel those hands and lips on his body again. Castiel’s scars shine like silver in the moonlight, like fractures that let the brightness inside him seep out into the world. Dean wants to kiss every single one of the cracks, and bask in that light.

They both move at the same time and close the distance between them. Dean searches for Castiel’s mouth and kisses him softly. “Castiel,” Dean mutters, and is corrected in that low and rumbling voice:

“Call me Cas. Please.”

Castiel – Cas gets pliant under Dean’s hands, parts his lips and welcomes him, sucks Dean’s bottom lip into his mouth and licks it with tender strokes. Holding Cas feels a lot like coming home. It’s only been ten days, but even to himself Dean can’t deny that this is way more than a hook-up.

“Let’s clean up before it gets too cold,” he whispers against the warm lips.

He takes Cas’ hand. They walk into the cool water together and press close for warmth. Cas opens his hand and presents a soap bar that Dean grabs hastily. Dean ducks under the surface and comes back up to hastily wash himself as thorough as possible in the freezing water. Then he hands the soap back to Cas. Instead of washing himself Cas lathers up his hands and lets them glide over Dean’s skin.

Cas follows the knobs of Dean’s spine, the hollows of his hips, his stomach, learns every curve of Dean’s body. Dean’s breath catches when Cas finds one of his hardening nipples and Cas looks up at the sound before he rubs over the spot a again.

Always curious, he lets his nails scratch over the nub to make Dean hum with pleasure. The cold isn’t as harsh anymore as Dean’s blood begins to race through his veins and his heart beats furiously. Cas’ hands explore him reverently. Dean cannot remember ever being touched like that, like he’s something precious, something to be cherished.

A low hum of arousal vibrates through his body, and his skin tingles wherever Cas’ hands roam. A fingertip follows the line of his collarbone. A palm cusps the curve of his shoulder. Dean sighs.

Then Cas’ right hand drops to his ass and dips between his cheeks. At Dean’s gasp, the movement stops. “I’m sorry…”

“No, Cas, please.”

Cas looks unsure but proceeds to touch Dean with that quiet determination to learn how to make Dean feel good. Cas’ left hand is clutching the forgotten soap against Dean’s hip and Dean takes a step forward to feel Cas’ body again.

He brings them close and lets his head drop onto Cas’ shoulder. Dean opens his stance in invitation. A tentative finger strokes over his hole and Dean shudders. He wants to feel Cas, all of him, just this once.

Cas’ chest heaves with harsh breaths against his own chest, and despite the cold water Cas fills out against Dean’s thigh. Cas’ fingertip breaches him, hesitant, and Dean sighs at the intrusion. They can’t go much farther here, but he rocks back into Cas’ finger nonetheless and revels in the light burn.
Cas finds Dean’s mouth then, hungry, and pushes his tongue past his lips as if he wants to get inside Dean in every way possible.

*You can have me*, Dean thinks, and opens up under Cas, moans when Cas’ tongue and his hand work in the same rhythm. He doesn’t want to wait any longer, so he steps back and meets Cas’ heated gaze.

“Let’s go back.”

They dry hastily with their abandoned clothes and run back to the camp. Dean heads straight to their provisions and starts rummaging, ignoring Cas’ questions. With a small cry of triumph he turns back to Cas.

Dean grabs his hand to pull him down onto Cas’ plaid next to the fire and presses his bounty into Cas’ hand. Cas looks down, perplexed.

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It’s a jar full of grease, and Cas stops breathing when the full implication of what Dean wants hits him. There has never been the time or the partner in his life for this kind of intimacy. Cas is floored at seeing the trust and desire in Dean’s eyes.

Dean lays back on his kilt and the fire caresses his skin, makes it glow from within. It’s unblemished and so soft, a beautiful blush creeping up from his chest over his neck and his face.

Dean lets his thighs fall open, such an inviting, needy, honest gesture that speaks to some primal part of Cas. His cock hardens even further, while his heart threatens to jump out of his chest with affection for the man that lays himself bare and vulnerable, trusting Cas to take care of him. It’s a heady mix, and Cas is dizzy with it. With fumbling hands he opens the jar and coats his fingers before he sinks to his knees between Dean’s open thighs and leans over him to kiss him again.

Dean sighs breathily into his mouth when Cas finds his entrance and teases him.

“Please, Cas,” he murmurs, and Cas is unable to deny him. They both moan when Cas’ slick index finger sinks into Dean’s body. It’s tight and so hot. Cas is not sure he will hold out long enough to feel that heat surrounding him. He moves his hand tentatively, catalogues Dean’s every reaction. After a few minutes he feels the tightness loosen and Dean’s body accepting him.

“More,” Dean begs, and Cas pulls his finger out to come back with a second one. Dean’s body arcs under him. Cas is about to pull back when Dean whimpers and croaks “right there, again” and then Cas can feel it, a slight bump under his fingertips, and when he presses into it again, Dean’s voice breaks around a shout.

Cas had no idea that a spot like that existed, but he’s a fast learner and exploits his new knowledge without restraint. Dean moves his hips to meet Cas’ fingers and gradually comes apart from Cas’ insistent touch.

Cas looks down to see his cock hanging heavy between his legs, painting Dean’s thigh with precome. Dean’s own erection lies on his stomach, red and wet and begging to be touched.

Cas adjust the angle of his hand leans down to taste Dean and licks over the head, before he closes
his lips around it to suck lightly. One of Dean’s hands grabs his hair and jerks his head back, and Cas’ cock twitches at the sharp pain on his scalp. Dean’s eyes, glazed over and blown black, meet his. “God, Cas, you… I want you, now.”

Cas slips his fingers out of Dean and grabs the jar to coat his cock. He groans at the contact and tugs a few times. Dean’s gaze is glued to Cas’ erection vanishing in his fist so Cas draws the moment out to torture them both. If he had another night, a week, a month, a year, he would find every single way to coax pleasure from Dean’s body.

Now he cannot stand the wait any longer. He grips Dean’s thighs to open him up even further, to bend Dean’s legs back against his torso, and then he frees one hand to line himself up against Dean’s waiting hole. Cas is shaking with want and his blood is roaring in his ears. Dean exhales slowly and Cas breathes with him to find some semblance of control. The head of his cock nudges at Dean’s rim and Cas has to close his eyes for a moment.

“Please,” Dean whispers again, but Cas is the one who should be begging here, Cas is the one who would lay down his life for one more night like this.

Their bodies find each other slowly.

Cas opens his eyes to watch. He can’t tear his eyes away from the sight of Dean welcoming him.

All Cas feels is tight heat and slick pressure. He can’t breathe, can’t think beyond it, can’t hear a single sound over Dean’s pants and his own thundering heartbeat.

And then they are joined and Dean sighs at finally being filled.

Cas doesn’t dare move and takes a trembling breath. Dean crosses his ankles at Cas’ back and draws him even closer.

“It’s okay, Cas, you can… it’s okay,” he breathes and lets his head fall back with a moan when Cas begins to move his hips haltingly, carefully watching for any sign of distress. When he doesn’t find any on Dean’s face, Cas gets bolder and slides in and out of the pliant body under him with more deliberate thrusts.

Dean gasps when he finds that spot again, and Cas makes sure to graze it with every motion of his hips. Dean’s eyes fall shut, rough pants tumble from his open, wet lips, and Cas thinks he might die from just looking at him.

Pressure begins to build in his spine. Heat pools deep in his belly. Cas’ thrusts become sharp and erratic as he loses himself in Dean’s body. Sweat beads on his back, runs down between his shoulder blades and cools in the night air.

Cas groans with every thrust. Dean meets him, snapping his hips up against Cas and his untouched erection slaps against his stomach. Cas loosens his right hand, still slick with grease, from Dean’s hip to close it around Dean’s cock. A shout rips through the night. Dean jerks in Cas’ hand, oversensitive, and Cas strokes him lightly while Dean whimpers and thrashes. Cas stares and tries to commit it all to memory. The wet sounds of their bodies meeting and the smell of their sweat and the graceful arc of Dean’s neck.

Dean grasps blindly to pull Cas’ head down. He plunges his tongue deep into Cas’ open mouth while he comes in thick white ropes over Cas’ hand.

With every pulse, Dean’s body is clenching around Cas and it makes the last sliver of control slip. Cas fucks into Dean’s spasming heat with sharp thrusts, and when he buries himself for the third,
fourth time, hilt-deep, he tumbles over the edge too.

Pure euphoria sings in his veins, bubbles up with a sigh from somewhere inside his chest, spills over and falls from his lips, all bundled up in one word, “Dean.”

He’s collapsing, burying his face against Dean’s sweat-slick neck, tasting the salt on his skin. Dean pets his hair while his breathing calms down. A lot of other words lie on Cas’ tongue then, and he cards through them like a painter looking for just the right color to bring his piece of art to life. He mixes the words, but they won’t fit, everything he could say would be too soon, too honest, too painful.

“I’ll never forget you,” Dean whispers, and Cas doesn’t have to lift his head to know there are tears in his eyes.

“Never,” Cas agrees, lips pressed against Dean’s skin, their bodies still one, for the first and the last time, and he thinks he can hear his heart breaking in the silence of the night.
They crawl into the tent after cleaning up as best they can, and spend the night tangled close together under the roughness of Cas’ kilt.

Dean wakes up lying on Cas’ chest, his ear directly over the strong and steady heartbeat. He can’t remember the last time he spent the night with someone. Has he ever woken up in the arms of another person and wished he could stay forever? Maybe when he was younger, he muses, maybe with Cassie, but he’s not sure. He feels warm and safe in Cas’ arms, and instead of getting up and bringing distance between them, he closes his eyes and falls asleep for another hour.

After a short breakfast, they’re on their way to Stirling again, and the streets get more crowded. The Scottish clans have come south for weeks, gathering near the heavily fortified town of Stirling where the English garrison waited for reinforcements from the English crown. The men they meet are tired and worn out after months of battle.

To Dean they seem in no shape to fight, but he knows they will beat the English army, which is much greater in number, well-fed and better equipped. They will win because they fight for their homes and their freedom. Just like Cas will, soon. Worry twists his insides at the thought of Cas in the heat of the battle.

While Cas has been mostly silent for the past days, they start talking now. The moment of their goodbye is drawing nearer, and Dean feels the urge to leave something with Cas, even if it’s only his boring life story.

Cas tells him about his family, how he has always been the odd one out, interested in everything, reading every book he could get his hands on, enthused about the thoughts of philosophers old and new alike. He has spent his life in the service of his clan, but he has never felt like one of them. Between the farmers and the swordsmen, he didn’t dare speak his mind and tell them that he would prefer to read poetry than tend to his weapons and train with his brothers.

Dean doesn’t ask and Cas doesn’t tell him, but Dean can hear the loneliness in each word, and he can’t imagine a life without any real connection. He’s a catastrophe when it comes to romantic relationships, yes, but Dean prides himself to be a good brother and a loyal friend. He has no secrets from Charlie and Benny, and he misses them with a sudden fierceness that surprises him. To quench it, he talks about them. Cas listens with wide eyes when Dean tries to explain role playing and renaissance fairs. Shit, the renaissance hasn’t even started, Dean thinks with a jolt.

The sun is shining brightly. It feels like a lie to Dean, since his mind is dark and overcast at the prospect of leaving. He can’t know for sure, but Cas seems bummed, too. They never had a future, and Dean knew that going in, but his heart doesn’t seem to care. He doesn’t dare to name the heaviness behind his ribs, but it’s a thing he hasn’t felt in a long time, maybe in forever.

In the late afternoon, Stirling slowly rises from the ground on the horizon. After Castle Brodie and the small villages, the fortress on the hill looks huge and impenetrable. Cas stops and turns to
Dean. “We should wait here for the moon to rise. It wouldn’t be wise to introduce you to my brothers before… before you go.”

Dean nods and looks around. A tall oak offers shadow and protection from prying eyes. They let their packs fall to the ground and sit next to each other. Dean reaches over and takes Cas’ hands, warm and a little bit clammy palms pressed together.

“Thank you,” Dean murmurs, head bent over their combined hands.

Cas looks over to him as if he has lost his mind. “For what?”

“You could have killed me that night. Could have thrown me out. And even when Rowena told you the truth, you could have left me there instead of staying with me. That was quite noble of you. So thank you.”

Cas laughs. It’s the first time he ever laughed in Dean’s presence, a deep rumble that makes Dean smile despite himself and feel warm all over.

“You can say a lot about the motives I had for keeping you close, Dean, but I assure you, noble they were not.” He squeezes Dean’s hand. “I never wanted anything as much as I wanted you, and that hasn’t changed since that first night.”

Seems like this is the moment for brutal honesty then. It’s a feat Dean has never been good at, and he’s sure it’s not Cas’ forte either, but on the other hand, none of them has ever been in this position. They have nothing to lose and very little to give each other apart from that honesty.

“Me, too.” Dean finds his own voice small and breaking, but he soldiers on. “When we sat at Rowena’s table, and I couldn’t be sure if she would help me, I thought… for a moment I thought I would have to stay. And instead of freaking out, all I could think of was you, that I might get to be with you…” He trails off, self-conscious all of a sudden, afraid that he has given away too much. A fingertip on his chin coaxes him to look up at Cas. Dean finds the blue eyes are sad and full of affection that Dean is sure he doesn’t deserve.

“You can’t stay here, Dean. You have to go back to your family. It’s not safe. If what you told me is true, I might be dead next week. And even if we win, there’s hunger and sickness and the fighting for power between the clans that could end your life every single day. I – I wouldn’t survive that. I need to know that you are safe. You’ve got to promise me.”

Dean feels tears pricking at the corner of his eyes and his throat is tight with emotion. He knows Cas is right, he would never survive this time, would only be a burden. And what would they tell Cas’ family? There’s this guy who came out of nowhere, with a weird English accent, no clue about anything, but I’ll keep him? Given Cas’ already strained relationship with his brothers, Dean can’t see that going over well.

“Okay.” He bumps his forehead to Cas’ and gets lost in the endless blue of his gaze. “Okay.”

They don’t talk much after that. They kiss and look at each other and trace the lines of their faces to commit them to memory – as if I’ll ever forget the cut of his jaw, or the curve of his mouth, or the green of his eyes, Cas thinks, but that doesn’t keep him from touching.
When the sun begins to set, Dean presses forward and pushes Cas gently to the ground, and he wedges a thigh between Cas’ legs and deepens his kisses, with a new urgent hunger. They rut against one another with abandon, suddenly desperate to feel each other come apart one last time.

Dean gets there first. He tenses and relaxes with a sigh while his tears are dripping down onto Cas’ cheeks. “Come on, Cas,” Dean urges. Cas crests with a broken moan that gets cut off by Dean’s lips as he searches for Cas’ mouth again.

When Cas opens his eyes, the sun has set, and he can see the moon peeking through the leaves of the old oak. He tightens his hold on Dean’s heavy body above him, and whispers, “It’s time.”

Dean pulls back and comes to his feet. He moves like an old man, Cas thinks. Dean brushes off the dirt and dead leaves and fumbles with his right hand. After some cursing he straightens and holds out his arm towards Cas. In his palm lays a silver ring, the one Cas has seen before on his ring finger.

Cas reaches out. His hand is shaking when he closes it around the shining band. He slips it on and looks up to see Dean nod, his beautiful face a mask of resolution.

Dean turns and begins to chant the words Rowena told him.

The bag with the herbs bursts into flame.

And in the blink of an eye, Dean is gone.

Dawn is breaking when Cas finally moves. He’s been staring at the spot where Dean vanished with dry eyes for hours. He stands and packs before he starts walking, like a puppet on a string, one step after the other.

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“Holy hell, Dean, that was rude.” Charlie punches him in the arm. “Apologize to the lady.”

Dazed, Dean turns to find Rowena smirking at him. Recognition dawns slowly on her face. Before she can say anything, he croaks “I’m sorry”, grabs Charlie’s arm and nearly runs to the exit.

“Dean?” Charlie’s voice is worried, bordering on panicked. For her, he must have stood next to her the whole time, from one second to another he lost a few pounds, gained two week’s worth of grime and had his heart broken. No wonder that she’s looking at him like he’s lost his mind.

“I don’t feel well, must have eaten something wrong,” he lies, and stirs her in the direction of the parking lot and the Impala. They drove here together so he has to tag her along.

“I’ll drop you off at home. Sorry that our trip got cut short.”

She eyes him sideways, pity and curiosity warring on her face.

“Okay,” she finally says and slides into the passenger seat of the car. The heat inside is stifling, and Dean opens the window to let the breeze clear his head a little. The deep rumble of the engine soothes his whirling mind and he clicks on the cassette player to fill the silence with Zep IV.

Cryin won’t help you, prayin won’t do you no good,
Now, cryin won’t help you, prayin won’t do you no good.

They reach Charlie’s house and she hops out after making him promise he’ll call her. And then, another twenty minutes later, he’s home, at last. Sam’s blissfully still at college. Dean can break down in peace.

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Dean doesn’t sleep, he doesn’t eat, and he doesn’t leave the house. Three weeks in, Sam and Charlie stage an intervention.

“This has to stop,” Sam tells him with the stern voice he usually saves for rebellious students, and Charlie nods solemnly. “I don’t know what’s gotten into you.”

“You’re right.” Dean doesn’t recognize his voice. It’s rough from lack of use, thin and weak. “You’re right. I promised.” He goes over to the wide window of his room and opens the curtains. Instead of the lawn he sees the soft hills of the highlands and a tall oak. He swallows thickly. “I’ll have to do some research.”

Charlie is so happy that he left his room she’s willing to spend the day in the library with him. “What are we looking for exactly?”


It’s hard work, but after four hours, Charlie finally scrunches up a list. Dean traces the names with his fingertip. They are not in alphabetical order, but sorted by fiefdoms and clans. Castiel’s name is the second to last on the page. Beside his name and title, someone wrote not buried. Dean stares at the name. He should feel grief or anger or loss, but he’s completely numb. Charlie says his name, he doesn’t react. After long minutes, he closes the book and turns to go without looking back.

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Charlie comes over every day now. It’s been a week since the scene at the library. She asked him to come back with her, somehow knowing that it’s connected to his depression, but he declines.

Dean cleans the house, and goes back to work. He goes through the motions and hopes someday he won’t feel like a hollow shell anymore. Charlie doesn’t give up. She changes tactics and brings the books to his house, chatting about the things she found. “And this one guy, Casimir? Caspar?”

Dean jerks upright. “Castiel?”

“Yeah, that one. It’s a funny story. He’s listed as dead, but I found some creepy legends about him. A few of his clansmen swore they saw him vanishing in the middle of the night while he invoked the devil.”

Dean’s heart starts beating like a drum, pumps against his ribs, and his skin feels too tight all of a
sudden.

“Bannockburn, that was June 24th, right?” Charlie nods and Dean does the math. Four weeks after he left. A full moon. Could Cas – did he go back to Rowena? Would he leave everything behind after making sure his men would win the battle? Dean remembers Cas’ fond smile, his tender touches, how lost he looked when Dean turned to go.

A soft knock on the door rips him from his thoughts.

Dean goes over and opens it.

“Hello, Dean.”

Dean’s knees buckle under him and he sinks to the ground in a shaking heap. Cas looks worn out, thinner than Dean left him, and a broad gash on his cheek speaks of the violence he left behind. His eyes are glowing though, and Dean wants to drown in the warmth of that blue gaze.

They both didn’t put a name to what they felt, to the feeling that grew in the silence of the shared nights, nurtured by the mutual respect and strengthened by a bond they formed despite all odds, but there’s not a single doubt in his mind that it was the same for both of them.

Cas found him, through the mists of time, and gave up everything to be with him. Dean will make sure he will never regret that decision.

Cas crouches in front of him, cradles Dean’s face in his scarred and calloused hands.

“There’s something I didn’t tell you,” Cas says, like it’s the most normal thing in the world that the 14th century warrior you fell in love with travels through time to find you again.

“I know,” Dean croaks, and grabs Cas’ shirt to kiss him.

Chapter End Notes

I hope you enjoyed reading as much as like I enjoyed writing it. I'm procasdeanating on tumblr. Come say hi!

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