Life's Coda

by Susspencer

Summary

Spencer is searching for the way to end his day, that will bring him peace and sleep. He is tired of restless nights, nightmares, recalling the cases as he tries to sleep. After meeting Sammy Sparks, he may have found the answer to his search. The power of music to calm the soul, to bring order to chaos, and to give meaning to a life of meaningless destruction and murder. Perhaps, it is a bit more than just music that brings the coda to ongoing issues that a profiler must face in his life? Is there a refrain that bring harmony to Spencer's life?

Notes

This story is written for the artwork provided by Rivermoon. I hope I have done her proud. Her art and her encouraging words throughout the last year plus, were the driving force behind my effort in this story.

This one's for you.

See the end of the work for more notes
Music Lessons

Episode tag - Season 6: Coda

Spencer kept looking for something to take away the images, memories, thoughts of case after case. He knew that it wasn’t his eidetic memory. Each and every BAU member dealt with nightmares, taking home the job, not being able to let go. They each developed coping mechanisms. Spencer knew that there had to be something that would ease the pain, guilt, just plain burden of knowing, seeing, and experiencing the horrors of the evil side of life. Days went by, months turned into years, time passed as it always does, yet, there was no perfect answer. There was rest. There were ways to cope. There was no true peace. Such it was, this was Spencer Reid’s life.

Spencer awoke to his alarm, got dressed, and headed out to his favorite coffee place. The daily routine. After getting his regular coffee, over sweetened for most, he headed to the Metro and off to another day at the BAU. Even though each case tended to be different, they all contained the same elements. Someone, the victim, was taken, the team needed to try and get to them before the unsub hurt them or killed them. Yes, the cause of, or manner in which the pain or death would be inflicted changed but it was always there. Spencer thought that it was almost like a mathematical equation. Unsub plus victim times speed of BAU involvement equals capture. Snickering in his mind, Spencer stepped off the metro and walked to the FBI building. He started to compare the things that were simply mathematics. It was an interesting list.

“Tomorrow, you promise yourself, will be different, yet tomorrow is too often a repetition of today.”
Author James T. McCay.

The team gathered at the round table. This time it seemed to be the parents of Sammy Sparks, of Lafayette Parish, Louisiana, missing. At least one of them was injured, Sammy had arrived at school with blood on him.

“No one's talked to the witness yet? I don't understand.” Spencer asked.

Hotch answered. “Sammy’s autistic.”

After arriving and meeting Sammy, Spencer and Rossi understood why no one had interviewed him. He was sitting in the police station drawing, what looked like the letter L over and over again. When the police officer with them touched Sammy, Sammy reacted with a scream and by rocking back and
forth. It took most of the day to find a way to connect with Sammy. Sammy played the piano and keyboard. Spencer had connected with him over the piano at the Sparks home. Using the piano to have Sammy answer yes and no questions, Spencer was able to play the piano, also.

“I didn't know you could play, Reid?” Rossi asked?

“I never have, but it's pretty much just mathematics.”

They discovered that the song Sammy was playing and the L that he kept drawing, related to the time, he was at the music store, after school. At 3pm each day, the song would play, the unsub would deliver packages, and Sammy would play the song on the keyboard. With that information, the team was able to track down the unsub and return Sammy’s mother to him.

They flew back to Quantico. When Spencer finished his after action report, he gathered his messenger bag and left. Instead of taking the Metro home, he took it to the music store. Carefully looking over his choices, he selected the keyboard that best fit his needs and space available. He took his purchase with him back and the Metro and then the short walk home.

He placed it in front of his window, brought a chair over and began reading the instructions quickly. He had it set up in no time. His fingers ran over the keys lightly at first, then he fell into the rhythm that Sammy had taught him earlier. Surprised at how easily he recalled the notes, Spencer closed his eyes, playing the tune over and over. He let the music wash away the sadness of Charlie Sparks dying. The tune caused Spencer to start relax his shoulders and neck. He found himself improvising a finish, that made him smile. He recalled Sammy patting his mother's back, an almost hug. A major achievement in the life of an autistic child and certainly a milestone for Sammy.

He turned the keyboard off. As he closed up his apartment for bed, Spencer found himself almost floating from locking up, turning off lights, to changing into his sleep clothes. Normally, he just drug himself from task to task. Humming the tune, as he placed his glasses on the nightstand, Spencer tucked himself in. He found himself asleep quickly, without the regular tossing and turning that followed cases.
The Day the Music Died

Chapter Summary

What will Spencer do now to cope with Ian Doyle's murder of Emily? Is there anything that will bring peace and calm to his mind after this? Is there even a reason to keep going on?

Episode tag: Season 6: Lauren

The next case was what one would call routine or as routine as the BAU would get. Even though Spencer found himself, reading a book on how to read music, to unwind afterwards. Little did he know how much he was going to be thankful that he had done that very soon. Between that and the limited music he played, he found that the headaches that he had told Emily about were subsiding a bit. It seemed that the music may have been helping him relax, and that relaxation helping the pain.

Ian Doyle, a name that would forever be etched in Spencer Reid's brain. It wasn't because of his eidetic memory either. The following days were spent chasing Prentiss, who was after Doyle, culminating in Doyle taking Emily to the place where his son was killed. When Emily informed Ian that his son was alive, he stabbed Prentiss with a stake of wood.

Morgan had arrived just moments later. Reid had figured out from a photo of the shooting, that Emily had staged the killing. With Garcia's help, the team was able to find the warehouse. Albeit too late.

The team sat, paced, prayed, worried, and wondered, as they sat in the hospital waiting room. Spencer could feel a headache building, to a crescendo.

JJ came out, “She never made it off the table.”

“I didn’t get a chance to say goodbye.” Spencer’s words echoed in the quiet hospital, as JJ blocked him from running off.

He went home and cried himself to sleep, a fitful sleep. Finally, he rose up and wandered the apartment. Defeated, his headache throbbing, Spencer took some medication. He sat at the keyboard. He had purchased some sheet music, in the hopes of playing it. Spencer found himself just staring at it. About ten minutes later, he was thumbing through the music. He settled on Die Zauberflöte ("The Magic Flute") by Mozart. It was the fugue section, that seemed to still Spencer's heart. The music let out his grief at the unfairness of not being able to say goodbye to Emily. Over the next few weeks, when he would get home from talking to JJ, and crying his eyes out, he would play another piece of classical music. Each helping to release his rage at Doyle, his sadness at missing his close friend, his bitterness at death itself.
Chapter Summary

When the case hits too close to home, with schizophrenia, will Spencer be able to focus? Will he be able to find any peace and rest when the case is over? Or like Ben Foster will he be searching for a way to rest? With friends like Spencer's he has a much better chance of finding peace.

Episode tag: Season 6: Friends Like These

The next case was a young man named Ben Foster, who was hallucinating three friends that had died in a fire that Ben had set at ten years old. It hit hard for Spencer, when they were giving the profile. He walked out of the room. Morgan found him in the men's room washing his face and looking frazzled.

“You know, that profile kind of makes it sound like Schizophrenia leads to serial killing.”

“That's not what we said at all, Reid.” Morgan corrected.

“You know, my mom has Schizophrenia. There are many different types.”

“I know that.” Derek agreed.

“Catatonic, Disorganized. Just because someone suffers from an inability to organize their thoughts, or they can't bathe or dress themselves, it doesn't mean they'd stab someone in the chest 30 times postmortem.” Spencer rambled on.

“Reid, what's really going on?” Derek inquired, concerned for his friend.

“Our unsub's hallucinations aren't fractured like a typical Schizophrenic. They're vivid and clear, leading me to believe that we're missing an important variable. Rather than making crazy conjectures, I think we should be trying to figure out what it is.” Spencer warned.

“Okay, listen to me. I know this is a scary age for you. It's when Schizophrenic breaks happen. Have you talked to anybody about this?” Derek asked comfortably.

“Emily.”

“Have you seen a doctor?” Derek checked.

“They all say I'm fine.” Spencer confided, looking down towards the floor.

“Then why don't you believe them?”

“Because predicting one's chances of developing a genetic condition are like finding a penny in an ocean. I have terrible headaches. I can't sleep at night. I can't focus on our cases. I only read 5 books last week.” Spencer said sadly.

“Come on, kid, you gotta cut yourself some slack. You're also depressed about Prentiss, and I get it
we all are. Reid, I miss her every day. But if your mind was splitting, do you really think you'd be able to figure out that this team is missing a variable?” Derek questioned with trust in his voice.

“'I'm just speculating that we are. Need to prove it.”

“Okay, then you do that. The moment you are wandering around the streets aimlessly, that's when I'll be concerned about you. Come on, pretty boy. Let's get to work.” Derek confidently stated, as he wrapped his arm around his friend.

Spencer figured out at the next crime scene that the variable was insomnia. Ben was stabbing these people after they were already dead, to tire himself out. In that exhaustion, he was finally free from his three friends that kept urging him to kill, and he could have peace. Peace that's all Ben wanted. Peace seemed so far away from Spencer these days too. If only he could find it, even for a few moments.

Returning home after the case, Spencer was once again worn out. Turmoil, grief, headache pain, fear, all reared their ugly heads. The quiet of his apartment, just echoed their taunts louder and louder. How was anyone supposed to find rest and peace?

He walked over to the keyboard by the window with the cup of hot tea he had made. He looked through his sheet music, while he drank the tea. Finally, in frustration he swiped the music from the stand sending it fluttering to the floor. Spencer just started playing notes. First, it seemed random, but then there was a mathematical quality to the rhythm. It flowed back and forth, up and down. The y axis crossed the x axis, looping back below the -y axis and up again. It was a musical parabola. Spencer kept at it for quite a while, til his eyes became droopy. What went on next must have been by rote, because he didn't recall closing the place up for the night. Yet, when he awoke well rested the next morning, everything was locked up tight.
The Conductor Raises his Baton

Chapter Summary

It seems that there maybe a new composition on the horizon. One that offers some hope, it might be the best arrangement that Spencer has ever heard. Light, airy, cozy, sweet, jazzy, with a beat. It could be life altering, Here's hoping it's the answer that he has been searching for.

Episode tag - Season 6: Hanley Waters

Hotch called each team member in for a grief assessment. When it was Reid’s turn, it was difficult for him to speak. With his voice cracking, on the verge of tears, he did his best to explain how he felt.

“It’s just unfair that she’s gone. It's like if-if we can't keep each other safe, th-then why are we even doing any of this? I just Sometimes I think maybe maybe Gideon was right, you know, maybe maybe it's just not worth it.”

The next case took the team to Tampa, Florida. Damian’s mother couldn’t get past her grief. The last thing she had done was yell at the boy to stop kicking her seat, as she drove. Moments later their car had been plowed into by a man fleeing the police. Her husband, a firefighter, was not with them that day, Damien’s birthday. A day that should have been a celebration, now was etched in this mother’s memory forever as the day she “she promised that daddy was coming to help,” but he didn’t. The day that the newspapers reported about the high speed chase, in which a police officer had been killed. Damien was barely a footnote. His mother, Shelley, felt everyone had forgotten him. How could she or anyone move on without him? Reid listened intently, at the compassionate words that Hotch used to bring her down, disarm her, remind her that everyone would remember how they failed Damien that day.

“You You You don't know a thing about Damian.” Shelley accused Hotch.

“I know he was a happy and confident little boy.”

“How could you know that?”

“I have a picture of him, standing next to you. You're holding his hand and he's smiling. He's not hiding behind you like some children do. It tells me that you encouraged him and you gave him a lot of confidence.” Hotch spoke with a calm voice.

“Don, I found this picture of you and Damien. It's clear who his hero was. I know you blame yourself, and you shouldn't.” He continued, looking at Don.

“And, Shelley, all the hurt that you might inflict on people is not gonna bring him back.”

“They need to know what they did.” Shelley spat.

“Believe me, everyone who tried to save him that day isn't gonna forget. It's the day they failed.
They'll ask themselves what they could have done. Could they have gotten here sooner? They'll heal, but it's gonna take time. They'll move on, but they won't forget.” Hotch, his voice giving out a bit, added.

“The last thing I did was yell at him for kicking my seat. That was the last thing he heard or will remember.” Shelley sniffled.

“That's your regret. It's not what he remembers. Look.- Look how happy he was. Losing him is not your fault. He was taken from you and that's not fair. But while he was here, while you were lucky enough to have him, he was happy. That's how he lived and that's how he left.” Hotch stated, his voice now tainted with sweetness.

Reid’s eyes were moist, as the situation was resolved. The words that had just transpired, the actions that had just taken place, and the compassion that just flowed from Hotch, had moved Spencer. It stirred up the feelings, which he kept hid. Spencer was good at hiding them. After all until recently, Aaron had been married. Even after the divorce, he didn’t seem ready to get out there and start dating yet. He certainly wasn’t sending signals that he was bi-sexual. So, Spencer kept his attraction to the man to himself. It was difficult. Hotch had many wonderful character qualities, that made him attractive. When you added in the physical attributes, that the man possessed, well, damn, Hotch was one fine looking man. He could turn on a blind man. Well, that was the good doctor’s assessment.

Upon returning to Quantico, finishing the required paperwork, Spencer went to Hotch’s office to turn it in. Derek was just finishing up his assessment with Hotch. Hotch asked Spencer to sit for a moment, after taking his report from him.

“Spencer, since it is past quitting time, I wanted to discuss some personal things with you as a friend if you have a few moments. Do you have some time?” Hotch asked, in a voice, a bit too timid for him.

“Sure Hotch, I don’t have any plans. What did you want to talk about?”

Aaron took off his suit coat, hung it over the back of his desk chair, and sat in the chair next to Spencer. Spencer couldn’t take his eyes off of Aaron. In the past, Spencer had made it a point to watch discreetly. This evening however, the temptation was just too strong. There stood the man of his dreams, disrobing (well not really, but that’s how most of his fantasies started) in front of him. Then, Mr. Tall, Dark, Muscular, and Handsome saunter over next to him, Spencer was surprised that he was able to keep himself from panting and sporting an erection. He crossed his legs, to make sure nothing showed if he did lose what little self-control he had. Spencer knew he was already emotionally compromised from the case and the loss of Emily.

“I have a bit of a dilemma. If you will let me spill the entire situation out for you, then give me your advice. I would really appreciate it.”

“I thought you normally go to Rossi, with these kinda things?”

“Dave is my best friend, but you’ve become a close friend over the years, that I can trust. Besides we both know Dave can be an ass sometimes. This is one of those things that he might be an ass about, so I’d rather not involve him yet.” Hotch said with a bit of a smirk.

With a chuckle, Spencer agreed.

“I - there is this person in my life that I have grown fond of. I want to ask them out, or see if they are interested, but I have no idea if they even have any thoughts or feelings towards me.” Aaron said clearing his throat a bit. “I mean they, we are friends, but I don’t know if they could consider
changing or moving towards a romantic relationship. With Haley, we grew up together, went to the same schools, we knew each other, so there was a familiarity. This person is totally different. I mean they make me so unsure of myself. We both know that I am smart and capable, but ...they are so much more. Their strength astounds me. The compassion and caring they have, just blows me away. I almost feel not worthy. How do I even approach someone that makes me feel this way?"

“Wow! This must be some incredible woman. You are an amazing man, Hotch. You command respect, are a strong leader, an excellent protector. You have such a marvelous moral compass. I can’t believe that there is anyone that could ever make you doubt yourself like this. I mean gee,” Spencer stated as he shook his head, “if you were awkward and clumsy like me, sure I could see that, but you're confident and strong. And compassionate! You were amazing with that woman on this case. You almost had me in tears. The sympathy, and caring that came from your heart, as you spoke to her about her son, and her loss. I could feel the emotions of every case, that we got there just a moment too late, to save a child.”

Spencer reached over and put his hand on Aaron’s thigh. He took a deep breath, looked him in the eye, and said. “If it was me, I would consider myself lucky to have caught your attention.”

With a nervous chuckle, Aaron laid his hand on Spencer’s and replied. “Well, if that is true then. Are you available to go out Friday night?”

Spencer jerked his hand back, His face looked like he had just been told the most shocking or devastating news of his life. He knew he was supposed to say something, but his brain couldn’t process anything that was happening. In that moment, his eidetic memory pulled up the first minute that he knew he was attracted to Aaron. It then proceeded to recall every other time, that love grew. Before he knew it, he realized he was sitting there staring at Aaron, with his mouth gaping open.

“I-I d-d-don’t understand. You were talking about me? I make you nervous? You, You want to go out with me?” Spencer finally stuttered out.

“Yes, Spencer. I would like to go out with you. (paused) If you are interested, I mean..” Aaron stumbled. “I don’t even know if you are attracted to men or me.”

“Oh, my goodness.” Spencer blurted out, quickly. “I have been attracted to you for the last four years, if not longer. You were married, then Haley divorced you, but you were so devoted to her and Jack still. I couldn’t even consider anything, besides you are so far out of my league, plus you never have showed an inkling of being bi-sexual, how would I stand a chance? I mean you have everything going for you, looks, skill, leadership, muscles, and …”

Aaron interrupted, “I hate to interrupt your ramblings, but Spencer you’re the one who is out of my league.” He took Spencer’s hand in his. “You know so much. I have been awed by the things you know, that I can’t even begin to know. It kills me everytime, that I have to stop you. Plus you are so amazing the things you can do with your mind. The connections you can make, the way you see things that others rarely do, the way your eyes twinkle when you are reading a new book. And looks, don’t you know how attractive you are? Every time we go out as a team, there are men and women gawking at you. It takes all my self-control not to scare them away with one of my glares.”

“Well then,” Spencer blushed and gulped, “What time Friday, if we don’t get a case?”

“I’ll pick you up at seven?”

“Great. I look forward to it.” Spencer said, starting to stand, his hand still in Aaron’s.

Aaron didn’t let go, as he stood also. For a moment, they both stood there, just looking at each other.
Aaron released Spencer’s hand, reached up, and brushed his hair behind his ear. A smile on his face, Aaron rested his palm on Spencer’s cheek. Spencer leaned into the warm hand, blushing at the attention. He rubbed his cheek against Aaron’s hand, and smiled back, then pulled away.

“So you tomorrow, then Hotch.”

“So tomorrow, Reid.” Hotch pulled his hand away, slowly.

He stared at Spencer, as he went. There was a look of almost disbelief on his face, coupled with a hungry lust in his eyes, as he watched closely when Spencer bent over to pick up his messenger bag.

After he floated home, Spencer went to the keyboard. He had planned to anyway, but now, there were just too many emotions all over the place. He pulled a piece of music from his bag, that he had picked up in Tampa. He laughed out loud. After the case and the loss of Emily, it had felt like a good choice. Now, however; it was humorous. He put the sheet music to ‘Alone Again’ by Gilbert Sullivan on the stand and began to play. He had thought about how it seemed, everyone he cared for left him, which is why he selected the song. Spencer stopped playing abruptly.

He reached up to his cheek. The one just an hour or so early that Aaron’s warm strong hand had been on. He closed his eyes and wished to never be alone, again. He opened his eyes, his fingers flew over the keys, and tried to find the giddy melody that his heart was fluttering to. The notes seemed to find his fingers, instead of his fingers finding the keys. Spencer found himself in a dream like trance, while he played. He couldn’t recall being this light hearted in so long. The music, the feelings, they moved in a sweet harmony together. For the first time in his life, he prayed, that this what dating Aaron was going to be like. Oh how he prayed, as he played.
The Composition

Chapter Summary

The piece plays itself out. Sometimes, what we see in life, what we hear in the music, what we want to believe, do actually all come together in that one moment, to create a beautiful composition of the perfect symphony. You have to be listening, watching, aware. In the best of words, you have to be a part of life.

Episode tag - Season 6: Out of the Light

Of course, a case came up before Friday. A young woman had plunged off a roadside cliff in Lake Worth, North Carolina, which is 200 miles outside of Raleigh. Reid was sent to the hospital to see if he could help figure out who this girl was and what had happened. Before she died, the girl, who they later identified as Angela, told Spencer that the unsub had “Mercy.”

It was confounding to Reid and the team. Until Garcia told them about two missing college girls, one was Angela. The other her friend Marcy. Spencer’s heart dropped, when he saw the sadness on Aaron’s face, as he announced it. He looked, from the corner of his eye, towards Hotch. In a fraction of a moment, his unit chief mask was back up. Reid refixed his eyes on the board in front of him.

Spencer found himself engrossed in Angela's tox screen. When Rossi stated, that the list of items, including the lead, sounded like stained glass making. Reid looked surprised. Aaron noticed that Spencer actually grimaced at the thought of an unsub that would pour hot lead on a young woman. Dr. Reid returned to analyze the information being shared at the table.

Shortly thereafter, Hotch and the police chief were off to find Robert Bremmer. Morgan and Seaver were coming from the other direction, to stop him. He was trying to turn Marcy into his deceased step daughter Rose. His end game for them to drown together in the same lake as the real Rose had drown in with her mother, to escape his abuse. When Morgan blocked his escape, he crashed into the lake. Derek dove in to rescue Marcy. Bremmer grabbed her, in order to keep her with him. As Morgan fought to get her free, Hotch appeared in front of the windshield. He fired three times. The second shot striking Bremmer, who released Marcy.

When Aaron returned soaking wet to the station, Reid followed him to the locker room. Morgan was already in the showers.

Spencer spoke softly, “Are you okay?”

“Yes, just cold and wet.” Aaron answered with a small smile.

“I saw Derek, and thought figures. Then I saw you, looking like a wet puppy. I just wanted to...make sure you were okay.” Spencer blushed a bit.

Aaron wanted to reach up and touch those blush tinted cheeks. He knew he couldn't.

“Thanks for checking Reid. Let me get out of these wet clothes and a hot shower, then we can head home.”

Spencer nodded. He left the locker room. He joined the rest of the team, in the process of packing.
up. They said their goodbyes to the locals and headed out. While Spencer slept on the plane, Aaron discussed coaching Jack’s soccer team with Rossi. Dave gave him some soccer formations and agreed to be his assistant. When they landed, Aaron offered a ride back to the office to Spencer.

“I heard about ‘Jazz in the Garden’ on Saturday evening, at the National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden. May I pick you up at 5pm tomorrow?” Aaron asked, as he drove.

“I’ve always wanted to go! Yes, please.” Spencer replied, probably a bit too over eagerly.

“Great. I look forward to it “

Aaron pulled into the parking garage. Both men were smiling, as they exited the car. Spencer slipped his hand into Aaron's for a moment. They changed back into their everyday personas. Into the office they went, to complete their after action reports. It took Spencer longer than normal as he was completely distracted by the image of a wet Aaron, that kept creeping into his mind every time he reviewed the case in his mind. He turned his report in, said his good-byes, and headed home on the metro.

Unlike most nights after a case, Spencer didn’t find himself dreading going home. He had something to look forward to. He knew they were off tomorrow. There would be no case to be called in on. He would be on a date in just nineteen hours forty-five minutes and twenty-three seconds. It was a night full of hope and anticipation. There was a giddy little spring in his step, as he carried his dinner up to his apartment. He sat down on his couch, crossed his legs, and munched out on his thai food. While he sat there, downing his food, he thought about what he should wear. He had bought a pair of socks with treble and bass clefs on them, along with a pair with musical stanzas floating across them. He had of course mixed them. He would put those with his loafers. Since this was outdoors, He figured his black jeans. The form fitting ones, that hugged his hips tightly, would be good if they sat on the ground. Spencer took the last bite of his thai. He couldn’t decide between his deep purple polo shirt or the lilac button down short sleeve. Either would go nicely with the black jacket he would take, just in case there was a chill in the air later in the night. He stood to throw away his trash. On his way to the kitchen, he passed the keyboard.

Spencer had no intention of playing tonight. He was going to throw out the trash, go shower, then head to bed. However; when the keyboard caught his eye, it just called to him. Almost like a need within his being, the music was saying “I need to come out, and play.” It seemed odd to Spencer, but he obliged. He sat down, positioned himself to play, then waited. His nature to plan what he was doing, but this was just coming from somewhere else. It was … he couldn’t find the word for it ...as his fingers moved to the keys. The melody, that came from the flow of his fingers across the keys, was sweet and sour, calm and tumultuous, it ebbed and flowed. As it reached a crescendo, Reid was startled. He stopped playing for a moment. He wondered where this had come from? Was there something going on inside of him that was arguing back and forth? It just seemed so polar opposite of what he would’ve chosen. He placed his hands back on the keyboard. He closed his eyes. The music began again. First, staccato. Short sharp notes. Then, It became grandioso. The music swelling and becoming grander, as he played on. Spencer was awed by what transpired. He felt like a puppet being moved by a puppeteer, who knew the play that was being performed. Then as if the composition was placed before him, Spencer followed the conductor’s baton. The music became softer and softer, until the last chord. It was harsh and laced harmony. It rang of dissonance, making Spencer wonder as he turned the keyboard off.
The Music Plays

Chapter Summary

Close your eyes, sit back, listen to the music play, go with the beat, sway with the rhythm, hum with the melody, and let the music carry all your cares away, until you just float away to that peaceful place. The place you and your love are together, without a worry in the world, just the two of you.

Saturday seemed to drag slowly for Spencer. Since he had decided last night on what to wear, the only thing he had on his to do list was his weekly grocery shopping. He had that finished by one pm. It certainly wouldn’t take him four hours to shower, shave, and dress. He looked at the keyboard a couple of times, but didn’t want to spoil his evening of music, by playing some of his own. After lunch, he tried to read a book. He hadn’t brought any files home to work on. Spencer thought about calling his mother, but what would they talk about? He really didn’t know where the blossoming relationship was going. He couldn’t call any of his friends from work to discuss it. He looked back at the keyboard at least it would give him something to do? No, he would go lay out his clothes. Well that killed five minutes, more.

Aaron’s day flew by. He didn’t think he was going to get everything ready on time. Jack’s soccer game went well. Jack passed the ball to Travis, who passed it back to Jack, who kicked it in for a goal. Aaron and his assistant, Dave Rossi, started an arch with the parents, that the team went under. Every player congratulated for a game well played. Then, Aaron hurried home, as Jack went off with a teammate to spend the day and sleepover. Aaron grabbed the picnic basket from the pantry, began to pack it. He filled it with napkins, plates, flatware, glasses, a bottle of wine was strapped into the holder at the top. Aaron reached in the bottom cabinet and pulled out the cooler bag, for the cold food items, which he would pack right before leaving. He made himself lunch, sat down, ate, cleaned up, made the items for the picnic, put them in plastic bags, put the cold items in the refrigerator, the others in the picnic basket, then retrieved the blanket from the hall closet. He set his clothes out on the bed, checked the time, stripped, threw his dirty clothes in the hamper, jumped in the shower, washed thoroughly, shaved, applied his deodorant and cologne, dried his hair, dressed, sat down on the bed and breathed for a moment. He didn’t even have time to be nervous yet.

It was three forty-seven. Aaron was in the kitchen, placing the food items in the picnic basket or the cooler bag. Spencer was out of the shower, taking care of his grooming, and dressing. He slid on his socks, smiled knowing Aaron would tease him about his mismatched pair. He finally took a deep breath and realized this was going to be, okay. Aaron loaded up the car and headed to Spencer’s. Spencer tucked in the deep purple polo. He looked in the mirror. He untucked the polo shirt, took another look in the mirror, then tucked it back in again. He ran his fingers through his hair. Spencer sighed. He thought to himself, that’s as good as it gets. He went to the living room, to find his bag. Spencer took his wallet out, slipped it into his back pocket. It was a tight fit. He put his keys and cellphone in his front right pocket. All he could do now was wait, trying not to be anxious.

Aaron pulled up to Spencer’s apartment at four forty two. He hadn’t meant to be early, but traffic was less than expected. To be honest, he was nervous about being late and over compensated on time. He tried to wait in the parking lot, but it just made him fidgety. He knocked on the door at four fifty. Spencer answered the door. Well, he opened it. He saw Aaron. Dark hair free of styling products, kinda messy, but in a way that framed his face more. It made his chocolate eyes pop out.
Then, there was that smile, not the half smile, you sometimes saw at work, but the one where his
dimples showed. The smile, that caused his eyes to twinkle, your heart to lift, and your spirit to feel
lighter. His shirt was a black polo. Simple, but it highlighted the man’s biceps, shoulders, forearms,
(gulp) oh those arms ‘wrap me in those arms and hold me. Chase all my fears away. Make me feel
protected.’ and his abs. He wore similar tight dark jeans and loafers.

“Spencer? Are you going to invite me in?” Aaron asked.

He shook his head. “Oh sorry, yes please come in, Aaron.”

Spencer step to the side letting Aaron in. Aaron looked around a moment, then stared at Spencer,
who was still gawking at him.

“Is there something wrong? Something on my clothes?” Aaron asked, spinning around.

“Oh, no! You look marvelous. I just can’t…”

Next thing Spencer knew, Aaron was inches from his face. Aaron reached up, placed his hand on
Spencer's cheek, tilted his head, leaned in, and kissed him briefly. It was just tender and sweet,

enough to silence him, but not take away the magic of the moment.

“While I would love to hear how much you appreciate my wardrobe choices, we need to get going,
if we want to find parking.”

Spencer grabbed his jacket, laid it over his arm, opened the door, and followed Aaron out. He
turned, pulled the door closed, reached into his front pocket for the keys, and locked the door. Aaron
took in the delicious view of Spencer's rear, in his black jeans. If Spencer was gawking earlier, then
Aaron was drooling. As Spencer backed away from the door, then turned around, he was face to
face with Aaron again.

“You know. We have to move towards the car, in order to get in it.” He snarked, as he leaned in and
stole a quick peck of a kiss.

Aaron jumped a tad, at the kiss. It shook him out of his, call it appreciative look. It was hard on both
men, not to just enjoy the freedom to stare, touch, do all the things they couldn’t in the field. The
walk to the car was quiet. The ride was anything but.

Spencer spent the short ride discussing the
history of jazz music in America. He told Aaron how excited he was to be able to sit among the art
sculptures to listen. He mentioned a few of the pieces that were in the sculpture garden, since they
wouldn’t be walking around. Aaron got a word in, that let Spencer know he had walked the gardens
before with Jack on a trip the Smithsonian, They parked. Aaron carried the picnic basket, while
Spencer put the cooler bag over his shoulder.

As they walked to the gardens, Spencer saw the crowd
gathering. He saw the perfect spot for them was still open, pointed it out to Hotch, started walking
faster to make sure no one took it. Aaron reached forward and took Spencer’s hand. He pulled him
back to his side.

“It’s ok, my sweet. We'll get there. No one will take your spot. I promise.” He said, as he squeezed
his hand.

Spencer spied a couple heading towards his spot, and whimpered. Aaron looked at them, cleared his
throat loudly, gave them the Hotchner glare, and shook his head. The couple kept on going, the man
almost shook with fear. They arrived in just a few strides. Their place still available.

“See my love, no worries.” Aaron said, as he placed the blanket down.

Spencer sat. Aaron took the cooler bag from him at placed it to the left of the blanket with the basket.
He sat himself next to them, with Spencer to his right. Spencer squished closer to Aaron, so that their hips were touching. He leaned his head on Aaron’s shoulder for just a moment. This was going to be wonderful, Spencer thought.

“I picked this concert, Spencer, because we know each other well from work and our friendship. I thought that this way, we can just share our love for jazz, maybe learn more about our feelings for each other, and just be Aaron and Spencer. The two men, who have been enamoured with each other, but ...too ...unworthy in our own minds of each other. If you know what I mean?” Aaron stumbled through.

”And that is exactly why, I am so not in the same league as you.” Spencer chuckled, as he reached up and turned Aaron’s face back towards him. “You are so considerate, sweet, and tender.” He ran his thumb over Aaron’s cheekbone, as Aaron blushed.

Aaron turned, started to unpack the picnic basket. He handed a plate, fork, spoon, napkin, and knife to Spencer. He offered him some potato salad, triangle cut cucumber sandwiches or egg salad, fruit salad, cheddar goldfish crackers, which made Spencer giggle, as he took a handful and placed them on his plate. Aaron sat a bottle of water next to Spencer’s leg. Just as they began to eat, the announcer stepped up to the mic.

”Ladies and Gentlemen, you are in for a wonderful treat tonight. Performing tonight in our ‘Jazz in the Garden concert series’ at the National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden is Diana Krall. Let’s give her a big DC welcome.”

Spencer’s mouth dropped open. She was his favorite modern jazz pianist. He hadn’t really researched who was playing. Normally, they had someone famous or semi-famous play these concerts, but rarely a big name. He was now excited beyond belief. Aaron smiled, as he looked at Spencer. It brought him joy to see the man he cared about happy with his choice of a date. Spencer finished eating as Diana started to sing her song “Peel Me A Grape.” His fingers playing on his thigh, as she sang and played. Aaron pulled some dessert cheeses from the cooler bag, along with grapes. He reached into the picnic basket for some crackers. He placed these on a plate. Aaron poured the wine, handed a glass to Spencer, as the next song started, and put the place between them. They sipped and fed each other cheeses, throughout the selection. Her sultry voice, mixed with the wine, being there with Aaron, and the selections, was just getting to heady for Spencer. If he wasn’t sure before, he certainly was now. His heart was singing for the man. His soul swayed with the music. “The Look of Love,” with the band playing behind Diana, Aaron staring in his eyes, Spencer reached up, cupped that strong jaw, pulled the man to him, caught his lips in a kiss full of fervor and passion. Aaron had to pull away, reminding himself they were in public.

“Spencer?” Aaron asked, with a raised brow.

“Sorry, lost in the music and company.” He answered, lowering his head and blushing.

Aaron took his empty glass from him, returned it, the leftovers, and the bottle to their places. With everything packed up, Aaron pulled Spencer closer to his side, then wrapped his arm around his back for the remainder of the concert. Which seemed to include a number of love songs, it ended with a sing along to Nat King Cole’s “L-O-V-E”. This found a very shocked genius, when Aaron sang. Eyes locked with Spencer’s hazel ones, Aaron serenaded him.

“L is for the way you Look at me.
O is for the Only one I see.
V is for Very Very extraordinary.
E is Even more than anyone that you adore. “
Spencer found himself smiling, his heart soaring, his whole being just enraptured.

“And love
Is all that I can give, to you
Love, is more than just a game, for two
Two, in love can make it
Take my heart, and please don't break it
Love, was made for me and you” Aaron sang, along with Ms. Krall and the crowd.

As the crowd applauded, Spencer just sat there staring into Aaron’s eyes. The two barely seemed to notice the people milling about and leaving. The weather had been perfect. The company was better. Aaron could not have picked a selected a different artist or venue, that would have pleased Spencer. If they weren’t already friends, this certainly would have enamoured, Spencer to him. A cool breeze blew past the friends, that stirred them from their trance.

“Oh, I guess it’s time to go.” Spencer observed.

“Seems like it.” Aaron agreed, as he stood.

He reached out for Spencer’s hand. He pulled Spencer up from the ground. They stood chest to chest for a moment. Spencer’s breath became ragged. He so wanted to just kiss Aaron stupid. This had been so romantic, so intense, and so fairytale. He thought he had to be home, asleep dreaming. Aaron stepped to the side, bent over to pick up the blanket. He began to fold it. Spencer put his jacket on, as he watched Aaron. His only thought was how handsome and beautiful, inside and out, this man looked right now. He closed his eyes, wished that tonight wouldn’t end. Since, he knew the reality was it would. Before long, tonight, tomorrow or the next day, the phone would ring. They would be off somewhere, to save the world, a man, woman, child, or family from the next unsub. He sighed at the thought. Aaron had finished. He was holding out the cooler bag for Spencer to carry again. Spencer took it.

“What’s wrong?”

“Nothing, just went from this perfect evening to the reality of our lives. Damn brain.” He answered.

“No, No. Reality is not allowed on our date. Well, work that is.” Aaron chuckled.

“Isn’t it horrible how easily, the memories, thoughts of cases, are triggered. It seems that just a simple word, sign, sound can take you from whatever you are doing, back to any and every case. I pretty sure it isn’t just my damn eidetic memory.” Spencer, secretly begged, as he spoke.

“No, it's not just you, but no going there tonight.” Aaron assured him with a smile, that said tonight is about us.

So, Spencer walked closer to Aaron. He slipped his free hand into Aaron’s. It brought a sparkle to Aaron’s eyes. That sparkle, made Spencer’s heart race. He had waited to long to be here today. He never wanted tonight to end. Spencer didn’t realize they had stopped walking. Aaron tugged on his hand.

“Earth to Spencer, we have arrived.”

Spencer chuckled, let his hand go, helped him load cooler. As he handed it to Aaron, he held on until he pulled Aaron to him. He let go of the bag, but grabbed Aaron by the nape of the neck. He kissed him hard and passionately. Aaron was surprised at the boldness of Spencer, but the feel of the kiss was overwhelming. He could do nothing but kiss back. The cooler bag tumbled into the vehicle, as
Aaron's hand came up around Spencer's back. It felt like that moment in Georgia, when Aaron hugged Spencer in the cemetery. It was coming home. It was thank god you're alive. There was the emotion of you're the only one who really understands me, coupled with years of want and desire. There would never be words for this no matter what happened in the future, because nothing was stronger than right now.

They pulled apart to catch their breaths. Both panting as though they'd run a marathon, neither could look away from the other, but someone had to move them both along. Aaron stepped back to close the back of his SUV.

“Shall we head home?” He offered.

“I don't want tonight to end.” Spencer almost whimpered. “Come stay with me?”

“Let's head that way and see how things go. I don't want to rush anything.” Aaron replied, as he opened Spencer's door.

Spencer waited to say anything, until Aaron was on the road.

“I've...we've waited years even for this date. I don't think that there is any way to rush any portion of our relationship. We both know each other inside out. If it's something we agree on, then I say we should do it and be happy.” Spencer argued. It was more like stating facts.

Aaron smiled at him, looked back at the road, reached over and took his hand.

“Never argue with a genius.” Was all the answer he gave.

The rest of the ride home was peaceful, as Spencer hummed and drew circles on Aaron's hand with his thumb. Aaron couldn't stop smiling. His heart felt so wonderful to see the man he loved, full of happiness. When they say their hearts were soaring, that's exactly how he felt. If he let go of the steering wheel, Aaron was sure he would float away. He let go of Spencer's hand, in order to park. They grabbed the basket, cooler bag, and Aaron's go bag, and locked up the car.

Once they were inside Spencer's apartment. The basket was put in the kitchen. The contents of the cooler bag refrigerated. Spencer took the go bag to the bedroom. When he came back out, Aaron was seated on the couch. Spencer came up behind him, wrapped his arms around him, then kissed his neck. Aaron leaned his head to the left to give Spencer better access. Spencer slid his hand down Aaron's shirt, as he started to suck on his earlobe. Aaron moaned at the attention. He closed his eyes and let Spencer play. It was nice to be doted on, be the object of someone’s desire, to be…

“Ow oh” Aaron yelped, as Spencer twisted his nipple.

Spencer stood up straight, walked around towards the front of the couch. As he did, Aaron spied the keyboard.

“I didn’t know you played?” He pointed out.

“I started after Sammy Sparks taught me his song. It has be very cathartic,” Spencer answered, sitting next to Aaron, as close as he could get.

“Will you play me something? I would love to see and hear you.” Aaron asked with pleading eyes.

Spencer couldn’t resist that look. It was too adorable. He would’ve rather continued with kissing and foreplay, but when Aaron added the dimpled smile. Spencer was a goner.
“Certainly.”

He sat at the keyboard, looked through the sheet music he had, thought for a moment, then looked at Aaron, who had moved to the end of the couch. He selected “I’ve Grown Accustom to Your Face.” from My Fair Lady. He started playing. The melody flowed off his fingers. They lightly twinkled over the keys, it seemed. Aaron stood, walked over, entranced by the movements, stood there watching, swaying, lost in the music. It was hypnotic. The sway of Spencer’s body, the flight of his fingers, the determination in his eyes, the serene look on his face, his lips as they mouthed the words of the song. His lips, his fingers, his eyes, his face…

“I’ve grown accustom to your face,
He almost makes the day begin
I’ve gotten use to hear him say good morning everyday
His joys, his woes, his highs, his lows
Are second nature to me know
Like breathing out, breathing in.” Aaron sang in Spencer’s ear.

Spencer shivered as he finished the piece, He turned around and found himself facing Aaron’s midsection. He leaned forward, rested his head on Aaron. Aaron reached down and stroked Spencer’s hair.

“You seem to amaze me in a new way, every time I’m around you. Is there anything you can’t do?”

“Shoot straight.” Spencer laughed.

Aaron let a big belly laugh out. He pulled Spencer up, into his arms. He hugged him tight.

“I tell you what. I’ll take care of the shooting. You take care of the music.” He smiled.

Aaron turned, led Spencer towards the hall.

“I assume the bedroom is this way?”

Spencer nodded, eagerly. He followed as Aaron led. Spencer knew the bedroom was easy to find. However; he would follow Aaron anywhere. He trusted Aaron with everything.
Chapter Summary

The daily grind always seems to get in the way of the good things in life, doesn't it. You have to kind of look at it as the chorus of the song or the composition. It is the refrain that is repeated. Yes, it may seem to drag sometimes, but that is the part that everyone remembers. The hero always rushes in to save the day. The prince always gets his princess. The song heads towards its resolution, with a swing and an upbeat tempo.

Episode tag - Season 6: The Big Sea

Aaron had placed his phone on the nightstand. That is where it was, when he fumbled for it in the dark.

“Hotchner. Yes, where? How many? Okay. We will be there after first light.”

Spencer rolled over and grabbed the man. He tried pulling him back in the bed.

“Tell me we can sleep an hour or two more please.” He grumbled sleepily.

“I wish, I could. How about thirty minutes?”

“Will take what I can get, come here.” Spencer demanded.

Aaron snuggled back down with his genius. They held each other, exchanging tender kisses on lips, foreheads, and necks. They took turns sighing at the feel of laying there holding each other. It had been a short lived dream come true, before reality came storming in again. The half hour flew by. Aaron offered to make breakfast while Spencer showered. The coffee smell drew Spencer out. His hair still damp, but the rest of him in a robe, he entered the kitchen.

“Perfect timing. Everything is ready. Grab your coffee and sit.” Aaron ordered.

Spencer followed the instructions. Eggs, bacon, toast, and orange juice was set before him. Aaron sat down with his own plate. They ate, still enjoying being together. Spencer didn’t inquire about the case. Aaron didn’t volunteer. It would rear its ugly head soon enough. Aaron went to shower, as Spencer did the dishes. When Aaron came out, he found Spencer finishing dressing for the day and packing his go bag.

“Jacksonville, Florida, pack for warm weather.”

“Thanks.” Spencer answered.

Aaron grabbed his go bag, dressed himself, then they were off to work.

When they arrived in Jacksonville, they found themselves working on the beach itself. A beach repair crew had been pumping sand from the ocean floor, when its output tube jammed. They checked their equipment and while they did bones came flying out. The Jacksonville police set up a tent, tables, microscopes, supplies, for the BAU to use in identifying the remains.

Spencer was busy at work under the tent. He had separated the bones that were found by length of
time in the ocean, which he had backtracked based on the layers of sand and sediment.

“Nine victims in nine years means that he's in control of his urges.” He told Hotch.

“Any sense of the victimology?”

“Only that he likes variety. Pelvic bone width indicates that he kills both men and woman, and skull structure says he crosses racial lines as well.” Spencer replied.

They were interrupted with news of three more remains having been found. They determined there must be an emotional tie to this dump site. Its discovery would make the unsub find a new one, but the Atlantic ocean was vast.

“The sea has never been friendly to man. At most, it has been the accomplice of human restlessness.”

Joseph Conrad.

Aaron walked up to where Spencer was working, well Hotch walked up to where Dr. Reid was.

“Have you nailed down the victimology?” Hotch asked.

“I found a unique evolution, actually. The earliest victims appear to be high-risk. These lesions are consistent with syphilis, most likely a prostitute. This one has severely ground and missing teeth, commonly seen in excessive methamphetamine abuse. And then all of a sudden out of nowhere, a change healthier and stronger victims all the way through to number 12.” Reid said, with almost an excitement. He was in his element.

They both understood, that the unsub was evolving to lower risk victims, harder to hunt. Hotch moved a bit closer to Reid, to look at the first victim. Their hips just barely touching.

“What do we know about the first victim?”

“You know, that one's tough. He or she has been in the water so long, they're mostly bone fragments. I can attempt to reconstruct.” Reid offered.

“You've got three hours.” Hotch told him, with a wink.

“I can do it in two.” Spencer boasted, with a couple of bones in his hands. He had a look like he was taking a head start in a race.

“Make it one.” Aaron said, challenging him back, as he took his phone out. He walked away with a bit of a swagger in his step.

It was nothing that anyone would’ve noticed, but between the two men, it was just a little reminder of the fondness they shared, now.

While Hotch talked to the press, Dr. Reid, the scientist, was in full reassembly mode. Morgan fended off the call from his aunt, trying to get closure about his cousin's disappearance. Rossi felt for him and his family. Years of victims' families, body after body, unsolved cases, they weigh heavy over the years on a profiler. When they started getting more information later in the case about Charleston and its link to victims, Rossi forced Morgan to rethink Cindi’s disappearance. Which led them to the discovery, the unsub was getting his victims not off of boats, but off of the train.

Victim number one, when Reid had him reassembled, was a male in his fifties. The unsub had a
great amount of anger towards this man, who showed vitamin deficiencies normally seen in alcoholics. There were defensive wounds on the bones, plus signs of overkill. Hotch and Reid agreed, this was the unsub’s father, who most likely abused the unsub. Spencer noticed a sadness in Aaron’s eyes about that. He reached up, patted him between the shoulder blades, firmly and quickly, nodded, gave a understanding smile, as Hotch walked away. Ever since Perotta, Reid understood that part of private Hotch included a history with his father. Spencer had heard what transpired between the two men, plus he saw the reactions every time there were abused children. Hotch’s compassion could only have been built from empathy and experience. Spencer loved the sincere compassion that Aaron brought to victims. He was a man who put his whole heart into his work. Few really noticed, how much the man gave and how much the job took.

As the team discussed the postcards, and their first confirmed DNA match to Dr. Samantha Cormick, a Parkinson's patient, they noticed that her postcard had no signs of the disease.

“There's a drug called trilamide. In minute doses it treats Parkinson's, but its main use is for seasickness.” Reid mentioned.

“Something a fisherman would have access to.” Morgan agreed.

Reid explained a high dose makes the victim totally compliant.

“Criminals had been known to slip it in your drink or blow the powder in your face and naso-dermal absorption is almost immediate. You're instantaneously susceptible to any suggestion.”

They had a total of five postcards for twelve bodies. Nothing linked them geographically, but three were mailed from Miami and two from Charleston. He's bouncing between two cities?

“By alternating hunting grounds, he ensures that neither city pays too much attention to people going missing.” Aaron stated.

Hotch told Reid to start a linguistic profile.

They would deliver the profile in the morning. The team headed to the hotel for the night. After everyone settled in, Spencer snuck over to Aaron's room.

“Hey, can I visit a minute?” He asked?

“Sure, come in.”

Spencer sat at the little table by the window. Hotch always kept the curtains drawn, so no one would see anyway. Aaron sat next to him on the bed. He slumped forward on his arms, resting them on his thighs. This was Aaron, the man who was comfortable around Spencer. It was odd how fast he had fallen into this level of trust with the younger man. Yes, they had known each other for years, but let's be honest, Aaron didn't trust easy.

“I thought so. When, I told you about the first victim, I saw you tense. You're still thinking about it...him. Aren't you?”

“I'd ask you when you got so smart, but you always have been.” Aaron chuckled, but it didn't reach his eyes.

“You know, I've watched you for years. You never have to tell me. I already know, but if you ever need to talk, I can listen.” Spencer leaned forward, placed his hand on Aaron's knee, and gave him a smile.
“I use to listen to mom, all the time. She may not have made sense, but she knew I cared.”

Aaron covered Spencer's hand with his. “I don't think, I will ever doubt that.” Aaron's smile reached his eyes this time.

“Sad, the impact fathers leave on their children.” Aaron side.

“Some father's leave good legacies, Aaron.” Spencer said.

Aaron smiled again, stood, wrapped his arms around Spencer. He knew that Spencer meant him. It only takes one to break the cycle. Spencer kissed Aaron goodnight. Just a sweet tender kiss, to let the man know he was loved. He excused himself back to his room.

In the morning, they delivered the profile. The unsub saw his victims abandoning their responsibilities. The messages he forced them to write showed it: "It's too much." “There's nothing for me here." "It's better if I leave.” Reid explained.

“We believe this anger stems from his first victim, his father.” Hotch started.

“Most likely a local fisherman, definitely an alcoholic, and based on this unsub's level of sadism, violently abusive.” Morgan continued.

“He's also the first person to abandon the unsub.” Seaver added.

“Walked out on his family, maybe, even wrote a postcard like this.” Reid finished.

The locals pulled a body from the ocean. Reid and Morgan went to the medical examiner.

“You know, if he'd been given Trilamide, the unsub could have forced him to cut himself.” Morgan suggested.

“The Trilamide kept him compliant enough to hurt himself.” Reid stated

“Then what overcame his self-preservation instinct?” Morgan questioned?

“A protective instinct!” Reid figured out. “This guy was mentally and physically compromised, but he still went after the unsub with everything he had.”

They returned to the team. After they explained, that this father had fought to protect his son. Garcia helped narrow their unsub down. He was grabbing his victims off the train, on which he was a conductor.

Blake Wells had inherited his father's boat after killing him. Blake was now saddled with James, the son of the man whose body now laid in the morgue. He took him to the cannery on the St. Johns River, that he had worked at as a teenager.

Wells explained, “I was just about your age when I started working here. That son of a bitch said I had to earn my keep. And then he'd beat me, he'd take my paycheck, and he'd drink it away!”

Garcia found docking information and the cannery address. Hotch and the detective went to the marina. Morgan and SWAT went to the cannery.
“One day I was late for work, and my dad broke my arm. And he told me to keep gutting. And I cut and I cut till I passed out.” Wells told James.

James refused to gut, “I won't do it.”

“Pick up the knife.”

“Or what? You gonna break my arm?”

“No, I'm gonna slice your throat.” Wells threatened. Only to be stopped by Morgan.

As Morgan interviewed Blake, Blake taunted him about his dump site.

“How do you know I don't have a dozen more just like it? It's a big sea.”

“No. Blake, it's the same place where you dumped your own father. He was the most important one, so you had to come back here and dump the other bodies.” Morgan assured him that the BAU knew.

“We are tied to the ocean, and when we go back to the sea, whether it is to sail or to watch, we are going back from whence we came.” John F. Kennedy.

When the team had gotten back to Quantico, finished their reports, and headed home, Spencer had a date with his keyboard. He had a song he wanted to find and learn for Aaron. He was going to practice it, then suggest it as their song. He had thought about it non stop, since visiting Aaron's room. The lyrics seemed to ring true. It was an older song, but age and time did not apply to them. Mostly, they were just too good to be true. And as always, when it came to Aaron, it was hard to take his eyes off of him. He found the sheet music online, downloaded it, printed it, played through it, and found himself lost in the emotions that it stirred within him. “The sight of you leaves me weak, There are no words left to speak…” echoed in Spencer’s brain as he drifted off to sleep.
The Coda

Chapter Summary

There was a four step process to playing a coda. It was easy to learn, just like profiling, you had to look for the signs. One, Start at the beginning and play until you see D.S. al Coda. Two, Go back to the “S” sign and repeat this passage. Three, Keep playing until you see the symbol of an oval with a cross inside. Four, Go directly to the Coda and keep playing all the way to the end. Profiling, one, start with victimology and continue until you see what all the victims have in common. Two, find the “S”, the signature of the unsub, that sets this unsub apart from the others. Three, keep narrowing down the suspect list until you see the person that best fits profile. Four, go to suspect’s last known whereabouts, address, etc. until you can arrest unsub. How do you get better at both? Practice, Practice, Practice.

Episode tag- Season 6: Supply and Demand

There was a four step process to playing a coda. It was easy to learn, just like profiling, you had to look for the signs. One, Start at the beginning and play until you see D.S. al Coda. Two, Go back to the “S” sign and repeat this passage. Three, Keep playing until you see the symbol of an oval with a cross inside. Four, Go directly to the Coda and keep playing all the way to the end. Profiling, one, start with victimology and continue until you see what all the victims have in common. Two, find the “S”, the signature of the unsub, that sets this unsub apart from the others. Three, keep narrowing down the suspect list until you see the person that best fits profile. Four, go to suspect’s last known whereabouts, address, etc. until you can arrest unsub. How do you get better at both? Practice, Practice, Practice.

Penelope was beside herself, at being called in before dawn. Kevin reassured her that there was nothing to worry about. He reminded her, they had met in the bullpen. She shooed him away and met with the team in the conference room.

“When was the last time Hotch called a meeting before dawn?” She asked?

“When Gideon left.” Spencer answered.

“Who’s leaving?” She inquired panicking?

“No one!” Morgan responded quickly.

Just then Hotch came in. He announced that there had been a budget meeting late last night. He let Morgan know that the New York office was interested in him again. Hotch also asked that if others received offers that they let him know. Everyone pretty much indicated they weren’t planning on going anywhere. He just stated that they let him know if they were approached. As he went to continue the conversation, his phone rang. Virginia troopers had found two bodies in the trunk of a car. He sent Rossi and Morgan to the accident scene.

Meanwhile, in the roundtable room, Reid, and Seaver started a whiteboard. Garcia started a missing
persons search. Andi Swan, from the human trafficking division, arrived, when the bodies had been identified as two missing college students. She had a theory on what was happening. It looked like a human trafficking ring was taking the students. Garcia brought a stack of files of missing college students into the room.

“How did you narrow it down further?” Reid asked her?

“I didn’t.” She answered. “I didn’t have any other information.”

“That never stopped you before.” He reminded her.

She bolted from the room, to get back to work. Seaver picked up the stack of files, handing a bigger portion to Reid for causing Garcia to desert them. They kept working through the files, as Hotch and Andi left. Andi and Hotch were off to find out why one of her undercover agents had missed her check ins.

The undercover agent Renee had stumbled onto the unsub. It was a group, that held the students. They kept them drugged, well fed, in good shape, in order to auction them to the highest bidder. Unlike normal human traffickers, these students weren't sold into the sex trade. They were sold to be tortured. Eventually, to death.

Renee had befriended a girl named Lucy, who was also being held. While the team was tracking down the missing students and agent, the unsub started their auction. First, a young man was beaten, choked, and was still standing, as the audience watched.

Meanwhile Garcia followed the money. One of the owners of the clubs, from where the college students were last seen, also owned property in rural Virginia. The space, owned by Bob Moore, was abandoned. It would be the perfect location and size. Andi, Hotch, Rossi, Morgan, and Seaver were on their way with the SWAT team.

Renee was stirring up the other students. Lucy decided to handle it herself. After getting Renee to confess to being an agent and alone, Lucy put her up for auction. With the opening bid starting at double, the FBI agent was a treat to the sickos bidding. Lucy played Russian Roulette with the agent, until the team spoiled her fun.

They arrested fourteen bidders, saved seven college students, plus Renee. As they were outside clearing the scene, unsure if the leader had escaped or not. A vehicle started to leave. The driver was shot but a young woman was removed from the back of the car. She tried to explain to Rossi how terrible it had been to be held there. He grew suspicious. Just as Andi and Hotch were discussing the woman, that Renee had been last seen with, a shot rang out. Lucy fell to the ground. Derek looked at Dave and nodded. Teamwork held this team together, kept them all alive, they trusted each other to watch out for each other. Dave had done it inside earlier for Morgan, it was just Morgan's turn this time.

Back at the office, Reid was boxing up the files. Seaver was disappointed at the number of missings that were still unaccounted for. Overall, with seven rescued they had done well, but there was always more. The oh so familiar refrain, tomorrow there would be more.

It was a long ass day, as Morgan observed, when Garcia pointed out that Hotch left before everyone. Reid suggested getting something to eat. There was this new twenty four hour Indian place. It had the best Chicken Tandoori. They headed out to grab a bite to eat before heading home.

When Spencer turned the key in his door, he knew even with not having to be in until 9:30 am, he wasn't going to get much sleep. Even less when he saw the tall man stretched out on his couch.
His mind supplied the soundtrack as he locked up the door.

“Pardon the way that I stare, There’s nothing else to compare.” Spencer began to sing, as he made his way to Aaron.

“The sight of you leaves me weak, 
There are no words left to speak.”

He knelt down beside the arm of the couch, he leaned near Aaron’s ear, and continued.

“But if you feel like I feel, 
Please let me know that is real. 
You’re just too good to be true, 
I can’t take my eyes off you.”

He moved to the keyboard and played.

“I love you baby, 
And if it's quite all right. 
I need you baby, 
To warm the lonely nights. 
I love you baby, 
Trust in me when I say... 
Oh pretty baby. 
Don't bring me down I pray, 
Oh pretty baby, 
Now that I've found you stay, 
And let me love you, baby... 
Let me love you.”

Aaron stirred. He sat up and stared at his genius.

Spencer was lost in his song to Aaron.

“You're just too good to be true. 
I can't take my eyes off you. 
You'd be like heaven to touch, 
I wanna hold you so much. 
At long last love has arrived, 
And I thank God I'm alive.”

Aaron walked behind Spencer. He joined him in singing, what became their song.

“You're just too good to be true, 
Can't take my eyes off You.”

Spencer stopped playing. He stood, held Aaron, they swayed, as they sung. It was as if they were dancing.
“I love you baby,
And if it's quite all right
I need you baby,
To warm the lonely nights.”

As they danced their way to the bedroom, Spencer began to speak.

“Aaron,” he said, “I think we've found our Coda. [koh-duh], noun, a concluding section or part, especially one of a conventional form and serving as a summation of preceding themes, motifs, etc., as in a work of literature or drama, anything that serves as a concluding part.” He rambled on, as Aaron undressed them for bed.

”Coda (Italian) The few chords or bars attached to an infinite canon in order to render it finite; or a few chords not in a canon, added to a finite canon for the sake of obtaining a more harmonious conclusion. (4) That closing adjunct of any movement, or piece, specially intended to enforce a feeling of completeness and finality.”

“Is that so?” Aaron asked, as he kissed Spencer quiet.

“Yes, my love. It's as simple as that. When a case is over good, bad, or indifferent results, all that matters in the end. Is the peace that we find in each other, in our love, in our family, and friends.”

End Notes

The song portions included in this work are direct lyrics from the songs themselves. Credit is listed in the story to the singers and/or writers of the songs. If not, I have tried to list them here.

L-O-V-E by Nat King Cole
I've Grown Accustom to your face from My Fair Lady.
Alone Again Naturally by Gilbert Sullivan
You're just too good to be true. by Frankie Valle

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