NSP-3710/B

by AuntieClimactic

Summary

Science made them do it! There’s a form for that...

Notes

Spoilers for season one. X-posted from it's original spot on my live journal, back in the day.

Jack Carter wasn’t a stranger to fielding inappropriate sexual advances. As a cop, the uniform carried a certain allure, and, as a U.S. Marshall, it wasn’t unusual for a perp (male or female) to offer sexual favors in exchange for their release. For example:

“You could say you couldn’t find me,” Julia Barton suggested, trailing her fingers down Jack’s chest to his belt.

Jack grabbed Barton’s wrists firmly and slapped the cuffs on, “Yeah, no.”

“Yeah, no,” became Jack’s standard response to that type of proposition. Thankfully, it never went any further than the casual offer, aside than the occasional stoner or prostitute (or a combination of both), but they were easily restrained.

That was until he came to Eureka.

There may have never been a sexual harassment case in the history of the town, but there was a
whole file cabinet reserved for Form NSP – 3710/B. NSP – 3710/B referred to cases involving what Allison tactfully called Induced Misconduct and what Jo called the old Science Made Us Do It excuse.

When Jo showed him the cabinet during his first week, Jack actually laughed.

“Oh come on, really?” He crossed his arms in front of his chest, and wondered if it was too late to ask for his old job back. This was during the Clone Susan Situation, and there was only so much one man could take in a day. “I mean, really?”

Jo merely raised an eyebrow. The one that said, ‘wait and see, dumb ass.’ But he hadn’t known Jo for that long; he still had that eyebrow confused with the one that said, ‘I can break your spine, dumb ass.’ Jack swallowed hard and changed the subject.

He learned his lesson three days later in the usual way you learn things in Eureka – with explosions.

This specific explosion occurred in one of the high school science labs during a late night extra credit experiment. Allison called Jack in for damage control, and to detain one Professor Gail Crockett PhD., PhD., the genius who somehow forgot a particular substance in the experiment was, oh, illegal.

After making sure no one required medical treatment, nothing valuable had been damaged, and no clones of any kind were involved, Jack started the process of arresting Miss. Crockett. This would have been easier had she not locked herself in the supply closet. By the time Jack managed to break the lock (“Come on Gail! If I miss dinner again my house is going to yell at me.”), he was a tad irritable.

The closet door burst open. Jack had enough time to register a funny sulfur-like smell before Gail had her tongue in his mouth and a hand down his pants.

Jack retaliated by yanking her face away and screaming, “What the-? Gail! Don’t put your hands - Jo!”

Jo appeared quickly and together they managed to pull Gail Crockett PhD., PhD., off him and restrain her before any serious molestation was done. When Jo shoved her into the back of the cruiser, Gail made shameless moaning sounds that turned Jack bright red.

“What the hell was that?” Jack addressed Allison, trying to hold pieces of his torn uniform shirt together while Jo read Gail (who was doing unspeakable this to the back of his truck) her rights.

“That, Sheriff, was your first NSP – 3710/B.” Nathan Stark stepped out of his own car, sliding smoothly up to Allison.

Jack’s scowled, “Dr. Stark, always a pleasure. Shouldn’t you be signing papers alone in your office? And I don’t think Professor Crockett was harming endangered species of flora.”

Nathan smirked his ‘idiots amuse me and my massive brain’ smirk, but Allison broke in before they could start bickering, “That’s NJP-3701/D. NSP-3710/B is the Induced Misconduct Form.”

“Aw, your first one.” Jo appeared next to Jack’s side, “I’m so proud.”

“We got lucky.” Allison continued, (“Well, one of us certainly did.” “Real mature, Stark.”) “-that she locked herself in the supply closet before she could attack any students.”

Jack gave up on his ripped uniform and let the pieces of his shirt flutter to the ground.
“I hate this town.”

Jo patted him on the back.

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The second time was worse because he was the one induced and Dr. Ethan Edison was the one he misconducted.

Long story short, a scientist trying to sneak out of Eureka with information to sell to Finland (How had this become his life? How?), sprayed Jack with a sort of hormone-altering mace. It didn’t kick in immediately, but the last thing Jack remembered before Jo knocked him out by throwing a chair at his head was Dr. Edison walking into the station to report vandals on his farm.

“Again, Dr. Edison, I am so sorry.” Jack said, pressing the cold compass firmly against the back of his head, “And it’s my duty to inform you that if you wish to press charges—”

Ethan laughed, and signed his portion of NSP-3710/B, “Please Sheriff, it’s not like the first time this has happened to me. At least this time it wasn’t in public… with Vincent.”

Jack gaped at Jo after Ethan left the station, “Okay, this? Is so wrong.”

“Don’t worry Sheriff,” Jo looked up from her spot on the floor where she was trying to piece the chair, which broke into several parts after impacting his face, back together with some sort of science super glue. “Eureka is very welcome to the bisexual members of the community.”

“That’s not what – I didn’t – I mean – I feel like I should arrest myself!”

Jo shrugged, “You’ll get used to it. I’ve filled out over half that cabinet alone.”

“This is wrong.”

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But Jack didn’t get used to it. Thankfully, most of the events were isolated and happened to someone else. There was one memorable event where Jack had to restrain one of Zoë’s classmates for eyeballing her chest in a suspicious way only to later discover there was no inducement. But mistakes happen.

Once when a situation involved Jo, Allison, Fargo, and Henry all filling out NSP-3710/B forms, Jack snapped.

“Okay, I’ve tried to embrace this whole community selective memory when it comes to sexual assault, but, seriously, doesn’t it bother anyone?”

Jo, now used to these outbursts, ignored him. Allison refused to look him in the eye, and Fargo was still trying to sink into the floor, so it was Henry who answered.

“Jack, people here understand that with great science comes great risk. Sometimes that… can be awkward and embarrassing,” Henry glanced at Allison, who was signing her name with a bit more force than necessary, “but in the end everyone understands the science behind the action and acknowledges that to take it personally would just make the situation worse, in a sense.”

Jack shook his head, “That’s just dumb. Very, very dumb.”

“You’ll understand one day.” Henry said, handing Jack his form.
“Yeah, no.”

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At the so-called “annual dance” Nathan ambushed him into filling out his next NSP-3710/B. Jack was picking through the cuisine looking for something normal when Nathan slapped his hand on his shoulder, hard. Yes, Jack flinched, but he was still recovering from the attack by hundreds of replicated Nathan Starks, so he thought he deserved some credit.

“Sheriff Carter.”

“Doctor Stark.”

Nathan sneered, which was the only clue he gave as to how pissed out he was. Otherwise, Jack knew, the man’s face would have been his usual expressionless mask. Jack couldn’t blame him. He did grope his wife’s ass. Done in a heroic attempt to save the world by distracting the Stark Replicas bent on world domination, but done nonetheless.

“Enjoying the festivities?” Nathan’s tone was level, but all that meant was he had something premeditated.

“Yes,” Jack said carefully. He held up a plate of… something, “Want some?”

Nathan ignored the plate, “Shouldn’t you be in your office?”

“Why?” Jack asked, unhappy at the satisfied look in Nathan’s eye.

“Well, Sheriff,” This was accompanied by a squeeze of Jack’s shoulder. “You did touch Dr. Blake inappropriately in front of her colleagues. In a heroic effort to save the world, but done nonetheless. I believe you have a form to fill out.”

Anger quickly overwhelmed Jack’s initial caution, “Now wait a minute!”

“I’ll expect to see it on my desk. Tomorrow.” This was said lightly, but Nathan’s eyes were hard. Jack instinct warned him that if he protested, they would undoubtedly end in a physical fight. He was angry enough to consider it briefly, but he glanced over to where his daughter was dancing happily. Nathan followed his glance, and the hard light in his eye was momentarily replaced by guilt. Too late. The damage was done.

Jack put the plate down, and felt in his pockets for his car keys, “Sometimes I really hate you, Nathan.”

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Then came The Incident. Hell yes, Jack was capitalizing it. The Incident where Allison practically humped his leg while kissing him in her sexy, very see-through, pink underwear until he acted nobly (stupidly), and babbled something about how this wasn’t right, gave his standard “yeah, no,” and oh Jesus, he was the biggest idiot in the history of ever.

She kicked him out of her house, and he was left cranky, turned-on, and frustrated. Because he knew how this would go. He would figure out what was wrong, avert the crisis, and Allison would feel embarrassed enough that she probably wouldn’t look him in the eye for the next year, putting their semi-borderline relationship back to where it started: polite flirtation that went nowhere except to Nathan.
So Jack, in his irritated state, kind of... burned down a field. Which actually helped. A little. Okay, a lot.

Thus, the pollen crises was averted (as predicted), Allison couldn’t look him in the eye (as predicted), Jack left her in the arms of her ex (as predicted) and went back to the station to fill out the necessary Induced Misconduct forms alone (as fucking predicted). Because what else do you do in this town when your chemically imbalanced boss gives you a hard on? He was on his second attempt, after his pen ripped right through the paper on the first one, when he heard the door open.

“I swear to God, someone had better be dead or – oh hi, Stark.” Jack changed tactics when he saw Nathan looming in his doorway looking a bit twitchy. Shit, if Nathan was pissed off about Allison, and still under the effects of the pollen... Where did Jo keep the taser?

“Sheriff.” Nathan said by way of acknowledgement, “Allison told me what happened today.” His hands clenched into fists briefly before relaxing.

Jack took this all in with a glance, “You realize that if you punch me I get to arrest you even if you’re still drugged, right?”

“What?” Nathan’s eyes widened before resuming his normally irritated look. “No! I came thank you, you moron!”

“Oh,” Jack crossed his arms and leaned against his desk. He was going to enjoy this. “Really? Are you feeling okay? I mean, aside from your usual pompous superiority complex?”

Nathan sighed and rubbed his forehead, “Sheriff…”

“Name’s Jack. I insist that all people who kiss my ass use my first name.”

“Jack,” Nathan said through his teeth. “Thank you for not taking advantage of, or bringing legal action upon, my wife.”


Nathan’s lips twitched, “It was.”

“And she’s your ex-wife now, right?” Nathan just glared at him.

So things went back to normal, or as normal as it could in Eureka, and Jack kind of understood what Henry tried to say. Because taking things personally felt a hell of a lot worse.

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Now Jack was about to die. His psychotic house was going to kill him. And worst of all, this was happening while he was locked in a soundproof box with Stark. What was supposed to be a fun not-really-sick-but-avoiding-responsibility-and-general-weirdness-of-Eureka day, with beer and football, had transformed into a deadly going-to-freeze-to-death day, with Stark.

When the temperature first started to drop, Nathan and Jack had huddled in their respective corners. As time went on, and temperatures continued to drop, they started to edge slowly toward each other until they were pressed side to side against the far wall.

Doing his best to ignore the sight of his breath, Jack glanced through the glass to see how the others
were doing. Beverly was removing her dress while Fargo was pretending not to look; Allison and Henry, who had attempted to hit S.A.R.A.H. with a power surge and got them into this mess with B.R.A.D., seemed to be in the middle of an impassioned conversation.

“This is all your fault, you know.” Nathan managed to get out between shivers.

Jack turned so he could glare, “How is this my fault? Fargo’s the one that built S.A.R.A.H over some insane computer!”

“If you had just –” Nathan started.

“Oh no! You don’t get to blame this on me, Stark. This one’s all on your mad scientists.” Jack almost poked Nathan in the chest for emphasis, but he restrained himself. And he was shivering too hard.

“If you hadn’t moped -”

“If you had, oh I don’t know, done your job -”

“Says the man ditching work!”

“Work? What work? You won’t even let me arrest criminals!”

“Dr. Skillman didn’t…” Nathan trailed off and stared thoughtfully into across the room, surprising Jack into silence as well. He followed Nathan’s gaze and saw Fargo waving frantically at them through the glass. When he had their attention, Fargo pointed to Henry and Allison, who were exchanging a sincere hug. He then very deliberately put his arms around Beverly, and gestured at them to do the same.

Jack stared at Fargo blankly. The man had obviously cracked under pressure.

“Of course!” Nathan gasped and practically lunged sideways toward Jack, who, after years of honing his reflexes in these situations, acted instinctively.

“Yeah, no.” Jack said smacking Nathan’s arms away. When Nathan tried again, Jack’s brain finally caught up with his mouth.

“What do you think you’re doing?”

Nathan sighed, and made a big deal about speaking slowly and clearly, “We have to show the computer that we’ve given into its demands of reconciliation. B.R.A.D. was programmed to accept nothing but total surrender or utter annihilation of the enemy.”

“So, it’s hug or die.” Jack understood what Nathan was saying, but he couldn’t resist dumbing down his explanation just to piss him off.

“I suppose you could put it that way.” Nathan said, doing his stoic equivalent to an eye roll. He stepped into Jack’s space and put his arms around him.

Nathan’s arms looped around Jack’s shoulders and waist, pulling Jack into Nathan’s chest. Jack’s face was pressed into Nathan’s neck, which meant that Nathan had to stoop slightly, resting his chin on Jack’s shoulder. Against his chest, Jack felt Nathan’s heart beating steadily.

After standing in the freezing room, the additional body heat felt wonderful, but it also made Jack uncomfortably aware of how long it had been since he’d been this close to another warm body without having to fill out a form afterwards.
“Carter?” Nathan’s breath ghosted across his ear. Jack tried to convince himself that he was still shivering because of the cold.

“Yeah?”

“You have to hug me back or this won’t work.” Even though Jack couldn’t see Nathan’s face, he could hear the smile in his voice.

“Oh. Right.” Jack placed his arms lightly around the middle of Nathan’s back, making sure to add a few manly pats in the process.

A few awkward moments passed where Jack was becoming painfully more aware of the body against his own, and, not that Jack had noticed or anything, but Nathan had a nice body. It was too cold for the usual reaction, but his body was reacting nonetheless.

“This is weird.” Jack said into Nathan’s neck, trying to break the silence.

“It should have worked by now.” Nathan said, ignoring Jack completely, “What aren’t you doing right?”

“Me?! Why is it always -” Before Jack could continue, Nathan pressed his hands firmly on his shoulder and the small of Jack’s back, pulling Jack flush against his body.

A quiet gasp escaped Jack’s mouth, and he clenched his jaw down before the sound could grow and cause any more damage. Jack’s groin pressed firmly against a warm thigh while Nathan’s was snugged against Jack’s hip; Jack felt his dick starting to take interest despite the cold. Great, he thought morosely, not only is my boss’s ex-husband borderline molesting me, but I’m enjoying it.

“I better not have to fill out a form for this,” Jack muttered.

Nathan surprised him by chuckling, “Not if you buy me dinner first.”

A moment later, the glass barriers retreated back into the walls, promoting a shout of triumph from the others. Jack released Nathan quickly, and jumped back to a safe distance. Nathan paused, and, in a moment so quick Jack thought he imagined it, gave him the same intense look Jack had seen directed at lab reports before rushing to ensure Allison’s safety.

All was well for about the 3.74 nanoseconds before Beverly got stupid and B.R.A.D. got nasty. Between the following high adrenaline parental panic and smashing a nuclear generator with a baseball bat, Jack practically forgot all about Nathan and the less than professional touching. It wasn’t until Jack managed to talk his lunatic house down, and S.A.R.A.H. (Now with abandonment issues!) went out of lockdown, that he and Nathan spoke again.

Beverly and Fargo practically ran out of the bunker. Henry’s exit was a little more composed. Allison couldn’t leave without congratulating Jack of a job well done and instructing him which forms to fill out.

“When you come back to work. Tomorrow.” Allison stressed.

“I think I’ve had enough sick days for the rest of my life.”

Allison smiled and touched his arm lightly. Jack gave her a tiny grin but was too exhausted to participate in their usual flirtatious teasing. Allison’s smile dimmed slightly, but she gave Jack a friendly nod before turning to leave. Nathan was waiting for her at the door, watching the conversation closely. Once Allison passed through the doorway, Nathan swept his gaze briefly up
and down Jack before raising an eyebrow.

“Sheriff.” He said and followed Allison out.

“Okay, what was that?” Zoë put her hands on her hips. Jack decided to go for innocent and hope it worked better on her than on her mother.

“What was what?”

“That look Stark just gave you.” The duh was implied.

“What ‘look’?”

“I believe Zoë is referring to the sexual charged visual exchange between Dr. Stark and yourself, Sheriff Carter.”


“He was totally eyeballing you.” Zoë said, “I know eyeballing when I see it.”

“Oh yeah?” Jack turned his glare from the ceiling to his daughter, “How, exactly, do you know what eyeballing looks like?”

Zoë froze like a blonde deer in headlights, and that was the end of the conversation, at least between him and his daughter. Jack went into work the next day with the grim determination to confront Nathan about what happened, and what was happening, between them.

But in the mist of Kim’s death, and Henry’s grief, power transfers, and expanding force fields, by the time Jack had a free moment, Nathan seemed to have forgotten the whole thing. In fact, he and Allison seemed growing closer by the day. Every time Jack saw Nathan outside of Global, he was with Allison, Kevin, Allison and Kevin, or talking about Kevin with Allison.

It made something inside his chest ache, but even Jack couldn’t begrudge Nathan choosing his family over a few seconds of what was probably endorphin-induced insanity. And whom was he kidding anyway? Him? With Nathan? They’d probably kill each other within a week. It was –

“Stupid.” Jack muttered pushing bits of his hamburger around. He stared at his lunch plate, determinedly not looking over at where Nathan and Allison were sitting at Café Diem with their heads close together.

In front of Jack was yet another NSP-3710/B to fill out concerning Taggart, Jo, and public exposure that he really didn’t want to think about. He really didn’t want to think about NSP-3710/B anymore either because that led to thoughts about what occurred with Nathan, which just led to a headache.

“Talking to yourself, Sheriff?” asked a familiar voice.

Jack looked up, startled. Callie from the dry cleaning store stood next his table, not Nathan. There was no way Callie even sounded like Nathan so it was stupid to feel disappointed.

“Oh, hey Callie.” Jack gave her his best ‘ya caught me’ laugh, and scratched the back of his head. Callie smiled back, shyly.

“Don’t worry, I do it all the time.” Callie waved her hand dismissively. Jack smiled politely, but Callie must have noticed the false tone because she looked at him a bit awkwardly. Then Jack noticed she was carrying coffee, and immediately felt like a jerk.
“I’m sorry, Callie, do you want to sit?” Jack gestured to the empty chair next to him.

Callie seemed pleased, but shook her head, “Thanks, but I have to get back to the store. Maybe next time?” The question was hopeful. She smiled at him again, and Jack was surprised by how nice it looked.

“Yeah, I’d like that.” Jack smile was sincere this time. Callie blushed.

“Good. I’ll, um, see you tomorrow then.” Jack stared uncomprehendingly. “When you pick up your clothes.” Callie prompted.

“Oh, right! Of course. I wouldn’t miss it. My clothes I mean.” Jack babbled like a moron.

Callie waved at Jack before leaving the Café. Jack waved back, and turned to the food on his plate with renewed gusto. He thought he felt someone staring at him a couple times, but it was late enough that the Café was empty except for himself, the creepy twins that where always here, and, of course, Nathan and Allison. He probably was imagining it.

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Basically, Jack coped with the whole “eyeballing” event by ignoring it until it went away. Now that he and Callie were kind of almost dating, it was easier to forget the whole thing entirely. Callie was nice. It was nice. Mostly.

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Nothing ridiculous about sexual harassment, my ass, Jack thought glaring at the semen sample cup, and then cringed at his choice of words.

“Step back, step back! Give the Sheriff some space! Don’t make me ask you again, Gretchen! I saw you staring at his penis!”

“Fargo.” Jack said, pinching the bridge of his nose. Breath in the warm light. Breath out the murderous impulses. He turned to one of the security guards forming a protective circle around him. “If I’m going to do this. I need you to be as far away from me as possible.”

Fargo didn’t even bother to lower the bullhorn, “What was that, Sheriff?”

Jack closed his eyes and repeated the breathing technique Beverly taught him to deal with stress. It never worked, but it kept him from shooting people (Fargo).

When he opened his eyes, the head guard looked sympathetic. The guard exchanged significant looks with three other guards, and together, faster than Jack imagined possible, they swarmed Fargo, sweeping him down the hallway and out of sight.

“Wait! I have to protect the Sheriff!” Fargo’s cries carried from around a corner. “He needs me! I have the bullhorn!”

The remaining two guards continued led a stunned Jack to the restroom. He should have expected this. Security guards in Eureka probably had several years of special ops training. Together, they walked until they arrived at the restroom shortly, and the guards took position outside the door.

Jack watched them and sighed, “Look, guys. I think I can handle it from here. Why don’t you go do...I don’t know, just leave.”
The two guards shared an uncertain look between each other.

“Please,” Jack said. “This day has already been incredible awkward, and I can’t even imagine how many NSP-3710/Bs I’m going to have to fill out by the end of it. Give me a break. I don’t really want to have to, you know, with you guys outside the door. I promise I’ll lock the door so no pheromone crazy girls can jump me.” Jack tapped the men’s room door for emphasis.

The two guards seemed to silently come to an agreement.

“All right,” the guard spoke for first time, surprising Jack. At this point, he thought it was against the security guard moral code. “Call us on your cell if you need anything.”

“Thank you. Really.” Jack watched the two move swiftly down the hall before ducking into the men’s room, and clicking the lock behind him.

Safe from observation, Jack leaned his forehead against the cool door and tried to force some tension out of his body. “God, whatever I did to piss you off, I think I’ve paid for it.”

“Talking to yourself again, Carter?”

Startled, Jack whirled around ready to ward off any inappropriate grapping. He relaxed when he saw Nathan leaning against a sink. Jack’s breath left his lungs in relieved whoosh. Then he remembered Nathan was the last person in the world he wanted to be alone with and tensed right back up.

Nathan watched this and smirked, “Little jumpy?”

“Stark,” Jack realized belatedly that he was still holding the sample cup in his hand. He tried to hide it behind his back. “Although I appreciate your support on the most uncomfortable day in my life, go away.”

Jack was expecting Nathan to exchange a couple verbal barbs before swaggering out of the room, leaving Jack humiliated and angry, as was Nathan’s customary routine. Instead, Nathan shrugged and walked over to the door. A bit shocked, but not about to question his good luck, Jack stepped to the side so he wouldn’t block Nathan’s path.

Nathan reached the door and tugged lightly on the handle.

“It’s locked,” Jack said.

“Good,” Nathan said before grabbing Jack’s shoulders and slamming him up against the bathroom wall. Jack instinctively tried shoving Nathan back, but Nathan quickly stepped into his space, pinning his body flush against Jack’s.

“Stark, what -” was all Jack got out before Nathan kissed him.

At first, Nathan’s lips pressed roughly against his own. Jack could feel Nathan’s teeth through their lips, and wasn’t that the perfect metaphor? Then Nathan tilted his head to the side and really kissed him. The brutal pressure of his lips turned soft, and Jack shocked himself by groaning deep in his throat. He couldn’t think, couldn’t move – things went blurry around the edges.

Nathan’s tongue was in his mouth, warm and wet, and his beard scratched at his cheeks. Jack felt about one second of panic at this sudden change in their relationship before his fingers were twisting into Nathan’s hair, holding on and kissing back. Nathan’s hands loosened their grip on Jack’s shoulders and slid firmly down his chest. When they reached Jack’s waist, his hands worked at Jack’s belt and untucked his uniform shirt from his pants.
The sensation of warm hands against his bare skin finally kick-started Jack’s brain.

“Oh shit,” Jack panted, pulling back. Nathan looked at him steadily. His pupils seemed to swallow all the color in his eyes, and Jack had to wonder if he ever understood this man, even once. “It’s my mojo. The gland thing. You’re being affecting by my glands.”

Nathan shook his head, “How am I attracted to someone this stupid?”

“Hey!” Jack protested. But Nathan’s hands were popping the button on his slacks and pressing hotly against the naked skin on his waist, making it difficult to form complete sentences.

“Your ‘gland thing,’ only affects females.” Nathan said, pausing to press his lips to the tendon in Jack’s neck and sucked hard. Jack moaned, and his hips trust involuntarily. “Why do you think every gay male in Eureka isn’t molesting you?”

“I hadn’t thought about it,” Jack voice came out higher than normal, watching as Nathan gently took the sample cup from Jack’s grip and twisted the top off.

“There’s a shocker,” Nathan said, but the bite in his words was lost in the sound of Jack’s zipper being pulled down. Jack only had time to think ‘Allison’s going to kill me’ before Nathan’s hand wrapped around his cock.

“Do you know what it’s like?” Nathan asked, tracing his fingers lightly over Jack’s rapidly hardening erection, “Watching all of them touch you?”

What the fuck? Jack face twisted in bafflement. He thought about pointing out that Nathan was the one who’d been ignoring him, but Nathan’s thumb rubbed across the head of his dick, and all thought flew from Jack’s head. His knees chose that moment to turn to rubber, and he had to grip Nathan’s shoulders to keep from sinking to the floor.

Nathan’s hand was so warm, and it kept moving on him, finding the places that made Jack close his eyes and whimper.

Jack forced himself to open his eyes. Nathan was watching his hand as he started stroking Jack faster. His face was so intently focused that Jack almost laughed, but then Nathan met his eyes and tightened his grip, Jack’s toes were curling in his shoes, and he was coming into the sample cub Nathan moved into place just in time.

After it was over, he practically collapsed against Nathan. His arms were still around the Nathan’s shoulders, and he had his face pressed into Nathan’s collarbone. Jack stayed there, between a cold wall and a warm body, counting the thuds of Nathan’s heart until he could breathe again.

When he finally pulled back, Nathan was watching Jack it what might be a soft way, except this was Nathan Stark who had two settings: hard and sarcastic.

Nathan held up the now-full sample cup (How the hell did he get the cap back on?), and smoothed his hair down where Jack had grabbed it.

“I’ll just give this to Allison, shall I?” Nathan’s face took on a more familiar smirk, and Jack could only watch as Nathan unlocked the bathroom door and walked out.

Emotions washed over Jack in waves, briefly settling in Confused and Pissed Off, until he realized that Nathan Stark, PhD., PhD., PhD., and probably PhD., was walking through the hallway carrying his semen.
He was still laughing when Fargo found him.

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Jack was almost halfway through the NSP-3710/B forms for all the interactions between his mojo glands and the female population of the town before Callie approached him again.

“Did you even like me?” Callie asked. Jack was thrown for a second before realizing that this was Eureka, and everyone here was too smart to buy the usual ‘I Need Time’ bullshit.

“No, Callie, I -” Jack looked down at his desk. “I think I always liked someone else. I was just never able to admit it. I’m not good with…that.”

Callie nodded, her eyes sad. I am such an asshole, Jack thought, and then decided he might as well say it out loud.

“I’m an asshole.”

“Yeah, you really are.” Callie agreed, but she was smiling as she said it so Jack thought they were okay.

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Jack watched Jo escort Henry out of the office in handcuffs. He waited until they were out of sight before turning to face Nathan and Allison.

In all honesty, he was ready to pitch a big fit with harsh worlds and shouting that would conclude with his resignation. Because he just arrested his best friend, damn it!

Then he saw Allison clutching Kevin to her chest, the poor kid was still naked except for a blanket, and, slightly in front, Nathan standing protectively between them and the rest of the world. The rage drained out of Jack, leaving him feeling sapped of all energy.

“I need to take a statement from at least one of you before you leave,” Jack said.

Nathan nodded, “I’ll do it.” He turned to Allison and spoke with her briefly. Allison nodded and released her death grip on Kevin long enough to give Nathan a brief hug.

“Thank you, Nathan. For everything.” Allison said. Jack noticed the dark rings under her eyes and speculated on how long this had been happening right under his nose. He should have put the pieces together, but he was too busy with his own problems to, oh yeah, do his job. The urge to hit a wall (or a person) returned.

“I’ll be in contact.” Jack said to Allison as she took Kevin by the hand and led him from her office. The door closed behind them, and he was alone with Nathan for the first time since their encounter in the restroom.

When Jack had finished his last NSP-3710/B, he’d gone home after saving the town from evil, gland producing, sex inducing spores (‘I leave you alone for one day!’” Zoë shouted at him that night after returning from a weekend with Abby) with the intention of going to Nathan’s office the next day. They needed to… share. Or something.

Instead, the town morphed into gold, one thing led to another, and here they were. With Nathan watching Allison and Kevin in a way that tore at him.
It was a little awkward. The best thing Jack could do was to pretend nothing happened. He could do that. He was good at that.

“Dr. Stark, if you could tell me what happened on the day of October 2nd between Dr. Deacon, Dr. Blake, Dr. Barlow, and yourself.” Jack pulled out his pocket notebook and pen.

Nathan’s eyebrows rose until they were practically in his hairline, “Jack -”

Screw pretending things were normal. Jack slammed his notebook down on Nathan’s desk. He sucked at that away.

“You should have told me.” Jack’s voice was rising, “How can I protect you people if you won’t tell me when you’re in trouble?”

“He’s Allie’s son! My son!” Nathan stood from his perch on Allison’s desk and glared down at Jack, “They would have locked him up! What would you have done if it was Abby and Zoë?”

“Leave them out of this!” Jack shouted. Nathan’s back straightened like it did when he was settling into a really long, really loud argument. He’d seen Nathan do this with the DoD, Henry, and now him. Jack stared at Nathan for a few long seconds before exhaling noisily and shoving his hands into his pockets. All the fight left him. Now all he felt was tired.

“I could have helped you.” Jack whispered, not quite looking Nathan in the eye.

Nathan seemed confused, and unsure. His jaw worked constantly before finally saying, “I didn’t want you to get – I didn’t want to involve you in this.”

Jack nodded. He understood what Nathan meant. He thought about how he felt the same way, and how he was nervous about this too. He could explain this to Nathan, and maybe they would understand each other for once.

He said, “You suck at this, you know.”

“You’re worse,” Nathan shot back.

Jack shrugged, “I doubt it.” Soon they were smirking at each other. Some things didn’t need saying.

“Wanna hug?” Jack joked, opening his arms wide.

Nathan’s smirk disappeared. He stared at Jack in a way that made him shiver and all the blood in his body run southward.

“Yeah, no.” Nathan said.

They made it to a horizontal surface this time. They were improving (one step at a time).

Works inspired by this: [NSP-3710/B [podfic] by litrapod (litra)]

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