Three Hundred Sixty Five Days

by HazelDomain

Summary

Angels aren't meant to live for centuries without their mates. It's torture. Cas Novak lost his hundreds of years ago, and the loss is a physical ache, driving him to desperation.

Sam Winchester has just left home for the first time- well, as much as a series of motel rooms and hunts could be considered "home." He's trying to hitch a ride to Stanford when he's picked up by a very strange man.

**Abandoned and discontinued**

Notes

Tags added for future content. This is gonna be long.
Day 1

It was April, in Oregon, and it was raining. It wasn’t raining hard, not yet, but the sky looked like it was keeping its options open. In short; not good hitchhiking weather, but Sam Winchester was hitchhiking anyway.

Or trying to, at least.

His last ride had picked him up in Salem and carried down I-5 for more than an hour, so as close as he could figure, he was somewhere near Eugene. Or in other words; still hell and gone from Stanford.

A car flicked its lights at him as it skimmed past, narrowly avoiding splashing him in it’s way up the on-ramp. He wasn’t sure what the light flick was meant to convey. ‘Get out of the rain?’ Yeah, he’d figured that one out for himself already, thanks.

He could camp out at a diner somewhere if he needed to- there were almost six hundred bucks in his pocket, along with two fake IDs and credit cards in a variety of names, none of which were his. He was hoping not to have to buy a bus ticket- six hundred bucks seemed like enough until it was all you had in the world- and it wasn’t likely to stop raining any day soon, so he hunkered down and watched for headlights.

Two more cars passed over the course of the next forty minutes. It was not a well-populated exit, and it was getting dark, fast. Sam wasn’t excited about the idea of hitching in the dark- sleepy drivers tended not to stick to their side of the white line.

Headlights turned up the on ramp, and Sam reluctantly pulled his hand out of the half-dry warmth of his pocket, extending his thumb with a hope he didn’t feel.

The car accelerated toward him and he saw it wasn’t a car at all, but a box truck, white and unmarked. Probably a commercial vehicle, which meant he didn’t stand a chance of catching a ride.

The truck blew past him and he dropped his hand back into his pocket.

The road beneath him glowed a sudden red as the truck’s driver applied the brakes. Sam hesitated, making sure the truck was truly stopping, and the white reverse lights flashed for a moment, indicating that the driver had put the truck in park.

Sam shouldered his damp knapsack and ran for the cab.

The window rolled down as he approached.

“Where you headed?” the driver called, and Sam couldn’t keep the pride out of his voice as he responded “Stanford.”

The driver whistled.

“I’m not going that far, but I can take you probably thirty miles.”

“That’s perfect,” Sam said. He climbed up into the cab, slamming the door and fumbling to find his seat belt before the cab light shut off. His long hair stuck to his face, and he pushed it out of his face for the hundredth time. It fell right back where it had been. The driver accelerated smoothly onto the highway, kicking his wipers into a higher gear as the rain began to fall harder.
“Looks like you came just in time,” Sam said, peering out the windshield into the gloom.

“Your very own guardian angel,” the driver agreed. Sam glanced over at the guy, but he couldn’t see much in the gathering darkness. Solid build, dark hair, late twenties, by the sound of his voice.

“Name’s Sam, by the way,” Sam said, extending his hand. The driver looked over and shook it once, quickly returning his hands to the wheel.

“Cas,” he answered. “Cas Novak.”

“Nice to meet you, Cas,” Sam said with a nod. “So, headed home, or away?”

“Home,” Cas said, and Sam heard the smile in his voice. “I’ve got a place out in the woods where I do most of my work. I’m an artist.”

“Yeah? Like a painter?”

“Sculptures, mostly,” Cas answered, jerking his thumb toward the back of the cab. “Thus the truck. I was making a delivery to a buyer up in Fremont.”

Sam glanced back.

“That’s a big sculpture,” he remarked, and Cas laughed.

“Well, go big or go home, right?”

Sam had nothing to say to that. Cas cleared his throat.

“What about you? Home or away?”

“Definitely away,” Sam answered, looking out the window. The rain was falling even harder now. He followed the line of the guardrail with his finger, tracing an imaginary line. “Got a full ride to Stanford. Pre-law. Classes start in five days.”

“Hey, good for you, kid. Your family must be thrilled.”

Sam snorted.

“Nah. My dad’s pissed at me for not going into the family business, and my brother’s pissed at me for upsetting my dad.” He shrugged. “They’re a better team without me anyway. They’ve been working together since I was little.”

“They’ll probably get over it. Give them a call in about six months. They’ll have cooled off, they’ll be glad to hear from you.” Cas hesitated. “In my experience, it’s the silence that does it in for most people. Nobody knows how to break it, so they just… don’t. They let it stretch out. Until it’s too late.”

“Yeah, that sounds like my dad.”

“Well, don’t listen to me, anyway. I’m just a crazy hermit you met on the highway.”

Sam laughed, and the tense atmosphere evaporated somewhat.

“Yeah, well, that was just my subtle way of letting you know that if you murder me, no one will ever know what happened.”
Cas chuckled.

“Me? You’re the obvious serial killer. Tall guy, eight layers of plaid flannel, hitchhiking on dark rainy roadides? Yeah, I’m not surprised you couldn’t catch a ride. Tell me honestly you don’t have a machete in that knapsack.”

“Nope. Left it with my brother,” Sam answered, and they both laughed.

The road was dark, utterly deserted, the truck’s headlights illuminating a dim triangle of pavement and grass.

“I’ll tell you, I’m a little worried about this rain,” Cas said after they’d driven in silence for a while. “There’s nothing at my exit except a little mom-n-pop gas station and they closed an hour ago. The pumps’ll be dry, but I very much doubt you’ll be catching another ride until morning.”

“You never know,” Sam answered noncommittally. “If it comes down to it, I can always just walk.”

“Along the highway? You’ll get arrested.”

“Not unless someone drives by and reports me. In any case; so what? I get picked up, the cops take me somewhere warm and dry and let me sleep it off.”

Cas glanced over, for all the good it did him, in the dark.

“I get the impression that you have lived an interesting life, Sam.”

“Yeah. You could say that.”

Sam smiled a little to himself, staring out the window at the rain. He’d been bouncing from motel to motel for his whole life, learning to fight ghosts and werewolves and vampires. He’d been arrested six times and given them all different names, though not in the year since he’d turned eighteen. At least one of his IDs still labeled him a minor, which would get a raised eyebrow at his size, but it wouldn’t be too closely examined. Not a lot of kids wanted to be younger.

The exit appeared all too quickly and Cas flicked on his blinker, signaling his intent to the empty road.

The gas station was, in fact, closed. Just as Cas had predicted. He pulled the truck under the awning, giving them a brief respite from the rain. Sam worked to disentangle his bag from his legs, pretending he didn’t see Cas pulling out his wallet and removing a couple crisp bills. He was about to offer either charity or a business proposition; either way, Sam was going to turn him down.

“Good luck,” Cas said simply, and Sam opened the door, and the cabin light turned on, and Sam got his first good look at Cas.

His hair was dark, spiked from the rain, and his eyes were wide and blue, He had high cheekbones and a strong jaw and as the light flooded across his face his eyes widened and his jaw dropped and for a second, he looked like he’d seen a ghost.

“Sam,” he said quietly.

“You okay?”

Cas shook his head, clearing out cobwebs.
“Yeah, sorry, the light startled me.” His outstretched hand tightened around the folded bills. “Look, it’s really late- my place is only about twenty minutes from here. I’ve got a spare room and chili in the crock pot. Why don’t you come crash at my place and I can bring you back here in the morning? Comfier than a jail cell, guaranteed.”

Sam glanced from Cas’s face to the folded twenties, and back. “No, thank you,” he said clearly, and moved to get out of the car. “Wait-” Cas stammered out. “Take the money anyway. It wasn’t- I didn’t mean to imply-” “I don’t need it,” Sam interrupted, sliding out of the cab and turning to shut the door. “Can you help me with something, then?”

Sam narrowed his eyes, looking at Cas carefully. Cas waved his hand. “Forget the money. It’s just a stupid thing. But the door, on the back of the truck, it’s been rattling and I think it’s loose on the track. There’s a bunch of switchbacks on the road to my place, and I don’t want it flying open.” Cas opened his own door, pulling a flashlight from the footwell. “You’re tall. Can you just check the pulley and make sure it’s not damaged? Please. It’ll just take a minute.”

“Christo,” Sam murmured under his breath. Cas tipped his head to one side. “What?” “Nothing. Sure, yeah, I’ll check it.” “Thanks,” Cas said, exhaling in relief. They crossed to the back of the truck and Cas keyed open the padlock, throwing the door open. He climbed easily into the truck bed, then extended a hand to help Sam up. Sam ignored it, clambering into the truck on his own. Cas clicked the light on, pointing it up into the section of track closest to the door. “That one first. It looks like it might be bent to me.”

Sam got right up against the wall, standing on his toes to get a closer look at the track. It looked fine.

The flashlight beam bobbed as Cas surged forward, but Sam was expecting it. He turned to meet the older man head-on, raising his hands to protect his face, but Cas was faster than he looked and he hit Sam’s defense hard, driving him back into the wall. Sam braced against it, using it as an anchor to shove back against Cas’s attack. “Don’t fight me, Sam, you don’t understand. I have to do this.” “Great, you’re a psycho and a perv.” Sam grunted, keeping his arms down to cover his torso. Cas backed away, just out of arm’s length, studying Sam closely in the rolling light of the flashlight beam. “I’m not, please, you have to believe me.”

Sam was only a few feet from the gaping truck door. He lunched for it, but Cas was faster, hitting him on the side and taking him down against the hard metal floor of the truck. Sam pivoted, trying to keep Cas from landing on top of him, but Cas anticipated and ended up on top anyway. He
straddled Sam’s chest, making it hard to breathe and then- *with one hand-* he pinned both Sam’s hands above his head. Sam twisted against him but his grip was like stone.

“I’m *so* sorry it had to be this way,” Cas said, and it sounded as though there was actual sadness in his voice. The fingers of his spare hand tangled in Sam’s hair, and with a swift jerk, he slammed the back of the teen’s head against the floor of the truck.

Sam wasn’t sure how long he was out. When he woke up it was dark, pitch dark, and the truck was moving. His head was pounding, and he tasted blood.

So, that wasn’t ideal.

He was lying on his side, one arm twisted awkwardly beneath him, and when he tried to move it, he found that his wrists were bound behind his back. They were twisted palms-out, the rope looping a couple times up his forearms, and that didn’t bode well, because it meant he wouldn’t be able to slip them easily. He shifted and found that his legs were bound as well, above the knee as well as at the ankle. There was at least one rope tethering his wrists to his ankles, and he pulled his legs up higher, feeling around the bindings with his hands, looking for a knot. Nothing. The knot was either in the front of his ankles, or up by his knees. He tried to draw his knees up to his mouth, to work at the rope with his teeth, but the tether between his wrists and ankles was too short.

The truck shifted, going around a sharp corner, and he remembered Cas saying that there were switchbacks between the highway and his house.

Sam used the altered center of gravity to roll in the direction of the door. Probably, Cas hadn’t been stupid enough to throw his knapsack into the truck after him, but maybe today was Sam’s lucky day.

He felt around slowly, trying not to lose too much energy in the search. He’d need it when Cas opened the door again.

The knapsack wasn’t in the back with him. Cas had either taken it up front, or just left it in the gas station parking lot. Sam hoped it was the latter- the identification in it wasn’t his real name, but it was a known alias. It might be enough to set Dad or Dean on his track- *if* the station owners turned it into the cops and *if* Dean filed a missing person’s report and *if* the gas station had cameras and *if* the cameras had been good enough to get the truck’s plates-

That line of reasoning was getting a little worrisome so Sam abandoned it, choosing to focus on his current situation.

His arm was going numb, so the next time the truck doubled back he rolled over again, taking the pressure off. Almost immediately, his other arm began to ache.

The switchbacks. How many had their been? Four? Five?

It might be useful information to know.

Sam began to count them, and after eleven, the truck stopped turning, and instead began travelling up what felt like a very long hill. It got bumpy toward the end, and the truck slowed, making it easier for Sam not to bang his head against the jostling truck floor.

They’d been driving at least ten minutes since the last switchback- Sam had been trying to count but his internal metronome wasn’t quite right, so he didn’t know exactly how far they’d travelled.
Not to mention, he had no idea how long he’d been out. So when the truck rolled to a stop and the engine cut out, Sam really had no useful information to work with.

He heard footsteps crunching on what sounded like gravel, and then a clattering of metal as the padlock was removed from the back of the truck.

The heavy metal door rumbled upwards, and light flooded into his eyes. There were bright lights mounted behind Cas, turning him into little more than a silhouette and blinding Sam when he tried to look outside.

At least he knew for certain that his knapsack wasn’t here.

“Hello, Sam. Have you had time to test the ropes?”

“Fuck you,” Sam spat, twisting to get a better look at his captor.

“I’m going to carry you inside,” Cas continued. “You can struggle if you’d like, but you already know that the ropes can’t be broken. At best, you’ll earn yourself a fall to the ground where you’ll be still bound, but possibly injured. So I would suggest that you don’t.”

He reached into the truck and grabbed Sam by the calf, dragging him across the smooth metal. Sam bucked against his grasp, but Cas held tight.

He hefted Sam easily over his shoulder, his arm around the back of the teen’s thighs, Sam’s upper body hanging down his back. Sam bucked again, but Cas held him easily still. Too easily. He walked across the side lit gravel as though the 220 lb body over his shoulder were no heavier than a jug of milk.

“What are you?” Sam demanded, and that made Cas’s steps falter, but he didn’t answer. Sam twisted, trying to look around, but the positioning made it hard to get a view of anything except Cas’s back.

The man climbed up a short set of stairs, rough wood, onto a porch maybe? And then they went through a doorway into a darkened building. Sam’s eyes adjusted slowly, further limiting his vision, but Cas strode easily through the room without hesitation. Either he could see in the dark, or this was very familiar territory. Maybe both.

They passed through another doorway and then Cas was depositing him unceremoniously onto what felt like a quilted bedspread over a surprisingly soft mattress.

“What, you didn’t have a creepy basement dungeon handy?”

“No. I had not planned on this at all,” Cas said evenly, and Sam blinked as a set of fluorescent bulbs flared to life.

The room, or what Sam could see of it, was almost frighteningly normal looking. Laminate wood flooring. Little ikea bookshelf with a collection of beat up paperbacks. Bedside table. Walls painted a modern warm green. White trim.

No weapons or torture devices or ominous dark stains on the floor. The braided rug in the center of the room looked almost depressingly hand made. Sam eyed it with suspicion.

“I suppose you’re going to tell me we’re in the middle of the forest and there’s no point screaming because no one can hear me?”
“Hmm,” Cas agreed. He was looking carefully around the room, scrutinizing it’s contents. “I own the land surrounding my home for several miles in either direction. I do occasionally receive visitors, but not frequently and certainly not at this time of night.”

He crossed the room and removed a framed photograph from the wall. Sam couldn’t see what the photograph was of, and Cas carried it out of the room before he could look closer.

His pinned shoulder was starting to ache. He thought maybe if he could get his legs under him, he might be able to get into a kneeling position. Getting off the bed would be tricky, but maybe there was a part of the bedframe he could work the ropes against?

Cas came back and shut the door behind him, blocking any view Sam might have had of the room outside. He crossed the room, heading toward Sam, and Sam braced himself for whatever was coming, but Cas just passed him and opened a second door that Sam hadn’t been able to see from his original vantage point.

“Tonight is likely going to be uncomfortable for you. I apologize. Tomorrow I will work on making the room more… hospitable. In the meantime, I’m going to need to keep you bound.” His eyes were soft, and he actually smiled down at Sam’s scowling face. “Just for now. Until I can trust you.”

Sam gave him a sarcastic grin.

“Yeah, we’re gonna be friends, I can tell already.”

Sadness touched Cas’s smile.

“That’s just it, Sam- we’ve already been friends. So much more than friends. You’ll understand soon, I promise.”

Sam scowled, and looked away. He was ready to be done with this conversation. He was a couple feet off the floor- rolling off the bed was going to be noisy and potentially dangerous. It would be easier if his arms weren’t bound so tightly to his ankles, but it was what it was. No point wishing it were different.

It came as somewhat of a surprise when Cas came closer, laying a hand on his upper shoulder and rolling him firmly onto his belly.

“What are you doing? Get off!”

“I can’t let you go to sleep like this. Your arm isn’t getting adequate bloodflow. Left alone, you could end up with nerve damage.”

Cas’s fingers brushed across his tingling palm.

“Can you feel that?”

“Don’t touch me,” Sam snapped.

Cas released the rope and Sam fell flat, his ankles still bound to one another, but no longer to his arms. His thighs and belly immediately began to tingle in the absence of the straining pressure they’d been held under.

“Before I go further, do you need to use the toilet?”
“No!”

“This will be your last opportunity until morning. Are you certain?”

Sam started at him wide-eyed, taking this information in.

“If I do, will you untie me and give me some privacy?”

Cas shook his head.

“The bathroom window is more than large enough to escape through. Even for you. I can’t allow it, I’m sorry.”

Sam sorted through his options, not finding one he liked.

“Is this a power trip thing? Like if I yell for you in the middle of the night are you gonna let me piss myself to prove who’s boss?”

Cas wrinkled his nose.

“That’s disgusting.”

“Then I’ll let you know when I need to go. We’ll address it then.”

“If you insist.”

“I insist.”

Sam became very aware of the weight of Cas’s hand on the small of his back. He rolled onto his side, trying to force his body into a sitting position, but his head pounded and a wave of nausea went rolling over him. Cas caught his shoulder and pulled him up until they were sitting shoulder-to-shoulder, their legs hanging off the edge of the bed, Sam’s hands still bound behind him.

“Would you like me to heal you?” Cas asked, and Sam frowned.

“What are you?”

“Same as you. Please, it looks like it’s hurting you a good deal.”

“What do you want back?” Sam asked. He’d never met a member of the supernatural who didn’t ask some payment for their magic, but Cas just shook his head.

“Nothing. It is worth it to me to relieve your pain.”

“Swear?”

Cas smiled, canting his head slightly to the side.

“I swear.”

Sam swallowed, hoping he wasn’t falling into some trap.

“Fine.”

Cas’s fingertips rested on his jaw, turning his head, and before he realized the man’s intention, Cas was pressing his lips gently against Sam’s mouth.
His first impression was that Cas’s skin was cold, cold enough to freeze his whole body, like he’d plunged beneath the icy surface of a frozen lake and he couldn’t find the surface- but then it was gone, along with the pounding headache and the dizziness and the only thing left was Cas’s skin, warm and soft against his lips.

Sam jerked back.

“*The fuck was that?*”

“I healed you,” Cas replied simply, as though it were the most natural thing in the world. “I’m going to untie your hands now, after which you will lie on your back and I will secure your wrists to the bed frame.”

His left hand remained on Sam’s jaw, but his right tightened around the teen’s bicep.

“Please know that I can break your arm if I need to. I will repair it afterward, but it will not be pleasant for either of us. Do you understand?”

Sam swallowed hard, his face suddenly pale. He didn’t know what he was dealing with, but he didn’t doubt in the least that Cas was telling the truth. He glanced down, to where Cas’s hand rested on his arm. He’d broken that bone once before, when he was a kid. He wasn’t interested in having it happen again.

“Yeah. I got it.”

He held very still as Cas guided him down onto his stomach again, ignoring the instincts that told him to *fight* and *run*.

The bonds around his wrists loosened and Cas backed off, giving him a little room. Just enough rope to hang himself with.

“Can I take my shoes off?” Sam asked, and Cas hesitated a second before nodding. Sam bent awkwardly, fumbling with his laces, very carefully keeping clear of the ropes binding his ankles. He loosened one, then the other, kicking them off and letting them land on the floor beside the bed. Cas watched him carefully as he did all this, nodding in approval when he straightened up without attempting to interfere with his bonds.

“Would you prefer to sleep on your front, or your back?”

“Back.”

“Alright. Lie down.”

Sam did, being very careful not to touch Cas with his bound legs as he pulled them up onto the bed. He got as close to the headboard as possible, laying his head on the pillow. He raised his hands above his head, crossing his wrists deceptively- the way the bones crossed, a secure tie could be easily slipped by relaxing both hands.

Cas smiled down at him, condescending, like Sam was a child he was deciding not to humor.

“I don’t think so, Sam.”

Cas’s hand closed around his wrists and a moment later the older man was straddling him, pinning him at the waist, holding him still between strong thighs.
He measured the rope out between his hands, holding a segment of it between his teeth, and then he made a loop which he slid over Sam’s wrist. It tightened instantly, and Cas released Sam’s left hand in favor of fastening his right to the headboard.

Sam took the opportunity, turning his free hand to reveal the silver blade he’d removed from the sole of his shoe.

Cas was already off balance, leaning toward the corner of the bed, and Sam hit him hard, burying the small blade into the side of his throat and then, a second later, between two of his ribs. He twisted the blade, driving it against the bones, feeling blood gush over his hands. Cas made a peculiar groaning sound which Sam assumed had something to do with one of his lungs no longer being airtight.

Cas’s grip on Sam’s hand loosened and Sam pulled free, ripping the loosened rope off his wrist and shoving at the other man with all his strength.

Cas went sideways, one palm pressed against his bloody throat, and Sam didn’t spare him a glance, just attacked the ropes binding his legs. He could feel the point of the blade pressing against his thigh but he didn’t have time to slow down.

The bindings around his knees snapped loose and he pulled his feet closer, spreading his knees to draw the rope as tight as possible. The knife slid easily through them and then he was free.

He grabbed his boots with bloody fingers, not bothering to put them on before he ran. Cas was struggling to his knees, coughing, and Sam wasn’t naïve enough to think that he was dying, silver blade or no.

He hefted his boot in one hand, feeling the heavy weight of the sole, and when Cas looked up at him he brought it down on the other man’s temple.

Cas went back down, crumpling into a boneless heap, and Sam ran.

The house was deceptively normal looking, mail scattered on the living room table, coat discarded over the back of a chair, a collection of DVDs on a stand near the television. Sam cast around quickly, looking for car keys, a cell phone, anything. Nothing obvious presented itself so he headed for the front door, pulling his boots on as he went.

The truck they’d arrived on was parked outside, the back still hanging open, and Sam went there first. It was unlocked, and he slid into the front seat, punching the cabin light control and searching the meager space for anything he could use to crack the dash panel open. He flipped both visors, pawed through the center console, even checked under the seats, but there was nothing. Just some maps and a pair of sunglasses. The tiny blade he had wouldn’t do anything against the thick nylon of the paneling, even if he had the time to try to pry it open.

There was a crash inside the house and he ignored it; there wasn’t any useful information that could be gleaned by turning to check on what Cas was doing.

Sam swore and pushed the door back open, taking a moment to kneel and drive the pocketknife into the side of one tire. The air began hissing slowly around the puncture, and he worked the knife back and forth, trying to get it out of the sidewall.

The screen door slammed, and this time Sam did glance back, because if Cas was coming out with a hunting rifle, that was information he needed.

Cas had no weapon. He looked like something out of a bad horror movie, blood splattered all down
one side, black in the half darkness.

He called Sam’s name and Sam abandoned the knife, turning his back and bolting into the woods.

It was still raining lightly, and that would cover his tracks. This would work for him and against him; Cas knew where they were, likely knew the basics of the layout, knew the general direction of civilization. Sam didn’t, and what’s more, if he lost track of his location, he could end up circling around in the woods until he died of starvation or exposure.

Sam set off at a course parallel to the gravel driveway, twenty or thirty feet off the path, and almost immediately he lost track of where he was in comparison. It all looked like trees. Fortunately, Cas couldn’t see any better than he could, and didn’t know where he’d gone-following the road was the obvious choice, but Cas didn’t know which side he was on, or how close he was following. Maybe if he had a car with headlights, he could do it, but Sam had taken care of that.

“Sam!”

Sam rolled his eyes and continued deeper into the trees, letting the gentle patter of rain cover the sounds of his footsteps.

Chilled water was soaking through his clothes. It didn’t bode well for a long-term escape attempt. He hoped they weren’t too far from a road- he didn’t know how long he’d been out, but the color of the sky indicated that they were on the tomorrow side of midnight, so he had two hours- maybe three- before the morning rush. He had maybe six before the cold started giving him real problems.

He couldn’t hear Cas, not any more, but he knew the man was behind him somewhere and so he kept moving, keeping the vague line of the driveway somewhere off to the side of him.

Light flooded through the trees, harsh and directional, and Sam couldn’t help it- he turned to look, his eyes stinging at the sudden flash.

The light- whatever it was- was coming from the forest, not the house. Sam held his breath, listening- just his luck that Cas would have an ATV with hunting lights- but no, the woods were silent. Even the insect noise had died down when the lights turned on.

“Sam!” Cas shouted again, this time like he was worried, and Sam turned away from the light, trying to move faster now that he could clearly see where he was going.

He broke out of the woods onto the gravel way, not bothering to try to hide anymore, not with that much light streaming through the trees.

Something hit him from behind and he went down, hard, his assailant coming down on top of him. His knee jarred against a stone, turning awkwardly, and he flailed at the person behind him, trying to get their weight off his body.

“Sam. Sam, stop, stop it, stop-”

“Get off me!” he screamed, turning onto his side and beating at Cas with his fists.

The light was Cas. Or, Cas was the light. Or had been. His skin held a dusky gold glow, rapidly fading, and Sam felt a thrill of fear because he didn’t know of anything that *glowed.*

Cas’s hands were on him, pushing him down, trying to hold him still, and he could feel a rough
line of rope dangling from Cas’s hands.

“I don’t want to hurt you, Sam,” Cas was saying, and Sam responded with a punch to the ribs, on the bloody side, just below the place he’d put the knife. Cas barely reacted at all—either he was immune to pain or else he actually had healed that fast. Sam hit him again, harder, just to check, but there was no reaction at all.

Cas anticipated the hit and used it as an opportunity to get the rope around Sam’s hand. It tightened painfully around his wrist and Cas pinned it to the ground. There was too much weight on it—Sam winced as the bones ground together.

He shoved his weight against his good leg, forcing his body upwards, trying to squirm out from underneath Cas, but it was no good. He couldn’t get the leverage, not with one arm pinned. He ended up on his back, Cas straddling his hips, and the other man looked almost pained as he tried to wrestle Sam’s other arm into submission.

Sam brought his good knee up, driving it hard into Cas’s back.

Cas let go of his arm, but Sam had only a moment to celebrate before he felt Cas’s hands closing around his throat.

“I’m sorry.”

Cas’s voice was thick, and he kept repeating himself.

“I have to, Sam. I have to. I’m sorry, I’m so sorry, but I have to, I have to…”

Black clouds were rolling across Sam’s vision. He couldn’t breathe. He didn’t bother pulling at Cas’s hands— he aimed for the face, the eyes, but nothing he did had any effect. His hands were slow to respond, there was nothing to see but blackness.

And then, just before everything faded out—

“I’m sorry, Samael…”
Sam opened his eyes to light, too much light, spiking down through his eye sockets into his brain. Somewhere out in the world, someone was banging pots and pans together loud enough to make his teeth ache.

“Dean?”

The banging stopped. Sam heard a rustling, someone moving around the room, and he relaxed. Dean was up.

He looked up to see if his brother was equally hung over, but it wasn’t Dean.

Everything came rushing back and Sam let out a whine of disappointment, falling back onto the bed. He tugged at his wrists- sure enough, he was strapped down, his hands near his waist.

“Please don’t be like that,” Cas said softly, sitting on the edge of the bed.

“Fuck off,” Sam groaned.

“Who’s Dean?”

“My brother.” Sam opened his eyes again and stared at Cas. “My older brother. Besides my dad, I’m all he’s got. He’s expecting me to call today, to let him know I made it to Stanford. He’s going to freak out when he realizes I’m gone.”

Cas sighed, but wouldn’t meet his eyes. Sam was undeterred.

“Please. Please, Cas. Please, let me call him. He’ll come get me, nobody ever needs to know this happened. I don’t even care what kind of creature you are- we’ve met lots of them and never told.”

Because we killed most of them, he didn’t add, but Cas stayed silent.

“I can’t let you call him yet,” he said regretfully.

“Yet?”

Now Cas did look at him, his blue eyes wide and earnest.

“I need time. A month. After a month it will be safe to let you call.”

“A month? Cas, I can’t stay for a month.” Sam’s mind was racing- the stupidest, most illogical things filling his mind. “I need to be at school in three days or I’m going to lose my scholarship. Cas, I’ve been trying to do this my whole life, do you understand?”

It was stupid and trivial but Cas looked hurt nonetheless.

“Let me go. Please. I don’t even need a ride back to town. I don’t want anything. Just let me walk out the door and you’ll never see me again.”
Cas’s face cracked at that, in one moment filling with so much pain that Sam drew back.

“That’s what I was afraid of. I was afraid I’d never see you again. It’s been… Sam, it’s been so long. Finding you like this- do you know the chances?” He shook his head. “You’ll understand soon. I’m not taking your future, Sam, I’m giving you another one, one so incredible, you can’t understand.”

“I’m flattered, really, but Cas, I can’t—”

“We aren’t discussing this!” Cas snapped, and Sam flinched back. The shout was like an iron spike into his head. His whole body was bruised and sore- the fight in the woods hadn’t done much for him. He scowled.

“So then what are we doing?”

Cas set his jaw.

“For the moment, you’re going to stay exactly as you are. The restraints may be a bit… severe, but unfortunately, you’ve proved to me that you need them. I… I’m going to keep working on this room. I’d like to get to a place where I no longer need to keep you constantly restrained.”

He stood without another word, and a moment later, the banging resumed. Sam groaned.

“Oh my god, do you have to?”

He turned his head. Cas was standing at the window, fixing a metal contraption across the bottom. Sam tried his best to focus his eyes.

“Are those… bars?”

Cas nodded.

“Hmmm. I made them last night out of some scrap material I had in my workshop. They aren’t the most aesthetically pleasing, but once they’re adhered to the casement, they should prove effective.”

“Do you have to adhere them right now? My head is killing me.”

“That would be the oxygen deprivation.” Cas frowned. “I didn’t want to do that, but I was afraid you were going to injure yourself further. You’re quite a determined fighter.”

“Yeah, I get that from my dad.”

The conversation was interrupted by the sound of Sam’s stomach rumbling. He listened to it in surprise- he hadn’t even realized he was hungry. He searched back, trying to find the last time he’d eaten.

“Would you like me to make you something?”

“No.”

Cas paused.

“You will eventually need to eat. There’s no point putting it off.”

“Or you’ll what? Tube feed me?” Sam looked over at him, shuffling up onto his elbows and glaring. “How hard are you willing to work at this, Cas? You think you’re gonna keep me here like
I’m a pet- how much mess do you think I can make, here?”

Cas set the hammer very deliberately on the windowsill.

“I like to think I won’t have to. But I’ll force you to eat if you need it. I’ll force fluids into your body. I’ll clean up anything you manage to soil or destroy. And if you injure yourself-” he paused, considering. “I’ll make you a deal. I’m going to go out into the living room and make some food. And if you eat it, I’ll heal you.”

He turned toward the door. Sam said nothing.

“You have until I get back to decide.”

The minute he was out the door, Sam began to wrestle with his bonds for real. It looked like he was strapped down with a combination of belts, rope, and twine. It was messy and knotted but ultimately effective. His hands were held at his waist and his feet were pinned about shoulder width apart. He couldn’t move his feet in any direction, and when he tried, his knee screamed in agony. He couldn’t tell, but he thought he might have torn something.

He sighed. He wasn’t going anywhere for a couple days, at least, not with his leg like that. He’d be able to hold out a hunger strike that long, but he wasn’t stupid enough to think that he had a real chance of being released voluntarily. A physical breakout was his best bet, which meant prioritizing the knee over the protest.

It took Cas roughly three minutes to come back with a steaming bowl.

“Have you made a decision?”

“Depends on what’s in the bowl.”

Cas was holding something in his other hand, being careful not to show it as he tipped the bowl toward Sam.

“Just oatmeal. Apple cinnamon. You always liked apples.”

Sam decided not to comment - he didn’t have a preference on apples one way or another.

“I eat that and you fix my leg?”

“Yes.”

Sam pretended to consider.

“Can you let one of my arms loose so I can actually eat it?”

He really hoped Cas wasn’t planning on spoon feeding him like a baby.

“I thought you might ask that.”

And now Cas extended his other hand, fingers open so Sam could see the four little blue pills resting in his palm.

“You take these, I’ll untie your arm.”

Sam gaped.
“You can’t be serious. What even *are* those?”

Like the answer mattered and he had any intention of taking random pills from his kidnapper.

“They’ll put you to sleep. Or at least, keep you foggy enough that it will be safe to leave you alone for a little while.” Cas sat on the edge of the bed, picking at the twine circling Sam’s wrist. “This isn’t ideal. I think we’ll both be more comfortable once I can set up a more permanent arrangement, but to do that, I need things I don’t have here.”

There was an idea winding its way through the fog of the headache. Sam looked at the pills. He could shake off a couple sleeping pills. And if he took them, Cas would leave him alone—probably for a couple hours. That would be plenty of time to get clear of the house. If he could find his knapsack, he could get his cell phone—and with Cas gone he’d have plenty of time to look for it.

“I take those, you untie me, I eat the oatmeal, you heal me,” Sam clarified. He had no way of knowing whether Cas would stick to the agreement once it was made, but if nothing else, he was about to find out.

“That’s right.”

“And you think they’ll knock me out?”

Cas nodded.

“I’m fairly certain that they will render you immobile, at the very least. Human medications don’t work well on me, but these are strong enough…” he trailed off, thinking, then shrugged. “I have a high degree of confidence in this.”

Sam had a sudden thought.

“I want to add something. If I take those… if it does work…” he paused. “Don’t touch me. While I’m out.”

Cas gave him a small smile.

“I will not molest you while you are drugged. Don’t concern yourself on that front.”

Somehow, Sam did not feel better. He stared at the pills a moment longer.

“Aright. Give them to me.”

“Thank you.”

Sam scowled, but said nothing. Cas gave him the pills one at a time, giving him sips of water between them so he could swallow. He cheeked the first one but Cas caught him immediately, and after that he just swallowed them like he was supposed to.

Cas didn’t bother untying him, just left and returned with a pair of scissors that he used to cut through the twine holding Sam’s right hand. Sam shook it out, getting the feeling back into his stiff fingers, then balanced the hot bowl on his lap and ate quickly, trying to get the food into his stomach before the pills had a chance to fully dissolve. He didn’t feel anything yet, except maybe that his headache was fading slightly.

Cas took the bowl when it was empty, and Sam took several seconds to realize he was gone, and had left Sam with one hand unbound. In the time it took him to formulate a plan with this
information, Cas was back, and securing his hand to the bedframe once again. He stared at the other man numbly.

“Sposed to fix me,” he mumbled, and Cas laid a hand gently on his cheek. Sam tried to pull away, but he couldn’t get his balance right. Cas had to guide him back until he was lying down, with Cas leaning over him.

“That was the agreement,” Cas agreed quietly, and then he pressed his mouth to Sam’s. Sam felt a rush of cold, at the same time that Cas’s tongue was darting into his mouth, fire-hot between his frozen lips. The pain melted from his body, leaving a quiet, placated feeling of warmth and happiness.

Sam relaxed, letting it happen, letting Cas kiss him. Then the other man drew back, smiling.

“I shouldn’t be long,” Cas told him, but Sam was already out.

Sam sat on the dry ground, knotting a strand of long grass between his fingers. The bison had been here recently; the grass was cropped and trampled. He picked another strand and wound it idly around the first.

It was warm. He was enjoying himself. A family of prairie dogs lived in this field, and if he stayed quiet, they would come out of their holes and he could watch them. They got up to mischief and it always made him laugh.

He drew another strand, working it around his creation. This one was a darker green, it contrasted with the first two. He worked a tan strand into the braid.

He kept braiding, watching a pattern emerge. The sun began to go down, the smell of a cook fire wafted across the plain. He stood, rolling the stiffness from his shoulders, and walked back toward the shelter. His mate was waiting for him, sun bronzed skin glowing in the firelight.

Sam joined him, leaning against a shoulder. He took his mate’s hand in his, tying the braided grass around his wrist.

“You’re beautiful,” Sam murmured, and his mate laughed and nudged at him, chiding him for the line.

“It’s true,” Sam told him in the old tongue, and he pulled his mate in for a kiss and only when he saw the vibrant blue eyes did he realize it was Cas.

Sam jerked back, his eyes flying open. The room was dim, the light the orange-gold of late afternoon. He tugged absently at his hands, but his body felt as though he were moving through mud.

He should be working harder at this, he knew. Pulling harder. He could figure out a way out of this.
His thoughts came slowly, wispy and nebulous. He couldn’t hold them.

His eyes slid shut, and he did not dream.

Chapter End Notes

I haven’t forgotten about this!

Okay I actually do know how this one is going to end, just for a nice... change of pace. Um....
still writing kink_meme prompts... accidentally picked up another long one... why do I do this to myself....
Day 2 (continued)

Chapter Notes

Hi. Hazel here. Look, I don't usually do this, but, this chapter is fucked up. It's fucked up and triggery. I'm gonna write some more in the closing notes, but if you've got any problems at all with domestic violence or unhealthy relationships or "why do you make me hit you" type stuff.... this is not a chapter (story) you're going to enjoy. Sorry.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Sam woke to the icy rush he was beginning to associate with Cas’s kiss. His mind cleared, quickly losing the drug-muddled fog he’d been swimming in for the last few hours. Cas’s tongue glanced across his lower lip and he bit at it, shoving his forehead forward into the bridge of the other man’s nose.

Cas withdrew quickly, his hand over his mouth, and Sam was satisfied to see he was bleeding. The damage would heal quickly, and he’d probably pay for it later, but for now it felt weirdly gratifying, to know he could still inflict that small amount of injury.

“Welcome back,” he said sweetly, giving Cas a smile. “Have fun shopping?”

“No. I had to go a good deal further than I originally anticipated, and the place I ended up was… unsavory.”

Sam pushed himself up into a sitting position, noticing for the first time the paper sacks on the floor by the wall. Two of them were from a hardware store, the others were unlabeled.

“So what’d you bring me?”

“All sorts of things. I wasn’t sure what would work, exactly, so I bought a variety.”

“Oh, good,” Sam said dryly.

“The first of which is these,” Cas continued, as though he hadn’t spoken. He went to the closest bag and retrieved a small, unmarked cardboard box. When he opened it, Sam saw two shiny silver cuffs, connected by a short chain. There was a key on a small metal keychain, which Cas took and tucked into his pocket.

“They’re stainless steel, so they won’t rust,” Cas explained, and Sam felt his stomach drop a little at the idea of needing restraints that wouldn’t rust. “I thought you might want to use the shower.”

Sam looked toward the small attached room. It’s tiny window was covered with Cas’s patented homemade metal bars, but maybe he could find something else in there to work with?

Not to mention, he was starting to need to pee.
“Yeah, that sounds good. Cuff me.”

Cas gave him a smile, then returned to the paper sack.

“Hey, I thought we were doing handcuffs. What gives?”

“Just more of the same,” Cas responded, returning to the bed with a second unmarked box. This one also contained a set of cuffs, slightly larger, connected by about two feet of chain. “I’ll put these on after you get undressed.”

“Sorry, what?”

“After you get undressed,” Cas repeated, without inflection. “I assume if you’re going to use the shower, you’ll be undressing first.”

“Not in front of you.”

Cas actually laughed.

“This isn’t a choice you’re being presented with, Sam. You can’t go a month without bathing and in any case, modesty is going to be the least of your worries, trust me.”

“Yeah, that’s not creepily ominous at all,” Sam answered back. It came out a little weaker than he’d intended it to sound.

“I know. I know this is hard on you. And it’s going to get harder. If there were an easier way, I would take it, but there isn’t. This is just how it has to be.”

“No, it doesn’t,” Sam insisted, leaning forward and yanking his hands against their restraints. “You can let me go. You can cut this stupid rope and walk away.”

Cas’s face hardened. Sam glared at him, not dropping his gaze.

Cas’s hand shot out, fisting itself in his hair, yanking his head back until his throat was exposed.

“Here,” he said evenly, pressing his finger to the skin at the corner of Sam’s mouth. His finger dragged lower, coming to rest at the edge of the teen’s jaw.

“Here.”

He forced Sam’s head to the side, his finger moving to the hollow of one clavicle.

“Here.”

Sam jerked, but Cas held him tight. He met Sam’s eyes as his fingers moved across his chest and down his belly.

“Here. Here. Here.”

The outside of one hip. The skin just below his navel. And then, finally, the inside of Sam’s left thigh, high enough that Sam’s heart beat faster.

“Here.” He stared pointedly into Sam’s eyes. “Do you understand what I’m telling you?”

Birthmarks. Sam’s body was peppered in the small, dark spots, and Cas had just pointed out the darkest of them.
“You stripped me while I was out, had yourself a look,” Sam accused. Cas just shook his head.

“I know every inch of your body, Sam. I know you as well as I know myself.”

His hand was still resting on Sam’s thigh and Sam shifted, trying to pull away. Cas’s fingers stroked him absently.

“I’m going to make some more preparations while you’re in the shower,” Cas said, and his eyes were faraway now, like he was seeing something else, a long time ago and far away. He blinked, focusing. “Do you want to get undressed or do you want me to do it for you?”

Sam gaped.

“You’re not serious.”

Cas stared silently back.

“I’ll do it myself,” Sam said. “Untie me.”

“Not yet,” Cas said, picking the handcuffs back up. He closed one around Sam’s left wrist, then stood, moving around Sam’s body to sit on the bed behind him. “Hold very still.”

The words had the opposite of their intended effect, and Sam jerked, trying to turn and see what Cas was doing. Cas grabbed him by the back of the neck, holding tight.

“I said hold still.”

Sam heard the sound of scissors opening, and god help him, he actually whimpered.

“What are you doing?” he asked, and his voice sounded quiet, too high.

The scissors closed a second later, and Sam felt the cold edge of the blade pressing against the base of his spine.

His shirt. Cas was cutting through his shirt.

“I said I’d take it off.”

“I can’t risk letting both of your hands free,” Cas answered evenly, and the scissors closed again, further up this time. “And there’s something else I need to do.”

Sam stayed still and quiet as Cas sliced up the back of the cotton tee, neatly cutting through each worn sleeve so that it fell in a puddled heap in Sam’s lap. Sam didn’t look at it. Cas let go of him.

“This might feel strange,” the man said, and then something hot and wet was dripping onto Sam’s right shoulder. He closed his eyes, trying not to feel whatever sticky crap Cas was putting on him. A fat drop rolled down his spine, making him shiver.

“What is that?” he finally asked.

“Blood,” Cas answered.

“Blood?” Sam actually forgot that he was tied down, and tried to jerk away. He had a momentary vision of some string of prisoners Cas was keeping here, using bizarre rituals to try to transfer souls from one to the other. “Whose blood?!”

“Mine.”
Cas reached forward, showing Sam his bloody palm. He’d sliced it open with a scissor blade and it was already healing.

“The second life, freely given,” Cas explained, as though that statement was supposed to explain a damn thing.

His palms pressed into Sam’s back, the pressure increasing as he massaged the sticky substance into his shoulder blades. It tingled. Sam felt like it shouldn’t tingle. He’d gotten blood on himself before- lots of times- and it had never tingled. This was wrong. Something was wrong here.

The feeling increased, less like a tingle and more like a heat, like he was tasting a chili pepper with his back. He pulled away but Cas followed.

“Does it hurt?”

“It burns.”

“I’m sorry.”

“So stop.”

“I can’t, Sam. It will probably stop once it’s washed off.”

“You’ve never done this before?”

Sam turned his head, regarding the other man from the corner of his eye. Cas’s gaze was far away.

“No. How could I? I’ve never found you before.”

Right. Cas thought Sam was his… long lost soulmate or something.

Cas stood abruptly, holding his hands away from his body as he walked to the bathroom. He was bloody up to the wrist. Sam swallowed, watching his back as he scrubbed the blood from his hands. His shoulders still stung.

“What was the first life? You said the second.”

“My grace,” Cas said without turning. “I used it to heal you, but it should work to fulfill the requirements of the ritual.”

He returned to where Sam was sitting and quickly released the twine-and-rope bonds, snapping the silver cuffs around the teen’s wrists.

“Is that too tight?”

“No.”

Cas sat back and picked up the larger cuffs, the ones Sam knew were supposed to go around his ankles. Sam twisted at the chain connecting his hands- it was only a few inches long, not long enough to work as a stranglehold even if he could wrestle his arms around Cas’s neck, which he doubted.

Cas worked the scissor blade under the rope binding Sam’s left ankle. He glanced at Sam’s face and was apparently satisfied with what he saw, because a second later, the limb was cut free. Cas moved to his other ankle, then paused.
"I don’t have another pair of jeans that would fit you- you’re too tall for mine. So if I have to cut these off you, it might be some time before you get another pair. Do you understand?"

"Yeah."

Cas cut the rope around his other ankle, and Sam pushed down the urge to run. He’d tried that once already- if he couldn’t get away under the cover of night and rain, he sure as hell wasn’t jogging to freedom during the day. Best case scenario, Cas caught him and beat him down again. Worst case, the man might actually kill him.

"You’re stalling."

"I’m not a stripper. You’re looking right at me."

"Wouldn’t you watch for danger, in my position?"

"I wouldn’t know, I’ve never kidnapped anybody," Sam snapped. Cas frowned.

"I don’t like that word."

"I don’t like being tied to a bed."

"You’re still stalling."

Sam paused, evaluating his options.

He had none.

The handcuffs made it difficult to work his jeans down over his hips. Once, it looked like maybe Cas was going to step in and assist him, but Sam gave him a stare sharp enough that he retreated. Sam scooted backwards, dragging the hemline dangerously low.

Sam paused, his hands fisted in the denim. Cas was still looking at him.

He could still fight this. He could refuse to go further, he could fight and thrash and make Cas fight for every single inch.

And in return, Cas would hurt him. And then take what he wanted anyway.

Whatever that was.

He pushed the waistband down a little lower. Cas was still looking at him.

"You get off on this or something?"

"You’re as beautiful as I remember," Cas replied quietly, and that didn’t make anything better. Sam hadn’t been naked in front of anybody since he was a kid, so whoever Cas remembered, it wasn’t him. In any case, he wasn’t beautiful.

"So you did undress me while I was out."

"I knew you before. A very long time ago."

"You’re full of shit."

Cas reached for him and Sam flinched back. The man’s hand stilled, then dropped.
“You’re stalling.”

“Yeah, you know what? I am. Fuck you. Fuck you and whatever fucked-up tragedy you’re playing out here, because I don’t know you and I don’t want to.” Cas’s face hardened, but Sam kept going. “I don’t care what happened to you or your boyfriend or any of it, it’s not my problem and fuck you for trying to make it.”

“It was you, Sam.”

“Maybe it was, but it’s not now and it’s never going to be again.” Sam forced himself to meet Cas’s eyes. “You can strap me down to this bed for the rest of my life, and I’ll die hating your guts.”

Cas slapped him across the face.

“That’s where you’re wrong,” the man growled, and Sam struggled to hear him through the ringing in his ears. “I can bring him back. I can. Whether you like it or not.”

“Fuck you,” Sam spat. His mouth tasted like blood.

Cas slapped him again. It felt like he was getting hit by a car.

“I didn’t want to do it like this,” Cas said, and Sam felt his pants being jerked down his legs. He screamed in frustration, kicking out at Cas as best he could. His pants tangles around his feet and Cas jerked them off, tossing them to the floor.

Sam got a solid hit, straight to Cas’s belly, and the impact went ringing up his leg. Cas didn’t react. He reached for one of the bags and Sam expected another restraint, cuffs or chains or something, but what Cas withdrew was a bottle of what looked like lotion.

“I didn’t want to do it like this,” he repeated, and Sam saw the letters KY and he kicked out at Cas again, scrambling away as best as he could with his hands bound.

“You stay away from me, you fucking freak.”

He was backed into a corner and he knew that, but going for the door meant getting closer to Cas and Sam couldn’t make his body do it.

Cas stood and pulled his shirt over his head, and Sam saw an opportunity. He was on his feet in a second, but Cas was faster, catching him around the waist and hurling him back onto the bed like a rag doll.

He landed on his belly and he tried to get up again, but Cas was there already, bracketing Sam’s legs with his own, keeping Sam’s head down with a hand on the back of his neck. Sam screamed again, rage and fear, and then Cas’s weight was on him, crushing him down into the mattress.

“This is the third part,” Cas was saying, but Sam wasn’t listening. He tried to throw an elbow back against Cas’s ribs, but his arms were trapped underneath him. “The third life, freely given.”

“No!” Sam screamed, and he could feel Cas hardening, could feel the length of him rutting against the small of his back. “Cas, no. Get off me!”

The metal cuffs were driving into his chest, their combined weight digging the metal hard into his breastbone.
“I’m not trying to hurt you, Sam, just let me-”

“No!” Sam screamed again, but he was trapped, there was nowhere to go but up and he couldn’t lift Cas off him. There was blood on the pillow—his nose must be bleeding.

Cas rose until he was kneeling, his legs holding Sam’s thighs together, his hand between Sam’s shoulder blades, keeping him down.

“I need you to relax, Sam,” Cas said evenly, and Sam felt his hand against the side of his ass—hot and firm. He rubbed in small, concentric circles, making soothing noises as Sam groaned and struggled.

He was wearing himself out, he knew that, and he couldn’t seem to stop. There had to be a way to get away from this. This wasn’t going to happen to him. It couldn’t.

Sam arched his back, trying to force his muscles to respond, trying to drive his body up and out of Cas’s grip by pure force of will. It wasn’t happening. He was starting to develop tremors in his arms from the exertion.

The bottle cap snapped open and Sam wanted it to inspire a new strength in him, wanted it to drive him into some adrenaline-fueled fury that would allow him to rise up and escape this, but it didn’t. It just made his blood run cold and his heart beat fast.

Cas’s fingers were pushing between the cheeks of his ass, slick and wet against the skin there, and Sam choked. It was too strange, to have someone touch him there, stroking against the sensitive skin.

His ass was spread wider and he dug his face into the pillow, tears of frustration and shame forming without his permission. He was exhausted and pinned, even as he tried to jerk away from Cas’s probing fingers, the other man seemed to barely notice that he was trying.

The lube was cold, sending a shiver up his spine when it dripped unexpectedly onto his hole. He hissed in a breath, shifting so the cool gel landed elsewhere.

“I know, but it will warm up,” Cas told him. “Like I told you, I would have preferred to do this differently.”

Cas’s hot weight was on top of him again, the solid form of his body flush with Sam’s back. Sam didn’t want to try to identify things. Didn’t want to feel Cas’s lips on the back of his shoulder. Didn’t want to feel his hand, sliding beneath Sam’s belly. Didn’t want to feel the hard jutting length of Cas’s cock, sliding wetly between his cheeks and coming to rest against his hole.

“This might hurt,” Cas told him, and his lips were soft against Sam’s shoulder. “I will try to be gentle with you, but I need you to try to relax. Can you do that for me?”

“Please don’t do this,” Sam whispered. His eyes were clenched shut now, trying to keep the tears inside, because it wasn’t just frustration now, it was fear and denial and pain and he didn’t want any of that showing on his face. “Please, Cas, please. Don’t.”

Cas hesitated, then pressed a kiss to the side of Sam’s throat.

“I have to, Sam. You’ll understand soon, I promise.”

At first there was nothing, just a gradually increasing pressure against him. He reacted involuntarily, his balls pulling up tight, his whole body clenching taut, trying to keep this from
“Relax, you’re going to make it worse,” Cas told him, and Sam felt a sob escape his throat, because how the hell could this get worse.

Cas’s hips shifted against him, and the angle changed, and Sam felt his body give way. There was a burning, hard push and then Cas was inside him.

“No,” Sam said again, and it came out as little more than a whisper. It hurt, but the pain was far away. Like it was happening to someone else. Cas was rocking deeper into him, pausing at one point to add some more lube, but it was miles away. Sam wasn’t here. Sam was at Stanford. He was dropping his duffel onto the floor of the efficiency apartment he’d rented and he was trying to figure out where to print his class schedule. He was finding a good coffee shop and making friends with the blonde girl in his English lit class.

Something deep inside him gave way and Cas slid deeper, a quiet gasp escaping his lips.

Cas was inside him. That’s what Sam was having the big problem with, he supposed. There were words, that he knew, that described this. Words he knew about in an abstract sense. Words that described things that happened to other people. That could happen to other people.

The words that he knew didn’t really seem like they had anything to do with this feeling inside him, this stretching burning pressure that was pulling him open. They didn’t have anything to do with Cas’s weight rocking against his back, the hot, sweaty slide of his skin, the scrape of body hair, the sound of his breathing in Sam’s ear.

The fingers of his right hand were starting to tingle. Circulation was getting cut off somewhere, and he should really check on that. It was the cuffs, probably. It was hard to tell.

“You’re so good for me,” Cas murmured in his ear. “Always so good for me, just like this. Always so perfect.”

It suddenly seemed very strange to Sam, the idea that this had happened before. He’d remember it. He was sure. There was something happening to his mind right now, some fissure cracking open, some fundamental shift, and as he felt it breaking open, he knew it would be there forever. He’d never been here. He’d know.

“No,” he said, but it was just a whisper. He couldn’t put any force behind the words. His voice was gone.

The hand on his belly was sliding lower, Cas hiking his hips up to press deeper into Sam’s body. His fingers glanced across Sam’s soft cock, and Sam hissed, burying his face into the pillow. Cas’s hand closed around his shaft, stroking gently. Sam felt sick. He shifted onto one shoulder, taking some of the weight off his chest, and he was able to slide his cuffed hands down lower. His shoulder bore both of their weights now, but for all he cared it could come full out of its socket if it meant pushing Cas’s hand away.

The cuffs dug into his pubic bone now, and he could feel the rhythmic tug on his balls as Cas—

He couldn’t breathe. His body was twisted too hard, Cas was crushing him, he was being torn to shreds from the inside and he couldn’t breathe.

“Shhhh,” Cas was saying, and he was taking his weight onto his own elbows, rising up off Sam, and Sam realized he was crying, his breath coming in deep ragged sobs. “Sam, shhh, you don’t have to be afraid of this. You’re beautiful and perfect and you’ll love it when you get used to it.”
Sam’s eyes and throat were burning, and he knew he was crying into the pillow, big ugly gasping
sobs that he couldn’t stop because it hurt.

Cas pulled out of him and something trickled down over his balls and Sam realized that Cas had
come inside him. It occurred to him to worry about that- but it’s not like there was anything he
could do about it now. It’s not like he could ask Cas to use a condom.

Cas was stroking him, rubbing his back in wide, gentle circles, trying to stop his crying, and Sam
grit his teeth. He forced himself to breathe deep, deep and steady, breathe through the pain, just
like Dean and his dad had taught him. Breathe deep.

Cas fastened the second set of cuffs around his ankles, and Sam didn’t even bother to kick at him.
He waited for Cas to finish, then rolled to his side, pulling his knees up to his chest.

“You should take a shower,” Cas said quietly. “You needed one before but it- you’re worse now.”

You weren’t supposed to take a shower, Sam remembered distantly. Some health class he’d taken
in high school- he’d half-paid attention, in case there was some girl he’d need to help some day, but
they said you weren’t supposed to take a shower, he remembered that. You were supposed to go to
the police and they’d do a- a kit.

He remembered that.

That wasn’t going to happen to him.

“Yeah,” he agreed, and his voice was ragged. He sat up, wincing in pain.

“Let me heal you-” Cas started, but Sam jerked away, staring at his outstretched hand in terror. Cas
sighed and let it drop.

The bathroom had nothing of use in it, as Sam might have expected. A collection of fluffy blue
towels were the only things in the closet. There was a toothbrush, a tube of toothpaste, and a plastic
cup. Under better circumstances Sam might have considered shattering the mirror and using a
shard as a weapon, but he’d stabbed Cas twice with a silver blade and had no effect. All he was
going to do with a mirror was cut himself.

Sam didn’t want to look at the mirror. He knew what he looked like. There was blood on his nose
and mouth from where Cas had slapped him. There were bruises on his chest and belly where the
cuffs had dug in. There was blood smeared across his back and shoulders from whatever Cas had
been doing there. There was tearing and bruising on- between his legs, and it was wet there, too
from the-

Sam’s stomach lurched and he distracted himself by turning on the shower. Hot water- as hot as it
would go. He looked around the small space- glass door. Shampoo. Soap. Washcloth.

The water ran a reddish brown at first, big flecks of dried blood coming off and washing down the
drain. He stood for a while, letting the water run over his body, and then without warning his knees
buckled and he ended up kneeling, the water pounding down over his back. He watched it spiraling
down the drain, slipping past the plug and simply vanishing, never to return.

He flicked the lever and the water stopped draining, pooling quickly in the bottom of the fiberglass
tub, splashing between his fingers.

Out in the main room he could hear Cas doing something with power tools, but he ignored it. It wasn’t important.

He wondered if he could dissolve, if the disconnection he felt in his mind would extend to his body, and he could just melt into the water and escape down the drain. Ghosts did it. All the time. He’d seen it.

He leaned forward, closing his eyes, letting his forehead rest against the bottom of the tub. The sounds vanished. All he could hear was the splash of the faucet, and beyond that, a deep, muffled banging. He could hear his blood in his veins. He could hear his heart beating. He couldn’t hear his own labored breathing or the sound of the mattress or the words Cas had whispered in his ear. Just the water.

Eventually, he needed air.

Chapter End Notes

So, uh, this chapter is the reason why "On Sale" hasn't been updated. The next chapter in that story is wholesome and beautiful, whereas I am a raging dumpster fire of emotion right now. Someone (I forget who) once described a problematic chapter as an "angst carnival" and I'm appropriating that. Husband and I are still trying to make a spawnling and that means I'm off birth control and all the wonderful PMDD-crushing pharmaceutical benefits contained within. So, here you go, have some traumatizing rape; that's the mood I'm in. I will be fine within 48 hours, this is cyclical and predictable and don't worry I'm not going to jump in front of a bus and leave these unfinished. In the meantime, it's just me and my "I am enough" shirt and my couch, writing porn with no pants on. But this chapter... this might be the first thing I've ever written that was actually mentally difficult to create.

I want to give a quick shoutout to my three unofficial betas- AmeliaCareful, Interstitial, and GertieCraign, who are excellent resources, wonderful people, and very tolerant of my weird. I actually meant to give Interstitial a better credit a couple chapters ago but I was posting in a hurry so here it is: thanks for being the kind of friend who gets a tumblr message about a lung-stabbing and just takes that in stride and answers the question. I love you guys and everyone else should love you too.
Eventually the water got cold. Sam ignored it.

He was too big to lay out flat, but if he pulled his knees up, he could lay back and let his head sink under the water. At first it was hot, so hot it felt like his skin would blister and slough off, but it didn’t. And then it got lukewarm and then cold, until the water coming out of the tap was cool as the ground it had come from.

That’s when Cas had come in, drawn by the sound of water splashing onto the ground. He shouted something Sam couldn’t hear—everything was pleasantly muffled beneath the water.

Cas shut the tap off and yanked the drain open, and Sam’s head filled with the pleasant gargling of water down a pipe.

“-not know how to take care of your vessel?”

Sam frowned. The water was too low. He could hear the real world now.

It all came crashing back, Cas, the unpleasant feeling of the cuffs on his wrists, and now the violent shivers wracking his body.

Cas put a towel around his shoulders, and it slid almost immediately down his back, into the water. Cas pulled it back up, taking Sam’s hand and pressing it to the cloth.

“How do I help you?”

Sam frowned, thinking about it. What would help right now?

He wanted to talk to Dean. Not to tell him he’d been- not to tell him what happened. But to tell him he was in trouble, maybe. Ask how things were going on the road. How dad was taking it.
He needed his phone. His phone was in his knapsack, he needed to find-

*His phone was in his knapsack.*

Sam stilled, remembering. His phone was in his knapsack. And his knapsack was- here, hopefully. He hadn’t seen it in the main room, but maybe it was in the truck, or in a different room. Worst case scenario it was back at the gas station and-

*And Dean could track his phone’s GPS.*

It was a very dim light at the end of a very long tunnel but it was something, something he could hold on to. It was a long shot. It depended on Dean realizing he was missing, before the phone battery ran out. Long shot. But something.

His eyes focused and he pushed Cas’s hand away.

“Don’t touch me.”

He shifted awkwardly in the slippery tub, shifting onto his knees so he could sit on the lip of the tub. It was a trick, but he was able to swing his chained feet over the side. Cas watched him the whole time, letting him work it out on his own.

He pulled the towel off his shoulders, holding it in front of him to try to cover himself as best as he could.

For all the good it did him now.

“I want my pants back.”

“I’m doing laundry, it’ll take another hour or so.”

Sam blinked.

“You’re doing… laundry.”

“Yes. Your clothes and the sheets were both stained with dirt and blood. I’m doing laundry.”

Which made sense, Sam supposed. He’d just never thought of psychotic kidnappers as having to do laundry, before.

Cas was looking at him closely, watching his hands. He reached out, taking Sam by the wrist and pulling his hand away from his chest.

“Cas? Cas, no.”

Sam tried to drop him, tried to keep his hands close to his body, but Cas was unrelenting and Sam had to drop the towel, letting it fall into his lap.

“You’re bruising.”

Cas’s fingertips were light on his chest, his wrists, where the cuffs had dug in and left their mark. He was right- the skin was turning a mottled dark purple. Cas looked up at him.

“Doesn’t it hurt?”

“Yeah, Cas. It hurts a lot.”
Lots of things hurt.

“Let me heal you.”

Sam looked into his eyes.

“I’d rather have it hurt.”

Cas’s face hardened.

“You’re so much more fragile than you used to be. I will try to keep this in mind, and be more careful with you in the future.” His thumb stroked the inside of Sam’s wrist. “It doesn’t need to be like this. I’ve made love to you a hundred thousand times and you always found it enjoyable.”

Sam’s stomach tightened.

“I’m not gay.”

“Neither am I.” Cas’s fingers tightened around his wrist. “There’s only you for me. And there’s only me for you.”

“You mean the other guy. The one who looks like me.”

“It’s you. You just need to remember who you were.”

Sam opened his mouth, not sure whether he wanted to ask.

“What if I don’t?”

“You will.”

“Yeah, but what if I don’t. I’m a whole person, Cas. My name is Sam Winchester and I have a brother and a dad and a scholarship and a future. There aren’t holes. I don’t have stuff… missing from my memory, you know?”

Cas was looking away now, and it made Sam’s stomach turn, but he pressed on anyway.

“Cas, what happens when I get those memories back? Do I just… remember, before? Or is this a Total Recall type situation?”

“I don’t understand that reference.”

“When he comes back. What happens to me.”

Cas hesitated.

“I… don’t know.”

“And you just went ahead and did it anyway?” Sam swallowed hard. “How long do I have?”

Dean probably wouldn’t be here for two days, maybe three, longer if he didn’t realize Sam hadn’t made it to Stanford- he might not have that long. He needed to figure out how this spell worked and how to counteract it- now.

“A year and a day,” Cas answered, still not looking at him. Sam let out a sigh of relief. He couldn’t help it. He had time. The spell wouldn’t work for another year, that was plenty of time to get out of
here, to find Dean, maybe Bobby had something on this.

“In the meantime,” Cas continued, “I wish you’d let me heal this. It pains me deeply to see it. And it’s ultimately pointless to turn it down— it’ll be healed in the morning, anyway.”

Sam’s thoughts came to a screeching halt.

“Why will it be healed by morning?”

“The three lives must be given again, after dawn.”

Sam’s jaw tightened and his vision went vaguely white. He fought it down, forcing his voice to work without a tremor.

“How—how many times?”

It was three. It had to be three. That was the spell, groups of three, three lives, given three times, it would be three, it had to be three-

“Once after dawn. Once before sunset. Until the spell has completed.”

No.
He thought he might be talking but he couldn’t hear himself over the sound of the mantra in his head.

No. No. This couldn’t be happening.

“You’re going to do that to me twice a day? For a year?”

“Probably more, if our previous experiences together are any indication.”

“That’s not me, Cas, that wasn’t me, I’m not your damn soulmate! Whoever he was he’s gone and maybe he had my face but it’s mine now, I’m using it and he can’t have it!”

He tried to yank his hand back from Cas, but Cas wouldn’t let go. His fingers dug into Sam’s wrist, too tight. And then he let go.

“I’ve made some changes to the room,” he commented, changing the subject. He stood, indicating that Sam should follow him.

With his hands chained, Sam didn’t have enough slack to wrap the towel around his waist. He pinned it under one elbow and managed to get it around his hips that way, but he had to hold it, awkwardly, off to one side.

He wanted his jeans back.

The first thing he noticed was that the doorknob had changed. The door no longer locked from the inside, though there were no fewer than two deadbolts on the outside of the door. Sam wasn’t going to be picking the lock any time soon. He could still probably break the door down, but he wouldn’t be able to do it quickly, or quietly.

“On the bed,” Cas told him, and Sam’s heart skipped a beat. He had to take a deep breath before he could bring himself to look at it.

The sheets had changed, and Cas had rotated it ninety degrees, so that the left side was now
pressed to the wall, rather than the right.

Two solid-looking chains trailed between the slats of the headboard, and Sam saw that they were bolted- actually bolted- to the wall on the far side. The chains, not surprisingly, ended in a pair of wide leather cuffs. There was a band of silver metal around the outside, so Sam wouldn’t be able to cut through them, even if he found something sharp enough to slice the leather.

Cas saw him looking.

“The plates are bolted into the studs- you may test them if you’d like.”

“I’ll take your word for it.”

“I thought these might be more comfortable, in the long-term. They’ll allow you a slightly wider range of movement.” Cas paused. “Sit down, Sam.”

Sam’s gaze was glued to the cuffs, sitting neatly on the clean pillowcase, the chains just short enough that they couldn’t touch. He could imagine what they’d feel like, snug and hot against his skin, the skin would chafe eventually but he wouldn’t bruise- Cas was right, it was a better long term solution, and secure, too. He knew a fair amount about escaping from various forms of restraints, and he could see right now that he wasn’t getting out of those. If he got on that bed, he wasn’t getting back up, not unless Cas decided to let him, and that wouldn’t be until tomorrow, until after-

Sam’s breath was coming faster, he was shaking his head.

“No, I don’t- I don’t want to- I don’t-”

He stumbled backwards but the ankle chain was too short, he’d forgotten about it, he tried to step backwards to catch his balance but he didn’t have the slack. He went down hard, landing on his sore ass and narrowly missing hitting his head on the ground.

Cas was on him in a second, pulling him up by the wrists, yanking him into a standing position and then actually lifting him.

Sam kicked out, screaming, using the edges of the cuffs to dig and tear at Cas’s arms. He wouldn’t go, he wouldn’t go, he could-

And then Sam was dropping back onto the mattress and Cas was straddling him, holding him down, and his jeans were rough on the bare skin of Sam’s hips.

“No!” Sam screamed, and he kept it up. From somewhere outside himself, he realized he sounded like a toddler, screaming out a repetitive litany of defiance as Cas buckled him in and secured the cuffs with tiny padlocks.

“This doesn’t need to be like this,” Cas told him, sternly, and Sam yanked at the chains with all his strength- nothing. The leather bands were wide enough that he didn’t even hurt his wrists when he tried. “You’re being stubborn. Stop it.”

His hand was on Sam’s throat, holding his chin still, and then came the icy-hot feeling of Cas’s mouth and grace. Sam felt a chill wash over him, and a second later, the throbbing aches in his body began to fade. It felt better.

He didn’t want it to feel better.
“Give them back,” he hissed at the man above him. “Give them back.”

“I wouldn’t if I could,” Cas said, stroking his hand over Sam’s bare chest. “You’re beautiful, and it’s terrible to think that I’d hurt you.”

“You did, you hurt me and you should look at it.”

“It was an accident,” Cas said quietly. His hand stilled on Sam’s chest. “I didn’t realize how fragile you’d become. I miscalculated, but I’ve fixed it now.”

“No!” Sam screamed, and the chains rattled as he yanked once more. “It doesn’t work like that!”

“You’re having trouble adjusting. That’s to be expected. But there’s no reason for you to suffer needlessly.”

“I am suffering, needlessly,” Sam responded, and it dawned on him that he’d dropped the towel and that he could feel the denim of Cas’s jeans on his cock. He turned his hips, trying to dislodge the older man. “Get off me.”

To his surprise, Cas obliged him, sliding easily off to the side. He lifted the clean sheet and settled it over Sam’s legs and groin, giving him at least that modicum of privacy. Sam looked away. Cas sighed, then stood and went to gather his tools.

“I’ll bring your clothes back when the dryer finishes,” he said, turning to leave. Something caught Sam’s eye and his stomach lurched.

“Cas, wait-”

Cas turned back to him.

“The shirt- my shirt- I want it back.”

Cas glanced to his shoulder, where he’d thrown the torn garment as he gathered his things.

“It’s ruined- I can get you a different one.”

“No, I want-” Sam’s voice caught. “That was Dean’s, you can’t just- don’t throw it away, I want it.”

Sam had been dressing almost exclusively in his brother’s hand-me-downs ever since he could remember. It’s not like the damn thing had been a gift. He remembered the day they’d found it at the thrift shop- Dean had been thirteen and thrilled to have a shirt with an actual AC/DC logo on it, even if the damn thing was four sizes too big. He’d worn it until it was a size too small and John had made a comment about it and he’d reluctantly turned it over into Sam’s care. It was almost too small for Sam now, too; his body was filling out just the way his brother’s had. There was a hole in the left armpit that was getting noticeably large, but it was worn and comfortable and Sam had wanted something familiar, when he got to Stanford.

And now it was hanging there, limp and ruined in Cas’s hand and it seemed suddenly very important that it not be thrown away, not yet. Not here. Not like this.

“Cas, please, just- I want it back, please don’t throw it away, Cas, please-”

Cas’s eyes widened a little and he returned to Sam’s side, sitting lightly on the edge of the bed and pressing the worn cotton into Sam’s hand. Sam felt his eyes beginning to burn and he shut them
tight, because he wasn’t going to get all worked up over a damn shirt, after everything else.

“Of course, Sam,” Cas was saying, sounding a little surprised that Sam was surprised. “Anything in my power to give. Forever. You have to know that.”

“Let me call my brother.”

Cas sighed.

“I can’t. Not yet. I need a little bit more time. One moon cycle- twenty eight days. Thirty, to be sure. But you will see him again, Sam. To our lifespans- thirty days is nothing. An afternoon nap, a conversation with a good friend- time slips away and is negligible in the scheme of things. But you will see your brother again. Do you understand what that is worth? To know?”

“He doesn’t know- all he knows is that I never made it to school.”

“Is there an address? Somewhere I could send a message?”

Sam thought, frowning. Bobby’s, maybe?”

“I think so.”

“Give me the address. I’ll tell them you’re alive.”

“Alive, and being held somewhere, by an unknown someone- that’s almost worse. If I go missing they might just think I’m avoiding them.”

Cas held out his hands.

“Then they will just have to wonder, for the time being. I know it’s cruel- but it’s necessary. It can’t be any other way.”

Sam rolled his eyes.

“Yeah, so you keep saying.”

Cas’s face hardened.

“The first day of the thirty has already passed. And at the end of thirty days, I’ll give you a phone, some money, and a ride anywhere you want to go. If you don’t want to stay with me by then, all you’ll have to do is walk away. You have my word.”

Sam opened his mouth to say something but Cas pushed on.

“You’ll speak to your brother before the season turns, but I have been without Samael for five hundred years.” His hand rose to his chest, as though feeling an old wound. “My soul has been torn for centuries, and I have pressed on, in the hopes of finding you again.” He turned to Sam, and his blue eyes were cold and hard. “You’ll have to forgive me if I have difficulty sympathizing with your brother’s plight.”

Sam’s fingers tightened around the shirt, holding tight.

“Fine. You want to give it a month? Fine. But the countdown isn’t on my side, it’s on yours. Because my family will find me and when they do, they’ll kill you for what you’ve done.”

Cas’s smirk was infuriating.
“Will they, now?”

“We’ve killed stronger things for less,” Sam hissed.

“I don’t doubt it. You’re very good at that, aren’t you? Rooting out the creatures that dare to inhabit your world—”

Cas’s voice was rising but he caught it, let it out in a long exhale.

“I don’t want to fight with you, Sam. I’m not the monster you think I am.”

“Prove it. Let me go.”

“No. Ask again and you won’t like the consequences.”

Sam let out a laugh.

“Is that how it’s going to be? That’s how our relationship is, you tell me what I can do, what I can say, where I can go- why do you even need me? You can crush anybody into the right shape—”

“It wasn’t like this!” Cas shouted, and there was an echo in his voice that made Sam’s skin crawl. “It was never like this! I’m doing the best I can with what you’re giving me to work with, which is nothing!”

“Nothing but my face, right? So why hold me a year? Why drag out the charade? Kill me now, you can dress me up nice and I won’t even fight—”

Cas’s nose wrinkled in distaste.

“That’s disgusting.”

“I’ve seen worse.”

“You’re upset, and this conversation is going nowhere productive. Do you need anything?”

“Bolt cutters and a phone.”

Cas huffed out a breath through his nose. He reached out, pressing his hand to the wall.

“My bedroom is just on the other side of this wall. If you call for me, I will be able to hear you.”

“I won’t call.”

“Suit yourself,” Cas said, standing. “But if you change your mind, I will be able to hear you. I will see you in the morning.”

Sam watched him leave, kept glaring at the door even after it was shut. He could hear the deadbolts on the far side sliding home. Cas had left the light on, but that was fine. Sam didn’t think he would be sleeping too much.

He looked around the room. Cas had removed most of the things he’d brought in, after he’d finished making his alterations.

The bathroom door no longer had a knob- there was only a rough hole where it had been. The bed had obviously been moved, and the bedside table was nowhere to be seen. The bookshelf and the paperbacks remained- not surprising. The shelves were probably made of particleboard and would
crumble if they were put to a use any more demanding than remaining unsteadily upright.

There was another change, too, Sam noticed. There was a small flat plate screwed to the floor in one corner. A ring protruded from the plate, and Sam assumed he would end up chained to it in some fashion, before too long.

He closed his eyes and let himself relax onto the mattress. It was strange to be sleeping with his hands pulled up and out, but it wasn’t uncomfortable, necessarily. He tightened his hold on the t-shirt, reminding himself that it was still there.

There were footsteps in the room next door, and Sam froze, then let out a breath. There was no point trying to hide. He knew that, the training just ran a little too deep to be shut off that easily.

Cas moved around his room, humming lightly. Water ran, a closet door opened, bedsprings creaked. Sam tried not to imagine what he was doing. The first step to killing any creature was to know it, know it’s habits, it’s routine, it’s basic needs… and yet somehow Sam couldn’t bring himself to picture Cas dressing for bed like a normal person.

He closed his eyes, forcing his breathing to steady. He needed to focus. He couldn’t be drifting in and out like he’d done after- in the bathroom. He had to figure out a plan, some course of action, before Cas- came back.

The hairs along the base of his neck stood up and he pushed back a shiver.

He couldn’t drop out like that. Not again. Because Cas was going to come back and he knew what would happen then.

His breath was trying to come faster, but he wouldn’t let it. He focused on breathing, slow and steady, letting the air out, drawing it back in. There was plenty in the room, the feelings to the contrary were a panic response.

He set the shirt down carefully, making sure it wouldn’t slide out of his grasp. He began a very slow, methodical inspection of his bindings. He could see them, if he twisted his neck up just right. Thick, leather, padlocked shut. They fit snugly against his wrists. He wasn’t slipping them, not unless he dislocated his thumb, and he didn’t have the leverage to do that from this angle. In any case, he couldn’t do it silently and he’d have to do both thumbs, which meant he’d be making his escape with two crippled hands.

There was silence from the room next door.

Sam reached up, trying to feel for the plate that attached the chains to the wall, but the slats of the headboard were too close together. He couldn’t get his hands between them far enough to touch the wall.

He yanked anyway, pulling at them as hard as the angle would let him, with no effect at all.

He slumped back onto the bed, staring at the ceiling, thinking.

He couldn’t fall asleep. He was going to be up all night, he knew that much already, there was no way he’d be able to drift off with an unknown creature in the next room over, just waiting for the sun to rise so he could-

He was painfully aware of his own nakedness. The sheet had settled low on his hips, too low, and he caught it between his knees, trying to pull it higher.
He scooted his body into a sitting position, raising his knees to his chest and wrapping his arms around them as best as he could. He wanted to rest against the wall, but he made do with leaning back against the headboard. He didn’t want to touch the wall.

He let his head fall back, looking at the ceiling. He needed to plan. He had eight hours or so, probably, and he needed to come up with something to do, before then. Some plan.

There had to be something he could do. To talk him out of it. To make him see reason.

There had to be.

It was hot. Beastly hot, nauseatingly hot, the kind of hot that stole all life from the body.

Sam sprawled on a couch in the courtyard, stripped down to the absolute bare minimum he could wear without causing problems. He was in the shade now, not that it mattered, not in this heat. The air didn’t move, not even a little half-breeze to chill the sticky sweat beading on his skin.

He turned his head to eye the courtyard, the clear water of the impluvium flat as glass. He had half a mind to stride over and throw himself into the pool, but it had been in the sun all morning- it was probably hotter than his own blood, by now. He groaned.

“Staying busy as usual,” Cas told him, emerging from inside the house. Cas, somehow, was fully dressed, though his hands and knees were dirty and scraped, and there was a smudge of what looked like mud on his cheek.

“We’re going north next summer, I don’t care if I have to carry you on my back,” Sam muttered at him, shifting to try to find a cool spot on the couch.

“We may not be here by then. I want to finish the mosaic, and then we can move on.”

Cas sat next to him, leaning down to nuzzle at his shoulder.

“Where would you like to go next, beloved?”

“Stop it, you’re getting me dirty.”

Cas grinned against the nape of his neck, and then Sam felt his lover’s strong arms around him and he was being lifted.

Sam swatted at him playfully, laughing, and Cas pulled him into an easy bridal carry.

“We’ll just have to clean you off then, won’t we?”

“Don’t even think about it- Cas!” Sam protested indignantly, then shrieked when he was dumped unceremoniously into the pool. It was cooler than he’d expected it to be. He sat waist-deep in the water, laughing.

“Is that better, love?” Cas asked, and Sam splashed him. Cas was standing between him and the sun, and he had to shade his eyes to look up at the other man. The light put him into silhouette, forming a halo around his face, and for a moment, Sam saw the shadow of wings, dark and terrible,
spreading from his shoulders.

And then Cas shifted, and the shadow was gone. He leaned down, offering his hand. Sam took it, but rather than rising to his feet, he pulled Cas down into the water with him, splashing him relentlessly as he spluttered.

“Shouldn’t you be working on your mosaic?” Sam asked innocently, and received a face full of water for his trouble.

Cas’s wet clothes stuck to his skin, and Sam felt a stirring in his lower belly, his mind finally on something other than the oppressive heat.

“Maybe we will be here next summer, if I keep progressing at this rate,” Cas groused as Sam pulled him close, kissing the cool water off his lips.

“Good,” Sam said, moving to kiss the water off his jaw. “I love this language on your tongue.”

“You love every language on my tongue.”

“Maybe it’s you I love, then, Castiel,” Sam murmured, and Cas laughed.

Sam bolted awake, not realizing he’d been asleep. The sound that had awakened him repeated, two hard knocks, and then the door opened. Sam’s heart dropped.

“You knocked?” he asked incredulously. “Were you going to make sure I was decent?”

His knees were still pulled up to his chest, the sheet feeling like poor protection from what was to come.

“It seemed polite,” Cas said, shrugging. He stayed standing by the door. Sam laughed.

“Know what else is polite?”

“Please, let’s not start this way.”

Sam stared. Cas held out his hands in a pacifying gesture.

“I feel badly about how yesterday went. I know you don’t believe me, but there’s no reason it needs to be that way. I’d like for today to be better. We can both be reasonable about this.”

There was a hysterical sound rising in Sam’s throat, but he kept it down.

“I don’t want to hurt you, Sam. I never want to hurt you. And if you can be… calm, and let me do the things I need to do, there’s no reason for them to cause you any discomfort.”

“I’m pretty sure some things are inherently uncomfortable.”

Cas didn’t react.

“After the blood, you’ll need to bathe again. Other than that- is there any order you’d prefer? We
can have breakfast first, if you’d like?”

Sam opened his mouth, then closed it again. Food would delay the spell maybe half an hour- but he wasn’t sure he could force it down, and if he did, he might puke, during. He didn’t want that, didn’t want Cas to see that.

“I had a thought, last- last night,” Sam said quietly. He looked up at Cas. “There’s nothing I can say? You’re determined to do this?”

Cas nodded once. Sam’s stomach twisted.

“Then drug me. Those blue pills you gave me when I first came to. Then you can- do whatever you need to.”

Sam’s voice got thick toward the end. He couldn’t meet Cas’s eyes, he didn’t want to. He didn’t want this, but if it had to happen, he didn’t want to remember. Didn’t want to know.

“Sam…”

Cas’s voice was sad.

“I’m not agreeing to it!” Sam snapped. “I don’t want you, Cas!”

Cas crossed the room in silence, reaching for Sam’s face. Sam pulled away as the man caressed his cheek, but with his arms bound, there wasn’t anything he could do about it.

“I’d like to try something. Something I learned about yesterday, from the people who sold me- all this stuff,” Cas said, gesturing to the chains and the stainless cuffs discarded on the floor. “Something I think might help you.”

Sam balked.

“You’re taking advice from the employees at a fucking sex shop?”

“Yes. They actually had quite a bit of interesting knowledge on the subject of power imbalances in a sexual relationship.”

Sam swallowed hard.

Sexual relationship.

Cas thought they had a sexual relationship.

“This goes way beyond just a power imbalance,” Sam said. “Do you understand that? This is not a relationship. I am being held here against my will and you are assaulting me. Do you understand that?”

“I have a relationship. If not with you, then with the man you have locked away inside your head. He was here first.”

Cas removed something black from his pocket, unfolding it and showing it to Sam.

“I’d like to put this on you,” he said quietly, holding out the blindfold. Sam pulled away from it involuntarily.

“Absolutely not.”
“One of the women I spoke to swore by it, for getting through difficult scenes. She said it helped her focus and accept.”

“I don’t want to accept!” Sam shouted.

“Then what? You want to keep fighting me, have me keep hurting you? Is that what you want?”

“Better that than give in.”

Cas looked at him for a long time. Sam stared back, not giving him an inch. When Cas turned away, it was to wipe his face with the sleeve of his shirt.

“You’re just like him,” Cas said quietly, and he was looking up, at the ceiling, at something maybe only he could see. He dropped the blindfold, and a second later, pulled his shirt over his head, dropping it to the floor as well. Sam’s heart beat harder, he could feel it inside his ribs, hammering. “Let me do something for you.”

“No.”

Sam pulled his knees up further, trying to make himself a smaller target and knowing that it would fail. The chain between his ankles clinked, reminding him that even under the thin sheet, he was bound.

Cas climbed onto the bed beside him, close enough that Sam could have let his fingertips brush against his bare torso.

“I need you to lie back down,” Cas said quietly, and Sam put his forehead on his knees, trying to stifle the sobs clawing their way up his throat. “Don’t make me force you.”

“I c-can’t.”

It was true. Sam didn’t think his body would respond to commands right now, even if he were capable of giving them.

“I’m going to move the sheet away now.”

Sam closed his eyes as Cas pulled the thin covering away, leaving him completely exposed. And then Cas’s hands were on his hips, pulling them forward until he was flat on his back again. He wanted to kick out but his legs wouldn’t respond, wouldn’t pull out of their protective huddle. Cas forced them flat, pressing his knee high between Sam’s thighs and using his weight to hold the teen down.

Sam couldn’t keep the sobs in now, and he kept his eyes closed, trying not to let the tears show, even as his breath came in small gasps. Cas leaned down over him, pressing his lips to the side of Sam’s mouth, and the tingle-chill of grace raced through his body. It found nothing to heal and so instead it simply circled, bouncing off his extremities like ripples in a pond, until it eventually dissipated.

Cas’s hands made their way down his body, stroking him lovingly, making Sam’s hair stand on end. Shivers travelled down his body, making goose bumps rise on his skin.

Cas lingered at his belly, stroking the hair that grew there, smoothing it down, drawing ever closer to the fork of his legs.

“Just get it over with.”
He meant it to sound disinterested, gruff, but his voice cracked at the end and he buried his face in his shoulder. Cas had paused, and was looking at him- he could feel the man’s gaze on him. He heard Cas shift, lean down over him, and then he felt Cas’s mouth on the soft head of his cock.

He twisted his hips to the side, but Cas was ready for him, his fingers splayed over Sam’s hips, keeping him down. He pulled back and then went deeper, taking Sam deep into his throat.

Sam stared. He couldn’t help it. Cas’s mouth was hot velvet and god how many times had he jerked off to the thought of some girl doing this to him someday-

His cock was hardening, to the point where Cas couldn’t get the whole thing in his mouth any more, and he was stroking at the base with one hand and Sam was transfixed.

Two years ago Jackie Swenson had told the lunch table that the best way to give head was to squeeze the base of a guy’s dong, and she’d demonstrated by stroking the tip of a breadstick and that visual had taken first place in Sam’s spank bank ever since.

This was not like that.

Cas’s hand was bigger, the skin rougher, and there was dark hair across the back of each knuckle. He hadn’t shaved this morning, and there was stubble grazing across the inside of Sam’s thigh and his tongue was flicking over the head of Sam’s cock and there was a guy going down on him and he was totally hard.

Sam stared.

It was his body, obviously it was his body, and his cock, and that was all normal, and then, right next to that, there was Cas, a guy, not in any manner a feminine guy, not at all, and Cas was going down on him, and he was hard. It was like an optical illusion, determined not to make sense no matter how Sam looked and still he couldn’t look away. The muscles in Cas’s shoulders rippled as his head bobbed, and he let out little moans here and there as he worked Sam’s shaft.

“No,” Sam breathed, and Cas glanced up at him, his eyes a startling blue, and Sam had a moment of déjà vu, just one, just a flash, and it sent him over the edge and he was coming into Cas’s throat.

Cas cleaned him up while his breathing slowed, licking his way up Sam’s softening cock, cleaning the evidence off him in wet little swipes.

He was right. It didn’t hurt. It might even have been nice, under other circumstances. In this case it just left him kind of boneless, not sick exactly, just tired.

He felt Cas move, felt him push his knees further apart, and he whimpered then, because his ankles were still chained, and the cuffs were biting into his skin, but Cas saw too. He adjusted again, moving closer, kneeling on the bed between Sam’s legs. Sam’s ass was pulled up onto Cas’s lap, making his back arch. His legs were wrapped around Cas’s waist in an odd parody of a lover’s embrace.

This wasn’t where he was supposed to be, Sam knew.

Cas was taking the little tube of lubricant out of his pocket, and Sam stared at it dully.

“This shouldn’t be as bad as it was yesterday,” Cas was telling him.

“If you don’t fight me, I can prepare you,” Cas said.
“This might be cold,” Cas said. “Sorry.”

And there it was again, that strange and foreign touch, the cold slickness of Cas’s fingers pressing against his hole.

He wasn’t supposed to be here.

He knew how this worked. Dean had sat him down one day and laid it all out.

For someday, Dean had said.

The most important thing, Dean had said, was to make sure she was wet.

Otherwise it’s crap for everyone, Dean said, while Cas slid a finger into Sam’s body.

Being wet is the key.

It felt like he had to use the bathroom, but it was just a second finger, stretching him, getting him ready.

Cas was watching him carefully, murmuring things to him, telling him he was beautiful, just like Dean had told Sam to do, all those years ago.

“’M not a girl,” Sam muttered, but there wasn’t any force behind it. Cas was working him open, getting him ready, and in a couple minutes he’d slick up his cock and fuck him.

Sam turned his head, looking to the wall.

They’d never talked about guys.

Never even thought it was a possibility.

Cas’s fingers withdrew and Sam pictured the look on Dean’s face, if he knew.

Cas leaned forward, sliding into him easily, and it didn’t hurt this time. It wasn’t great, but it didn’t hurt. Cas wasn’t moving as much, just kind of rolling his hips upwards, thrusting shallow.

Wait ‘til Dean heard he’d gotten a blowjob, Sam thought. Didn’t even have to get all the way to Stanford, didn’t have to talk up a sorority girl or anything.

Wait ‘til Dad heard, Sam thought.

Cas’s hands on his cock, stroking him, getting him hard.

Not so bad, Cas was telling him.

Sam thought of Dean, kicking down the door, one of his heroic rescues, standing dumbstruck in the doorway while his little brother gave it up to a dude.

His face, though.

His face would be priceless.

Sam smiled, and Cas came with a gasp.
The blood still burned, the heat penetrating deep into the muscles of Sam’s back as Cas rubbed him. His face was pillowed on his free arm, the other stretched up above him. Cas was straddling his ass, his bare ass, still slick with come and lube. Cas was talking to him but Sam wasn’t listening. He wanted Cas to hurry up so he could go take a shower.

Cas cuffed his wrists together before releasing him from the wall shackle, and Sam trudged wordlessly into the bathroom.
Day 3 (29 days until freedom)

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Sam stood under the water and wondered if he was still a virgin.

He didn’t think so.

The towel was still damp from the night before.

He dried off as best he could. His back still itched a little bit, and he thought maybe he hadn’t gotten all the blood off.

He shuffled back into the bedroom, towel clasped awkwardly around his waist.

The door was open. Daylight flooded the living room. Sam stared.

Cas was sitting on the bed. He’d straightened the sheets and blanket, letting the loose shackles lie on the pillow.

Sam’s jeans were on the bed next to him. Sam stared at them. His boxers were sitting beside them, folded, for christ’s sake.

Cas looked up at him hopefully. There were two steaming bowls in his lap. Chili. He held one of them out to Sam.

“It’s a little overcooked,” he said apologetically. “I’d meant to have it Saturday night, but. Well.”

But he’d been busy, Sam thought bitterly. He ignored the bowl.

“Can I have my pants back?”

“Of course.”

“You’ll have to unchain my feet.”

Cas nodded, setting the bowls to the side.

Sam approached him warily, then sat on the edge of the bed. His cuffed hands were in his lap, holding tight to the towel.

“It smells good,” Sam remarked, as Cas fished the keys out of his pocket. The older man nodded.

“It’s a South American recipe. It’s made with green chilies and chicken.” He knelt on the floor, turning Sam’s cuff so he could reach the keyhole. He only unlocked one cuff, and he didn’t look away when Sam stood to dress. “I’ll teach you to make it.”

“I’d like that,” Sam responded, and then he was fisting his fingers in Cas’s hair and pulling, hard,
driving his knee straight up into the bridge of Cas’s nose.

Cas fell back, clutching his bloody face with a curse. Sam didn’t wait to hear it, just bolted.

He didn’t need to go far this time. He wasn’t trying to make it to civilization. He just needed a phone. A phone. Preferably his phone, but any phone would work, really.

The living room looked the same as he remembered, television, couch, no sign of Sam’s knapsack. Or a phone.

Sam went left, through a doorway to the kitchen. It was big- stainless steel everywhere. Clean. A small table stood in one corner, flanked by two wooden chairs. Papers were strewn across it in piles, and by the wall, a phone cradle. No handset.

Sam rifled through the paperwork, awkward with his hands chained, but they weren’t concealing the handset underneath them.

He glanced around the counters, not seeing the handset or his knapsack on the marble surface.

He looked back to the cradle. There was a locator button. He hesitated for just a second before pushing it, and from the distance, a high pitched trilling sound began to repeat.

It was coming from the living room, the direction he’d come. He frowned, he hadn’t seen-

Cas appeared in the doorway. He held up the handset without a word, punching the button to silence the ringer. Sam glared at him.

“Are you done?” Cas asked. Sam didn’t answer. Cas was going to hurt him for this, he already knew that, and he’d be lying if he said he wasn’t afraid.

He cast around the room, looking for something he could use as a weapon. There was a knife rack- magnetic, stuck to the wall beside the oven- but it was empty. Sam had a feeling the drawers would be empty, too. Cas had predicted this.

There was a crock pot, though, still three-quarters full of the chili that Cas had brought him.

Sam went for it, hooking two fingers through the handle of the glass lid and winging it at Cas as hard as he could. He didn’t wait to see if it landed, just retreated through the doorway on the far side of the kitchen from where Cas stood.

He didn’t know what he was hoping for, but finding himself outside again was not an improvement. He was naked, barefoot, his hands chained- he’d die of exposure before he got any distance, which he wouldn’t. Not with Cas on his trail.

The air was misty, cold, and he shivered as he looked around. It was no good going for the truck, he already knew that. But there was another building- a barn. Cas had mentioned a workshop- if there were metalworking tools in there, that might be exactly what he needed.

Sam bolted for the barn doors, ignoring the cold and the feeling of stones cutting into the soles of his feet. The blood would leave a trail but he didn’t have time to worry about that now.

Halfway across the yard, the kitchen door slammed open. Sam didn’t look back. Cas would catch him or he wouldn’t, there was no point looking back now-

He made it to the doors, shoving them open with all his strength. They rolled easily along the
tracks, banging into the stop on the far side.

Lights flickered on automatically, filling the space with a shining silver light.

Wings, Sam thought, and then Cas was on him.

“I went back for the blindfold,” Cas said gruffly, twisting his fingers in Sam’s hair and shoving his head down. He forced Sam forward in a kind of bent-over shuffle, heading for the center of the room.

There was a wide table covered in miscellaneous metal pieces and Cas cleared it with a sweep of his arm. He hauled Sam up onto the flat surface and Sam scrambled away the moment he was released. Cas caught him easily, hauling back and slapping him across the face. Sam staggered, and Cas shoved him back onto the table, one hand around his throat while the other yanked his wrists above his head. Sam kicked and writhed and Cas hit him again.

The wrist cuffs were secured to something- Sam couldn’t tell what. Cas moved to the far side of the table and grabbed the cuff still dangling from his right foot. Cas knelt and wrapped the chain around the table leg, pulling it almost painfully tight before securing it.

“That fucking hurts,” Sam snapped. Cas ignored him, leaving and returning a moment later with a length of rope. Sam felt fear twisting in his belly and he kicked out at Cas with his free leg, ineffectively, as it turned out. The man looped it easily around his ankle, pulling it tight and securing it to the other table leg.

Sam pulled at the bonds, hard enough that he was pretty sure his wrists were bleeding, frustrated screams building in his throat. Cas pulled a handkerchief from his pocket, rolling it over twice and shoving it between Sam’s jaws. Sam tried to spit it out, but Cas’s hand was over his mouth, keeping it there.

“If you spit that out, I’m going to tape your mouth shut. Do you understand me?”

Sam nodded. Cas withdrew, and Sam immediately spat the makeshift gag out.

“Fuck you.”

Cas sighed and retreated to the workbench, returning with a roll of duct tape. He held it up where Sam could see.

“Happy now?”

He tore off a strip the length of his hand, pressing it over the hard line of Sam’s mouth. He added two more, just as long, just to be sure. Sam breathed hard through his nose, still glaring at his captor, refusing to give him an inch.

“I’d like to tell you something, and I think it’s going to take something a little more concrete than just words.”

Cas leaned over the table, searching Sam’s face for something that he didn’t find. He sighed, and disappeared from Sam’s vision. A few seconds later, a reedy whoosh sound filled the air.

“Before we begin here, I just want you to know that I can heal you. And I will. I don’t want you to be frightened of me, but I don’t want to have to fight you every day, either.” The whooshing sound continued. “This is going to scare you. Unfortunately. But I want to make it clear just how scared you should be. I can heal you the way your own body would heal, or I can restore you. Or both. Or
neither. Whatever else happens, none of this has to be permanent.”

Sam closed his eyes, trying not to listen to the sound behind Cas’s voice. He knew a switch when he heard one. That’s fine. Okay. He’d been switched before. Never on his belly, that was going to suck, but he could handle it.

“Open your eyes. I want you to see this. Just this.”

Sam clenched them shut, then looked up at Cas. Cas wanted him to watch? Fine.

Cas was rolling up his sleeves, letting them rest just above his elbows.

“I want you to know just how much damage this can do, if I let it.”

He picked the switch up off the table, and Sam’s heart dropped. It was thin, made of some light, springy metal. It shone a cruel silver in the light, and Sam’s stomach twisted. He knew how much damage that could do. He grit his teeth. He wasn’t going to beg.

Cas flicked it through the air a few times, then brought it down hard onto his own forearm. The skin split instantly, hot blood splattering down onto the table beside Sam’s chest. Cas turned his arm toward Sam, so he could see.

It looked like he’d been gouged with a knife. The wound was healing, but it was probably half an inch deep at it’s worst. Sam swallowed hard, imagining that springy little cane laying across his belly, his chest, his underarms-

Cas picked up the handkerchief from before, using it to wipe the blood from his arm.

“I can hit harder than that,” Cas said evenly. “I could probably lay you open to the bone, if I felt so inclined.”

Sam wasn’t going to beg. He focused on his breathing, keeping it steady as Cas circled the table, looking him over.

“You’re beautiful,” Cas remarked. “And you always have been. The last thing in the world I want to do is hurt you. But I won’t lose Samael. Not again. And I won’t continue to fight you on this.”

He paused just to the left of Sam’s shoulder, drawing the black blindfold out of his pocket. Sam jerked away from it, not getting far. He could feel his heart beginning to race- whatever Cas planned to do to him, he wanted to see it coming, he needed-

“You have to understand that you have no control here,” Cas told him, slipping the dark cloth over his eyes. Sam shook his head, trying to dislodge it, but there was velcro or something on the back and it held fast. “And if you can accept that, I think that this will go over easier for both of us.”

The cane whipped through the air and Sam froze, waiting for pain to blossom across his body.

It didn’t come.

Cas set it gently across his thighs, letting it rest there, letting it’s miniscule weight speak for itself.

“I could punish you,” Cas said quietly. “For yesterday’s escape attempt, for today’s. That could be the standard, if you’d like- every time you seek to escape your bonds, I could switch you until you were unconscious from the pain. I’m fairly certain you’d develop an anxiety disorder before you stopped trying to escape, but it might be worth a shot.”
His voice grew distant as he talked, and Sam could hear him moving around the room. He had a sinking feeling Cas wasn’t going to whip him—his captor had something a lot worse planned.

“I have these, too,” Cas said, laying a heavier tool on Sam’s chest. “They’re tin snips. They’ll cut through bone without too much trouble. I’m assuming you know how to pick a lock, but I also assume you’d have difficulty without your thumbs.”

Sam’s stomach lurched. There was no way Cas was serious. There’s no way he was that crazy.

His hands formed involuntary fists. Cas didn’t react, just kept talking.

“Or I could leave the thumbs, and take the last joint of each finger. There’s also the matter of the phone. I enjoyed talking to you in the cab of the truck, I think you could be a great conversational partner. I’d hate to give that up, but I also think you’d be far less likely to attack me for a phone if you were missing your tongue.”

Sam desperately wished he could see what Cas was doing. The other man had moved away from the table again, and Sam could only imagine what he was going to come back with. He tried to keep his breathing even, drawing in each breath deep through his nose. His heart was pounding and he knew he had to slow it down—if Cas cut him, he’d only bleed out faster.

“I don’t expect you’ll know this one,” Cas said, setting something heavy on the table, right at the fork of Sam’s spread legs. “It’s a butane torch. Nod if you know what that is.”

Sam could feel the blood draining out of his face, could feel the adrenaline rising in his body, and he whined, pulling at his bonds. They held tight.

“It works. I use it all the time,” Cas continued, and there was a click, followed by the steady hiss of gas burning. Sam could feel the heat of it on his belly. He couldn’t breathe. His body jerked against the bonds, even as he tried to stay still—the last thing he wanted was to knock the torch over. He tried to beg, but the tape reduced his pleas to wordless mumbles.

“Your palms,” Cas said. He was walking around again. “Or the soles of your feet. You wouldn’t be running too far if that were the case.”

The torch clicked off, and Sam let out a sob of relief. He was crying openly now, too terrified to try to stay stoic. His nose was running, and it was getting hard to breathe through the tape. He could feel the canister of the torch resting gently against the inside of his thigh, just below his balls.

Cas was down by the end of the table, doing something to the cuff around his right ankle. Sam wanted to kick at him, but he couldn’t make himself move.

“I could take your eyes, Sam,” Cas said sadly. “It would be terrible to see your face without them, they’ve always been one of your best features. But I could take them away from you. You might still be able to escape without them— but I’m the only one who could ever heal you.”

Sam moaned, shaking his head desperately. His whole body was wracked with shivers, and he couldn’t make them stop. Cas’s voice came closer, and Sam felt the man’s hand rest on his cock.

“There are other things I could take, too,” Cas said, and Sam dissolved into a stream of unintelligible pleas, begging through the tape.

Cas let him finish, waited until his captive dropped into deep, wordless sobs, and then he brushed his thumb across the bridge of Sam’s cheek.
“I want you to think about this, Sam,” he said as he wiped the tears away. “The epoxy takes fifteen minutes to set. And during that fifteen minutes, I will not touch you. I will not speak. I will not answer. This time is for you— I want you to think, very carefully, about how badly I’ve treated you. And how badly I could treat you if I chose to. I want you to think about the things that I risk by continuing to leave you able-bodied and whole, and I want you to think very carefully about how you want to repay me for that risk.”

What epoxy? Sam had time to think, and then Cas was retreating across the open space, settling down into something that sounded like a rolling chair.

And then there was silence.

Complete, utter silence.

Sam didn’t move. Didn’t dare pull against his bonds. Cas had promised him fifteen minutes but he was afraid of what the man would do if he were provoked into returning sooner.

Sobs were threatening to claw their way up Sam’s throat. The darkness was complete, and he couldn’t help flinching when he imagined Cas returning. He couldn’t see. He wouldn’t know. The man could be right there, bringing something sharp and terrible down onto Sam’s exposed skin—

His body was screaming at him to run, but there was nowhere he could go, nothing he could do—

Something clattered against the roof of the barn and Sam screamed.

He didn’t know how long it had been. A minute? Two? Five? Would Cas even come back after fifteen?

It occurred to Sam that Cas could just leave him here, bound and helpless and waiting—

He was panicking. He was panicking and he knew it and he couldn’t make it stop. He couldn’t breathe.

The tape was too much.

He gasped in air, huge lungfuls, sucking through the spaces where the tape had pulled away from his skin, it was sticky on his tongue and it tasted like chemicals—

The tape pulled away from his mouth and he could breathe but it meant that Cas was there and his time was up—

“Please, no, Cas, please—”

He was babbling and Cas was shushing him, wiping the tears from his cheeks, but he still couldn’t see. Cas’s other hand came to rest on his belly and Sam arched, keening, trying to escape whatever was coming.

“Have you thought about it?” Cas asked quietly.

“Yes, Cas, please, don’t, I’ll do anything, I swear, please, let me see, please just let me see.”

“In a minute,” Cas said. His hand stroked gently down the side of Sam’s face and Sam forced himself to be still, to be silent, to try to listen for whatever it was that Cas was doing. “I want to make sure we’re clear on what’s happening here.”

“Yes, Cas, I’m clear, please—”
Cas’s hand closed over his mouth, not hard enough to cut off the air, but enough that Sam knew he was meant to be silent.

“This is three times now you’ve tried to fight me. I’m stronger than you. You will not win in a physical confrontation. Can you accept that?”

Sam nodded, once.

“You cannot kill me, not with your hands, not with a weapon you can wield. If you run, I will come after you, and I will find you long before you reach anyone else. Can you accept that?”

Sam hesitated, then nodded again. Cas’s other hand had vanished from his belly and he shivered as he waited for the touch to reappear.

“Twenty nine days. After twenty nine days I will take the chain off, and you’ll be free to leave, if you still want to. I swear on your life. Now, the last and most important question. And I want you to think before you answer. Can you cooperate and act civilized for that time? Or do I need to force you?”

Cas took his hand away from Sam’s mouth and Sam had to stop himself from begging again. It was impossible, there’s no way he’d be able to do this for a month, not with what Cas was doing to him, he’d fight, he wouldn’t be able to help it, and then-

Something touched him, just below his ribs on one side, and he jerked away before he could even process what it was.

“No, please, I won’t fight. I won’t- please don’t, whatever that is, please don’t, please-”

“Shh, Sam. It’s alright.” It was just his fingertips, Sam realized, Cas was stroking the taut skin of his belly and he gasped in relief even as his stomach turned. “I know this is hard on you. I know you feel like you need to fight. But you don’t, Sam. You can just let this happen. You’re helpless and you’re hurting yourself fighting it.”

“Just let me see, Cas, please-”

“You don’t need to, beloved, what did I just say?”

“I don’t-”

“Tell me what I just said.”

Sam swallowed hard.

“I can let this happen.”

“Why.”

“Because I’m- there’s nothing I can do about it.”

The words came out almost inaudible.

“Good. Then there’s no reason I’ll ever need to do any of these terrible things to you. You don’t need to be afraid, as long as you remember to behave.”

Sam clenched his eyes.
“I’ll try.”

“Then it’s all forgiven.” Cas hesitated. “Say it.”

“It’s all forgiven,” Sam whispered.

Cas’s lips were warm where they pressed to Sam’s mouth. His tongue flicked against Sam’s lower lip, and Sam hesitantly opened his mouth.

Cas tasted like coffee. His kiss was firm, delving, and Sam kept his eyes closed, letting Cas do what he wanted. Eventually, he pulled away.

His fingers ghosted across Sam’s thighs as he removed the torch, the tin snips, the cane.

The tension on Sam’s arms let up, and he realized Cas had loosened whatever tie kept the handcuffs attached to the table. Hesitantly, he reached for the blindfold. Cas didn’t stop him. Sam pulled it away and sat up, blinking in the light.

The first thing that he saw was Cas’s blood, cooling on the table. He didn’t look at it. Instead, his eyes were drawn to the end of the workspace and the small plastic tubes sitting there.

“It’s cold weld,” Cas told him.

There was a small clamp around the cuff on his right ankle, and Cas set about removing it, showing Sam the place where the keyhole had been.

“After the month is up, I’ll get the bolt cutters and take it off.”

Sam stared at it, dumbstruck. He could see where the white epoxy had been forced into the keyhole, into the hinge. He wasn’t getting that open. Even if he could pick it, the hinge was stuck shut.

He closed his eyes, refusing to look at it, refusing to see it locked around him.

Nothing I can do about it.

He opened his eyes, exhaling. Cas was inspecting a length of chain that trailed along the floor. Two sizes of chain were linked by a second clamp, and Cas yanked at them, testing the hold.

“This should make it a little easier on you,” he said, gesturing with the chain. He began wrapping it around his arm, drawing it up, and Sam saw that it was linked to the cuff around his ankle.

“Let me down,” he said hollowly, unable to take his eyes off the chain. “Let me down, I’m going to be sick.”

Cas sized up the knot around Sam’s left ankle and went for the trash can instead, dragging it over to the worktable just in time for Sam to empty his stomach into it. There wasn’t much there- he spat a mouthful of bile onto the assorted metal scraps and tried to remember the last time he’d eaten.

Cas stroked his hair away from his face, and Sam flinched away, wiping his mouth with one cuffed wrist. His mouth tasted sour.

“I’d offer you some water, but we’d have to go back into the house,” Cas said apologetically. He was still wrapping the loose end of the chain around his arm. Sam guessed there was maybe fifty feet there. “Can you walk or do I need to carry you?”
“I’ll walk.”

Cas nodded, and untied the rope.

The chain clinked when Sam slid off the table, taking his first hesitant steps toward the barn doors. The floor was littered with debris, but he’d rather walk back bleeding than have Cas touch him again. Maybe if he got tetanus, the man would have to take him to a hospital.

He didn’t step on anything, making it all the way to the door without incident. It was raining again, and the ground was cold and gritty as Sam made his way across the yard toward the house. The chain pulled awkwardly at the cuff, but he didn’t look at it. He looked at the sky.

Chapter End Notes

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Holy shit, Cas, take it down a notch, jesus.
Sam sat on the edge of the tub, watching the water pooling around his muddy feet. There was a cut on his right heel that was deep enough to bleed sluggishly, the red mixing with the brown as it spiraled down the drain.

Out in the living room, he could hear power tools.

Sam shut off the water. He was clean, or as clean as he was going to get.

He stepped out onto the tile, leaving tiny half-moons of crimson on the clean surface.

*Good.*

The chain snaked off through the doorway, through a pair of boxers and his jeans, before disappearing under the door. Sam pulled the clothes on and tried not to feel grateful for the meager protection they offered.

It was almost noon. So he had… maybe six hours?

Until Cas wanted him again.

Sam shivered, just as the door to the bedroom swung wide.

“Good, you’re done. Come see.”

Sam stared at him dully, then followed him out into the living room, leaving a trail of spiteful blood smears behind him as he went. He’d almost reached the door when he paused and turned back, pulling the blanket off the bed and wrapping it around his shoulders. Cas hadn’t left him a shirt, and he didn’t want the other man looking at him.

Cas noted the change and raised an eyebrow, but didn’t comment. Instead, he gestured to the chain, where it trailed through the bedroom doorway and across the floor.

There was a plate screwed to the wall, vertically, and Sam could see where the screws had been sunk deep into the stud. The plate contained a single eye hook, and it was to that that the chain was fastened.

“I thought this might be easier than just keeping you strapped to the bed,” Cas explained, surveying his handiwork. “You’ll be able to reach the living room and parts of the kitchen. You can dress and undress without needing to be unchained, and if I need to disconnect the chain for any reason…” Cas shrugged. “I can lock the bedroom door so you aren’t tempted to fight me over it.”

Sam knelt, taking the chain in both hands and yanking.

The plate didn’t move. Didn’t even groan.

Sam pulled again, leaning his whole weight against the chain.

Nothing.
He dropped the chain then, and began walking along the wall. Cas watched him silently as he walked into the kitchen, trailing the chain behind him as he went.

It pulled tight just short of the electric range. Sam turned, walking across the open area to the kitchen island.

The crock pot had been moved safely out of his reach, but he could get to the sink.

There were a number of drawers he could reach, as well. He opened the top one to find it full of cutlery- forks, spoons, chopsticks.

The knives were notably absent.

Sam closed the drawer, and opened the one below it.

“Do you need help finding something?” Cas asked, coming up behind him.

“No,” Sam answered. The second drawer held office supplies- tape, pencils, a stapler. Sam picked out a felt tipped marker and closed the drawer.

The third and fourth drawers were empty.

He moved back around the island, being careful not to touch Cas as he passed.

He circled the living room, marking out his perimeter. He could reach the couch, the television, part of the bookshelf.

The front door was out of his reach, as were the windows.

“You’re bleeding!” Cas exclaimed suddenly. Sam didn’t respond, just kept marking his perimeter in red crescents.

Cas’s bedroom door was right next to his. Sam paused with his hand on the doorknob.

He’d be able to navigate Cas’s room almost as thoroughly as his own. He didn’t need to verify that.

“Sit down,” Cas ordered. “You’re making a mess.”

Sam went back into his room. He retrieved a hand towel from the bathroom and sat on the tile, wrapping the cloth around his foot.

A minute later, Cas came in with a roll of bandages.

“Let me see.”

“Give me the gauze, I’ll do it.”

“Nonsense, if you won’t let me heal you, at least-”

Cas reached for him and Sam jerked back, pulling in close to himself.

“Don’t touch me.”

Cas rolled his eyes.

“I hardly think-”
He reached out again and Sam scrambled back, kicking out at Cas’s hand as he did.

“Don’t.” Sam repeated.

Cas narrowed his eyes, and dropped the gauze into Sam’s lap.

“Have it your way.”

Sam pulled the blanket tighter around himself and waited for Cas to leave.

When he was sure the man had gone, he unwrapped the towel and examined the cut. Not that it would matter. His whole damn foot could come off and a couple hours later, Cas would just-

He wrapped the gauze tight, tying off the ends once it was secure.

Then, for the first time, he let himself look at the cuff.

It wasn’t coming off. That he determined almost immediately. Not unless he was willing to do some very permanent damage to the bone structure of his foot, and that would certainly hinder the remainder of the escape process.

He rubbed his thumb over the keyhole, feeling the smooth grain of the epoxy there. It already felt as hard as the surrounding metal.

He took the rest of the gauze and wrapped it around his ankle, creating a barrier between the metal and his skin. So it wouldn’t chafe.

Because it was going to be there a while.

29 days.

Sam shoved at the cuff, pressing it down against his heel until the skin felt almost ready to split- no difference. Not even close.

29 days.

He stood back up and limped into the bedroom, the chain clinking along behind him.

The wall opposite the bed had a large blank area. He stood in front of it, surveying.

This was his third day in the house, which meant it was Saturday.

Class started in two days.

Sam uncapped the marker and reached up, writing Sat in neat block capitals.

The rest of the week followed, thick black letters spreading evenly across the wall.

Underneath that, Sam made rows of squares, seven wide, five high.

The first Fri he filled with a black X. That was his first day, the first of the thirty.

One down.

Twenty nine to go.

He set the marker on top of the bookshelf and sat on the bed, surveying his handiwork. The
calendar was nearly four feet wide. He had a feeling that the black X’s would be visible even in the
dark. Letting him know how far he’d come.

And how long he had left.

Sam didn’t doubt that Cas was being honest about taking the chain off. Or at least… Cas thought
he was being honest.

The man truly thought that a month of captivity was going to make Sam fall in love with him. That
much was clear.

So he was delusional, and that made him unpredictable.

Cas said that after a month, he’d let Sam go free.

Sam had a sneaking suspicion that what Cas had in mind, might be more of the Jonestown variety
of freedom.

But Sam would need to come up with a better plan than just tearing free and running. Cas was
right- he was never going to win in a physical fight.

The cuff hung heavy on his ankle, making little metallic sounds as his foot shifted.

That would have to be the first thing to go.

Sam took a deep breath, trying to catalogue his assets.

I’ve got a blanket and a marker, he thought sourly, and then shook his head.

I’ve got a brother who’s probably looking for me right now.

Better. Still not good enough. Unless…

He wrapped the blanket tighter around his shoulders and went back out into the living room.

Cas was nowhere to be seen, and Sam returned to the drawer where he’d found the marker. There
were pens and pencils, but no paper.

“What are you looking for?”

“Paper,” Sam answered, without turning around.

“I’ll get you some.”

Cas searched the bookshelf for a moment before returning with a spiral-bound notebook.

College ruled, Sam noted without humor.

“If I write a letter, will you still send it to my family?”

“Depending on the contents, yes.”

“What can I tell them?”

Cas frowned, considering.

“That you’re unharmed. That you will contact them in a month. That there are reasons you cannot
call sooner.”

“That someone’s holding me?”

“That you’re with someone,” Cas said slowly.

Sam didn’t react to that. Instead, he sat down at the kitchen table, stared at the paper for a minute, and then began to write.

Dad, Uncle Bobby,

If you’ve tried to call, you’ll know I’m not at school. Something happened on the way down. I can’t tell you more right now.

It is August 25th. I will call you September 23rd. As early as I can.

Sam paused, and then added another line.

I’ve met someone I want to introduce you to.

On the bottom of the paper, he scrawled Bobby’s address- deliberately misspelling Singer with two r’s. Between that, and leaving Dean off the introduction, (not to mention sending a letter) they were sure to know something was up.

And they’d know it had happened somewhere between Seattle and Stanford.

It wasn’t much. But it was something.

Sam tore out the paper, handing it over to Cas without looking. The other man took it and read it over.

“Don’t you want to tell them you’re all right?”

“I am not all right,” Sam muttered.

“Unharmed, then,” Cas corrected, and Sam did look at him then. There was a cut on his lower lip that was beginning to swell, and he was sure it made a nice counterpoint to the shiner he could feel developing. Sam shifted, tightening the blanket around his shoulders. In the process the blanket slipped down his forearm, revealing the marks that the handcuffs had left on his wrists.

Sam continued staring. He made no comment, just let his skin speak for itself.

Cas was the first to look away.

“I’m going to type this,” he said at last. “I don’t know your handwriting and I don’t trust that you don’t have a code.”

“You have a computer?” Sam asked, perking up.
“Yes, I have a computer. No, you may not use it.”

“I didn’t think so,” Sam answered.

Cas made no move to leave, so Sam did it instead, pulling the blanket tighter around him and going for the fridge.

He wasn’t in luck; there was nothing alcoholic in there. There was bottled water in there, though, tucked between the assorted Tupperware containers. Cas either cooked frequently or cleaned infrequently.

Sam didn’t investigate. There was a bag of green apples on the bottom shelf, and he chose one of those.

A blanket, a marker, and an apple, he thought sullenly.

The apple was sour, it stung the cut on his lip. He ate it anyway, determined to get something in his belly. He had twenty nine days to figure out a plan, and he wasn’t going to be able to do anything on an empty stomach.

Cas watched him eat for a few minutes, then went back into Sam’s room.

Sam didn’t bother speculating what he was doing in there.

He heard Cas’s groan only a few seconds before the man reappeared, the forgotten breakfast bowls in his hands.

“I could have gotten you a calendar,” Cas said, irritated. Sam flipped him the bird without looking, and kept eating his apple.

Chapter End Notes

Sam is in the little-known sixth stage of grief, which is ‘sass for days.’

That chili is never going to get eaten.
Cas will probably eat it.
Sam wants his rabbit food.

Next chapter: Sam starts figuring out his escape attempt, more rape.
Sam sat on the floor of his room, his back to the wall, and listened to the printer. There was an office on the far side of the kitchen; by the sound, that’s where the computer was.

He begrudgingly added that to the list of his assets. The chain wasn’t long enough to reach it, but it was there.

He closed his eyes, thinking.

There weren’t clocks in the house. The digital readout on the stove was at least eight hours fast. Apparently Cas wasn’t the punctual type.

By the light shining through the window, Sam would guess late afternoon. He fingered the marker, considering the possibility of a sundial on the far wall.

Not that it mattered. His time here would be measured in days, not hours and minutes. It’s not like he had anywhere to be, or anything to look forward to.

Cas was moving around in the living room, on the far side of Sam’s closed door, and Sam stiffened momentarily before forcing himself to relax. There was no reason the other man would come in here. Sam was safe until sunset, he had a few more hours until-

*Stop it.*

He wasn’t going to think about that.

The chain. He was going to think about the chain.

Not the weight of it, or the way his body warmed the metal cuff around his ankle.

Sam drew a length of it into his hands, measuring.

It wasn’t silver, which made sense because Sam wasn’t a creature and that much silver would cost a fortune, anyway. By the looks of it, he was dealing with regular steel, probably zinc-plated so it wouldn’t rust.

He twisted it in his hands, wondering if he could get the zinc off, maybe he could get it to rust through-

No. That would take too long, and there’s no way Cas wouldn’t notice.

Maybe if he could figure out how to twist it…

Out in the living room, Cas stilled again and Sam froze, listening.

A bird trilled outside the window and Sam leaned his head back against the wall.

Think. Think. Think.

He had to have something he could work with.
Blanket and a marker, his brain supplied helpfully, and he cursed.

His ass was going to sleep. He couldn’t stay in this room for a month, he’d go insane.

He crawled to the bookshelf, being sure not to let the chain make any sound.

Paperbacks- sci-fi, fantasy, a couple westerns.

He picked one at random and flipped through it for a few seconds.

Whatever he was looking for, he didn’t find it, and in a sudden burst of anger he hurled it at the wall.

You could chew your foot off, he thought sarcastically.

He let his head rest in his hands. He needed to be productive. He could do this. It could be worse. He could be in a cave somewhere, waiting for a wendigo to come eat him. He could be chained to a pole in a vamp nest, that was always uncomfortable. At least here it was warm. He had a mattress, he had hot water, he had electricity-

Sam’s eyes flew open.

That was something he could work with.

It was going to take time, Sam realized as the light from the window slid across the wall. Maybe more time than he had. But he didn’t have anything better. And he wasn’t going to give up.

He was going to have to be very careful. And he was going to have to keep from antagonizing Cas. He was going to need all the freedoms he was currently being afforded- and maybe a few more.

Cas thought Sam was going to fall in love with him. Sam had that advantage.

He’d just need to pretend… not to hate the older man.

Over time, of course.

Sam shuddered to think of what that might entail. What he might need to do to convince Cas… but he’d cross that bridge when he came to it.

Sam fingered the chain, and watched the light fading to a dull orange.

Eventually, Cas knocked on the door, only waiting a few seconds before pushing it open anyway.

The two men stared at each other.

“You didn’t eat dinner,” Cas said at last.

“Wasn’t hungry.”

Cas was silent for a moment.

“It’s almost sunset. Are you ready?”

Panic clawed it’s way up Sam’s throat and he shoved it down.
“I don’t- I’m not sure I can do it.”

“You don’t have to do anything. Just let me take care of you.”

Cas crossed the room, reaching for him, and Sam’s heart went wild. He scrambled back.

“Please, no- please, the drugs you gave me before, not all of them, just one-”

Cas sighed.

“Are you sure?”

“Yes. Just to help me relax, just a little.”

Cas looked down at him for another few seconds, then turned and left the room. Sam rose unsteadily to his feet and followed the other man out.

When Cas returned with the pill, Sam took it gratefully, swallowing it dry. He didn’t know how long it would take to kick in, but even knowing that he’d taken it seemed to relax him a little bit.

“Do you want the blindfold?” Cas asked. Sam shook his head.

“But… can we do it in your room? Or out here?”

Cas blinked.

“Why?”

Sam swallowed, considering.

“I just… I’d feel better if I had a space. Where I was… safe.”

Cas reached out to him then, stroking a lock of hair back from his forehead. Sam forced himself to remain still, to let Cas touch him.

“Of course you’re safe here, Sam.”

“You wanted me to be afraid of you,” Sam whispered. He couldn’t make his voice louder, not when Cas was this close to him. “I’m afraid. Please.”

Cas leaned in, pressing his lips gently to Sam’s mouth. Sam shivered as the creature’s power flickered through him. He felt it centering on the wounds Cas had given him, the pain in his mouth and eye dissipating.

“Whatever you want,” Cas whispered.

Cas’s room was dark, the walls painted a deep burgundy. Cas skipped the overhead light, instead switching on a small lamp beside the queen bed. Sam hesitated in the doorway, watching.

“You should get undressed,” Cas told him, pulling his own shirt over his head as he did. Sam watched, trying to reconcile what was happening here.

Cas rolled his shoulders, stretching out the day’s tension, and Sam watched the fluid motion of his muscles beneath his skin.
"I'm going to sleep with him," he thought suddenly. He couldn't do this.

"I think... you might need to tie my hands," he stammered.

Cas gave him a sideways glance but complied, producing a pair of handcuffs and locking Sam's wrists together.

He took hold of the blanket, sliding it off Sam's shoulders, leaving him bare to the waist. His hands trailed down over Sam's body, coming to rest on the hem of his jeans.

Sam closed his eyes, trying not to hear the sound of the zipper opening, or his clothes slithering down his body. Cas's breath was hot on his belly, and Sam whimpered as the man's lips closed over a nipple.

He pulled back. He couldn't help it.

Cas looked sharply up at him. Sam didn't look back.

"I want to lay down."

Cas stood wordlessly, moving to the side so that Sam could pass him.

Sam stepped out of his jeans, keeping his eyes on the floor as he crossed to the bed. The chain trailed behind him, snaking through the empty clothes.

Sam climbed onto the bed- it was nice, the bedspread soft beneath him.

This shouldn't happen like this, he thought to himself. This should happen on dirty mattresses in some freak's basement.

And then Cas was behind him, pressed against the length of his body, guiding him down. His mouth was hot on Sam's shoulder, his hands strong where they held the teen's sides.

Every instinct in Sam's body told him to fight- if he threw his head back he could probably break Cas's nose. The cuffs would hinder him but he could still-

Sam heard the hiss of the torch again, the heat of it on his belly. His blood ran cold and he made himself still.

Let Cas do what he wanted.

There's nothing I can do about it, Sam told himself as Cas pulled his hips back. His face burned red. Cas nudged his knees apart and Sam tried not to imagine how he looked.

Cas withdrew, and Sam could hear him undressing. He didn't want to look. He didn't want to see Cas retrieving the bottle from the nightstand, or coating his fingers with the slick liquid. Sam pulled the pillow down, burying his face in the darkness.

He forced himself to stay still and silent as Cas worked him open. Cas worked slowly, letting Sam's body adjust to the intrusion. With his free hand, he stroked up the length of Sam's back, calming him. Sam pulled the pillow tighter.

"Does that hurt?" Cas asked, and Sam let out a humorless chuckle.

"Stop playing with me. Do it and get it over with."
Cas’s fingers withdrew, and Sam had only a moment to adjust before the blunt head of Cas’s cock was nudging at his rim.

“Tell me if I need to slow down,” Cas murmured, and then he was pushing into Sam’s body, filling him deep. Sam let out a pained groan, muffling the sound in the pillow. Cas paused.

“Too much?”

“Just do it!” Sam snapped. Tears were rising to his eyes and he wanted to be done with this. Cas didn’t move for a moment, and then he obliged, burying himself deep.

Sam’s hands fisted in the sheets. He braced against the headboard, trying to keep his hips up as Cas’s weight pushed them down. He could hear himself letting out pained little whimpers, like the girls in porn. He didn’t bother trying to stop.

It still hurt, the dragging friction hot against his sore hole. He hoped it felt better for Cas than it did for him, or they’d be here all night.

“Relax, Sam,” Cas told him. “Your body is fighting, it’s making it worse.”

“I don’t know how.”

Cas moved slowly inside him, the man’s hands firm on the small of Sam’s back. Cas stroked his back, fingers travelling from Sam’s shoulders down to the curve of his ass. Sam shuddered. He was getting tired- probably a side effect of whatever Cas had given him.

He stopped pushing back against Cas, letting the other man’s weight pin him to the mattress. The bedspread was soft beneath his belly, and he breathed deep, trying to let the tension out of his muscles.

It worked, maybe a little.

He was still relieved when Cas came inside him with a hiss.

I am a terrible person but I love playing with this fucked up dynamic they have here.

It’s gonna start being slightly less detailed from here on out because even *I* can’t put sixty rape scenes in the same fic.

Next chapter: Sam starts working on his Plan.

Also, did I already tell you this fic has a theme song? It does. Another Set of Issues by OK Go (those guys who did the treadmill video, you know the one.)
Sam woke up with a headache, a sharp, pounding thing that coincided with the rapping on his doorframe.

“Fuck, what?!” he snapped, sitting up and rubbing his temple.

Cas was standing in the open door, watching him.

“It’s morning,” he said simply.

“And?”

“And the spell needs to be worked again before the sun gets much higher.”

Sam groaned. His head was killing him. He rubbed his eyes.

“Fine. Give me a minute.”

Cas nodded and vanished from the doorway. Sam watched the place where he had been. When he was satisfied that Cas was really gone, he slung his legs out of bed and trudged to the bathroom.

He used the toilet and brushed his teeth, catching sight of himself in the mirror as he did so.

He looked like shit. There were dark circles around his eyes, probably because that’s what happens when you’re up half the night staring blankly at a wall. When he’d finally fallen asleep, he’d dreamed about a rocky path through frozen mountains.

Sam scowled at himself.

Cas was waiting for him, when he came out. Sam didn’t look at him, just trudged into the other bedroom.

He sat on the edge of the bed, his elbows resting on his knees, and waited for Cas to follow.

“You can go back to sleep after,” Cas told him, and Sam didn’t answer, just grabbed Cas by the collar and yanked him down.

Cas’s lips were like ice, soothing away the pounding ache in his skull. Sam shivered, breaking the kiss and shoving Cas away. The man stared at him with wide eyes.

“Sam, I-”

“I had a fucking headache,” Sam interrupted. “Don’t look too deep into it.”

Cas frowned.

“The pill. I shouldn’t have given it to you, it’s not meant for this.”

“You got anything that is?” Sam asked, raising an eyebrow.
“It would be better,” Cas said slowly, “if you could learn to relax on your own.”

“That’s not going to happen.”

Cas eased back into Sam’s space, resting his hands on Sam’s shoulders and pushing him steadily backwards. Sam turned his head, focusing on the light streaming through the living room door.

“Try,” Cas said.

Sam lifted his ass so Cas could work his jeans down over his hips.

Cas was gentle with him, moving slow and easy against his body. Sam hated him for it. Hated Cas for treating him like a lover. Sam wished he would just be honest about it, tie him down and fuck him till he bruised. At least then, he’d would be able to look himself in the eye afterward. He’d have the marks to prove he hadn’t wanted it.

Not like this.

When Cas finished, Sam rolled wordlessly onto his belly. For a moment, he didn’t think Cas was going to move, but then his captor sighed, and Sam felt the hot trickle of blood landing on his back.

It stung, and that worried him. Cas’s grace was cold and the other thing- well, that didn’t feel like much at all. Wet. But the blood itched and burned and seemed to sink deep into the muscles of his back.

Sam focused on it, grimacing, letting the burning ache of the blood overshadow the feeling of his cock, half-hard beneath him.

Sam pushed a piece of chicken around his bowl. He set it back on the table, pushing it away even though it was still half full.

Cas was still staring at him.

“How about you want something else?”

“No,” Sam muttered. He pulled his blanket tighter around his shoulders. He was still damp from the shower. “Yes. A shirt.”

“Sure. Later.”

Sam glanced over at Cas, interested. Cas took it as an invitation to continue.

“I ordered you some clothes yesterday. They’ll be delivered today.”

Cas took a sip of his coffee, glancing at Sam as he did so.

Sam was doing everything in his power to not look at the door. If someone was coming maybe he could get a message- write something on the windows maybe-

“The mail drop is at the end of the road,” Cas said, interrupting his train of thought. Sam had the
sudden horrifying suspicion that Cas could read his mind.

“I had some shirts in my bag,” he said cautiously. “A couple pairs of jeans, too.”

Cas frowned.

“Bag? I don’t remember you having a bag.”

“I had a bag,” Sam insisted. Cas shrugged.

“It must have gotten left at the gas station. What was in it? I’ll replace it.”

“Just… stuff,” Sam said. “Some clothes and a toothbrush and… and stuff.”

Cas looked at him carefully for a moment, then changed the subject.

“I’d really like it if you’d eat something.”

“Know what I’d really like?” Sam countered. Cas scowled.

“Yes, Sam, you’d like to leave. I’m aware.”

“I wasn’t gonna say that,” Sam protested. His fingers tightened on the bowl and he kept his eyes on the tabletop. Whatever else happened, he needed to sell this. He couldn’t be suspicious, not if he was going to have any chance of escaping.

“Class starts, day after tomorrow,” he said hesitantly.

“Sam…” Cas warned.

“No, I know, I’m not going to be there. But since I’m gonna be here for the next month, not really doing anything, I was thinking maybe I could get a couple textbooks? Get a head start on next semester?”

Sam risked a glance at Cas. To his surprise, the man didn’t look angry. In fact, as Sam watched, he broke into a grin.

“Of course.”

Cas wouldn’t let him on the computer, obviously. He sat with the laptop just out of Sam’s reach, reading off the course list until Sam could identify the times and teachers he’d been enrolled for.

He was making most of it up, of course. He knew he had a business law course, a humanities elective dealing with ethics in technology, some kind of math or another, (he guessed calculus but it didn’t really matter anyway, he wasn’t going to read it) and a science course. He didn’t remember which of the sciences he’d signed up for, and he told Cas it was physics.

The textbook requirements were listed right on the rubric, but Cas copied down the UPCs and switched over to Amazon, rather than buying them from the university bookstore. Sam didn’t blame him. It hadn’t actually occurred to him that a purchase like that could lead an investigator to an address.

He shivered, wondering what other bases Cas was covering.
“They’ll be here tomorrow,” Cas announced, looking up at him. “Is there anything else you need?”

“No.”

Sam’s hand dropped to his pocket, only just then realizing that the money he’d been carrying was gone.

“Did you-?”

“It’s on top of the dryer,” Cas answered, shutting down the computer and setting it to the side. He frowned. “I meant to ask you about that, actually.”

“No law against having money,” Sam said, looking away and holding tighter to his blanket.

“It’s not the money that interests me. It’s the credit cards. And the identification. And the colorful assortment of names on them.”

He looked at Sam, one eyebrow carefully raised. Sam didn’t answer.

“You have lived an interesting life, then,” Cas concluded. “I’d very much like to hear about the kind of childhood that leads a man to carry fake IDs and knives concealed in his boots.”

“What do you care? In another couple months you’re going to wipe my brain and overwrite it with someone else’s memories.”

Cas pursed his lips.

“You don’t know that for sure. It’s entirely possible that you’ll regain Samael’s memories and carry on, having lost nothing.”

“I’ll have to have lost something,” Sam argued. “He’s not me.”

Cas sighed.

“I was just trying to get to know you, Sam. I don’t want to be enemies in this.”

Sam almost said something unkind, but he remembered the weight of the tin snips on his chest and thought better of it.

“What time does the mail come?” he asked, dropping his eyes. Cas glanced outside.

“Mid day, usually. I usually only check it once every few days, unless I’m waiting for something.”

“Can you check it now?” Sam asked. “I’d really like to get dressed.”

Cas nodded.

The minute he was out of the house, Sam went back to the panel where the chain anchored to the wall. He prodded at it, but it was mounted flush to the wall, and clearly wasn’t going to go anywhere.

Sam glanced at the windows, not seeing anyone in the front yard.

Taking a deep breath, he ducked into Cas’s room.
The dark walls gave the place a dark, vaguely foreboding aura, and Sam shivered as he looked around, dragging the chain after him.

He checked under the bed first, not sure what he was expecting to find, but finding nothing anyway. The dark crawlspace was empty- not even dust bunnies.

The only other possibility was the nightstand, standing on the far side of the bed. Sam glanced back behind him again, listening for any sign of Cas’s approach.

Hearing nothing, he sprawled across the unmade bed, pulling the chain taut as he reached for the nightstand.

There was no way he’d be able to reach the bottom or middle drawers, but by stretching absolutely to his limit, his fingertips were able to brush the corner of the top one. He exhaled, closing his eyes and focusing everything he had into forcing that fingertip to move.

The drawer slid open, moving easily on oiled slides. Sam raised himself up onto his elbows, peering into the drawer.

The first thing he noticed was a plastic bottle, orange with a white cap, and filled with the familiar little blue pills. Sam reached for it, straining, and was just able to reach the cap. He pulled it toward himself, hurriedly twisting off the lid and dumping a number of the capsules into his palm. The bottle was about three-quarters full, and Sam didn’t dare take more than ten or eleven. More than that would be immediately noticeable.

He shoved the pills into his pocket and replaced the bottle, turning his attention to the remainder of the drawer’s contents.

On top of everything else, was the picture frame that Cas had removed from Sam’s room. Sam picked it up, turning it around so he could see what the photo was of.

His breath caught in his throat.

The girl in the photo was maybe seventeen or eighteen. She was sitting at a picnic table, smiling at the camera in the kind of artful pose that probably indicated a professional photographer. Her hair was gleaming auburn, and there was a mischievous, playful expression in her gray eyes.

He’d seen her before.

He knew it.

Sam stared at the photo, searching it for any indication of when it had been taken, or where, or of who.

He flipped it over, looking at the back of the frame for a note or a clue, but there was nothing. He considered trying to pry the frame open to see the back of the photo, but he thought better of it. If he damaged the frame, Cas would know he had been in here.

He set the frame on the table and went back to the drawer. There was just one other thing inside. It was a large, thick book, bound in unmarked black leather. Sam pulled it out, letting it fall open as he did.

His own face stared back at him.

Sam blinked, looking at the rough pencil sketch. The similarity was undeniable.
The face in the drawing looked older, the eyes sharper, the hair longer. His jaw was covered in a dark, thick stubble that Sam didn’t think he could grow if he tried- though he held out hope for the future.

The drawing’s face was turned just slightly away from the viewer, catching him in a profile. His shoulders were just slightly out of view, but Sam thought he could see the rough outline of a collar, made of some kind of fur.

Sam shivered. The drawing was unsettling, because of the ways it didn’t resemble him, almost as much as the ways it did.

Cas must have drawn while Sam was asleep. He’d probably been staring at him while he was out, to get the resemblance so close.

Sam flipped back through the pages, looking to see if Cas had drawn anyone else.

It was all him.

He was various ages, ranging from late teens to early thirties. The clothes and occasional backgrounds made no sense, but the face and body were clearly Sam’s.

Sam flipped through the pages, faster and faster, trying to understand how Cas had managed to draw all these in two days. Didn’t he sleep?

The book fell forward to one of the earliest drawings. Sam gaped, feeling a cold tightness crawl up his belly.

The drawing was of him, and he was naked. He was sitting in shallow water, leaning back on his hands, looking up at the artist. There was a smile on his face, and a gleam that Sam didn’t think he’d ever seen in his own eyes. His cock was thick and hard between his spread legs, the head just barely breaking the surface of the water.

Sam swallowed, trying to reconcile this.

He knew he’d never looked like that. Not at Cas, not at anyone.

He studied it a few seconds longer, but he was out of time and Cas could be back at any second.

He slammed the sketchbook shut, shoving it back into the drawer next to the pill bottle. The picture frame went back on top of it, face down, like he’d found it. He pushed the drawer shut and went back out into the living room.

Chapter End Notes

Aaaand we're back!

I'm finishing this thing for NaNoWriMo which means I'm gonna try to punch out 50k words in the next month because I <3 dying and being dead.
Day 6 (26 days until freedom)

Sam could feel Cas watching him as he marked another black X on the wall.

Day six.

He’d been here nearly a week.

He looked back to where Cas was waiting patiently in the doorway.

“Gimme a sec?” he asked. Cas shrugged and disappeared, presumably going to wait in his own bedroom. Sam took a deep breath.

Nine of the blue pills were hidden between his mattress and his bedspring. It was a terrible hiding place, but it was all he had. For the fourth time in as many days, Sam considered taking one.

Cas had refused to give him any more, ever since the last one had given him a headache. Sam insisted he didn’t care, it was worth it, but Cas still refused.

It would be easier if he took one of them, he knew. Cas still needed to cuff his wrists, still needed to physically pin him down. Sam couldn’t help it. He did everything he could to distract himself, but something would inevitably slip through and he’d fight. He’d have to.

Cas was patient with him during these times, rubbing Sam’s shoulders with a knee buried firmly in the small of his back, quiet and unconcerned while the teen exhausted himself. Eventually, Sam would collapse weakly back onto the mattress, and Cas would go back to whatever he’d been doing.

That was the price of doing it sober. Sam began his days weak and tired, his face puffy and his eyes red.

He hated that he cried, and he hated that Cas saw.

Sam steeled his shoulders, ignoring the blue capsules for now. He might need them for something important, later. There was no point squandering them.

Cas did it differently this morning.

He normally was content with cuffing Sam’s hands together, but this morning, he gestured to the headboard.

Sam raised his arms carefully, not wanting anything to do with this new development and knowing he didn’t have a choice.

Cas cuffed his hands to the headboard and took him lying on his back. Sam closed his eyes, burying his face in his shoulder, but he could feel Cas watching him, watching his reactions as his body yielded.

His captor leaned down, pressing a kiss to Sam’s pursed lips. His hand slid between them, slick fingers tightening around Sam’s soft penis.

Sam jerked once at the chains, but he knew it was useless. It was useless to struggle, to protest...
do anything.

He wished he’d taken one of the pills. As it were, he could do nothing but close his eyes and wait for it to be over. His cock had hardened of its own accord, and Cas was doing a little twist on the upstroke that was going to make him come. He could already tell.

The other man was still moving inside him, slowly and gently, and Sam was disgusted to find that he was beginning to enjoy the feeling.

He thought of the drawing, and how the man with his face had offered such a plain invitation. Is this what he had felt? What he had hoped to feel when he looked up at Cas?

It had been three days and Sam couldn’t get the picture out of his head.

In the drawing, he’d been sitting in a clear pool of water. He’d been soaked, his hair falling across his eyes in wet spikes.

But beneath the water, there had been a design- colored tiles arranged in a pattern, and Sam had seen that pattern before.

Cas shuddered above him, spending himself into Sam’s body with a low groan. Sam thought he’d withdraw, but he didn’t. He stayed there, propped up on his arms, looking down at Sam. Sam didn’t open his eyes.

Cas shifted and a moment later, Sam felt the man’s mouth on his cock. He jerked his hips back, hoping Cas would take the hint, but no such luck.

Sam tried to go somewhere else, to picture another scenario, to escape from his body and the things that were happening to it.

All that he could think of was the pattern of the tile, the heat of the air, the cool touch of the water on his naked skin.

Maybe it’s you I love, Castiel.

Sam jerked his hips upwards, burying his cock into Castiel’s throat, a dozen memories flying through his head all at once. He heard his own voice, speaking in languages he didn’t know.

Castiel.

“Castiel!” Sam gasped, staring down at the other man. “Your name is Castiel.”

Cas stared up at him, dumbstruck, and then his hands were cupping Sam’s face, his eyes searching Sam’s for something he didn’t see.

“Samael?”

“No. Get off me.”

Cas’s face fell as he released his grip.

“There’s still the blood left.”

“Do it, then.”

Cas uncuffed him and Sam rolled over, burying his head in his arms and letting Cas work. The feel
of the blood was getting stronger now, and at times it felt as though Cas were shoving needles into his back and shoulders. Sam whimpered, trying not to let the pain show.

“Only a little longer,” Cas told him quietly.

“Twenty six days,” Sam confirmed, not lifting his head.

Twenty six days.

He had twenty six days to get this chain off.

Sam dragged a length of it along the floor as he read. He was set up in a corner of his room, back to the wall, facing the closed door. The books had arrived several days previously, and he’d been carefully dividing his attention between them, marking things in the notebook Cas had given him.

The ethics book was the most interesting, but it was the physics textbook he really paid attention to. There was a whole section on electrical workings.

That was his way out. It was going to have to be. There was no way he’d be able to break the chain, so... he was going to have to destroy it.

Sam shifted against the wall, pulling his knees up and trying to focus on the diagrams in the book.

He knew the basics. He’d taken physics in high school, and he and Dean could both wrangle small motors or appliances back into submission. It was a handy skill to have, when the hotel manager came looking for the rent and John wasn’t back yet.

What concerned him was the lack of tools, here. And safety equipment. And the fact that he only had one shot. *Maybe* two. But if he screwed this up, he could burn out whatever components he managed to collect, and trip a breaker, to boot.

Cas was sure to notice if the lights started going off on a regular basis.

Sam shook his head. He didn’t have time to worry about what would happen if it didn’t work.

He stared at the book again, trying to put together a plan.

Back when he was in middle school, Dean’s high school had offered a number of vocational courses. Dean had leapt on those, of course, (he’d long regarded academics as a waste of his time, and yearned to focus on anything he deemed as ‘practical’) and for most of that month, he’d come home and taught Sam everything they’d done in class. In return, Sam had done Dean’s English homework.

They’d tripped more than a few breakers in the process, but fortunately, the motel was shitty enough that nobody had really cared. If the place had still run on fuses, Dean had explained, things might have been different.

He’d relayed a joke that had struck Sam as particularly poignant at the time, and which now formed almost the entire basis of his escape plan.

*Get the amperage high enough,* Dean had said, *and everything becomes a fuse.*
Sam dragged the chain absently along the floor, considering.

Cas’s house seemed relatively new—which meant that anything he got out of a receptacle was 120 volts and probably less than 15 amps. Twenty, if he was going to push it, but he couldn’t count on that. He’d have to base his plan on only having fifteen, and for something as thick as a chain link? He’d probably need closer to... what? A hundred? A thousand?

Sam rubbed his palms across his forehead. He knew fifteen wasn’t enough, but he didn’t know how to scale up. And he didn’t know how to convert the volts into amps anyway, not without a transformer and sure, Cas probably left one of those under the fucking bed by accident.

Sam realized he’d gathered several loops of the chain around his palm. Frustrated, he tried to toss them away, only to have them land unspectacularly on the floor a few inches away. Sam stared at it for a second and then turned, driving his fist into the drywall beside his shoulder. The impact rattled up his arm, the pain clearing out his mind.

Cas knocked on the door.

“What?!” Sam snapped, staring at the barrier. Cas pushed it open.

“What was that sound?”

Sam held up his hand, letting his bloody knuckles speak for themselves. He could feel a trickle running down to his wrist.

Good.

Cas set his jaw.

“Any particular reason you’ve decided to begin deconstructing the drywall?”

“Can’t you tell modern art when you see it?” Sam asked sarcastically.

Cas frowned at him.

“What can I do to stop this, Sam? I want to give you your privacy and your freedom-”

“Ha!” Sam interjected, but Cas carried on as though he hadn’t interrupted.

“- but I can’t have you hurting yourself like that. Do you want me to chain you back up? Is that it?”

Sam felt his blood run cold.

“No. No, I won’t do it again. Sorry. I just... adjusting, you know?”

He tried to force a grin, but it wasn’t going to happen.

Cas looked like he was about to approach, but Sam stood instead, taking a few hesitant steps toward the doorway.

“Would... do you mind?” he asked, holding out his damaged hand. Cas nodded and Sam went closer, ignoring the way his hair stood on end when he moved within grabbing range.

Cas didn’t grab for him, but he didn’t kiss him, either. Instead he took Sam’s hand in his own, covering the wound with his free palm. There was a faint white glow, and Sam felt a chill run across his skin. Cas released him, and the wound was gone.
“You can do it with your hand?” Sam asked, aghast. Cas frowned.

“Yes. Any body part, actually, I suppose. Why?”

“Then why the hell have you been kissing me this whole time?”

Cas still looked nothing but puzzled.

“Forget it,” Sam grumbled, turning back towards his corner.

So much for extending the olive branch.

He had twenty six days before Cas set him ‘free’ and if the crazy bastard thought Sam was gonna run for it, that freedom was likely to be the transcendent, eternal sort. In twenty six days, Cas needed to think Sam loved him.

It was in none of Sam’s best interests to antagonize him.

“You don’t like it when I kiss you,” Cas said from behind him. The words came out slowly, like Cas was trying them out.

“No, Cas,” Sam said. He didn’t turn around. “I don’t like it.”

“Oh.”

Sam waited a moment to see if he would say anything else, but there was only silence. When he eventually turned around, Cas was gone.
He was going to need wire. A lot of it.

That was the first problem.

Sam doodled in the margins of his notebook, trying to figure out a way around his current predicament.

He still didn’t know how many amps he needed, but at this point ‘as many as possible’ was about the only goal he’d be able to shoot for. His abilities were going to be limited by his supplies, that was all.

He tipped his head back against the wall, staring at the ceiling. This was like one of those locked-in puzzles, he just needed to figure out how to solve it.

Wire. He had the notebook spiral. The mattress springs. There was the stuff in the walls, too, if he could figure out a way to get to it.

None of these things were subtle. At all. Cas was definitely going to notice if he tore his mattress apart or started ripping out huge chunks of drywall.

*Think, Sam. Think.*

Maybe if there was an air conditioner in the window, but the window was barred shut and the days were only getting cooler.

He had twenty four days, maybe less. Cas had been unusually quiet ever since healing Sam’s hand, and Sam couldn’t see any way this development could bode well for him.

Cas had still been coming for him in the mornings and evenings, knocking softly on the door and waiting for Sam to come to him. Sam didn’t need to be dragged, anymore. Maybe the horror was wearing off.

You really *could* get used to anything.

But Cas had also stopped kissing him. He’d been giving Sam his grace through his hands. There hadn’t been any more blowjobs, either. Cas was becoming almost... mechanical about it. Like he was finally realizing that Sam wasn’t his lover, wasn’t going to suddenly remember that he was.

Sam didn’t think it would end well, for him, if Cas realized that this whole thing was a delusion. There was no way he was going to let Sam go, not after all this.

As if summoned, there was a knock on the door.

Sam slapped the textbook shut, looking up toward the sound. He didn’t say anything, knowing that Cas would just push the door open whether he responded or not.

Cas knocked again. Sam frowned. He’d been here eight days and in *none* of that time had Cas ever waited for a response.
“Sam?”

“What.”

Now the door did open. It hadn’t been an invitation, exactly, but it was more consideration than Cas had shown before.

Sam drew his legs up, watching the man in the doorway. Cas made no move to come in, but that could change. He was acting differently, and it made Sam nervous.

“What do you want?”

“It’s lunchtime,” Cas answered. His brow was furrowed, like Sam was the one being confusing.

“Not hungry.”

It was true. Sam’s stomach had gone tight the moment he’d heard the knock. It was tight a lot, lately.

“Will you come sit with me, then?”

Sam looked up at him, judging the question. It might be a request. It might be an order.

“...sure,” he said at last, rising to his feet. The chain trailed behind him as he followed Cas to the kitchen.

“Is it chafing you?” Cas asked, and Sam had to pause and puzzle out his meaning.

“The cuff, I mean,” he clarified, gesturing to it.

“Oh. No. I just keep wrapping gauze around it and that, uh... that helps, mostly.”

Cas nodded. Sam took a seat at one of the bar stools, watching Cas as he assembled a pair of cold cut sandwiches. One of them was for Sam, whether he’d eat it or not. They are a lot of cold food, simply prepared things. It made sense, because Cas didn’t seem to have a-

The idea hit Sam like a physical force, and for a moment he couldn’t breathe. He could feel his heart beating against his ribs, and he had to inhale very slowly to keep from alerting Cas that something was wrong.

A microwave. Cas didn’t have a microwave.

So Cas wouldn’t use a microwave.

Plans started going through Sam’s head, very quickly, conceived and immediately discarded as too suspicious.

When Cas offered him a plate, Sam took it. Cas was pleased, and only grew more so when Sam took a bite.

It tasted like ash. Sam swallowed it anyway.

“What do you... do up here?” he asked at last. Cas startled, as though he hadn’t been expecting Sam to speak.

“I... I make things.”
“Sculptures?”

“Sometimes, yes. I’m doing metalworking right now but my hobbies have... varied. Over the years.”

Cas looked sideways at Sam.

“Why do you ask?”

“Just... getting bored, I guess.”

Sam exhaled slowly, trying to sound casual.

“Can I watch a movie?”

Cas blinked.

“Of course. Is there anything in particular you’d like? If I don’t have it, I can burn you a disk.”

“I’m sure I can find something,” Sam said nonchalantly. “Can I make popcorn?”

“I don’t think I have any. There might be a jar of kernels in the cupboard.”

“No, I mean the good stuff, the stuff that’s measurably fake butter by volume.”

Cas scowled.

“Why would you eat that?”

“Why would you not?” Sam responded, aghast. “It’s a classic staple of American living!”

Cas rolled his eyes, but Sam carried on.

“No, really, you can’t watch a shitty horror movie without terrible fake popcorn. When I was younger, Dean and I used to-”

Sam paused, very deliberately. He dropped his eyes, letting most of the enthusiasm drain out of his voice.

“Sorry. Never mind. It’s fine. I’m just... I’m gonna go, okay?”

He left the second half of his sandwich on the table, grateful that he wasn’t going to have to eat it. He could feel Cas’s eyes on his back as he retreated, dragging his chain back into his room and shutting the door.

His stomach was twisting into knots, even though there was practically no way that Cas could connect the dots at this point. Worst case scenario, Cas would realize he was being manipulated.

And then he cuts my tongue out, Sam thought bitterly.

Cas knocked again at dinner, but Sam still wasn’t hungry. He didn’t want to go back out into the kitchen, and Cas left him alone until it was time to work the spell again.

Sam knew it was coming, of course, but he still couldn’t shake the urge to run when Cas came for him again.

Cas knocked and retreated. He didn’t need to tell Sam why he was there. Sam didn’t protest.
He set his books to the side and stood, rolling his shoulders. Sitting against the wall all day was giving him a persistent ache in his upper back.

He walked into Cas’s room, silent except for the sound of the chain dragging along the floor.

Cas was sitting on his bed, fully dressed, and that was new. Sam felt a flutter of hope, but it was quickly buried under a flood of terror. If Cas wasn’t going to work the spell, it meant that he’d given up on ever getting Samael back. And that meant Sam’s time was up.

“I wanted to apologize,” Cas began. Sam waited in the doorway, unsure about whether to approach.

“I didn’t... I’ve made a mistake. In my handling of all this. This spell- the things I need to do- they’re very... intimate.”

Sam let out a little laugh, which Cas did not acknowledge.

“None of this has been for the purpose of hurting you. I did not set out to be cruel. And I thought that if I could show you the kindness and affection I felt, it might make things easier for you.”

Sam narrowed his eyes, but didn’t respond. Cas didn’t look at him.

“I realize that I was wrong. I wish I weren’t. I wish that I were able to comfort you the way I used to. But if that’s impossible, then it’s impossible.”

“It might be impossible,” Sam answered. Cas still didn’t look up, but Sam could see his shoulders sag.

“I don’t know you,” Sam clarified. “It’s not comforting that you think we’re lovers. It’s weird. Weird and scary.”

Cas sighed, standing at last. Sam took a step back, the chain rattling as he did.

“I’m not going to hurt you,” Cas said dully, pulling his shirt off. “Get on the bed.”

Sam hesitated, watching Cas as he undressed. He was so nonchalant about it- like he’d done it a million times. Sam supposed he probably had.

Cas waited patiently for Sam to kick out of his jeans, letting them slide down the chain. His boxers followed, his face burning as he stepped out of them. Cas was unphased, stepping to the side so Sam could pass.

The teen lay on his stomach, closing his eyes when Cas knelt above him.

He saw the drawing again, because of course he did, it was painted on the back of his eyelids at this point. It was all he saw as Cas worked him slowly open, the image of his own face, his own body, eager for exactly what was happening now.

That person- whoever he had been- that’s who Cas saw when he looked at Sam. The same face, the same body.

Sam wondered if Cas saw that eager expression on his face. If that’s what he saw when he kissed Sam.

Cas entered him gingerly, like he was delicate, and Sam hissed as the chill of grace spread across his hips.
“Jeez, Cas, warn a guy!”

“Apologies,” Cas said from above him. He was straddling Sam’s legs, hands resting on his lower back. Sam could feel the man’s thighs tensing, pushing rhythmically forward.

Sam put one hand up, bracing against the headboard, trying not to be pushed along the bed. His cock was beginning to harden and he thought of the little blue pills beneath his mattress. How they’d let him sleep through all of this- or close enough, anyway.

He dug his face into the crook of his arm, glad Cas couldn’t see. The man was going faster now, his breath coming quick and uneven as he moved.

Sam couldn’t feel it when Cas came. The only clue was that he stopped, his hands landing to the side of Sam’s ribs and his breath coming hot on the nape of Sam’s neck. But he didn’t kiss him. Didn’t touch him any more than he needed to, for which Sam was grateful.

“Are you ready?”

“Pull out.”

Cas audibly grimaced, but did what he was told. Sam felt come trickling out of his hole and he shifted, trying to push his legs closer together. He didn’t like the idea of Cas looking down at him that way.

It occurred to him that he might be in Cas’s sketchbook now, looking coyly over his shoulder, his ass hiked up and-

The first drops of blood landed on his spine, burning hot, like Cas had turned a candle over on him. Sam whimpered, his hands balling in the sheets as the blood burned its way across his back.

“What does it feel like?” Cas asked quietly.

“Hot,” Sam answered, wincing as Cas began to work it into his skin. “Sharp.”

“... I didn’t know,” Cas said. It wasn’t an apology. But it wasn’t an excuse, either. “I’ve never known anyone to work this magic.”

“Write it down for posterity,” Sam grouched. His throat was tight and there were tears rising in his eyes. It felt as though the blood was burrowing into him, scalding him to the bone.

“This will be worth it,” Cas promised him, and Sam scoffed.

Within a minute, Cas finished and Sam stood, pulling his pants back on.

Cas wished him good night, but Sam didn’t answer. He went back into his own room, eager to get Cas’s blood off him.

He flipped the bathroom light on, grimacing as he turned his surely blistered back to the mirror.

The blood was gone.

Chapter End Notes
I hit my NaNo goal today.
And for anyone else doing NaNo, Novlr is free this month and it's working great for me.
Day 11 (21 days until freedom)

Chapter Notes
See the end of the chapter for notes

Cas bought a microwave and Sam had three weeks to take it apart.

Twenty one days exactly, and the more he looked at it, the more he thought it was going to take the entire time.

It sat innocently on the kitchen counter, next to an economy-sized box of popcorn and a collection of B-grade horror movies, all of which had shown up in the mail that morning.

An actual truck had come up the drive. It was fedex rather than USPS, which might have explained the oversight. Sam had heard it from his accustomed place in the corner of his bedroom, but Cas had been faster. Sam heard the car door slam about three seconds after Cas had pinned him to the wall, one hand clamped over his mouth, blue eyes promising violence if he made a sound.

Sam was silent. There was a knock at the door and the sound of the screen slamming. A couple seconds later, the truck’s engine thrummed as it trundled down the drive.

Cas released him and Sam didn’t move, instead focusing on making sure his heart didn’t beat through his chest. His captor vanished into the living room, but it wasn’t until he heard the front door slam that Sam could breathe normally.

He hadn’t even thought of screaming. He hadn’t even been aware enough to worry about the driver. He’d been silent and still, focused on not making a movement that Cas would mistake for an escape attempt.

When he saw what the truck had left, his stomach lurched again. At any moment, Cas would realize what he was up to and drag him back out to the barn.

But Cas didn’t. He’d set it on the kitchen counter and stared at it. Sam came up beside him.

“Do you know how to work it?”

Cas glanced over.

“I learned to cook in vessels made of clay. The convection oven is still a peculiar novelty to me.”

Sam didn’t respond to that. Instead, he tore open the box of popcorn and the two of them watched House of Wax.

Cas was not amused. Sam had seen it before. It wasn’t bad, he’d seen worse.

Mostly, he pretended to really enjoy the popcorn. In reality, it didn’t taste any better than anything else he’d choked down since getting here. But he made a point of appearing to relish it, even going so far as to suck the butter off his fingers.

Cas watched him closely as he did this; Sam pretended not to notice.

After House of Wax they watched the Friday the 13th remake and House of Fears.
Sam had seen them all before, and the predictability of the carnage was oddly comforting to him. Cas stayed on his own side of the living room, watching Sam more than he watched the movies.

Sam ignored him, instead trying to remember where he’d been the last time he’d seen them. They hadn’t been on DVD, it had been on spotty cable connections in anonymous motel rooms, just him and Dean laughing over the ridiculous improbability of the monsters.

It was stupid to get homesick when he’d never had a home, but Sam didn’t know a better word for it. He’d been away from Dean this long exactly once. He’d spent two weeks hiding out with a dog he’d picked up. It was not like this.

He watched a teenaged blonde meet an untimely end and pretended the lump in his throat was because of the salt.

Eventually, Cas got up and made dinner. He didn’t ask if Sam wanted any. Sam didn’t say no. Cas made two servings anyway. When he handed Sam a plate, Sam took it.

“Thank you,” he said quietly. Cas hesitated.

“For all this, I mean,” Sam said, gesturing to the pile of movies and the empty popcorn bowl. “I know you don’t get it, but... it helps.”

It was a crock of bullshit but Cas smiled at him anyway.

“You’re welcome.”

After they’d eaten, Cas retreated to his office, leaving Sam to his horror movies. He didn’t emerge until it was time to work the spell again.

This, Sam was nervous about as well.

When Cas paused in the bedroom door, Sam was already on his feet, following silently. He undressed without having to be asked and climbed onto the bed, laying on his back.

Cas’s eyes widened and Sam felt his stomach roll. He breathed deep, glancing away. He needed to sell this. Cas had to think he was coming around.

You’re overdoing it, his mind supplied. It’s too fast, he’s going to know you’re faking.

Cas could barely keep his eyes off Sam as he undressed, and Sam fought the urge to cover himself. The older man was already beginning to harden, his cock rising thick from the dark hair between his legs.

He looked away, not having to fake the flush in his skin as Cas climbed onto the bed and nudged his legs apart.

This doesn’t make me a whore, Sam told himself as Cas prepared him. His legs were practically wrapped around Cas’s waist and he wasn’t even cuffed down. He was letting this happen. He had to.
It had been nearly half an hour since he’d taken the first of the little blue pills, and a little over five minutes since he’d begun to feel the effects. His stomach settled and his heart beat slower, his body relaxing into the softness of the bed. Cas’s hands were warm and strong, his voice calming in its reassurances. Sam felt himself beginning to harden as Cas worked the pads of his fingers against his insides.

He felt like it should bother him, but it didn’t. It didn’t bother him when Cas finally slicked up and fucked him, either.

It didn’t hurt like it used to. Cas had been right, that first time. It really did hurt less if he could relax.

And Sam was relaxed.

He heard himself whimpering as Cas fucked him, rolling his hips up to meet the thrusts. If he timed it right, Cas’s cock would press against some internal point that made Sam’s cock jump.

Sam looked down, watching his cock bob against his stomach with each of Cas’s thrusts. He looked very pale against the backdrop of Cas’s abs. As he watched, a drop of precome leaked from his slit.

Without thinking, he wiped it away. And then he kinda… didn’t… move his hand. He let it rest there, his fingertips splayed along the length of his shaft, his thumb making small circles over the head.

Cas was saying his name now, his voice rough and desperate. His fingers dug into Sam’s hips, pistoning harder into his hole.

Sam’s hand closed over his cock and Cas let out a choked little whimper, missing a beat and losing the tempo he’d held before.

Sam didn’t mind. He closed his eyes and leaned back, enjoying the misty feeling inside his mind as he stroked himself to completion. He thought so much these days, it was nice to just take a break, take a break and enjoy himself.

He spilled over his fist with a small whine, relishing it. He couldn’t remember the last time he’d jerked off. Maybe that’s why he’d been so stressed.

He didn’t protest when Cas pulled out, or rolled him over onto his belly. He might even have fallen asleep, except that Cas asked him a question. Sam answered in the affirmative and Cas burned him.

He whined, clutching at the sheets, trying to crawl away from the pain raking across his spine. The mist began to clear from his mind and fuck, Cas was trying to use his grace to relieve the pain and fuck, fuck-

“It doesn’t help,” he gasped, writhing beneath the man despite his best efforts to be still. “Please, it doesn’t help, Cas, please-”

He didn’t know what he was begging for, other than for the pain to stop. Cas had stopped pushing his grace into Sam’s skin, and now there was only the memory of the blood, burning off Sam’s skin like ethanol.

Cas withdrew without a word, unable to look at Sam as the teen dressed and left the room.

He had a plan, he remembered.
The chain clinked as he dragged it across the floor. He stood by the counter, looking at the shiny black box.

He needed Cas to trust him, and he’d paid the price. It was his only chance at freedom, and he’d bought it with his body.

He yanked the plug and lifted the box, carrying it back into his own room. Depositing it on the floor, he went back for the box of popcorn. And the bowl, of course.

Cas raised an eyebrow when he came to lock Sam in for the night. Sam looked up from his place on the floor.

“I’m gonna be up for a while. I thought I’d keep it in here, in case I got hungry?” He looked hopefully up at his captor. “I won’t let it beep and wake you up, I promise.”

Cas gave him a little smile.

“So of course.”

The door closed and the deadbolts slid home, leaving Sam alone.

He turned to the microwave, sitting unassuming on the floor.

He had twenty one days.

Chapter End Notes

Obviously I am Very Trustworthy Author and I would not let Sam abuse drugs.

This is not a real drug, by the way. I can’t remember if I already said this, but I asked interstitial (my medical consort) if there were any over-the-counter medications that I could use to render a 6’4, 220 lb man unconscious or unresponsive for around six hours and she said no. Because she is the kind of great friend who just answers questions without asking for context.
He worked on it at night, mostly. After he was locked in, when he’d have the warning of a knock and the deadbolts before the door opened.

He sat on the floor, his books spread out around him, and he worked at the screws.

It was not easy going.

At first, he thought it was going to be pointless. The screws holding the machine together were tight and small. His grip slipped consistently, and before long he’d decided that the whole plan was garbage.

He kept at it anyway. He’d paid dearly for the opportunity. He wasn’t going to abandon it so easily.

With a phillips head, he would have had the back panel off in a minute and a half. He didn’t have one, and so it took him two days to loosen the four screws holding it on. He was able to get a butter knife out of the kitchen, and on the third night, he slid it between the panel and the main body of the appliance. With infinite care, he worked the back panel off. It took him nearly three hours to do it, freezing at each unexpected sound to make sure he hadn’t roused Cas.

The thing still worked for now, and he allayed suspicion by using it exactly how he’d indicated he wanted to.

If he ever escaped, he was never eating popcorn again. For now, it was about all he would force down.

On the thirteenth day of his captivity. Cas had informed him that he wouldn’t be able to slip the cuff by starving himself. There were bones in the heel that would prevent it.

Sam had stared at him for a moment and repeated that he simply wasn’t hungry. It was true.

Even with the grace he was getting twice a day, Sam was still just generally sore. His shoulders hurt from being hunched over his books all day (not to mention his project all night) and his hands hurt from the abuse of using them as tools.

He began to pace regularly, marking out the edges of his confinement, ignoring the looks Cas gave him when he did. He needed to move, to stretch out his body. The desire warred with the fatigue that settled over him like a fog, dulling his mind. He slept more, always turned toward the door, lest Cas come in while he was out.

Cas’s grace transfers got longer and more involved, like he was trying to force Sam back into vitality by osmosis. Maybe it worked. Maybe it didn’t. Sam made an effort not to act repulsed by the ongoing sexual activity, and Cas didn’t touch his dick any more, so that was going as well as could be expected.

The blood applications continued to worsen, leaving Sam panting and sobbing into Cas’s pillow. In the six days following the acquisition of the microwave, Sam took three of the pills he had stolen. Each time he woke the morning after with a pounding headache and sickening memories of what
he’d done the night before.

On the nineteenth day, Sam finally loosened the final screw and pulled the transformer free.

The whole thing was barely larger than his palm. He stared at it, his mind thrumming as he realized how much he still had to do.

He turned the component over in his hands, feeling the reassuring weight of it. It probably weighed a solid five pounds.

*If you can’t get it to work, you can always just brain him with it,* he thought sarcastically.

The primary and secondary coils were individually wrapped in rubber, and he picked at it until he could see the copper beneath. The secondary coil was easily an inch thick, made of thin, coiled wires—eighteen or twenty gauge, he couldn’t tell for sure. It would all have to come out, which was his next challenge.

After that, he’d have to replace it, but he’d cross that bridge when he came to it.

He knelt on the ground, bracing the transformer between his knees. His shoulders protested the haunched position but he ignored them.

He set the butter knife along the edge of the coil and gouged.

One or two of the thin wires broke. He scratched at them, trying to peel them loose from the collective.

They didn’t come easy— the whole coil was stuck together with some kind of resin.

Sam swore under his breath, laying the blade against the coil and gouging again. Another filament or two broke.

*Only about five hundred to go,* he observed.

Sam crouched in the long grass, trusting it to conceal him. The savannah was still, not a breath of wind to disturb the surface of the nearby pool.

He glanced back to the others, easily picking Castiel out of the group. His companions’ dark skin gleamed like obsidian. Castiel’s own skin had darkened since they’d come here, but neither angel held out hope of blending in with their hosts.

Castiel turned, presumably to ask a question, but the woman beside him only indicated that he should be silent. She sank lower into the grass, her eyes fixed on the still pool.

A great beast padded through the reeds on the far side. Sam watched, transfixed, as it lowered its head to drink.

It was just as they’d described it. A huge, tawny thing, each of its forepaws three times as large as Sam’s hand. He stared at it as it drank, marveling in the wonder of it.

There was motion at his shoulder, and Sam looked to the side. Castiel knelt beside him, his eyes wide as he watched the lion move. His hand reached out for Sam’s, and Sam took it. Castiel’s
wonder was a sight almost as intriguing as the lion.

“I’d thought they were mistaken,” he murmured in their own tongue. “I thought nothing could possibly be larger than the jaguars across the ocean. But they were right.”

Sam smiled, bumping his forehead against Castiel’s shoulder.

“It gets worse,” he murmured back, enjoying his mate’s transfixed expression. “These people have tales of a creature even bigger- a great striped thing that lives in the land left of the sunrise.”

Castiel kept his eyes on the lion.

When Sam woke up on the twenty first day, his hands could barely move.

He spent about two hours a night working the knife against the coils, and managed to cut about five percent of the way through each time. There were already blisters raising on the first fingers of each hand. Sam sucked at one of them, trying to relieve the pounding ache.

Everything was tucked back into the innards of the microwave, the back securely replaced and the screws finger-tightened into place. It would stand up to simple scrutiny, but the inside had clearly been tampered with.

Sam didn’t think about what Cas would do if he discovered the sabotage.

He climbed out of bed, crossing to the bathroom and performing his morning ablutions. He was starting to get a persistent metallic taste in his mouth, and he spent an extra long time brushing his teeth.

When Cas came for him he was ready, waiting by the door with his eyes downcast. Cas said nothing, just stepped to the side and let him out.

Sam plodded toward the other bedroom, his hands shoved into his pockets so Cas wouldn’t see the damage.

He’d almost crossed the threshold when he realized Cas wasn’t following him. His blood ran cold. He turned slowly, looking back.

“What?”

“I’m worried about you.”

Sam almost didn’t laugh.

“Yeah, I’m worried about me too. We doing this, or what?”

He plodded into the bedroom, trailing the chain behind him. Cas followed, waiting in the doorway.

“I was wondering if you’d like to go outside?”

Sam faltered in the middle of removing his clothes.

“Yeah?”
Cas nodded eagerly.

“I’ve set up an anchor, outside. I can relocate the chain. If you want.”

“Yeah,” Sam answered, nodding. “That’d be good.”

Cas was extra gentle with him, though Sam no longer lay on his back. It reminded him of the times he’d taken the drugs, which almost seemed to make it worse. Instead, he positioned himself on his hands and knees, burying his face in the pillow while Cas took him.

It didn’t hurt any more. Somewhere in the last three weeks, Sam’s body had given up fighting. He didn’t struggle against Cas’s grip and he no longer needed to be restrained. On all fours, there was a minimum of contact- Cas’s hands on his hips, the rhythmic slap of skin against his ass- but nothing as intimate as the full-body contact of laying on his side. Or missionary, for god’s sake.

The pain of the blood was plateauing, or maybe Sam just wasn’t able to process any more. Cas was hesitant and unsure, rushing through that part, apologetic to a fault. Sam clutched at the bedding and grit his teeth and tried not to scream. He was able to hold it in, most of the time.

Cas left him whimpering into the bedspread, dressing silently and retreating into the living room.

Sam picked himself up, the agony already fading to a dull memory. He knew that if he looked, the blood would already be disappearing, soaking into his body like a sponge.

The blood was a part of him, now. Whatever it was doing to him, he couldn’t go back now.

He rolled onto his side, gazing dully at the wall, his knees pulled up against his chest.

This could never be undone. It was part of him, now.

Cas cuffed him to the fridge while he unlocked the far side of Sam’s chain. Sam sat on the floor, his cuffed wrist held high above his head, and watched him do it.

Cas had unlocked it before- it was the only way Sam could change his clothes- but this was the first time Sam had been able to watch him do it.

Cas glanced furtively at him as the padlock clicked open, but Sam made no effort to move. He wasn’t going to escape dragging a fridge door; in any case, he was too tired to try.

He watched Cas through dull eyes as the man left the house, dragging the chain through the door that lead to the barn.

Sam’s stomach tried to lurch when he thought of the barn, but he didn’t have the energy to do it. It wasn’t that it no longer frightened him. It did. But he was always frightened now. He spent his nights silently whittling at a nest of copper wire, wincing at each snap and creak, nerves taut as he listened for sounds from Cas’s room.
And he spent his days waiting, pretending to read, watching movies whose plots he couldn’t follow, and waiting for Cas to come for him. One way or another.

Cas held his hand tenderly while he unlocked the cuff. Sam averted his gaze, not bothering to protest when Cas’s fingertips trailed across his palm.

The chain lead in the other direction now. Sam rose to his feet, waving off Cas’s extended hand. He followed the chain toward the door, raising a hand to block the glare.

It was mid-September now. The air was cool and the leaves were in the middle of changing colors. Sam looked over the yard, remembering his last mad dash across the open space.

He wasn’t running now.

He still didn’t have shoes, but that was alright. He didn’t plan on going far.

The chain rattled as he descended the wooden stairs, standing in the sunlight for the first time in weeks. The grass was damp with dew, but soft under his feet.

He took a few steps and dropped to his knees, letting his fingers dig into the dirt. The grass smelled fresh, like it had been cut recently. Sam didn’t think he’d ever be this grateful for that scent. Dirt caught under his fingernails and he thought wildly that he’d be able to take it back inside with him, tiny slivers of freedom concealed by his own body.

“Sam?” Cas asked from the doorway, but Sam ignored him. He dropped his forehead to the ground, feeling the grass prickle his eyelids and cheeks. His hair fell around his face, brushing through the damp stalks.

He heard Cas approaching and still did nothing. The dew was soaking into his jeans. He breathed in deeply, feeling the air in his lungs.

Cas’s hand rested on his shoulder and Sam deflated. He hadn’t expected to be affected this way. But he still wasn’t free. The cuff was still locked securely around his ankle, and Cas was still there, waiting for him.

He sprawled out onto the grass, not caring if it stained his clothes. The ground was cool and pleasant beneath his body, the sun warming him despite the chill in the air. He lay his head on his bicep, realizing for the first time that it was thinner than he remembered.

Cas was behind him, crouched low. Sam thought the man might reach for him again, but he didn’t. He just watched, silently, as Sam curled up on his side. The teen’s fingers dug weakly into the dirt, scratching lines in the soil.

“Are you alright?”

“Leave me alone, Cas.”

Sam closed his eyes and breathed, feeling the air travel through his body.

On each exhale, he imagined escaping, floating out through his own parted lips and being.... gone. Just gone.

Cas didn’t leave him. He sat on the wooden porch steps, and watched Sam breathe.
It occurred to Sam that he might be with Cas for the rest of his life. That it was very likely that the month would end and Cas would just strangle him. Maybe poison the both of them.

It occurred to him that he might die with this cuff still locked tight.

He had eleven days.

Chapter End Notes

NaNo is killing me.

Right now I'm actually just really fucked up over this election. I *think* I'm gonna make my NaNo goal today. It was originally 1500 words per day but I've been procrastinating so damn hard it's up to 1800 now. *strangled choking. *

Uh, what else.... I had a Mountain Dew today and so Smol Bean is having a smol party. Caffeine makes her feisty. She's almost big enough for Husband to feel her kicks. He says I'm not allowed to jiggle her to try to make her kick... in case anyone is wondering which of us is the responsible parent. (I told this joke on Facebook, apparently no one is surprised.)

In other news, I've gotten a HUGE amount of work done editing the novelized version of It Was On Sale. It had pretty much stalled until this month because.... well because the fastest way to get motivated for a project is to set a deadline for a different project.
Day 22 (10 days to freedom)

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Sam wasn’t going to sleep.

He wasn’t going to die here.

Two more strands separated abruptly, and his hand slipped. His knuckles drove into the frayed wire ends and Sam hissed, holding back a curse. He had the sudden mad urge to hurl the thing across the room, to slam it through the drywall and be done with the whole fucking charade.

His torn knuckles bled lazily and he licked the blood off, turning his attention back to the wire. He was about halfway way through the twisted bundle.

He turned it over in his hands, thinking.

The transformer was a solid block of metal, shaped like the 8 on a digital clock. Two parallel rings of wire circled the center bar, tightly packing the holes of the 8.

The primary ring he left alone. The secondary ring, though-

In theory, if he could replace the secondary coil with a loop of higher-gauge wire, he would see an increase in amperage. In theory. Or, he might melt the whole damn thing and electrocute himself to death in the process.

It kinda depended on how efficiently the electricity transferred between the coils, not to mention how efficiently it transferred along the chain.

He jammed the knife into the coil again, driving it into the resin binding the filaments together and twisting.

Another few strands broke loose.

He was developing a tremor in his left hand. Cas was healing him each day, removing the fatigue and the blisters, but he still had a limited amount of time before the muscles simply refused to respond.

He stabbed at the coil, again and again. He didn’t know what time it was. It felt like it was almost morning, but he couldn’t tell. Without the sun on the far wall, he had no way to gauge the time.

The knife slipped again, and he almost lost his grip on it.

Sighing, he set the transformer back into the microwave, replacing the back panel and climbing woodenly into bed.

He didn’t turn off the light. He slept with it on, now.

He’d taken the paperbacks off the shelf and pushed them under the bed, filling most of the tight space. The empty bookshelf had been turned on its side, pressed into a corner with no space behind.

Sam stopped worrying about things under his bed when he was six.
But he slept better, now, knowing that if something startled him, he’d be able to see it.

Cas knocked on his door what seemed like seconds later. Sam shot up, suddenly sure that he’d forgotten to hide the transformer. Cas was going to see-

But when the door swung open, the microwave was back in the corner, sitting under a pile of textbooks and looking completely innocent and unmeddled with.

Sam exhaled, falling back onto the mattress. Cas raised an eyebrow, silently questioning.

“I had a nightmare,” Sam muttered. Cas hummed and retreated. Sam sat back up, sliding his legs over the edge of the bed.

There was blood on the sheets.

He stared at the crimson smears in horror, suddenly remembering the damage he’d done to his hand.

Fuck.

Fuck, fuck-

He glanced back to the door, relieved to see that his jailor was missing. He stared at his hand, the thin scrapes clearly visible on his knuckles. He couldn’t hide them- they crossed the whole back of his hand.

Fuck.

Sam glanced back to the door. He had maybe three minutes to come up with an explanation. He sucked his thumb, using the damp pad to try to clean some of the blood off. A scab tore open, and a ruby bead formed on the surface.

Sam stared at it, his throat tight. Slowly, he turned his hands over, looking at his fingertips. His nails were longer than he was used to. He didn’t have clippers, Cas was worse than the TSA-

Quickly, he drew his fingernails across his torn knuckles, wincing as the skin tore further. Pink lines appeared almost immediately.

He glanced back to the door. Cas wasn’t there.

Exhaling slowly he made a fist, pulling the skin taut.

He scratched at it vigorously, burying the wire marks beneath an ever-expanding patch of raw skin. Blood welled to the surface, dropping onto the sheet, and Sam smiled. The new stains would be brighter than the old ones, but there was nothing he could do about that.

When he was satisfied, he stood and went to go meet Cas.

Cas was in his bedroom, already stripped down to his boxers. He looked up when Sam crossed the threshold. With no small amount of satisfaction, Sam noted that he looked tired.

“I was thinking maybe today-”
Cas cut off abruptly as he noticed the blood dripping from Sam’s fingertips.

“What happened?” he gasped, on his feet in a moment. Sam glanced down to his hand, as though noticing it for the first time.

“Oh. Yeah.”

Cas inspected the torn skin, gingerly turning it from side to side.

“Sam,” he intoned. “What happened.”

Sam shrugged, raising his other hand to see the bloodied nails.

“Seemed like a good idea.”

Cas looked up at him, harsh eyes searching his face. Sam didn’t meet his eyes. Instead, he withdrew his hand and pulled his shirt over his head. Cas caught his arm, pulling him back. Before he could protest, Cas was kissing him, hard and deep. His mouth was frozen with all the grace flowing through him, and Sam could actually feel the wound on his hand closing.

When Cas pulled away, Sam didn’t thank him. He looked to the side, his eyes landing on the nightstand. He thought of the drawings again.

Cas pushed him back and he went down hard, sprawling back across the mattress. Sam tried to sit up but Cas was already there, holding him down and kissing him again. Each time it was cold, more of Cas’s energy reverberating through Sam’s body until he was quivering with it.

“Stop-” he whimpered, trying to push Cas’s weight off him. “Cas, stop.”

“No,” Cas growled, his breath hot on the shell of Sam’s ear. He fumbled between them, shoving Sam’s pants down and closing a hand over his cock. “No. One of us is gonna be good to you, god dammit.”

He came back down hard, crushing their mouths together. Sam shoved at him, but it was like fighting stone. Cas didn’t move an inch until Sam was hard, only then moving to yank his pants down further. Sam kicked at him, his heart suddenly going fast. Cas barely seemed to notice, catching Sam’s flailing limbs and stripping the clothes off him. Sam thought he heard something tear, but there was nothing he could do about it now.

Cas took him on his back, pressing kisses to his mouth and throat. He held Sam’s hands down, lacing their fingers together. His palms were cold, letting more of his grace seep into Sam’s body. Sam could feel the coarse hair of Cas’s belly moving along the length of his cock, though whether it was that or the grace that kept him hard, he didn’t know.

Either way, Cas made sure Sam came first, stroking him quick and sure until semen bubbled over his fingers. Sam could feel it pooling on his belly and he groaned, not looking up.

Cas pulled out then, kissing a line over Sam’s throat and chest, bobbing his head to lick the mess off Sam’s skin. His tongue was fire-hot, almost painful when it swiped over the wet head of Sam’s dick. Sam cried out, twisting away, but Cas held him down. He took his time, trailing lines of kisses across Sam’s hips and belly and thighs.

Eventually, he made his way up again, locking their mouths together as he pushed back into Sam’s body. It didn’t take him long to come. Sam expected him to get off, to fetch the blade he kept out of Sam’s reach, but he didn’t. He stayed, looking down into Sam’s eyes, growing soft without
“I’d like to take you back outside today,” he said at last. Sam looked back blankly.

“Sure.”

Cas kissed him again, desperate now. Sam didn’t bother to push him away. He let Cas kiss him, even parting his lips when the man insisted. Whatever Cas was looking for, he didn’t find it. He let his body rest atop Sam’s, burying his face in the juncture of Sam’s shoulder.

“Come back to me,” he whispered, almost too quiet for Sam to hear.

Sam didn’t respond.

Cas didn’t cuff him to the fridge again. Instead, after the spell was complete and Sam had showered, Cas simply cuffed his hands behind his back, letting Sam accompany him outside. Sam sat on the wooden porch steps and watched Cas padlock the chain to an iron ring. It was set in what looked like concrete, and the whole thing looked like a recent construction. Sam tugged at his chain and tried not to feel like a dog.

When the chain was secured, Cas unlocked his hands, sitting beside him on the steps. They looked out across the grass, not speaking.

“I’m going to get some work done,” Cas said at last. Will you call for me if you need something?”

Sam shrugged, not taking his eyes off the forest. Cas studied him a few seconds longer, before standing and striding toward the barn. He heaved the wooden doors open, letting light flood the space. From his position, Sam could see the table where he’d been tied while Cas fastened the cuff. It was once again covered in miscellaneous metal pieces, flat planes and bits of twisted-

Sam sat straight up, staring into the illuminated barn.

Cas worked with \textit{metal}.

The whole back wall of the barn was decorated with a statue of what appeared to be an angel, it’s body nondescript but it’s wings spread wide. Copper and gold coiled together in jagged patterns, creating the illusion of fire. It was what Sam had seen the first time he’d burst through the doors, though he’d quickly forgotten in the horror that followed.

But now...

Sam rose, stepping carefully across the yard until he reached the end of his chain. It stopped him just short of the doorway, and he paused there, waiting. Cas hadn’t noticed him yet, was preoccupied arranging a number of tools along the far wall. Sam caught sight of the torch and shivered, averting his eyes.

Cas noticed him and straightened abruptly.

“Sam! Did you want something?”

“Can I watch?” Sam asked. He tried to think of some excuse, some reason for wanting this, but Cas didn’t ask for one.
“Of course!” he beamed, turning to the side to show Sam what was on the table. “I’m not doing anything particularly interesting at the moment, I’m afraid. A restaurant in San Jose commissioned me to make a collection of animals.”

Sam nodded, staring mutely at the half-formed creatures. Cas watched him, maybe expecting him to comment, but Sam said nothing.

Cas sighed and turned back to his work. There were a collection of pliers at hand, and as Sam watched, he worked the wire into coils and contours. Occasionally he went for the torch, heating the metal until it glowed. It was easier to work when it was hot, and when the metal cooled, the heat left a dull patina.

Sam watched, fascinated at the way Cas’s hands moved over the metal. For the first fifteen minutes he had no idea what the man was trying to make, but then Cas turned it sideways and Sam saw that it was the head and forelegs of an elephant.

Sam leaned against the doorframe, his toes scrunching in the dirt. Cas’s project was interesting, but at the moment, he was preoccupied with the other contents of the barn. Half-finished sculptures were scattered here and there, intermixed with lengths of wire and scraps of jagged sheet metal. Over in one corner, Cas had collected a pile of partially-melted pots and pans. They balanced precariously atop a pile of battered old cookie sheets.

Cas glanced up at him occasionally, making sure he was still there, maybe. It seemed to please Cas that he was interested, and Sam was absolutely going to take advantage of that.

When Cas broke for lunch, Sam followed him inside without being asked. The chain allowed him access to the far side of the kitchen, and he took a seat while Cas made food.

The chain also theoretically gave him access to Cas’s office, but the door was locked and Sam wasn’t much interested in trying to break it down.

Cas made fried rice, mixing in eggs and chicken and vegetables and topping the whole concoction with teriyaki sauce. He filled two bowls without asking Sam whether he wanted any.

He nearly dropped his fork when Sam began to actually eat it.

“You like it?” he asked, almost hopefully, and Sam nodded. He took another big bite, finding that the salty taste of the rice actually was kind of appealing.

“I can make it more often, if you like,” Cas offered, but Sam just shrugged.

He finished the whole bowl, even going so far as to get a second portion from the stove. Cas gaped at him, and Sam returned the look with a little grin.

Cas grinned back, some of the tension draining out of his posture.

Sam was in a good mood, too. He’d been watching Cas from the doorway, but he’d been watching something else, too. Back in Cas’s pile of scrap metal, there was a thick length of wrapped wire. It was twisted and dirty—maybe it had once been part of a utility line or a lightning rod, who knew—but it looked like copper, and Sam was going to have it if it killed him.

He felt better after eating.
So something I wanted to say about Sam's escape attempt: the science is legit. Like, in theory, what I'm gonna describe to you should actually work. I've got all the parts to test it and I'm gonna try to do it this weekend.

In the interest of safety I am not going to actually chain it to my foot.
Day 22 (continued)

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Sam spent the rest of the afternoon leaning against the barn door, watching Cas work. The chain wasn’t quite long enough to let him into the barn, but that was fine for now. All he needed to do was act interested, and that was easy.

Cas talked to him, telling him about the different tools he used, the different methods of working the metal. Sam followed along, even asking a question or two. He didn’t actually care much. In his mind, he was going back over the formulas he’d gotten from his textbooks.

If the bundled wire in the corner was copper, he was set. There was more than enough there to pull off what he needed to do. Probably.

He glanced back down at the cuff, resting innocently against the side of his foot. The chain trailed across the grass toward the ring. Sam yanked at it, watching it pull taut.

He still couldn’t get used to having it there. Even after several weeks, it still looked confusing, like a mirage he couldn’t quite blink away.

He looked back to Cas, watching him weave finer wires into the body of the elephant. The wires were a striking variety of colors- Cas explained that he’d electroplated them, he could make any color he liked. Sam thought it looked garish, more like a mardi gras peacock than an elephant, but he said nothing.

The light in the barn began to fade as the sun sank behind the trees, Sam’s stomach sinking with it. Cas stayed where he was, preoccupied with his task, and as the sun began to dip lower, Sam felt a flicker of hope.

The spell had to be worked before the sun went down.

What would happen, he wondered, if the sun went down with the spell unworked? Would that break the spell? Would it undo what had been done?

He rolled his shoulders, working out the stiffness that had set in while he’d been standing.

He needed to get a chair or something in his room, sitting on the floor all the time was getting-

He stopped, cutting off the line of thought before it could mature. He didn’t need to get anything in that damn room. He was going to be there another week, tops, and then he was never going to set foot on this godforsaken property ever again.

Well, no. He was going to find Dean, and his father, and the three of them were going to come burn this hellhole to the ground. And if Cas was still here-

They’d burn him too, Sam resolved, setting his jaw. He stared daggers at Cas’s back, watching the man move with no apparent knowledge of the captive plotting his death only a few yards away.

The corners of the barn were getting difficult to see now. The shadows were getting longer by the minute. The red sunset shone almost directly through the barn doors, and even more so than before, the angel’s spread wings glowed like fire.
Sam resisted the urge to hold his breath. How much longer before the sun sank below the horizon? Twenty minutes? Half an hour? How much had to be obscured before the spell’s requirements were no longer fulfilled?

Sam rolled his shoulders again, leaning back against the doorframe. The bugs were coming out with the darkness, and it felt as though several of them had landed on him.

As quietly as possible, he scraped his shoulders along the wood, trying to dislodge the biting creatures. If anything, it made the feeling worse. Sam wondered if he was exacerbating a cluster of mosquito bites, but this went deeper than that-

He pushed back harder against the rough wood, trying to rid himself of the sensation. It wasn’t an itch now, so much as a tingle, and it was spreading down his back, reaching almost all the way to his hips. He shifted again, glancing to Cas, who still appeared oblivious to all of this.

The tingle became a burn, and Sam recognized this feeling. It was the way the blood had felt during the first few times Cas had put it on him.

This was the spell, he realized, and he forced himself to go still. He grit his teeth, trying to steady his breathing. Half an hour, he had to get through this for half an hour and maybe that would be enough to ruin the spell. He just had to be quiet, had to keep from attracting Cas’s attention.

The burn went deeper now, and tears began to form in Sam’s eyes as the tendrils worked their way into his body. He could feel them splitting his skin and muscle, tearing him open-

A whimper escaped his lips and Cas turned, eyes widening as he took in Sam’s state.

“Sam? What’s-”

For the first time, he noticed the reddened light of sunset. He swore profusely, tossing a pair of pliers to the side and bolting for the door.

He reached it just in time for Sam’s legs to give out, the burning tendrils having shoved themselves low enough to interfere with his balance. Cas caught him, strong arms around his chest, lowering him to the ground.

“Sam? Sam, look at me. Focus.”

Sam’s eyes burned, his head was pounding.

Half an hour, he managed to think. I need to hang on for half an hour.

But it was too late. Cas was lowering them both to the ground. He knelt with Sam above him, straddling his thighs. Sam pushed at him, but Cas was stronger and held him tight.

The hot trickle of Cas’s blood ran down his back, seeming cool and soothing against the agony that overwhelmed him now. Cas’s palm swiped across his shoulder blades, spreading the blood like aloe across his burning skin.

Cas held him up with one bleeding hand, the other tipping Sam’s face up so that Cas could look into his eyes.

“Stay with me, Sam,” Cas ordered, and a moment later the man was kissing him, the icy feel of his grace spreading across Sam’s body. Sam let out a sob, looking up into the sunlight. It broke through the trees in crimson spikes, painting the grass like spilled blood.
Cas pulled at his jeans and Sam didn’t fight him, holding tight to Cas’s shoulders while Cas pushed up into him. He wasn’t prepared and it hurt, hurt the way Cas tried to keep from him when they had more time. Sam clung to his shoulders, his vision blurring. For a moment, it looked as thought the sun was just behind Cas, spreading from his back like the wings of his angel.

Sam closed his eyes against the burning light, slipping out of consciousness before he could open them again.

The first thing Sam saw was his bookshelf, still pushed into the darkened corner.

He sighed, closing his eyes. The sun had set, the spell had been worked after all. Cas must have brought him back inside, after he’d passed out.

He lay still, his throat tightening, tears pricking the back of his eyes.

The spell was part of him now. He couldn’t pretend otherwise, not any more. He couldn’t run away from this. Even if he could break the chain, he’d have- what? Six hours? Eight?

What would happen to him if the sun rose and he was alone? The withdrawal was agony, but would it pass? Or would it just get worse?

Sam imagined himself writhing on the floor of the forest, driven out of his mind by the pain, unable to make it stop.

Or maybe it would kill him. Maybe after everything, the spell couldn’t be escaped, even if he could get out of this godawful prison.

He shifted, trying to get the sinking feeling to dissipate, and that’s when he realized there was something heavy behind him.

_Cas._

Sam froze, his eyes flicking to the microwave. It sat innocently under his textbooks, the rear panel still securely locked in.

Sam shifted again, and Cas responded in kind, pulling closer. One of his arms was draped over Sam’s waist, his chest flush with Sam’s back.

Sam swallowed, feeling Cas’s hips against his ass and taking comfort in the knowledge that at least he wasn’t hard.

“What are you doing?” Sam asked softly.

“Waiting for you to wake up,” Cas answered. His forehead rubbed against the back of Sam’s shoulder.

“I’m up.”

“I know,” Cas answered, and his voice sounded tight. He raised his chin, pressing his mouth to the back of Sam’s neck. “It’s been four hours. I began to wonder.”
“You could have taken me to a doctor,” Sam grumbled, but Cas shook his head.

“They can’t help you. Not with this. Though I was beginning to consider it.”

“What...” Sam paused. “What happened, Cas?”

“I don’t know. I didn’t realize the sun was going down, that I was out of time—”

Cas’s voice caught and he exhaled deeply, his arm tightening around Sam again.

“When I turned around and saw you... when I realized what I’d done... I thought I’d lost you again.”

Sam struggled to keep his voice steady.

“Could I... Cas, could I have died?”

“I didn’t think so. Now... I’m not so sure.”

A dull whine filled Sam’s ears, his mind filling with static. He scrabbled away from the man behind him, fighting out of Cas’s grip. The chain tangled in something and he went down hard, jarring his shoulder against the floor.

“You bastard,” he growled, turning back to face his captor. “You bastard! You knew! You said you’d let me go, and you knew!”

“No!” Cas protested. He scrambled into a sitting position, looking down at Sam in the darkness. “No, I never knew it would be anything nearly as bad as this.”

“Bullshit,” Sam spat, glaring up at him. “You’ve been tying me down with a hell of a lot more than chain. You never had any intention of letting me go.”

“I meant what I said,” Cas said sharply. “When the month is up, I’ll set you free. If you still want to go, you can go.”

“If I’d rather die than stay with you, you mean,” Sam answered.

“If that’s how you see it.”

“Get, the fuck, out of my room,” Sam hissed, his voice tight. Cas looked like he was going to say something else, but even in the darkness, Sam’s expression was enough to stop him. Instead he rose, looking down at the teen on the floor.

“I’ll see you in the morning,” he said, meeting Sam’s glare. “I won’t forget again.”

Sam watched him go, listened to the sound of the deadbolts locking shut behind him.

And then the rage set in and he clambered to his feet, slamming his bruised shoulder into the door, drawing strength from the pain. He slammed his fists into the wood, leaving small dents.

“Fuck you!” he screamed, pummeling at the barrier. “Fuck you and fuck your soulmate! I’m not him, you hear me? I would rather die!”

Cas didn’t respond, though Sam kept his diatribe up for several more minutes before sinking to the floor, exhausted. His knuckles were bruised and bleeding, his shoulder throbbing in protest.
Sam rubbed his face, thinking.

He could still go. Cas had been betting on a month, which meant he still might have time. Nine days. Tops. After that, he was dead, one way or another.

He closed his eyes, picturing the sketches again. Samael. The man with his face.

“Fuck you,” Sam told him. He stood up again, slapping the light switch and blinking in the sudden glare.

The bed went first, knocking piles of paperbacks over on its journey across the floor. Sam shoved it right up against the door. It made a pitiful barricade, made somehow even sadder with the addition of the shitty particleboard bookshelf.

Sam didn’t care. It was a protest, a gesture.

And it would give him a warning, if Cas decided to come back.

He yanked the back off the microwave, setting it aside and retrieving the transformer. The frayed ends of the secondary coil reminded him of his progress, and he jammed the knife deep into the remaining wire, twisting hard.

Seven of the wires snapped immediately, and Sam blinked.

The most he’d ever gotten was maybe four.

He shoved the knife into the bundle again, trying to see what was different.

The knife went deeper; that much was undeniable. Sam wiggled it experimentally, trying to determine whether the wire in this section was thinner or had less epoxy than the other section.

He didn’t think so. The wire looked homogenous- hell it would have to be, for the physics of the damn transformer to work out. And the epoxy looked exactly the same.

The knife was undoubtedly going deeper.

He twisted the handle again, listening to the soft ping, ping as the wires separated.

Five.

Five.

He kept twisting, feeling the metal breaking beneath his hands.

Curious, he withdrew the blade, sliding it between the half-broken coil and the spindle.

Very slowly, he pulled back on the handle, straining against the full remaining girth.

The blade bent.

Sam stared at it, momentarily speechless.

He bent... a butter knife.

With his hand.
The damaged blade made it harder to break through the remaining wires, but even still, Sam was three-quarters of the way through the bundle when the sun began to rise.

He tucked everything back into the ruined appliance, replacing the back and stacking his books on top. That done, he climbed atop his bed, ready to resume his animosity with Cas as soon as the other man woke up.

He sat with his back to the blocked door, listening for any kind of sound from next door.

It wasn’t until he caught himself nervously chewing a thumbnail that he realized his knuckles had healed.

Chapter End Notes

Progression!

So does anyone know what's the record for the most number of rape scenes in any given story? Or like, rape/word count ratio? Because I feel like I'm winning a very terrible competition here.

I do hope it isn't getting repetitive. I'm trying to go for medium-detail because Sam can only blush from the shame of having his most private and intimate areas caressed, like so many times you know?

In case you were wondering I am like SIX THOUSAND WORDS SHORT of where I should be right here. But am I writing? I am not. What am I doing? Taking a microwave apart.


By the way, this chapter came easy and quick, because I did not intend for any of this to happen. Any of it. Sam was supposed to try to get the copper, but instead he decided to go for the long con and act interested a little longer. And then the sun started going down and literally everything after that happened without my permission. And FUCKED WITH MY TIMELINE.

Dammit, Sam.

You know. Just in case you thought I was one of those writers that carefully outlined my fics and defined my characters and had, like, any idea of what I was doing. Haha, nope.
Day 23 (nine days to freedom)

The morning went about as well as Sam predicted. Cas knocked on the door and Sam told him to go fuck himself, prompting a heated argument. It culminated when Cas managed to shove the door open, sliding the barricade—bookshelves, Sam, and all—across the floor. The door splintered under the strain, but Cas already had more than enough room to move.

Sam retreated further, but his progress was halted when Cas caught hold of the chain. He gave Sam the dignity of not reeling him in like an errant dog, but Sam was nonetheless determined not to make any of this easy for him.

He screamed and thrashed, beating at Cas with his fists and holding his own surprisingly well, given the circumstances.

In the end it was all for nothing. Cas pinned him to the floor with one arm wrenched up behind his back, one knee pressing into Sam’s neck. Sam could do nothing but scream as his clothes were torn away, but when Cas shifted to straddle his hips he threw an elbow back, relishing the grunt of pain he got in response.

“Stop it,” Cas admonished, getting nothing but a heartfelt ‘fuck you’ in return. He shoved Sam’s arm up, threatening to dislocate the shoulder if Sam wouldn’t stop struggling.

Blood dripped onto Sam’s back even as Cas entered him. He screamed in pain and rage, shoving at the floor with his free hand. He was able to shift the two of them several inches before Cas caught hold of his wrist and forced it back.

There was no kissing this time, no tender caresses. When Cas finished with him, he simply stood and left, leaving Sam naked on the floor.

Sam pulled himself up, glaring resentfully at the broken door. He wiped his mouth with the back of his hand, a little surprised that he wasn’t bleeding from the fight.

His insides throbbed, a dull pain he hadn’t felt since the early days of his captivity.

Good, he thought, his eyes not leaving the empty doorway.

It wasn’t until he got out of the shower that he realized what Cas’s absence meant for him.

He picked his ruined jeans up off the floor. Cas had torn them evenly down one seam, ruining them. His shirt and boxers weren’t much better.

Scowling, he fingered the torn denim, thinking.

He knew Cas was strong. Stronger than he really should be, for his size. And then there was the healing, of course. And the claims of immortality, which may or may not just be insanity.
Sam tested the fabric between his hands, thinking. And then, abruptly, he pulled at the waistband, testing it.

It didn’t tear, which was to be expected. If nothing else, denim was rugged.

Sam yanked at it again, working the fabric back and forth between his fingers, trying to do any damage at all.

Nothing.

He turned it around, fingerling the frayed edge where Cas had ripped it, thinking.

Cautiously, he pushed a fingernail into the top of his thigh, twisting. A sharp point of pain let him know he’d accomplished his goal. A tiny bead of blood welled to the surface, growing minutely larger. Sam closed his eyes, breathing deep, trying to focus on the spot of pain.

He breathed out, wiping the blood away with his thumb.

The skin was smooth and unbroken, no sign of the wound that he’d created.

Sam stared at it, thinking.

The blood, the grace- whatever Cas was giving him... it was making him stronger. Not as strong as Cas, not yet. And it was giving him the ability to fix himself.

He swallowed, thinking of the barn and Cas’s threats. It wouldn’t be pleasant, but if he could heal himself, it wouldn’t kill him, either.

Maybe he had a chance after all, if he was willing to risk it.

He glanced at the calendar. Today’s mark would be day twenty-three. He had nine left until Cas had promised to set him free. And Cas had said that the spell took a moon cycle. Twenty-eight days and rounded up to thirty.

To be sure.

Which meant Sam had seven days to break the chain and go. That was his only chance of getting out of here alive.

Even still...

Sam looked out the window, watching the leaves sway beyond the metal bars.

It might still kill him. He might die, out there in the woods, suffering through the withdrawal of whatever it was Cas had hooked him on. If that happened, nobody would ever find out what had happened. Even if they found his body, no one would ever know how he got there.

Belatedly he thought of Dean. Had Dean even realized he was missing? Had Dad?

He supposed it depended on whether Cas had ever actually sent the letter he’d written. He couldn’t know either way.

But he couldn’t afford to wait for them, that much was obvious.

He dropped the ruined jeans, pulling a sheet off the bed and wrapping it around himself.
He pushed the bed back into its corner, making sure to pin the manacles still hanging from the wall. After today’s little episode, he thought maybe Cas might go back to using them.

He shivered at the thought of spending his remaining time bound to the bed, immobile and waiting for time to pass...

He shook his head, rubbing at his forehead like he could get the idea out that way.

If Cas was gonna lock him up, he’d have done it already.

Pulling the sheet tighter, Sam pulled the cracked door open. He’d intended to go straight out into the kitchen, but the splintered wood caught his eye.

Placing his hands on either side of the crack, he shoved, forcing the door more or less back into its original shape. The broken pieces of the wood lined up, and though they sagged a little, they were undeniably better than they had been a moment ago.

Sam wasn’t sure whether he’d have been able to do that before. But the door shut, now, and that served his purposes well enough.

He turned out into the living room, searching for Cas. The house appeared deserted. The kitchen and living room were empty, as was Cas’s bedroom. The door to his office was closed, as usual, but Sam heard no sound from the far side. He shouted Cas’s name, banging on the floor, but got no response. So, probably not in the basement then.

That left the barn, which unfortunately put him out of Sam’s reach, for now.

Sam smirked at the thought of Cas hiding from him. Maybe after everything, he was starting to feel a touch of remorse over what he’d done.

Sam doubted it. He went to the sink, filling a plastic tumbler with water. He wasn’t hungry, but the feeling of thirst hadn’t abandoned him yet.

He drank it slowly, letting the cool water fill his belly. He looked around the deserted house, his eyes finally landing on Cas’s bedroom.

If Cas was outside, and planned to be out there for a while, this would be the perfect opportunity to snag a couple more of those little pills. Sam didn’t know if Cas had missed the ones he’d already taken, but in any case, he hadn’t said anything.

Casting one more glance around the house, Sam crept into Cas’s room. He felt distinctly exposed, spreading out over Cas’s bed with only a sheet wrapped around him, but it was the only way to reach the drawer.

It slid open easily, as before. This time, though, the photograph had moved- lying face up. The dark grey eyes of the woman stared out at him, and Sam studied her face again, trying to remember where-

-it’s Isobel, you have to come-

- he’d seen her. He took the photo out of the drawer, looking it over carefully. She was his age, maybe a little younger. There’s no way she could be connected to Samael, not unless she was immortal.

He studied the girl’s eyes. She didn’t look immortal. They tended to get a sharp look about them,
the uncanny feeling that they’ve seen too much. She didn’t have that look.

Sam glanced to the sketchbook. Maybe Cas had drawn a picture of her? Something that would give them context?

He didn’t want to look at the sketchbook again, but he did. He flipped it open to the first page this time, looking at the very first thing Cas had drawn.

It was him, of course. In profile, looking up to the sky. The drawing didn’t go lower than his bare chest, but it looked as though he were outside.

Sam turned the page.

He was in bed, asleep, the pillow pulled halfway over his face. Sam frowned at it. One of his shoulders was right in the center of the page, and the skin was smooth and unblemished. Sam had a burn there- he’d been underfoot while Dean was trying to cook something on a hot plate. It was old, just a little brown smudge, but it had been there his whole life. And it wasn’t in this drawing.

Sam flipped forward again, trying to find a drawing of his chest. It didn’t take long.

His birthmarks were all there- the moles, the freckles, every imperfection of his skin... but no scars. Never any scars.

He saw himself younger and older, laughing, thinking, eating, sleeping, even angry, all perfectly rendered, but no scars.

He found the drawing of himself in the bathhouse again, skipping past it quickly. He didn’t want to see it again.

He might have saved himself the trouble.

A few pages later there was another one- a simple pencil sketch, less detailed than the others. The figure in the drawing was sprawled out on his back, his eyes closed and his brow furrowed, his lower lip caught between his teeth-

Sam turned the page, suddenly sick.

He didn’t want to know if he looked like that, when Cas- when Cas...

He closed his eyes, blocking out a drawing of himself smiling.

When Cas raped him.

The word settled in his chest like lead. He’d been trying to find some other way to put it, something without the connotations, something that didn’t invite the feelings this did.

He’d been attacked before. He’d lost fights before. He’d been assaulted and beaten- hell, he’d been stabbed-

This wasn’t that.

That was violence. This was something else.

He opened his eyes again, forcing himself to look at the drawings.

They were him. Cas might be a crazy bastard but he wasn’t wrong about this. Whoever he had
known, all those years ago... it was Sam.

He turned the pages, again and again, seeing himself rendered in every possible scenario, over and over, until finally, ten pages from the end, Sam saw something he recognized.

Himself, sitting in the cab of Cas’s truck. The light came from the overhead dome, throwing his features into sharp relief. He looked tired, but grateful.

It was the first time Cas had seen his face. Outside the gas station, where he’d been prepared to get out of the truck and out of Cas’s life forever.

Sam’s fingers traced the drawing. His face was surrounded by darkness. It had been raining, and cold. If he’d just looked away, let his hair fall across his face, done anything but given Cas the look he saw now-

He turned the page again. It was too late for regrets, now.

In the next drawing, he was sitting on the bed in his room, his body restrained. He was holding a bowl of something, a tendril of steam rising toward his downturned face. His eyes were dark, lost in shadow.

Sam turned the page.

He was under the water of the bathtub, his features distorted, his eyes wide and blank. His hair floated around his face, forming a disturbing halo.

Sam remembered Cas pulling him from the bath, his face wild as he’d shaken him back into reality. Looking at himself now, Sam didn’t blame him. The face in the drawing may well have drowned.

In the next drawing he was naked. His wrists were shackled to Cas’s headboard, his face pained as he turned it away. His cock was hard, his legs spread, but there was no comparing this to the drawing of the bathhouse.

Sam didn’t want it.

He didn’t want it.

And Cas knew.

Sam stared at the drawing, at his own tearstained face, the way his body twisted away from Cas’s touch.

Cas wasn’t delusional. He didn’t look at Sam and see the same wanton invitation he’d drawn from before. He saw this.

Sam turned the pages, seeing himself again and again. He saw himself spread out on Cas’s worktable, Cas’s blood splattered across his side. He saw himself on the couch, watching the television, a mixing bowl balanced on his lap. He saw himself on the grass, the sun beating down on his back. His shirt hung loose and Sam realized how thin he’d gotten.

He hadn’t been paying attention, but Cas had.

Beneath the sleeve of his shirt, the burn on his shoulder was marked, a dull smudge across his skin.

The next page was blank. Sam flipped through the rest of the book, looking for any other clues, anything else he might be able to use.
The only other drawing was on the very last page. It was a silhouette, done in dark charcoals against a light background. Unlike the others, this one wasn’t of Sam. This one was of Cas’s angel, the same one that hung on the back wall of the barn. The creature’s wings spread wide, taking the whole width of the page.

Sam glanced back to the photo of the red-haired woman. Was she the angel?

He didn’t think so. The wings made it hard to see details, but he got the idea that the angel was larger than her. Physically stockier. Taller, too.

Sam turned the page, trying to get some kind of clue. Could it be Cas, in the drawing? The body type fit, but the wings.

He scoured his brain, trying to remember what creatures had wings. Nothing he’d ever come across, that was for sure.

The back door opened and Sam’s heart jumped into his throat. He slapped the sketchbook shut, throwing it back into the drawer. The picture frame was hastily replaced on top of it, and the drawer had slid shut before Sam realized that the pill bottle hadn’t been in there.

He pulled himself into a sitting position, wracking his brain for some explanation, some excuse. He couldn’t pretend he hadn’t been in here, Cas would have seen the chain trailing through the doorway the minute he’d come inside.

As though summoned, Cas appeared in the doorway. He stared at Sam, his head tipped slightly to the side.

“What are you doing in here?”

Sam dropped his eyes.

“Waiting.”

“For what?”

Sam took a deep breath.

Here it goes.

“For you to come back inside with whatever you were getting from the barn. Whatever you’re going to do to me... you’re gonna have to do it in here.”

He looked back up at Cas, his face a mask of defiance.

Cas just looked sad.

“I wasn’t getting anything, Sam. I just needed to think.”

“About what?”

“About what to do. With you. It hasn’t even been a month, and you’re already...”

He trailed off. Sam said nothing. Cas crossed the room, kneeling at Sam’s feet.

“You can have anything you want, Sam. You’re going to live forever, do you understand that? Whatever you want to do, wherever you want to go, I can give you that. I just need you to stop
fighting me.”

“And let somebody else take over my body,” Sam muttered. Cas shook his head.

“No, I don’t think so. I didn’t know when I started, but now- you knew my name. His memories are coming back, aren’t they?”

He looked at Sam expectantly. Sam stared at him, uncertain of the answer. After a moment, Cas went on.

“If his memories just... come back. If they add to yours, instead of supplanting them, then it’s just you, it’s only ever been you. You just... forgot who you were.”

“But you don’t know.”

Cas shook his head, looking away.

“I can’t stop, either way,” he murmured, not meeting Sam’s eyes. “If you could remember... if you knew how happy we were, how happy you were... you’d understand.”

“Was I?” Sam asked. He meant for it to sound accusing, but instead it only sounded weak. Cas looked back at him.

“Of course, Sam. I wish I could make you understand. The things we did, the things we saw. They were... they were incredible.”

His hand rose to rest on Sam’s knee, and Sam didn’t pull away.

“I would give anything to have that back. And if you- if we had...” he trailed off, thinking. “If things had been different. You would do the same.”

Sam shook his head vehemently.

“I would never do what you’ve done. Never in a million years.”

“You don’t know what it’s like, to lose what we had,” Cas answered. “If you could remember... when you remember. You’ll understand.”

“And what if I- what if he can’t forgive you?”

Cas looked taken aback, like he honestly hadn’t considered it.

“He can. I know he can. And you will, too. You just need time.”

“A year and a day,” Sam echoed, looking down at him. Cas nodded.

“Exactly.”

“Cas?”

“Yes?”

Sam hesitated, turning his attention to his hands.

“What about my family? Dean, and Bobby, and... and my dad. You’ll let me find them, right?”

His hands twisted in his lap, considering. He’d made the decision to leave, to go to school... but he
still planned to call. To visit, you know?

The idea that he might never see Dean again rose to the forefront of his mind, cutting off any thoughts that might have followed. He breathed deep, suddenly panicking.

Every time he thought he’d come to terms with dying, with the things he’d never do again, something else hit him.

He focused on inhaling, focused on the air in the room, bringing it into his body and releasing it. Nine days. Cas promised that he’d be able to use the phone. Nine days.

Cas’s hands cupped his face, thumbs stroking his cheeks. The man was speaking to him, trying to reassure him, but it was the thought of Dean that pushed him through it.

He wasn’t going to die here. Even if he couldn’t get his plan to work, even if he had to wait out the whole year, he wasn’t going to die here. He was going to call Dean and they were going to figure this out.

It was just a spell. Spells could be broken. They did it all the time.

Cas rose, pulling Sam close as he struggled to come back down.

Eventually, his breathing evened.

Chapter End Notes

This chapter rambled a bit. Sorry.
Sam lost some privileges after that.

For one thing, it was two days until Cas agreed to give him another set of clothes. He seemed content to ignore it until Sam brought it up, and even then, he just shook his head and said he wasn’t interested in having to tear them off again.

Sam made do with a sheet tied around his waist, and a blanket over his shoulders. The blanket helped more than anything- he hadn’t realized how cold it had been getting, until he started wrapping himself in the blanket all the time.

The morning of the twenty-fifth day, Sam got out of the shower and found Cas sitting on his bed. His first instinct was to scramble for a towel- or shut the door that wasn’t there- but he managed not to act on them. Instead, he straightened up, holding his shoulders back, staring straight at Cas.

“What do you want?”

Cas blinked, taken aback by his blunt approach.

“To get right to the point, I want you to eat breakfast.”

“Not hungry.”

“I know. I looked into it- it’s an acute stress reaction. And it’s making you worse.”

Sam tried not to roll his eyes, and failed.

“Know what’s making me worse, Cas?”

“Ketosis,” Cas answered bluntly. “You’re probably getting a metallic taste in your mouth?”

Sam blinked.

“So?”

“So your body’s shutting down and my grace isn’t enough to sustain it, and I want you to eat something. I want you to keep eating.”

Sam opened his mouth to deliver a counteroffer, but Cas held up his hand.

“In return,” he said slowly, “I’m willing to make concessions. I’ll give you your clothes back. We’ll go outside- every day. I’ve attached another length of chain, so you’ll have a wider range, out there. And I- I’ll...”

Sam watched. Cas was struggling with this one. Whatever it was, it was hard for him.

Sighing, Cas withdrew a familiar orange bottle from the pocket of his jacket.

“Half,” he said quickly. “Each time we work the spell... I’ll give you half of one. It should be mild enough to avoid the side effects while still letting you....”
He trailed off. Sam didn’t complete the sentence for him. He looked suspiciously at the bottle.

“How the sudden change of heart?”

“Because you haven’t remembered,” Cas blurted. “I’ve tried to make all of this as easy as I could, tried to make it good for you... but you still hate it. I thought if I gave it time, you’d get used to it, but you... you haven’t.”

“No,” Sam agreed. “I haven’t.”

Cas looked up at him again and he shivered, goosebumps raising across his naked skin. Sam figured he’d made his point and very deliberately retrieved a towel. He sponged the worst of the water out of his hair before wrapping it around his waist.

“So I start eating again and in return you give me my pants back and let me check out of our little romantic interludes.”

Cas looked pained, but nodded anyway.

Sam frowned, considering.

“I don’t suppose you’d throw a phone call in, sweeten the deal?”

“You know I can’t,” Cas answered, shaking his head. “Next week. You have my word.”

“Then I want something else,” Sam said. He leaned against the doorframe, trying to look confident. Like he was holding the cards, and he knew it. Cas looked up at him, not trying to disguise his eagerness.

“What?”

“Those things you’re making. The wire animals. I want to make one.”

Cas frowned, confused.

“Why?”

“Because I’ve been stuck in this fucking house for a month and I’m bored out of my goddamn mind?”

Cas blinked.

“I mean, why that? I don’t think you’ve ever tried to...”

He trailed off. Sam raised an eyebrow.

“Can I make one, or not?”

Cas shook his head quickly, clearing it.

“Yes, of course. Whatever you want. I’ll have to clean up a workspace... and there are tools you can’t use, of course.”

“Obviously.”

“Then you’ve got yourself a deal.” Sam raised a finger. “Pants first.”
Sam waited patiently while Cas locked him in and unfastened the other half of the chain. It was kind of an empty gesture at this point; the cracked door provided very little in the way of obstruction. If he squinted, he was pretty sure he could actually see Cas kneeling on the floor.

In any case, Sam didn’t bother trying to fight his way through. He didn’t have time for another lockdown, not at this point. He waited for Cas to thread the chain through a set of clean boxers and jeans, and shimmed into them when Cas unlocked the door. Cas gave him a plain t-shirt, too, and on request, a pullover sweater.

The sweater was a bit of a surprise, because Sam had expected to borrow one of Cas’s, but the one he received had obviously been purchased for him. It was brand-new, not to mention huge.

So, Cas was buying stuff for him in case he needed it.

That was... interesting.

Sam ignored it for now, instead opting to join Cas out in the kitchen.

He’d been here long enough that he had a ‘usual seat,’ now, and when he realized it, he switched to a different one. Cas didn’t seem to notice it. He was making fried rice again. It seemed a little early in the morning for it, Sam thought, but he said nothing. If Cas wanted to make fried rice, fuck it; he’d eat the damn rice.

He glanced at the door periodically, trying not to be obvious about it, but impatient nonetheless. Cas dished up a couple servings and sat one in front of Sam. Sam looked at it for a second, his stomach tightening at the thought of actually having to eat it. He closed his eyes, thinking of the copper and the pills and the clothes.

He had nothing but what Cas gave him, and if Cas wanted him to earn it, then that’s what he’d have to do.

He ate about half of his food before his stomach began to cramp.

Cas said it was fine, that his body would have to adjust. He cleared away the plates and poured Sam a plastic tumbler of orange juice. He set it on the table in front of Sam’s crossed arms, and declared that they’d go outside when Sam had finished it.

Sam raised the cup in a mock-salute, downing half of it in one go. When he broke for air, Cas was staring at him.

“You should slow down,” Cas suggested. Sam raised his middle finger and downed the rest of it. He set it definitively down on the table and stood without another word.

The chain trailed behind him as he walked, ruining his exit somewhat, but there was nothing to be done about that. Cas watched him as his disappeared into his room.

He shut the door behind him, and got halfway through brushing his teeth before he threw up.

Cas let him go outside anyway.

Cas had shoes for him now, too. Soft-soled things that definitely weren’t going to hold a hidden
weapon (or double as a bludgeoning device, for that matter) but they made the trek across the gravel a lot easier.

The extended chain let him get about ten feet inside Cas’s barn. He’d looked side-eyed at Cas’s impressive collection of metal-cutting devices, but they were all well out of his reach. He ignored them for now, instead focusing on the animals Cas had made. Each one was about a foot and a half long, and he figured that was a good starting point.

He and Cas spent about twenty minutes rummaging though Cas’s scrap pile, picking up a couple red-herring items before pretending to notice the length of bent wire. Cas handed it over utterly nonchalantly, as though he weren’t giving Sam the key to his freedom, just like that.

Sam struggled to keep his face steady, examining the ends of the cable. If it was aluminium, like the metal Cas was using, this was all for nothing.

It wasn’t. It was copper. Three distinct bundles of fourteen-gauge cable, maybe nine wires per bundle, plus an extra as ground.

Sam thought he might be sick again, but he covered it.

This was it. This was exactly it.

“Can I have a knife?”

Cas raised an eyebrow.

“Why?”

“I want to strip the casing off this.”

Cas looked at him for a long minute and Sam sighed, feigning contrition.

“Come on, man, I’m being good. I just want to do this myself, that’s all.”

Cas went back to his own workbench, retrieving a boxcutter. He approached Sam slowly, stopping just out of the chain’s range. He held it tightly, looking at Sam’s face.

“I want this back, before we finish tonight.”

“Sure,” Sam agreed readily, nodding. He extended his hand to receive the blade. Cas didn’t hand it to him.

“You already know you can’t hurt me with this,” Cas added slowly. He turned his arm until Sam could see the place where the metal cane had split his skin wide. There was no scar, whatsoever. He looked back up into Cas’s eyes, letting him know that Sam remembered.

“I know.”

Cas held it out and then froze at the last second, pulling his hand back.

“If you...” he paused. “If you try to hurt yourself with this. It won’t end well.”

“Well, it really couldn’t, could it?” Sam asked. Cas gave him a strange look, hesitating, before holding the knife out.

Sam took it, watching Cas’s face as he did.
“Thank you,” he said evenly. He flicked the blade out and began working the casing off the wire. Cas didn’t stop watching him for a long time.

When Sam finished, he had about thirty long copper wires, each about three feet long. He looked over them carefully. He would probably need about eight to do what he needed inside. He should probably use about ten, to be sure.

Taking one of the wires, he began to coil it, making a spiral.

The physics was one thing. His transformer didn’t need to be pretty, it just needed to work. This was another thing. This animal was going to be a complete piece of shit, he already knew that, but still. He needed to try.

He kept making the spiral as he planned. He had no more than five days until the first part of Cas’s spell was done. He didn’t want to spend more than about three on this. That gave him two days to disassemble it and get it rigged up to the ruined microwave.

It would cut it tight, but he didn’t have another choice.

Cas made him eat lunch, too. And dinner.

But he kept his promise on the pills, which was good of him.

He gave Sam half of a blue tablet about an hour before sunset. Sam swallowed it dry, purposely not thinking about what it would do to him when it kicked in.

It kicked in anyway, and by then, Sam was done worrying. He wasn’t quite as out of it as he’d been before- obviously, it was half the dose.

Still, he was feeling pretty good as he lay on his stomach, his arms crossed under the pillow, letting Cas rub his back. The man was straddling his thighs, working his palms into the tired muscles of Sam’s shoulders and spine. Sam lay quiet, occasionally humming when Cas worked a particularly stubborn knot of muscle.

“This is what it was like before, you know,” Cas told him, and Sam mumbled an agreement. Cas’s hands dipped lower, moving over Sam’s lower back and hips.

“Is that still okay?”

“Mmm...” Sam answered, truly not giving a shit at this point. He felt like he could lie here forever, not having to fight anything.

His cock began to harden as Cas’s hands stroked his ass. The angle wasn’t great- it went down instead of up, the head pointing toward his knees rather than his belly. He groaned and dug his toes into the bed, using his arms to leverage his whole body up until his hard-on could situate itself. Cas faltered as he rose, but quickly regained his balance. Sam had dropped back down onto the bed by
“You’re getting your strength back,” Cas remarked. Sam shrugged, burrowing his face into the pillow. He’d been eating for like, one day. Cas was either trying to make him feel better, or he was really overestimating the restorative capabilities of his cooking.

Either way, Sam didn’t bother to argue with him about it. He felt too good to get into another debate. The pills would wear off after the spell, when Cas gave him another hit of his grace, and he wasn’t going to waste his buzz.

Cas moved lower, one of his hands sliding into the crease between Sam’s thighs. He pressed lightly and Sam obliged, spreading his legs wider. Cas’s fingers pressed hard into the muscle there, and Sam shivered, murmuring something unintelligible.

Cas’s hands switched to the other thigh, working their way back up.

“Sam?”

“Mmm?”

“I’d like to do something for you. Something you- you enjoyed. Before.”

“’kay.”

Sam didn’t know much about Samael’s interests, but if it was anything like what Cas was doing now, he was fine with it.

Cas repositioned, shifting his weight again, all the while continuing to stroke and massage Sam’s prone body. His palms cupped the curve of Sam’s ass, his thumbs slipping between the cheeks. Sam’s breath caught as Cas spread him further, nudging at one of Sam’s knees until Sam obliged. He felt almost ridiculously exposed, but if Cas wanted to stare at his ass, well. To each his own.

Teeth nipped at the crease of Sam’s thigh and he froze, main faculties coming very temporarily back online. He felt another nip, higher this time, and then a press of something hot and wet against his hole.

“Ah, fuck, Jesus, Cas,” he groaned, his fingers tightening in the pillow. The flat of Cas’s tongue pressed against his balls, drawing up across the tender skin. “What’re you-?”

“Feel good?” Cas asked, and then that hot wet pressure was back again. Sam shifted, rubbing the length of his cock against the sheets as he repositioned. Cas spread his cheeks again, exposing Sam’s wet hole to the light. Sam whimpered, feeling him playing gently with the rim.

“Yeah,” Sam whispered, and then whimpered again as Cas’s mouth closed over his hole, licking and sucking at the tight muscle. His hips worked down against the bed, trying to stimulate his cock without lowering his ass too far.

Cas was way ahead of him, cupping and rolling his balls even as he breached Sam with a single finger. Sam stopped just short of begging for more, but Cas seemed to know anyway, sliding in a second digit and massaging Sam from the inside. His tongue still worked around Sam’s rim.

Sam groaned. He couldn’t focus. There were too many sensations trying to push their way through the staticky fog filling his mind. It was too much. He shoved his hand beneath his belly, palming his cock and coming after two pulls.
Almost immediately, Castiel’s touch became too much for his over sensitized nerves, and he collapsed onto his belly, sated. His thighs pressed together, discouraging further exploration, and Castiel laughed. He scooted up next to Sam, one hand across his belly, their legs tangled together. Sam pulled a pillow close, sandwiching his body between it and Cas.

“Good?” Cas asked, him, just a whisper in his ear, and Sam hummed. He’d half-softened and he was tired, now. He could feel the hard line of Cas’s cock, pressed along the slick furrow of his ass, but it didn’t concern him now. He nuzzled deeper into the pillow as Cas lined up, catching on his rim for just a moment before sliding in.

There wasn’t enough lube, not really, but Sam was loose enough not to care. In any case, Cas was barely moving, rocking his hips gently against Sam’s ass, his fingers splayed across Sam’s belly. It didn’t take him long to spill inside, his breath hitching against the nape of Sam’s neck.

Something niggled at the back of Sam’s mind, something worrying, but he ignored it.

“You still with me?” Cas murmured, and Sam only grumbled in response. Cas hadn’t pulled out, and Sam had a feeling they were about to make a mess.

“I have to do your back, now.”

Oh. That’s what had been worrying him. Sam felt the tension surging back into his body.

“No,” he whispered. “No, Cas, please, please, just one night, can we just skip it this one-”

“You know I can’t,” Cas answered. His voice was tight. “I’ve been looking- trying to find something that will lessen this, for you. No one seems to know.”

His hand was firm against Sam’s shoulder, pushing him onto his belly. Sam buried his face in the pillow, whimpering, his body tight in anticipation of the coming pain.

“I’m so sorry,” Cas whispered, and the first drops of fire rained down on him.

Chapter End Notes

There's something I keep meaning to put in here and I can't for the life of me remember what it is.

Uh... my science-ing didn't kill me.
I got to play rockband yesterday, which I haven't played in like six years, so that was nice. There's something nice about a video game just hard enough to occupy exactly 100% of your brain functions.
Like, 'I'm nailing it, but I cannot think about a single other thing right now.'"
I think that's how people with hyperactive brains meditate. Cuz if you asked me to sit still and let my mind calm.... you don't know me well.

I've gotten 2,000 words of my nano written for the last couple days, which is nice. I need to average 1,800 a day to catch up. Last week was... it was bad. It threw a wrench in a lot of people's well-being and I don't think a lot of people were doing art.
But I am gonna win NaNoWriMo. My country's new rape orange can fuck up a lot of stuff but he will not take this from me, dammit.
On the twenty-eighth day of his captivity, Sam finished his sculpture.

And it was awful.

It probably would have been better (as Cas helpfully pointed out) if he’d cut some of the wires, instead of bending them back and wrapping them, over and over, around the poor creature’s limbs.

Sam gave him a line of bullshit about preserving the unity of the source material (as it turns out, some of his other textbooks were actually pretty useful) and carried on wrapping.

He could do it pretty easily with his fingers, now, which was kinda cool.

He could feel the resistance of the metal and he knew- he felt like- it should be giving him more trouble than it was. This wasn’t an unfamiliar feeling for him. From the ages of twelve to about seventeen, he’d been damn near afraid to move because every time he reached out, his hand went further than expected because his damn arm was longer. Again.

At least this wasn’t giving him trouble walking. The ground stayed the same distance away; everything else was secondary.

He toyed with the pliant metal, refusing when Cas offered to let him use the metalworking tools. He wasn’t interested in that level of precision. He was going to have to straighten all this out again, after all.

Cas looked at it silently, his arms crossed. He didn’t comment, and even though Sam knew the damn thing was shitty, it still ticked him off a bit.

“Well?”

“I still think you should have trimmed the spare. The way it coils back obscures the contour of the legs.”

“Yeah, but you can tell what it is, right?”

Cas tilted his head slightly, looking at the copper monstrosity sitting crookedly on the wooden workbench.

“It’s a dog, right?”

Sam gaped at him.

“It’s a lion, numbnuts, when’s the last time you saw a dog with a fucking mane like that?”

“In my defense,” Cas answered, raising an eyebrow. “I’ve never seen a lion that looks like that, either.”

Sam snatched the misshapen creature off the bench, holding it to his chest.
“Don’t listen to him,” he told it in a loud whisper. “He’s just jealous of what we have.”

Cas rolled his eyes.

“I think maybe you should stick to your studying, leave the art to me.”

“Maybe I’d be better at it if I practiced for like a million years,” Sam griped, adjusting a stray wire on the lion’s tale. He paused, and looked up. Cas was staring at him.

It occurred to him that he might get that chance, and it sobered him up. He looked back to his lion.

“How old are you, anyway?”

He didn’t look at Cas, but he could hear him shifting.

“I don’t know.”

Sam smirked, adjusting the back leg to try to make the balance more even.

“How do you not know?”

“We travelled often. Back then, there was not a unified calendar system. We also spent long periods in uninhabited areas, and we did not mark the passage of time.”

Sam paused, setting the lion back on the table.

“You say ‘we’...”

“Samael and I.”

Sam wasn’t sure he wanted to have this conversation. In a way, it felt like bringing up a jealous ex. He fingered the copper wire.

If the escape didn’t work... and he didn’t kill himself trying... he was gonna share a body with this guy. He cleared his throat.

“You guys were together a while?”

“Since our creation,” Cas responded. He’d turned back to his own work, but his hands were still. “Our kind is created in pairs. We are not meant to be alone.”

“So you’re like... brothers?” Sam wrinkled his nose, thinking of Dean again, but Cas was shaking his head.

“We are two halves of a pair. Nothing more, and nothing less.” Cas glanced back at Sam. “I was the artistic half, if you were curious.”

“You certainly didn’t get the good looks,” Sam answered brightly. Cas laughed.

“Or the quick wit,” he agreed. He picked up the animal in front of him, a half-rendered dolphin. “No... Samael was the clever one. He had an eye for patterns, similarities between one place and another. He always picked up languages much faster than I could.”

Sam watched him as he spun the sculpture idly between his fingers.

“He went to school too, you know,” Cas said suddenly, looking over to Sam. “He was at the
University of Paris for a while, but when the king banned the English students, Samael chose to go back to Oxford with them.”

“When was that?”

Cas frowned, thinking.

“I don’t remember. During one of the Henrys, I think. I don’t think they were awarding degrees back then, anyway. It was just a centralized area for studying and higher thought.”

Sam had no idea when the Henrys had been kings. A long damn time ago, probably.

He rubbed his forehead. The pill Cas had given him before breakfast was wearing off, and it was bringing the predictable headache with it. He looked around for a clock, but didn’t see one. It was mid afternoon, sometime after two, maybe. They’d been out here all day.

Cas liked bringing him outside, liked that Sam seemed interested in the wire art. Or maybe he was just glad that Sam wasn’t barricading himself in his bedroom any more.

Sam pulled gently at the roots of his hair, temporarily relieving the ache. When he looked up, Cas was watching him.

“Does it hurt?”

Sam rubbed his eye.

“Yeah, a little.”

Cas held out his hand, his fingertips within Sam’s reach.

“I can remove the remainder of the drug from your body, if you’d like.”

Sam didn’t return the gesture.

“I’m good.”

Cas raised an eyebrow, but dropped his hand. Sam went back to fucking with his ugly-ass lion.

He’d been low-grade stoned for the better part of three days, now. It didn’t interfere with his ability to break the transformer apart, and it was doing worlds of good suspending the animosity between him and Cas.

Which isn’t to say Sam was done hating his guts; oh no.

But it was easier not to act on it, now. Not to dwell on it, not to obsess over it. Sam could think of things that weren’t fear or anger or resentment and after nearly a full month, it was a nice damn change.

So if it was all the same, he’d put up with a headache, thanks.

The lion balanced evenly on the flat table, and Sam withdrew, leaning back against a wooden beam as he appraised it. He’d been bent over the table too long, his shoulders were bugging him. He rolled them back against the rough wood, relishing the deep scratch through his shirt.

It kinda reminded him a little bit of what Cas had dome for him, the night before-
He stopped that train of thought in its tracks.

There was an inverse correlation between taking the pill and the deep, unsettling lurch he got in his belly when he thought about the things Cas did to him in the bedroom.

It wasn’t as strong as usual- certainly not as bad as the aching nausea he’d gotten the morning after Cas went down on him- but he wasn’t quite medicated enough to think too hard about it.

“I do remember a supernova,” Cas said suddenly, breaking the silence. Sam looked over, startled out of his thoughts.

“What?”

“A supernova. We saw a supernova. I think. There was a very large, very bright thing in the sky for several weeks, and then it went away. I thought it was beautiful. Samael thought it might be other people, coming toward us from the land of the sun.”

Cas looked down, smiling faintly.

“We never got a definitive answer. I think it might have been the Vela remanent, but there’s no way to know for sure. But if that’s what it was, then I think it’s fair to estimate that I might be as old as ten thousand years.”

Something fizzled out in Sam’s hindbrain.

“I’m... what?”

“Maybe older,” Cas admitted, shrugging.

“You can’t... what?”

“You can see why my memory for details is poor.”

Sam stared at him.

Ten thousand years. He was going to have ten thousand years of memories shoved into his head. Ten thousand years of Cas.

His shirt caught and scraped along the wood as he slid to the ground, landing hard on the concrete.

“Sam?”

Cas’s voice was far away.

Ten thousand years.

“I can’t be that fucking old,” Sam insisted. It didn’t make any sense, but it was all he could think, at the moment. He couldn’t be that fucking old. Nobody was that old.

Cas’s face was suddenly in front of him, blue eyes meeting his, full of concern.

“Sam? Focus. Tell me what’s wrong.”

“I’m eighteen,” Sam insisted. He couldn’t get vision eyes to focus. “I can’t- I can’t-”

“I think that’s enough time outside today,” Cas said evenly. He slipped his arm beneath Sam’s
shoulder, lifting him easily to his feet. “Come on. Let’s go make supper.”

Sam shrugged him off, taking his own weight. Cas didn’t back away, instead he just stood and watched, ready to swoop in if Sam’s balance failed him again.

It didn’t.

Sam stood tall, taking a few confident steps toward the door.

“I think I might go to sleep early,” he said hollowly, mostly to himself. Cas nodded.

He had just enough presence of mind to grab the lion before going in.

They had a late lunch- or an early dinner. Cas made tacos, because he seemed to have gotten it into his head that Sam liked ethnic food more than traditional American fare.

And Cas actually made tacos, letting the chicken simmer on the stove while he mixed lard into flour and flattened it into tortillas.

Sam watched, increasingly interested as the second of the day’s pills began to kick in.

The thing was, Sam grew up in motel rooms and the occasional rented apartment, where ‘home cooking’ meant puncturing the cellophane before throwing it in the microwave. Even when they had a stove he didn’t know how to use it, though Dean could occasionally be persuaded to boil pasta in an actual pot.

It had never actually occurred to him that you could make tortillas, and yet, here they were. Frying.

Sam laughed, turning a sly look to the lion sitting on the table beside him. The lion didn’t react; he wasn’t that high.

But still. The two of them shared a secret that Cas didn’t know, and if for no other reason, Sam felt a camaraderie with the ugly little thing.

He looked back to the stove, watching Cas flip the finished shells onto a plate. Cas looked at him and Sam grinned back, giving him double thumbs up.

He had to get out of here.

Chapter End Notes

The tone in this chapter's a little lighter.

I have no idea what Sam's on. This is a magic secret medication I made up in my own mind and it does different things based on how much you take.

Welcome to NaNoWriMo, where the facts are made up and we'll fix it in post.
... it occurs to me that people might not know that expression. Is that an expression people use? 'Fix it in post?' My people all use it, but we work in media production so maybe it's just me.

Okay so 'fix it in post' is basically the film crew's way of saying 'fuckit, we'll handle this problem later.' It's kind of a joke because usually the film crew and the post-production crew are two completely different sets of people with completely different skill sets and there isn't a ton of overlap. So you're on set and they're like 'hold on there's the wrong gel on the left hand lights' and since they've been filming for ten hours and everybody's tired and wants to go home, the director goes 'fuckit, we'll fix it in post (production)' and they start filming even though there's like, weird colored light from only one direction.

And then the postproduction crew gets the footage and they're like 'wtf, you want us to color-correct ONLY THE LEFT?' because the set crew tends to wildly underestimate the difficulty of digital video manipulation. The post-production crew then feels unappreciated and overly burdened because "how hard is it to change a gel?!?" but they're sitting in a climate controlled office in front of a computer instead of in an attic filled with 60,000 bees so maybe it's easy for them to underestimate the difficulty of changing a gel for each of 15-30 takes.

So yeah, 'fix it in post.' Means "gonna make this a way bigger problem for someone else, later." I have no idea if people say this.

I'm easily distracted nowadays. In my defense I'm being kicked from the inside and it is exactly as weird as it sounds.
Day 30 (two days to freedom)

There was pounding on the heavy wooden door, and Sam was out of bed before he’d made the decision to rise. Behind him, Castiel was rising sluggishly, making confused inquiries in the wrong language.

“Samael!” a man’s voice hollered from outside. “Samael! I need you!”

Sam pulled the door open, meeting the stricken eyes of the man outside. He was panting heavily, as though he’d run a long distance.

From within the house, Castiel struck a match, and Sam realized he knew this man.

“It’s Isobel,” the man gasped, trying to regain his breath. “Please, you have to come.”

Sam was already moving, dressing for the cold in the light of Castiel’s flame.

Sam woke up in Cas’s bed with a pounding headache, and realized he’d been in the house for a month.

He sat up, rubbing his face, paying almost no attention to the fact that he was naked, or that Cas was asleep beside him. His fucking head hurt.

He got up and pulled his pants on, trudging to the kitchen for a glass of water. The cool liquid soothed the pounding somewhat, but not nearly enough. Groaning, he headed back to the bedroom, trailing his chain behind him.

Forming a loose fist, he shoved at Cas’s shoulder.

“Hey. Get up.”

Cas just groaned, pushing his face deeper into the pillow. Sam scowled.

“Get up,” he insisted, shoving against Cas’s chest.

A jarring cold rattled up his arm and he hissed, drawing back. Almost instantly, the pain in his head vanished. He shook the residual grace out of his hand, shivering.

“You could have warned me, jeez,” he griped when he noticed Cas looking up at him.

“I didn’t do that,” Cas answered. He was smiling in a way Sam didn’t like at all. He reached for Sam’s hand, but Sam drew back.

“Don’t touch me.”

Cas looked taken aback. Sam was undeterred.

“If you didn’t freeze me, who did.”
Cas grinned again, and Sam felt his headache threatening to return.

“You did. Your body called to mine. You were in need.”

Sam stared at him, slack-jawed.

“Jesus fuck,” he muttered at last, before turning on his heel and heading back to the kitchen.

He was three quarters of the way through making coffee when Cas emerged, too. He was dressed only in sleep pants, his hair pointing in a dozen directions. He approached the coffee maker and Sam backed away, keeping out of arm’s length.

“Stay away from me.”

Cas sighed.

“Sam, let’s not do this. You slept next to me all night, you don’t need to treat me like I’m about to attack you.”

Sam opened his mouth to protest, but there was nothing.

He wanted another one of those damn pills.

“I’m taking a shower. Stay out of my room.”

He didn’t hear Cas’s response, muffled by the slamming of Sam’s broken door. Sam stared at it for a few seconds, fuming.

He fell asleep.

He fell asleep.

He’d been here a month, but Cas hadn’t started with the spell until the second day, which meant, by Sam’s math, he needed to get the fuck out of this house tonight.

He glanced over at the lion, sitting innocently on the bed, where he’d put it the night before. He’d been intending to disassemble the damn thing and go, but instead....

He sighed, lifting up a corner of his mattress. Five and a half of the little blue pills sat, waiting.

Five and a half, because he’d supplemented last night’s dose.

He closed his eyes, thinking of the agony of the blood and the fact that he’d have to endure it twice more before he got the chance to work on the transformer.

He’d sworn, sworn to himself that he’d shake it off, that after the spell, he’d come back to his own room and push through the fatigue.

Like he had been.

But the blood... the blood was getting worse. Cas had to physically restrain him again, now, his hands on Sam’s shoulders, slicking the blood halfway to Sam’s elbows.

It felt as though he were being flayed, though it never left a mark.

And if he’d been just a little less stupid he could be done with it forever now.
But instead he’d taken the extra half-dose, bought himself a little relief at the cost of two more sessions.

Gritting his teeth, Sam scooped up the remaining pills, stomping into the bathroom.

His hand hesitated over the rim of the toilet, his fingers refusing to unclench. The thought of them dropping into the water, dissolving into nothing...

What if he needed them again?

Sam frowned, berating himself.

He wouldn’t need them again. He was leaving. Tonight. And he wasn’t upping his damn dose again, not after last night. He might be stupid, but he only needed to learn a lesson once.

Grimacing, Sam returned to the bed, lifting the mattress and letting the pills drop back into the hidden space beneath.

He dropped the mattress quickly back on top of them, unwilling to look at them or acknowledge what they represented.

Cas would give him another half this morning, anyway.

So he didn’t need them.

But he might, later.

If this whole... thing... didn’t work.

He glanced to the door again, making sure it was closed, and then kicked out of his pants and headed for the bathroom.

He checked his back in the mirror- he always did that now, always expecting some kind of horrific damage and never finding anything. His skin wasn’t even pink. He ran his fingers across it as best as he could, trying to find some evidence of what the blood was doing to him, but there was nothing.

He let his eyes trail over the rest of his body, looking for marks or changes. There was nothing. The small scrapes and mysterious bruises that plagued any living person were gone, leaving not so much as a hangnail to break the smooth lines of his body. He didn’t even have zits, for heaven’s sake.

He didn’t like it.

His body was, and always had been, a roadmap of scars. A catalogue of occurrences.

Now, even the old marks were beginning to fade.

He leaned into the shower, turning the dial all the way to hot. Within a minute, the mirror had fogged over, and he didn’t have to look at himself any more.

Cas knocked on the door. Sam rolled his eyes, fetching his blanket off the bed and wrapping it around himself before answering. He pulled the door open just as Cas was about to knock again, leaving the other man stranded mid-motion.

“Yeah?”
“I had an idea,” Cas said quickly. “About the blood. How to lessen the pain of it, somewhat.”

“Can it wait until I’m dressed again?”

It was a stupid question and they both knew it. The next bloodletting would find Sam stoned, naked, and probably with come still leaking out of his ass.

Sam closed his eyes, exhaling, trying not to think those thoughts.

The last day. This was his last day.

One way or another.

He opened them again, looking down at Cas.

“Nevermind. What.”

“The water,” Cas said earnestly, looking around Sam’s shoulder into the bathroom. “It might dilute it or wash it away before it can hurt you so much.”

Sam blinked.

“You want to get in the shower with me.”

“I’ll give you one of the pills, first.”

“No.”

Sam shut the broken door and turned, making it halfway back to the fogging shower before doubt started to chew at him. He had two more of Cas’s sessions before he could mount his escape.

Shutting his eyes, he tried not to think about them, think about the pain and what he’d done to escape it.

Groaning, he shut off the water. He yanked his jeans back on, pulling a shirt and sweater on over them.

Cas looked surprised when his door opened again, but Sam didn’t acknowledge him. Instead, he crossed the kitchen and went straight for the coffee maker. It was his coffee, he’d made it, he was damn well going to eat it.

Cas was watching him expectantly.

“Not in my bathroom,” Sam snapped, not looking up.

Cas nodded.

They ended up doing it in Cas’s room.

Sam got another dose- half a pill this time, unsupplemented. He drank his coffee while he waited for it to kick in. It usually took about half an hour and sure enough, by the time the mug was
emptied and he’d dutifully eaten his wheaties, he could look at Cas without his stomach lurching.

Cas had this bathrobe and when Sam looked at him, it was pretty obvious he wasn’t wearing a shirt underneath. Which, you know, made sense, since he was expecting to get laid soon, no point getting dressed just to get undressed again.

Sam shoved his hands into the pockets of his sweater and tried not to dwell on it.

They went back into Cas’s room and Cas raped him- that’s another thing, another way he could tell when the meds were working. He could think that word without feeling like he was about to puke.

He’d probably have to take like ten of the damn things if he ever needed to tell Dean or his father what had happened.

He kinda hoped they hadn’t noticed he was missing. He didn’t know how to explain this. Didn’t even know how to start.

Cas finished and Sam whimpered, knowing what was coming next. Cas gave him a sympathetic look but didn’t offer to stop.

Unlike Sam’s shower, Cas’s had a detachable shower head. Sam huddled on the fiberglass floor of the tub, one arm wrapped around his knees. With his free hand, he balanced the sprayer so that the hot water flowed over his shoulders and back.

He heard Cas’s knife flick open, and he shut his eyes, pulling his knees closer. The liquid flowing over his back became marginally warmer, the runoff tinged with pink, then red.

It still hurt- it felt like the water was boiling now- but it wasn’t the burrowing, thought destroying pain he’d felt before.

Sam almost laughed, keeping the irony to himself. He leaned forward, nudging the dial toward cold. It didn’t help much, though he could feel the water turn frigid as it flowed around his feet.

“We’re done,” Cas murmured, reaching forward to take the sprayer from him. Sam relinquished it, watching impassively as Cas ran the water across his sliced palm. Within a few seconds, the wound had healed and even the residual pink droplets had vanished.

Sam was already beginning to shiver. He rose to his feet, unwilling to meet Cas’s eyes. The man was smiling as he unfolded a towel, wrapping it around Sam’s shoulders before he could protest. The motion brought him uncomfortably close, and Sam froze. Cas seemed not to notice.

“We’re on to something,” Cas announced, and Sam’s blood ran cold at the hint of excitement in his voice. He opened his mouth to say something scathing, but held it back at the last second, looking away instead.

He thought of the lion.

Cas kept glancing at him through the day. At first it made Sam nervous, like maybe Cas knew he was up to something. In his head, he went over his plan again and again, imagining the feel of the wire beneath his hands, planning and re-planning.
According to the book, it should work. It should. Assuming he’d correctly estimated about a hundred variables like the thermal resistance of the primary coil and the voltage conversion of the wrapped copper and-

Cas looked at him again and Sam froze, until he noticed the small smile on Cas’s lips.

He couldn’t decide if that made him feel better, or worse.

The gargoyle of paranoia raised its head, whispering that Cas knew his plan, had always known, and was waiting until the last second to yank the rug out from underneath him. He’d go to get out of Cas’s bed tonight and the man would stop him, would pin him down and whisper into his ear that it had always been hopeless-

Sam squeezed his eyes shut, refusing to think that way.

Cas was looking at him again.

“What?” Sam asked, not looking back.

“Are you alright?”

“Cas, I am getting really tired of that question.”

Cas had been working with a set of pliers, and he set them firmly back onto the bench with a clunk. Sam breathed deep, hoping beyond hope that Cas wasn’t going to come over.

Sam was sitting in his usual corner of the barn, his back against a wooden beam as he fiddled with some leftover metal pieces. Ostensibly, he was working on another metal creature. Functionally, he was trying to drive the point of a broken corkscrew through an old baking sheet, mostly just to see if he could. Cas didn’t seem to care much, one way or another.

Sam palmed the corkscrew as Cas drew nearer. He had no idea what he could do with it, if it came right down to a physical altercation between himself and Cas. But still. Having something hard and sharp made him feel better, if nothing else.

Cas looked down at him and Sam drew his knees up, trying not to think of this morning, when he’d taken mostly the same position. Cas extended a hand, indicating that Sam should take it.

“Let’s go back inside. I want to show you something.”

Sam looked up cautiously, pretending to consider Cas’s offer while surreptitiously slipping the corkscrew up his left sleeve. He reached out with his right, taking Cas’s hand and letting the man pull him to his feet. It left them standing uncomfortably close, and Sam dropped his gaze.

“Something inside?” he asked hesitantly, trying to bring this moment to an end.

“Hmm,” Cas agreed, looking over his shoulder.

Without warning he leaned forward, his hand closing over Sam’s left wrist. His grip tightened, digging the metal into Sam’s skin. Sam winced, trying to pull his hand back and failing.

“I think this can stay outside, though,” Cas said amiably. He was far too close and Sam was suddenly sure that Cas was re-creating his daydream on purpose.

He knows, he knows, he knows-
“Right. Yeah,” Sam answered. Cas released him and the corkscrew clattered to the ground, bitingly loud in the sudden silence.

Sam didn’t say anything while Cas moved the chain back to its inside anchoring. He got the feeling Cas didn’t plan to let him outside again any time soon.

Stupid. He didn’t even need the damn screw, and now he was drawing attention to himself by trying to steal it.

Cas went to the cupboards, the ones out of Sam’s reach. Crouching, he withdrew a small paper bag. He looked at it a few seconds, before turning back to where Sam was sitting on the couch.

“Close your eyes,” Cas instructed, and Sam felt a lump forming in his throat.

“Why?”

“Because I want it to be a surprise.”

Sam’s stomach tightened. This was new.

He opened his mouth to protest but something in Cas’s demeanor stopped him. Cautiously, he closed his eyes, leaving them open just enough to watch Cas’s approach.

“No peeking,” Cas insisted, sitting on the couch to Sam’s left. Sam turned his face toward his captor, hoping to see what was in the bag. Instead, he felt the cool silk of the blindfold settling over his eyes. Everything went black, even when he opened his eyes fully to try to find the light.

“Cas, please-”

“Shh,” Cas answered, and Sam felt his fingertips brush his cheek. “You’ll like this. I promise.”

Sam struggled to even his breathing, every nerve electrified with the anticipation of Cas’s next move. Cas’s fingers trailed up his jaw, smoothing the light stubble that had begun to grow.

“Open your mouth,” Cas said, and Sam recoiled, remembering the pliers and the threat and oh fuck he’s gonna cut my tongue out he’s really he’s really gonna-

Cas’s lips pressed against his, the hand on Sam’s jaw pulling him back close.

“Relax, you’re going to be fine.”

Sam reached out, his fingers finding the soft fabric of Cas’s shirt. He bunched the cloth between his fingers, grounding himself, ready to shove the other man away at the first sign of trouble.

“I’m sorry,” he whispered. “I’m sorry about the screw, I really am, I don’t know what I was thinking, I won’t do it again I swear just please-”

Cas kissed him again before he could finish the plea, which was just as well because Sam didn’t know how to finish it anyway.

“Open, Sam.”
Sam almost couldn’t. His body was frozen, trapped between fighting and fleeing because he wasn’t capable of either. He imagined Cas frowning at him, getting bored of waiting and simply tying him down again. He was making it worse on himself by fighting this.

Slowly, he forced his jaw to open. His tongue pressed flat against the bottom of his mouth, waiting for the cold touch of Cas’s blade.

The bag rustled and Sam held back a whimper. A moment later, Cas pushed something between his lips and he almost screamed.

It wasn’t sharp. It wasn’t even hard, Sam realized after a second. He poked at it with his tongue and the object yielded, though there were little hard pieces of something-

It was sweet, he realized.

It was food.

His breath caught and for a second he forgot how to chew.

It was some kind of soft fruity thing, with nuts stuck on the outside, and whatever it was, he’d never had anything like it before. He bit into it, feeling it break apart, trying to figure out what the hell it was.

“I didn’t make them,” Cas admitted. “There’s a bakery in San Francisco that I visit whenever I’m in town. They were kind enough to send me an order.”

“The hell is it?” Sam asked around the saccharine mouthful.

Cas was silent for a few seconds.

“I’ve forgotten what they were called originally. But it’s made with dates and honey and almonds and it was always...” he trailed off. “Samael enjoyed them very much. I thought you might, too.”

Sam had never had this before. It probably wasn’t his favorite, but with the shock wearing off, he could admit that it was good.

“You scared the shit out of me,” he admonished. He couldn’t see Cas’s reaction, but a moment later, another morsel was pressed to his lips. He took it, sheepishly letting go of Cas’s shirt.

“It was supposed to be a surprise,” Cas answered. “It’s been a month since you came here, you know.”

“I know.”

“It seemed like an occasion worth marking,” Cas went on. “Though I know you’re probably more interested in getting the chain off, in two days.”

Sam crushed a chunk of almond between his incisors, and didn’t comment.

“I thought we’d been making good progress. But then out in the barn...”

Sam felt a minute change and he realized that Cas was pushing his hair out of his face. The man’s fingers brushed the shell of his ear, and he stiffened.

“Do you remember what I told you a month ago, when you first came here? About fighting me?”
Sam’s heart beat faster, the honey-sweet taste turning sour in his mouth.

“You said you’d cane me down to the bone,” he answered hollowly. “You said you’d take the torch and-”

“No, not the punishment. I told you that you didn’t need to fight me. That you could let it happen. Do you remember why?”

Sam swallowed. He remembered why. It had been running through his head for weeks.

“Because I’m helpless,” he whispered. He could feel his face turning red.

“So whatever you were planning to do with that, you don’t need it after all, do you?”

“No.”

“Good.”

Cas removed the blindfold in one movement, and Sam blinked in the sudden light. Cas was very close to him, their knees nearly touching. Cas handed him the paper bag, heavy with the weight of the dates.

“They arrived yesterday,” Cas told him, standing. “Though I ordered them a week ago. I thought you might enjoy having them again.”

He looked down to where Sam was still sitting, frozen on the couch.

“This isn’t how I planned to give them to you. I didn’t want it to be this way, but you... you made it clear that you’d forgotten my words.”

“I’m sorry,” Sam whispered, still looking at him. He thought of the lion, of the ruined transformer, and his throat tightened. “I’m sorry.”

“It’s all right, Sam. This is for your benefit, too. I can be very good to you. I want to be good to you. Just... let me.”

“Yeah,” Sam echoed. The paper bag tore slightly, and he realized how tightly he’d been holding it. Cas looked like he was going to say something else, but decided against it. He turned and went back out the kitchen door, leaving Sam alone.

It was almost a full minute before Sam worked up the courage to move.
Day 30 (continued)

Chapter Notes
See the end of the chapter for notes

Sam put the dates back in the fridge.

The number and variety of foods in Cas’s kitchen had been steadily increasing since Sam’s arrival. Now that he thought about it, he wasn’t sure they’d eaten the same thing twice. He certainly hadn’t.

He wondered how much it cost to have all this shit delivered, since Cas hadn’t been further than the mailbox for the last month. Not since Sam got here.

He closed the door, scowling, and went back into his room.

He still had a few hours until sunset- it was coming earlier and earlier now. His eyes flicked to the lion, debating about whether to get an early start, but he decided against it.

He climbed into the bed instead, pulling the blankets over his shoulders and trying to ignore the sweet taste in his mouth.

He hadn’t meant to take the corkscrew. It was stupid and reckless and he should have known better, but Cas had apparently decided not to punish him for it. Not beyond the few minutes of heart wrenching terror on the couch, that is.

He rubbed the tip of his tongue against the roof of his mouth, trying not to think of Cas’s promise, all those weeks ago. He shuddered, thinking of tonight’s plan.

What would Cas do if he failed?

He’d considered that he’d die in the woods, of exposure or withdrawal from the spell. He hadn’t put much thought into what would happen if Cas caught him, again.

He remembered his last, desperate flight through the forest, Cas’s face, furious as his hands closed around Sam’s throat, cutting off his air.

Sam pulled the blanket tighter. He considered taking another one of his pills, but he pushed the desire away. Tonight was his last chance. No matter what happened.

The rain pelted onto Sam’s hood, dripping across his eyes and making it difficult to see in the dark. His boots slipped on the muddy road, but he knew the way. He’d made it a dozen times in the last few months, though always before, he’d had the daylight to help him.

The Mann’s cottage was lit up bright, and when he pushed the door open, half a dozen eyes turned to meet him. All women; Stuart Mann had gone out on the water some three months ago and neither he nor his vessel had been seen since. Isobel Mann struggled in his absence, the progression of a difficult pregnancy being the prime of her worries since her husband’s death.

Isobel herself was laid out in the center of the room, her face screwed up in anguish. Her copper hair was stuck to her face and throat, damp with a cold sweat that covered her body. A hush fell over the room, and only then did she look up at him. A smile cracked her face, though her eyes remained glassy with pain. She reached for him weakly, and Sam saw that her fingers were
Smeared with blood.

Sam bolted upright, his heart going fast and a familiar pain already building behind his eyes. His dream, vividly clear only moments ago, was already fading. The one thing that stayed with him was the sound of rain, and when it did not fade, he realized that the sound came from outside.

He scowled, rubbing his face, because of course it was raining. On top of everything else, he’d be making his escape in the rain.

He dropped his hand to the bed and only then realized that his door was open. Cas stood there silently, silhouetted against the light from the living room, watching.

“Jesus fuck, Cas, you scared the shit out of me.”

“Apologies,” Cas answered, stepping through the doorway. “I was coming to get you. The sun is setting soon.”

He held out his hand and Sam saw that there was a single broken pill sitting there. He took it reluctantly, making as little contact with Cas’s hand as possible. He swallowed the pill whole, not taking his eyes off Cas as he did. The older man sighed, and turned back toward the door.

“You missed lunch,” he said. “Come have supper while we wait for that to kick in.”

“I’m not hungry,” Sam groaned. He still felt uneasy, something to do with his dream, he thought, though he couldn’t remember now. Cas cut a look back at him.

“I know you’re not. But you have to eat something anyway. That’s the cost of the drug.”

Sam groaned, collapsing back onto the bed.

“Fine. I’ll be out in a minute.”

Cas stayed in the doorway, his face turned back, watching. Sam covered his face with his arm.

“I said a minute, Cas.”

The doorway brightened as the man vanished. Sam dropped his arm and looked over to the lion. It stared dourly back at him.

“Couple more hours, buddy,” Sam told it.

The lion said nothing.

They ate in silence. Cas set the bag of dates onto the table and Sam ignored it, his stomach dropping when he remembered the feel of the first sweet between his lips.

Cas was quiet, as well, and Sam was sure the meal would have been awkward if he weren’t so busy being fucking terrified.

The pill helped a lot. Sam could feel his heart slowing as the medication filled his veins, taking the edge off his worry, letting him relax.

He didn’t protest when Cas stood and gestured to the bedroom. He followed numbly, stripping off his shirt as he went. Cas caught him in the doorway, his arms around Sam’s waist, leaning up and kissing him deep. Sam opened his mouth, letting Cas have him.
When the older man eventually pulled away, Sam turned toward the bed but Cas stopped him.

They ended up in the shower, Sam’s hands braced against the cold tile, hot water beating against his back as Cas fucked him. It ran down his spine and over his ass and thighs like a lover’s caress. It wasn’t a good position- the height difference wasn’t working in their favor and the water diluted the lubricant even in the short time it took Cas to reach climax. Sam stayed soft all the way through, and he could see Cas’s disappointment when he noticed.

Sam pushed his face beneath the water, letting it wash away the wet streaks across his cheeks.

He’d been here a month. Twenty eight days since Cas started doing this. Which meant... fifty six. Cas had done this fifty-six times. And Sam was still crying over it.

Sam rubbed vigorously, trying to scrub the shame off his face. Cas waited behind him, saying nothing. Eventually, Sam dropped to his knees, resting his forehead against the tile and waiting for the blood.

Cas didn’t disappoint, and even with the water, Sam screamed.

Sam was limping when he got back to his own room. Cas had offered to heal it for him, but Sam healed pretty fast on his own, now, and he didn’t really want Cas to touch him any more than he needed to.

He closed the door and considered barricading it, but he thought that might be too suspicious. Instead, he sat on the floor with his back against his bed, so he could shove the ruined lion beneath it if Cas decided to barge in.

He looked the thing in its face, or what passed for a face on this mushed-in abomination.

“Sorry buddy,” he murmured, and bent one of it’s legs back. It folded easily, more easily than he expected. He looked at it again, but it was still copper. All the way through.

He caught the end of one thick wire, pulling it straight and unwinding it from the others.

It wasn’t difficult to disassemble the thing. He’d built it to be taken apart, refusing Cas’s offers of pliers and hammers because he didn’t want it wound too tightly.

Within a couple minutes, he had ten identical lengths of copper wire. He looked down at them, his heart thrumming in his throat.

He had them. Here, in his room, with Cas sleeping and the whole night ahead of him.

Now, it just came down to the math. The math, and the craftsmanship.

Exhaling carefully, Sam selected eight of the wires. Holding the ends together, he twisted them quickly into a coil. It would have been easier if he still had the rubber casing, but then again, it would have been easier if he had a lot of things.

He went over to the microwave, picking up his notebook. A pen and a roll of tape sat on top, waiting for him.

He’d spent the last couple days taping rough ‘drawings’ to the wall of his corner. By now, Cas should be used to the sounds of tearing paper- and tape, for that matter.

Very carefully, Sam began tearing sheets out, making sure to stick to the perforated edges. He had
no idea what the electrical insular properties of paper were, but hopefully, they’d be enough to give him at least a couple minutes.

He wrapped every inch of the twisted bundle in paper, securing it carefully with the tape. After three layers, he felt it was probably about as safe as it would get.

He cast a glance at the broken door, then crossed the room on his hands and knees. The back of the microwave came off easily, revealing the butchered transformer. Closing his eyes and begging for silence, Sam took hold of the power cable sprouting from the microwave’s rear cover. He needed to yank it out quick and easy, but if the metal reverberated, it was almost certain to wake Cas.

He held it between his thighs, steadying it as much as possible. He twisted the cable in the housing, ensuring that it moved freely. On the outside, it was a normal power cable, ending in a three-prong plug. On the inside- or what had been the inside, it split into three equal sized, bare-ended wires.

Closing his eyes, he yanked at the outside of the plug. It slid silently from its rubber housing, slipping free of the microwave’s rear panel in a single jerk.

Sam stared at it for a second, unable to believe it had been that easy.

He didn’t have time to waste, thanking his lucky stars. Outside the window, the sky was pitch black, which meant it was already at least midnight. And he had a lot of work left to do.

He set the back panel aside and retrieved the transformer. He didn’t need any of the microwave’s other internals, so he screwed the back panel onto the device again, pushing it back into the corner.

The transformer had only a single remaining coil. The other had left nothing but two empty holes when Sam had removed it. He threaded his paper-wrapped cable through these two holes, wrapping it once around the central spindle, so that the two ends emerged from the two holes, running parallel. A single turn of paper-wrapped wire sat between them, looking damn insubstantial.

Sam looked at it, swallowing hard.

That... should do it. In theory.

He looked at the chain, running along the floor to the cuff around his ankle.

If he fucked this up, that chain was about to light up with a hundred and twenty volts, and there would be nothing he could do to shut it off.

He shivered, standing and walking away from his contraption. The chain jingled pleasantly, reminding him of its presence.

There was a towel hanging from the hook near the sink, and he gathered it up, making sure not to make any sound as he returned to his original position. It wasn’t until he sat down that he realized that his limp had vanished.

Very carefully, he tore the towel into strips, shoving it between his ankle and the cuff. It was a tight fit, but it was the best he could do in this circumstance. The towel was at least dry, which should help protect him somewhat.

He looked at the cobbled-together contraption again. The length of disembodied power cable sat beside it, looking innocuous.
Carefully, he dug his fingernails into the rubber housing surrounding the positive and negative cable ends. The ground, he left alone for now.

There were prongs on the primary coil where the original power circuits had been connected, and he stared at them for several seconds before realizing that they would wrap around the bare cable ends. It wouldn’t stand up to any kind of abuse, but it should be good enough to transfer the current, at least.

While he connected them, he had a burst of inspiration. Pinching the second prong so it folded double, he glanced over at the microwave and the gutted notebook sitting atop it.

It took him a couple minutes to unwind the coil of the notebook, unthreading it loop by loop until he had a good five inches of wire. His, he bent methodically back and forth, back and forth, back and forth, until the wire snapped.

It left him with five inches of very thin wire, sitting unconnected to anything else.

He picked up the notebook wire and jammed it into the center of the paper-wrapped end of the secondary coil. The silver wire stayed lodged between the copper strands, and he repeated the gesture with the other end of the secondary coil.

He picked up the plug, holding it tight.

With any luck, the electricity feeding into the primary coil would transfer to the secondary coil via the shared spindle, converting from high-voltage low-amperage into the reverse situation. Anything spanning the two loose ends of the secondary coil would be subjected to a couple hundred amps—enough to melt a notebook binding, at the very least.

Or, he was totally wrong, the entire device would burst into flames, the breaker would pop, and Cas would come in here and flay him for his troubles.

What’s life without a little risk? he thought to himself, and shoved the plug into the outlet.

Almost instantly, the transformer began to emit a quiet crackling sound. A wisp of smoke rose from the coils, light and acrid.

Sam yanked the plug out.

The lights were still on, which meant he hadn’t tripped a breaker, which meant he had another chance.

He waved his hand slowly over the notebook binding.

He poked it quickly, then let his finger rest on the bright metal.

Not even warm.

He closed his eyes, thinking.

The secondary coil was cool and the primary was overheating, which meant the transfer wasn’t efficient, which meant... which meant...

He lunged for the book again, turning to the page numbers he’d long since memorized, looking over the formulas again. They hadn’t changed.

He just didn’t have the information to convert this into a practical application. There wasn’t enough
data and he didn’t have the tools to test any hypothesis he could come up with.

He stopped just short of throwing the book across the room. Instead, he set it gently on the floor next to him, careful not to make any sound.

The transformer sat on the ground, cold and useless. Sam picked it up, looking it over. The primary coil was still warm to the touch. Which meant...

Which meant he needed another turn on the secondary coil.

He almost laughed when he realized. It was late and he was getting tired, and Cas’s pill was making him loopy and he almost missed something *simple*.

Or so he thought.

There was a limited amount of room for the secondary coil to loop through, and the new wires were much thicker than the old ones. When he tried to push the end of the cable through again, it wouldn’t fit.

It would have been a lot easier if he’d had- well, no point going down that trail of thought again.

He braced the transformer against the floor, working the loose end into the tiny space. By moving it back and forth, almost *leveraging* it through the hole, he was able to *just* get the end shoved through. He grinned and took hold of the end, pulling it the rest of the way through.

The paper tore. He wasn’t sure where, but he heard it.

He cursed, kicking himself. If the secondary coil dead shorted, the whole damn project was going to be a wash.

Carefully, he worked the end of the cable back the way it had come, exposing the bare wire on the first turn.

It took him about ten minutes to patch the tear, laying two layers of tape on tight, trying to keep the profile small while protecting the paper.

This time, when he pushed the end back through, it didn’t tear. There were now two full wraps on the secondary coil, and if that didn’t do the trick, he was out of options. There was officially no more room to do a third twist.

Crossing his fingers, he bridged the ends of the coil with the section of notebook binding again. Careful to keep his chain from rattling, he backed away, taking hold of the plug.

“Please,” he whispered, plugging it into the outlet. “Please please please please please-”

The transformer buzzed again, and a few seconds later, the notebook coil began to glow red. The red turned to yellow, then white, and then molten metal began dripping to the ground, singeing the floor and breaking the circuit.

Sam yanked the plug back out, staring at the silver drops hardening on the floor.

It worked.

The fucking bastard *worked*.

He clapped his hands over his mouth before the triumphant noises inside could get out.
It was still too early to celebrate. The notebook binding was still much thinner than the chain keeping him captive, and just because this had worked, didn’t mean he was out yet.

He glanced to the window again. The sky was no longer black. It had lightened to a deep indigo, though what that meant, Sam had no idea. It could be anywhere between two and six AM. No way to tell.

He looked at the chain, trying to find a good link. They were fairly uniform, so one would melt as easily as the others.

The trick would be finding one far enough from the cuff that he wouldn’t burn himself, while still making sure that he wasn’t dragging five feet of loose chain through the forest.

He picked one about eight inches from the cuff. He turned it over in his hands, thinking. He needed to current to stay in that specific link- if it spread out to the others, the effect would be mitigated and none of them would melt through. Not to mention the damage it would do to his ankle.

He went back to the notebook, tearing out more thin strips and wrapping them tightly around the adjoining links, insulating them from his target as well as possible.

The sky lightened further as he did this, but he didn’t rush. Being punctual wouldn’t help him a damn bit if it didn’t work.

Finally, after roughly three layers of tape and paper, he felt satisfied. If that didn’t work... well, then it wasn’t going to work.

The last problem was the ends of the coil. He’d have to hold them against the chain link, and the coil itself was going to get hot. Really hot. Possibly hot enough to burn the paper insulation, though he hoped not.

He took the last scraps of towel, wrapping them carefully around the loose lengths of cable. It didn’t look like much. Certainly not enough to protect from a couple hundred degrees of electrical heat.

Too late now. He didn’t have anything else.

Sam went back to the power cable, ignoring the plug for now, and focusing on the other side. The positive and negative cables were still affixed to the prongs on the transformer, but the grounding plug hung free. Sam took hold of it, pulling it back until the wire-wrapped section hung separately from the others. He took the little copper tip and, after wiping it off on his jeans, bit down on it, holding it between his teeth.

If he was gonna get electrocuted, at least he wouldn’t get electrocuted for long.

In theory.

Exhaling slowly, he plugged the cord in. The transformer began to buzz.

Making sure to keep his hands on the towel, he held the two ends of the coil within a few millimeters of each other.

There weren’t any sparks, no arcing, which meant low voltage. Which meant he wasn’t going to die, probably.

He yanked the plug back out of the outlet one more time. He kept the ground cable between his
teeth as he wrapped the coil ends around the chain link and gave them an experimental tug. They held.

In theory, now, he wouldn’t need to hold the ends of the coil against the chain. The wrapped ends would hold the contact on their own.

Exhaling and saying a quick prayer, he plugged the transformer in again.

It buzzed.

For a minute, nothing happened. A small tendril of smoke rose from the transformer, but it didn’t worsen or make any noise, so Sam ignored it.

The edges of the chain link began to turn red. Smoke rose from the paper insulating it, but Sam didn’t worry about that yet. As he watched, the red spread further and further across the link, until the whole thing was glowing a brilliant yellow-white.

The paper burst into flame, and Sam belatedly realized that there might be a smoke alarm in his room. He looked up, spotting the blinking red light directly above him.

He scrambled to his feet, reaching it easily and twisting it off the ceiling mount. The paper continued to burn as he ripped the rear panel off, exposing the battery. His fingers slid over the smooth plastic casing, his pulse thundering as he braced for the shrill scream of the alarm.

It didn’t come. The battery popped out easily, leaving the device silent.

Sam shoved it under the mattress for good measure. The remainder of his pills caught his eye and he scooped them up, dropping them into his pocket. He stripped the blanket off the bed, shoving it into the crack under his bedroom door. Hopefully it would keep enough of the smoke in the bedroom to avoid setting off the living room alarms.

The paper had mostly burned up, and the chain link was beginning to drip.

The zinc, Sam figured. The chain was probably zinc-coated steel and the zinc would go first. After that, he’d need a little longer before the steel gave way. He yanked the case off the pillow and pressed it awkwardly over his face, trying to filter out the smoke. It was getting into his eyes and making it hard to see.

Hot metal was falling onto the wood floorboards, flaring and smoking but cooling too fast to start a real fire.

Sam took hold of the sides of the chain, pulling hard. The link didn’t break, but he could feel the heat through the terrycloth surrounding the secondary coil.

The dripping slowed as the zinc burned off. Sam shut his eyes and pressed the pillowcase tighter against his mouth and nose. The air in the room was beginning to get distinctly acrid, and it occurred to him that the smell would wake Cas, before anything else happened.

Too late now.

The thinned chain link glowed red, seeping toward white where the coil made contact. As Sam watched, the white spread across the link, until the whole thing glowed bright.

He grabbed at the chain again, pulling with all his might.
The hot link warped, but didn’t break.

The primary coil was beginning to smoke. Sam suspected that the enamel used to contain the wires was beginning to burn. If that went and the coil shorted, this little experiment was going to end, quickly.

He bit down on the ground wire, digging his teeth into the metal as he yanked at the chain. The hot link was completely uninsulated, and he could feel the heat seeping up the links into his hands. Soon it would be too hot to touch, not without some kind of real protection.

A drop of steel hit the floor, and Sam almost screamed in relief. He just had to leave it alone... leave it....

Another drop fell to the floor, igniting the wooden boards on contact. The flame burst high and went out when the metal quickly cooled.

The primary coil was smoking consistently now, and Sam yanked at the chain again, holding tight and keeping up the pressure. The chain was hot, almost burning his hands, but he didn’t have time to work on getting more insulation. His hands stung as he pulled, but he could see the glowing link warping and twisting-

It broke.

The two ends of the chain separated suddenly, one of them glancing off Sam’s thigh as it went. The other clattered to the ground.

The broken link was still attached to the secondary coil, and the transformer hissed and spat as the primary coil finally ignited. Foul smoke rose from the device, obscuring deep red flames.

Sam grabbed a thick paperback, using it to shove the burning contraption under the bed. Almost immediately, the books piled there began to turn brown, bursting into light where they touched the glowing metal. Flames licked against the underside of the mattress, melting the polyester cover and releasing a horrible smell. Black smoke billowed forth like a monster in a child’s nightmare.

Sam bolted for the bathroom, soaking the pillowcase and breathing deep through the cooled layers of cloth. He turned back to the bed, where one corner of the sheet had caught fire. The flames spread over the top of the bed. It was already difficult to see the short distance to the door. Sam crossed the room with his head low and eyes closed, kicking the discarded chain as he went. He felt around the floor until he found the corner of the towel that he had shoved beneath the door. He yanked it out and began to wave it in a vague attempt to clear the air. He didn’t open his eyes to see whether it was working.

He heard a dull whoosh and he cracked an eye.

One of the curtains had caught. It went up in only a few seconds.

The window-glass cracked. Sam breathed deep, fighting back the urge to cough.

Time to go.

He stood quickly, not inhaling while he drove his shoulder into the broken door. It moved instantly, opening a wide crevasse. Hot, smoky air bloomed through the new opening, and Sam grit his teeth at the feeling of the wind at his back.

The window shattered and the fire surged, licking across the ceiling. Sam battered against the door
again, knocking the bottom portion wide open.

Hands grasped it from the outside, pulling it open. Cas was there in a second, his hands tight against Sam’s shoulders, dragging him into the living room.

The smoke alarm screamed, finally, and Cas looked up at it, wide eyed. The air in the main room was already getting toxic, and Cas bolted for the kitchen. Sam went for the back door, pulling on the soft-soled shoes Cas had given him.

A second alarm began going off- carbon monoxide, Sam suspected. The sound inside the smoky house was deafening.

Cas rose from behind the kitchen counter, a heavy fire extinguisher in his hands. Sam had been betting that the broken chain would go unnoticed in the chaos. It had been a good bet. He heard the pressurized foam being released from the canister, though he could no longer see anything that was happening in his room.

The power flickered out just as Sam slipped out the back door into the yard. He pulled the hood of his sweater up, trying to get a little protection against the rain.

The sky in the east was beginning to lighten, and as Sam took his first steps into the forest, a bird began to sing.

Chapter End Notes

Man, Cas is gonna be SO PISSED when he gets done dealing with that fire and he realizes the chain is broken.

Whoooo-ey.

Anyway I'm sure Sam will make it back to town and call Dean and John will take them out for milkshakes and Cas will have some deep introspection and come up with healthier coping mechanisms for his loss.

Because this is a HazelDomain production and I am ALWAYS nice to my characters and I never, ever brand them or beat them up or have them castrated, nope nope nope.

I hope the science in this bit didn't get too boring. If you'd like to see a video recreation of Sam's experiment you can see mine right here.

Oh! I remembered the thing I was gonna mention!

The horror movies that Sam was watching like three chapters ago? Jared Padalecki was in all those movies. So there's that.
The sun was coming up in the east, so Cas’s driveway definitely headed north.

For a while, anyway.

Sam had no practical application for this knowledge, but he filed it away anyways, just in case. It was stupid to try the same thing he’d tried last time. He knew that, but he really didn’t have any other options. He had to follow the road, the only alternative would be to set off blindly into the forest and hope he ran across civilization before he got lost.

He stayed to the left of the driveway, keeping a safe distance, trying not to trip over anything in the morning gloom. His sweater was already soaked through, as were his shoes. They weren’t meant for this, but at least they were better than nothing.

Behind him, in the distance, he heard glass shatter. Probably his bedroom window blowing out. Hopefully, that would keep Cas occupied for a while. Hopefully.

He kept walking. His head was beginning to hurt, and his fingers skimmed over the denim covering his pocket. The pills were still there, but he ignored them for now. He needed to keep a clear head if this was going to work.

After the sun came up, he’d have the same withdrawal symptoms he’d faced before. It was gonna hurt and he’d lose the ability to fight back if Cas found him in the meantime. He’d probably pass out for a couple hours, and whether he’d even wake up still remained to be seen. In any case, he needed to put as much distance between himself and the house as possible—now, while he still had the ability to move.

He trampled through the underbrush in the half-light, glancing to the right, he could see the driveway in the distance.

It occurred to him that if Cas came driving after him, there would be very few places in the woods to hide. His sweater was a dark gray, so that was alright, but his skin was pale white and his jeans were unapologetically blue.

He dropped to his knees, scooping up handfuls of dead leaves and mud. He rubbed them up and down his pants, letting the dark soil obscure the blue. When he was satisfied, he dropped the dirt clumps, leaving his hands wet and dirty. He rubbed his palms against his face, smearing the camouflage against his skin. That done, he set off along the same track as before, still keeping a safe distance from the road.

It was slow going. The sticks and bracken slowed him down, tripping him up frequently. At one point, the driveway turned away to the right, and he’d gone quite a distance before realizing. He didn’t know whether the track had turned away, or whether he’d changed his bearing by accident. He had to choose between tracking back or simply heading right and hoping that he ran across the track again.

He chose the latter, but in the darkness he nearly stumbled into the road before he realized he’d come upon it again.
After that, he tried to be more aware of his surroundings, but the pain in his head was growing worse with each passing step. The sun rose, and with it came the deep, irritating itch between his shoulders.

“Before sunset” was easy, it was a measurable time frame, but Sam had no idea how long “after sunrise” might be. Apparently, the symptoms began at sunrise. How long it would take them to incapacitate him, he had no idea.

Time seemed to stretch as he trekked on, step by step, always cognizant of the gravel road to his right. He heard nothing else from behind him. If Cas was following him, he was doing so silently.

The itching grew steadily worse, combining with the pounding in his head to create a symphony of discomfort. The rain dripped down on him from the trees above him. He’d hoped the cold would alleviate some of the irritation on his back, but he’d been wrong.

The rain had begun seeping into the denim, as well, and the rough, wet material was beginning to chafe at him. He thought again of the pills in his pocket, probably getting soaked through and ruined. They’d go to waste, and his head hurt so bad-

The pounding was actually visible now, the sunlight flaring in time with his heartbeat. He almost rubbed his eyes before he remembered the mud on his hands.

He could hear it now, too, he realized. A long, reedy warbling, painful in its volume and intensity. It was accompanied by more lights, bright red and white flashes that lanced into his eyes like needles-

He was on the ground before he realized he’d fallen, his hands pressed over his ears to keep out the sound. It got louder and louder, like an ice pick into Sam’s brain, and it wasn’t until it was too late that he realized the sound wasn’t in his head.

He looked up toward the driveway, eyes wide, just in time to see the red truck go screaming past. He could feel the siren in his teeth but even so, he managed to scramble to his feet. Vertigo hit him hard, and he lurched from tree to tree as he stumbled toward the driveway and the truck.

It was already gone, but if he could get onto the road, maybe someone would see-

It felt like the forest was holding him back, the tendrils of branches and vines burrowing into his back, flaying the muscles away from bone as he tried to force himself forward.

One of his legs gave way and he went to the ground, hard, jarring his knees. He grit his teeth, trying not to scream.

Hide, he needed to hide, he was going under-

No-

If he could get to the road, if the truck came back, if someone else came-

Something in his back tore and this time he did scream, scrabbling over his shoulder at whatever it was that was clawing at him.

He jerked at the zipper of his sweater, trying to get the garment off.

The rain, the rain was falling, freezing and pure, it would get the blood off, would get Cas’s blood off-
He’d fought halfway out of the sweater when he remembered that Cas wasn’t there. Whatever was hurting him, it wasn’t Cas.

He reached over his shoulder, the muscles protesting, and his fingers skidded across something hot and slippery. When he pulled them away, they were red and sticky. He frowned at them, his vision going staticky as he tried to focus.

On the road or off the road.

On the road or off.

Who would drive down it next? If it was the truck, he was safe. If it was Cas, he was dead.

He drove his knee into the ground, trying weakly to get to his feet. He was halfway there when his skin tore again.

He went down hard, his vision going out completely, and he didn’t get back up.

When he woke up, the sun was high, shining weakly through thick clouds. His mouth was dry, despite everything around him being soaked. His cheek was pressed hard into the bracken.

The pain lessened, his head clearing as he blinked the fogginess out of his eyes.

His back felt like it was covered in ants, from the back of his neck all the way down to his ass. Even the backs of his arms were itchy, like he’d landed in poison ivy or something.

Cool water was dripping through the trees, puddling in the furrow of his spine, soothing the ache.

He’d lived.

He’d lived.

The withdrawal was through, and he was alive, dammit.

He grinned wide, an actual laugh escaping his lips as he pushed himself up off the ground.

“I’m glad you think this is funny,” Cas muttered.

Sam didn’t hear him. He was staring in horror at his hand, or what used to be his hand-

His arm was pale and spindly, the skin disgustingly tight around his elbow. Thick blue veins wriggled under the filmy surface of his skin. His wrist was completely gone, the limb ending in a long, stunted point.

Sam screamed, flailing the multilated thing, his mind filled with a mantra of get it off like he’d be able to be rid of his own body if he backed away fast enough.

Cas was on top of him in a second, mud-streaked hand covering Sam’s mouth.

“Shut the fuck up,” the man growled in his ear, but Sam was beyond that now. His other arm had
come into view, similarly distorted, and his higher reasoning had utterly shorted out. He continued screaming, high and mindless. Cas kept a hand clamped over his mouth, and a second later, Sam heard something tearing. A wad of balled cotton was shoved between his teeth, dampening the sound. He tried to spit it out but Cas was faster, tying a thin strip of torn fabric around his mouth. It pulled his cheeks back, painfully tight, and it pushed the wadded cloth back further into his throat. Sam realized that the cloth had come from his own shirt. He must not be wearing it any more.

Sam tried to pull at it, but his arms weren’t responding to commands the way they should. Cas ignored his attempts, gathering up a fistful of Sam’s hair and pushing him back down into the mud. A stick scraped against Sam’s cheek and he tried to get away, but Cas held him with a grip like steel.

“No,” he tried to say, “no, no, no-”

His words were lost in the gag, and a few seconds later, he heard Cas’s zipper.

Cas fucked him dry, not bothering to prep him first. Sam quit struggling, burying his face in the dirt and clenching his eyes shut around the tears of pain.

He’d been close. He’d been so close.

“We are doing this outside,” Cas told him, “because there are a dozen people at my house. Because a fire tower called in a report of smoke.”

He shoved forward into Sam, taking them both to the ground. Sticks and rocks jabbed into Sam’s flesh, but he still didn’t try to fight. Cas was crushing him, forcing the air from his lungs with each thrust. Sam’s nose was running, he couldn’t breathe around the gag. He tried to slow his breathing, to force air through the damp cloth, but it didn’t work. His chest heaved in hiccupping sobs, no matter how badly he tried to make them stop.

Cas made a noise high in his throat, driving down one last time, and holding. Sam felt a sticky wetness filling him.

Fifty seven.

Cas withdrew and pulled his pants up, leaving Sam on the ground. Sam didn’t get up- didn’t even try. He attempted to roll onto his side, but it crushed his upper arm against his ribcage in a way he couldn’t seem to fix, and so he just abandoned it. He lay where Cas had left him, the rain puddling on his bare back.

He closed his eyes, listening to the crunching of leaves as Cas came nearer. The man circled around in front of him, crouching down. He yanked Sam’s jeans back around his waist, buttoning them but leaving the zipper open.

“Get up, Sam.”

“No,” Sam answered through the gag. It was muffled, but he felt sure his intentions had been conveyed.

Cas grabbed him by the hair, hauling him to his knees and slapping him across the face.
“Let’s try this again,” Cas snapped, and there was rage in his voice. It occurred to Sam that he might be about to die.

His cheek throbbed where Cas had hit him, but many of the other aches and pains seemed to have vanished. Cas must have given him a hit of grace while he was out. Must’ve done the blood, too, if the itching was any indication.

Sam closed his eyes, ignoring the pain as his head sagged in Cas’s grip. He wished he’d slept through the rest of Cas’s spell, as well.

He had one shot and he blew it. He’d lost.

Maybe Cas would kill him. As he thought about it, it occurred to Sam that he was almost exhausted enough not to care. Better that, than spending another eleven months in the woods with this psycho and then dying.

Cas’s grip tightened a fraction, and Sam opened his eyes. Cas had his head tilted, like he was listening. Sam listened, too.

A low rumbling echoed through the trees, far off, but getting closer.

Sam’s heart lurched.

The truck.

They weren’t gone yet.

He was on his feet in a second, moving so quickly that Cas lost his balance and toppled backwards. Sam didn’t stop to celebrate. He ran through the trees, slowed by the forest bracken and the strange positioning of his arms. His center of gravity was off, and his shoulders seemed to pull back more than usual.

He couldn’t see anything yet. Cas must have dragged him back further away from the road—probably for this exact reason. The sound of the engine drew nearer, and Sam screamed. It was a pathetic sound, muffled by the gag and his own labored breaths, but it was something and he wasn’t going to waste it.

The gravel drive came into view moments before Cas reached him, tackling him to the ground and landing bodily on top of him. Sam couldn’t catch himself and went down hard.

Cas stayed low, covering him almost completely, shoving him against the ground as the sound of the engine grew louder. They weren’t far off the drive—maybe 200 feet, at most— but the ground was uneven, and the trees were thick.

Sam wrenched upwards, thrashing against Cas’s hold. He could feel the man’s hands, tight around his upper arms, holding him against the mud.

“Stop it, stop—”

Sam twisted, trying to shove an elbow back into Cas’s belly, but the movement was weak. Cas pushed him back down, holding tight, and Sam heard his arm break. The pain was immediate and overwhelming and Sam gagged.

He barely caught a glimpse of red as the truck blew past. His protest died in his throat. There was nothing else to say.
Cas didn’t let him up until the sound had faded. He held the still teen against the ground, listening carefully for any sign of a return. When there was none, he grasped Sam by the good arm, yanking him to his feet.

The broken limb swung loose, bones grinding together as Sam struggled to stay upright. Black fog swirled around the edges of his vision, threatening to overtake him.

Cas yanked him back toward the road.

“You walked here, you’re walking back.”

It took them four hours.

Sam didn’t know how long he’d spent fleeing through the forest, but it was probably way less than four hours.

Each step was a victory against exhaustion and pain. He was healing faster than he used to, that much was obvious, but he kept stumbling, jarring his broken arm and bringing new bouts of dizziness and nausea.

The first time it happened, he dropped to his knees, gagging. Cas took the gag out after that, but Sam said nothing. His throat was raw and parched, used up.

Even breathing hurt, so much that when the house came into view, Sam felt an irrational surge of relief.

*This is how it ends, then,* he thought to himself, looking at the damaged building.

The front windows were broken, and Sam could see which bedroom had been his. The wall was burned through and part of the roof had collapsed.

The yard was deserted, and Sam’s last hope evaporated.

He followed Cas up the front steps, stumbling over the top one and going to his knees. Cas didn’t help him up. He waited in the doorway, eyes stony, for Sam to get to his feet.

They went through Cas’s office to the far door, and Sam was almost too tired to look around. On the far side of the office was a door, and when Cas opened it, Sam realized it was a staircase.

The house had a *basement.*

Sam balked at that, but it was too late. Cas’s hand closed around his throat, dragging him through the narrow doorway and down.

The basement had a cement floor, Sam realized when he hit it. The impact went jarring up his bad shoulder and he screamed, ragged and tight.

“Shut up,” Cas ordered again. Sam tried to shift but he couldn’t lay on anything that didn’t hurt. He ended up on his back, his arms pinned awkwardly beneath him, looking up at the ceiling.

The basement was unfinished, and beyond the wood beams, Sam could see pipes and wiring.
He was surprised Cas was going to let him near those, after last time.

Cas came back into his line of sight. He said nothing, just drove the toe of his boot into Sam’s ribs, flipping him onto his belly.

Sam let his cheek rest against the concrete, trying not to listen as Cas tore off lengths of duct tape. Sam felt them being wrapped around his wrists and forearms, binding them tight together all the way up to the elbow.

Not that he was going to have much use for them, the way they were now.

Sam closed his eyes, grateful that he’d been unconscious for whatever Cas had done to him. He imagined Cas laying him out, his palm flat against a rock or a stump, and just slicing.

Sam didn’t gag. He was too far gone for that.

Cas was probing at the broken bone, making Sam whimper with each prod.

“I should let you suffer through this,” Cas told him. “After that goddamn stunt. Do you have any idea how stupid you are?”

“I’m gettin’ the picture,” Sam muttered. Cas responded by tightening his grasp.

“You could have gotten us both killed,” he snapped. “I should leave this hanging. It’ll heal slow and crooked and it’ll be agony the entire time. Is that what you want?”

Sam didn’t answer. He didn’t particularly care whether his deformed, mutilated arm healed crooked. Cas sighed.

“The bones have fused. I’m going to re-break it and set it straight and heal it. Which I shouldn’t do. Fucking appreciate this.”

Sam opened his mouth to say something sarcastic, but all he could do was scream when the bone snapped again. Seconds later, the muscles in his arm froze as Cas’s magic streamed through them. The pain dulled to a distant ache, and then vanished. Sam’s breath came a little easier, though the restriction of his arms made it impossible to breathe deep.

“Better?”

Sam gathered up the last drops of moisture in his mouth and spat derisively on the floor. He didn’t bother looking up at Cas. He heard cloth rustling as Cas headed back for the basement stairs. Rather than climbing back up, though, he sat on the bottom step, contemplating his prisoner.

“I can’t fix this by myself. I’m gonna have to have... people here. For the next couple days. Which leaves me the conundrum of what to do with you in the meantime.”

Sam didn’t respond. Cas could come to his own goddamn conclusion.

Cas watched him for a while, saying nothing. Sam didn’t look at him, keeping his head turned away from Cas’s contemplative form.

Eventually, Cas rose and went back upstairs.
Thanks for the speculation guys.

I love the ever-changing landscape of what you think is gonna happen vs. what you want to happen.

What team are ya'll on?

Also, because peeps keep asking: yes Dean is going to play a part in this story. No, probably not the part the prompter requested.

I forgot to link the original prompt.

Bad Hazel, no cookie.

Speaking of bad Hazel- I have done some really terrible things to my characters throughout my long and storied history as a fanfiction author but for this fic, at least, Sam's not getting gelded. So you can rest easy.
Sam listened to Cas moving around upstairs. He was dragging something— a small item dropped and rolled. Twice, Sam heard the back door slam.

He pulled himself into a sitting position, pulling his legs up and resting his chin on his knees.

It didn’t really work without his arms wrapped around his legs, but... that wasn’t an option any more. Because of the tape, for starters. Sam closed his eyes and thought very hard about the tape. Not what his hands and wrists looked like, inside the tape.

And not what Cas would do once he came back downstairs. Sam hoped that the mutilations he’d undergone would be punishment enough, but he wasn’t naive enough to think that might be the case.

The door at the top of the stairs swung open, and Sam pulled his knees closer to his chest, trying to make himself a smaller target. Whatever Cas was going to do to him... there was no escaping it now.

Cas reached the bottom of the stairs, dropping an armful of tools onto the ground. A long metal pipe clattered noisily against the concrete and rolled. Sam looked at it and tried not to imagine Cas using it as a club, methodically breaking every bone in his body—

When he looked up, Cas was still holding a single tool, a long-handled bolt cutter whose blades he was opening and shutting experimentally. Sam paled.

“Cas—”

“Shut up,” Cas interrupted, advancing on him. Sam struggled backwards, kicking out and digging his feet against the concrete. He didn’t make it far. Cas caught him easily, bending over and catching him by the ankle. Wordlessly, he dragged Sam back to the center of the room. Something scraped along his back, and Sam realized he was sitting directly over a drain.

“Hold still or I’m going to cut more than I mean to,” Cas ordered. Sam watched, wide-eyed, but Cas only lined up the blades and snipped through the cuff still locked around Sam’s ankle. He snipped it in two places, letting it fall harmlessly to the floor. Sam stared at it. It seemed impossibly insubstantial in the harsh lights of the basement.

“Just like I said,” Cas announced, looking down at it. “I wanted to give it thirty days, to be sure, but I think you’ve well proven that twenty-nine is more than enough.”

Sam didn’t ask about the rest of the promise— the promise to let him go, to take him anywhere he wanted. If Cas left him alone now, he’d die from the withdrawal. Sam was left with little more than the freedom to choose his own deathbed. He glared up at the man through the muddy spikes of his hair.

“I hate you,” he spat. “I am always going to hate you. Mark my words.”

“Marked,” Cas responded. He looked up at the ceiling above Sam’s heads, doing some calculation in his own head. From a pocket, he withdrew a solid steel eye-hook. Sam swallowed.
Cas was tall enough to reach the beams above his head just by standing on his toes. Sam didn’t watch as he affixed the hook above Sam’s head. He didn’t look when Cas went upstairs, returning with a length of rope.

“For your consideration,” Cas said, catching Sam by the collar of his sweater and hauling him to his feet, “I no longer give a single fuck what you think of me.”

The collar was choking him, and Sam was forced to stand, taking his weight onto his feet. Cas began wrapping the end of the rope around Sam’s wrists. The other end was threaded through the eye-hook, and when Cas yanked the rope, Sam’s wrists were jerked up behind him. He cried out in surprise and pain, bending at the waist to allow his wrists to raise higher.

Cas tied off the rope and circled back around in front of him, looking down at Sam’s face with distain. He went back upstairs and returned with something small and silvered. Sam’s eyes widened.

It was a camera.

“No, Cas, no—”

Cas raised the camera, snapping a picture of Sam’s face. The shutter whirred, and Sam closed his eyes.

“It does video, too,” Cas remarked, moving closer. “And it’s going to. You should pay attention.”

Sam watched in horror as Cas snapped his knife open. He circled around Sam’s back, slicing roughly up the back of his shirt and sweater. The sleeves were trapped underneath the tape, and they were hacked off and left in place. In a matter of seconds, Sam was naked from the waist up.

“First choice,” Cas said, snapping another photo. “Do you want to cooperate, or do you want me to tie your feet and cut your pants off, too?”

Sam opened his mouth, ready to tell Cas to go fuck himself, but he remembered the days of humiliation when Cas had refused to let him wear anything at all, and the insult died in his throat.

“I won’t kick you,” he grumbled.

“You’ll cooperate?” Cas prompted.

“I’ll cooperate.”

“Good.”

Cas’s hands wandered over his waist and thighs as he worked Sam’s jeans and boxers down. His face was inches from Sam’s cock, and Sam grimaced, not wanting to imagine what might be coming next.

Not even his socks were spared, joining his jeans and underwear in a corner in the floor. Sam rose up onto his toes, taking some of the pressure off his wrists and letting him stand up a little straighter.

Cas had the cane, the metal one from the barn. He was looking at it with a frown, turning it over in his hands. Sam paled, his stomach sinking. He remembered the look of Cas’s arm, the deep bloody gouge through muscle and skin.
“You’re getting at least one,” Cas said definitively, raising his eyes to meet Sam’s terrified gaze. “Maybe more. It’s up to you.”

Sam tried to straighten a little further, to look Cas straight in the eye- but the rope was too short. His calves were already beginning to protest the current stance.

“What- what do I have to do? To make you stop?”

“Ask me,” Cas answered simply.

There was a narrow workbench along one wall, and Cas set the camera on the dusty wood surface. A small red light blinked, and Sam realized that Cas was recording.

His punishment was being taped.

Cas stepped closer, letting the end of the cane rest against the side of Sam’s chest. The line of pressure shifted, dragging across his ribs and across the small of his back. Sam shuddered, but held his tongue. He wasn’t going to simper. Not on the tape. He wouldn’t give Cas the satisfaction.

“After the first,” Cas began, “I will stop when you beg me. And I will heal your wounds, when you beg me.”

“I won’t beg,” Sam responded. His body was beginning to tremble from the exertion, and he dropped back down off his toes. It forced him to bend over further, exposing him to Cas’s gaze.

At least Cas wasn’t putting him through the humiliation of taking the video from the back.

The cane drew across the meat of his ass, like a violin bow. Sam bit his lip, closing his eyes and waiting for the pain.

“It’s up to you,” Cas told him. “But I think you will.”

The tip of the cane scraped across the top of his hip, trailing down the cleft of his ass. It caught temporarily on the furl of his hole, before carrying down over his balls.

Oh fuck please don’t let him hit me in the balls with that thing, oh fuck, please,-

The cane withdrew and there was silence, full silence.

“Spread your legs a little further, Sam.”

“No.”

The cane slipped between his thighs, moving quickly to flick each in turn. Sam yelped, damn near jumping in his attempt to get away from the stinging blows.

“That’s perfect, thank you.”

His thighs stung. Sam risked a glance down and back. His legs were spread further than before, his junk hanging stark and soft between them. The skin on his thighs was striped with red, already raising into welts.

“This isn’t going to change a damn thing, Cas.”

“We’ll see. Five seconds.”
Sam grit his teeth, closing his eyes so he didn’t need to look at the blinking red light. He would stay quiet for five. He could do five. Five was a respectable number. And then he’d just say “please stop and heal me” and that counted as a beg, he could stay composed for two words. And if his voice wavered a little, then no one would be able to fault him.

The cane came down on the furrow where his ass met his thighs, and Sam screamed. It didn’t crack so much as it thwacked and Sam had the horrifying memory of a cleaver hacking through a thick cut of steak.

The pain was unimaginable. Cas had gone down to the bone, he was certain of it, if he looked down there would be blood pouring freely across the ground-

Thwack.

The second hit came only a few seconds after the first, but to Sam it may well have been hours, or no time at all. He tried to scream again but he hadn’t finished the first time. He couldn’t stop. The sound petered out as he ran out of air but he couldn’t pull more in. He didn’t know whether the second hit had landed above or below the last. He could feel nothing but the pain.

Thwack.

His eyes flew open and he saw his own blood, trickling down his calves and toward the drain. He couldn’t feel the hot liquid, everything beneath the small of his back was lost in an inferno of agony. He gasped deep, the air burning his throat as he filled his lungs. A bitter scent filled the air and he realized that he’d pissed himself.

“Stop!” he gasped, desperate to get the words out. “Please, Cas, fuck, please, not again, not again, not-”

“Are you sorry?”

“Yes!”

Sam didn’t even hesitate. Waves of pain crashed through his body and his pride was long forgotten. He didn’t even think of the camera.

“Yes, please, I’m sorry, I’ll stop, please just don’t hit me again, please, please-”

Cas’s form came back into view, the cane still gleaming in his hands. Sam jerked away from it, sending screams of pain through his shoulders as they wrenched in their sockets.

Cas didn’t say anything, just set the cane on the table beside the camera. Sam’s head dropped, and again he saw his blood, streaming across the concrete. He needed stitches, he needed, he needed-

“P-please heal me,” he begged, and new tears rose in his eyes. He hoped he was quiet enough that the camera couldn’t hear.

“You want me to end your punishment?”

“Yes.”

“Say so.”

Sam let out a sob, but even still he barely hesitated.

“Please... end my punishment, Cas.”
Cas circled back around behind him. The freezing touch of his grace spread across Sam’s ravaged skin. Sam whimpered.

Three. He’d withstood three and he’d cried like a baby and if Cas repeated the exercise he’d do the same thing. Sam didn’t look at the camera. He’d have begged after one, if he could’ve breathed.

His face was wet, his nose running and tears falling onto the concrete. He couldn’t move, couldn’t escape. Couldn’t do anything.

He kept his eyes on the floor while Cas shut off the camera.

“That didn’t need to happen, you know.”

“Yeah, it did,” Sam responded dully. He still didn’t look up.

The shutter whirred again, though what Cas was photographing, Sam didn’t know.

Cas retreated back up the stairs again, returning with a bath towel and a large sponge.

There was a plastic utility sink beside the washing machine. Sam was facing away from it, but he could listen while Cas ran the water. He heard the sound of a metal handle clanging against a bucket, and the sound of water rising.

He expected the water to be cold, icy and paralyzing, but it wasn’t.

Cas poured the first half of the bucket across Sam’s shoulders, letting it wash away some of the dirt and blood.

The second half of the water was poured across the back of Sam’s head. It was grimy and dark as it sieved through the mud in his hair.

Cas didn’t have a comb, not down here anyway. He made do with his fingers, running them through the tangled locks. Sam made a half-hearted motion to jerk away, but he couldn’t do much more than move in a circle. The rope holding his wrists wasn’t slack enough.

Cas refilled the bucket, pouring the warm liquid slowly over Sam’s hair. He repeated the motion, running his hands through the wet strands until they lay straight and clean. Only then did he catch Sam’s chin, forcing him to look up.

“Close your eyes,” he ordered, and Sam did. The sponge caressed his face, wiping away the camouflage.

“How are you doing this?” Sam choked.

“Because you’re filthy,” Cas muttered back. The sponge moved down Sam’s throat and shoulders, scrubbing lightly.

“Why do you care?” Sam insisted. His voice was rough. “Why clean me up and buy me things and pretend like we’re friends?”

“Because I thought it best to try to make this easy for you,” Cas responded. He’d refilled the bucket again and he poured it across Sam’s back. He knelt to Sam’s side, working the sponge over his bloody thighs. “I can see that I made an error. That’s why we’re doing this, today. So that you can help understand your circumstances better.”

“I understand fine. I’m a prisoner. A prisoner and a plaything.”
Cas paused, his hand on Sam’s calf.

“Still, no.”

He didn’t say anything else, and Sam endured the humiliation of being washed like a child. Cas moved down each leg, taking his time, filling the bucket again and again until the water ran clear.

When he was finished, he took another photo. Sam glared up at the glass lens, hoping the hate in his eyes would poison the photo for anyone who saw it.

Cas retrieved the towel, unfolding it to reveal a large, flat blade. Sam tried to back away, his efforts wasted. Cas glanced up at him.

“How can you be still?"

Sam stared at the blade, wide-eyed. He opened his mouth but couldn’t make words come. The cane hadn’t been enough? The cane and his... whatever Cas had done to his hands?

“Please don’t, Cas, I get it, I’m not going-”

“If you move, it’s going to be infinitely worse for you. So I’ll ask again. Can you be still?”

Sam closed his eyes. His answer came out in a whisper.

“No.”

Cas dropped the blade back onto the towel and instead picked up the metal pipe. He moved around behind Sam, who braced for impact. Instead, however, Cas only lay it behind him. Silently, he bound each of Sam’s ankles to the ends of the pipe, forcing his legs wide.

Sam could feel air moving over his ass, utterly exposed in this configuration.

Not for the first time, he wondered if he was going to die. If Cas was going to kill him and write this iteration of his soulmate off as a bust.

“Please, Cas,” he whispered, but Cas didn’t respond. He simply returned to the folded towel, returning with two bottles.

“Second choice,” Cas told him firmly, holding them out. Sam stared at them, not understanding. He didn’t recognize the bottle on the left, but the right was just an aerosol can of shaving cream.

Sam’s eyes flicked back to the flat blade.

“I’m guessing you don’t have a safety razor?”

Cas said nothing, just shook his head. Sam inclined his head toward the left bottle. Whatever it was, it had to be better than having that blade dragging over his skin.

Cas set the can on the ground and popped the other one open. Immediately, an awful smell filled the room, sharp and artificial. Sam wrinkled his nose, not wanting to have that stuff on his face.

It turned out, he needn’t have worried.

The cream was cold on his chest, where a patch of dark hair grew over his breastbone and around his nipples. Cas took his time on those, spreading the cream across them until they were hard and peaked.
Sam stupidly hoped that would be the end of it, but he wasn’t stupid enough to think he was getting off that easy.

Cas moved down his body, smearing the cold substance down the center of Sam’s belly, where a trail of hair led across his belly button.

“Samael did this for several years when we lived in Egypt. It wasn’t my favorite look, but it was hot enough to be understandable, at least.”

Cas spread a thick layer of the cream across Sam’s mons, making sure to coat the hair down to the root.

“Gettin’ nostalgic?” Sam asked. The question didn’t have the humorous nonchalance he hoped for. He glanced at the camera, thankful at least that the red ‘record’ light was dark.

“No. But it was a startling change, to say the least, so I’m hoping it will be the same now.”

Cas’s hands delved between his legs, coating his balls and the hair around the base of his cock. Sam was grateful for the cold; Cas’s touch was soft enough that he might have gotten hard, otherwise. His breath caught when Cas’s hand delved up the furrow of his ass, catching momentarily at his hole.

Sam closed his eyes and groaned. He knew the smell, now. Dean had put it in his shampoo once, just after he’d started growing it long. Nair- or some variation.

“You think I’m going to change because I look different?”

“No, of course not.”

Cas was cupping his ass now, working the cream along the top of his thighs. With a start, Sam realized Cas meant to do all of his legs. The cream on his chest was beginning to sting uncomfortably, and he wasn’t looking forward to the feeling on his balls.

“Then what?”

“I’ve been trying to make this easy on you- keep you as comfortable as possible during the transition. But you need to understand.” Cas paused here, looking up at Sam. “This has nothing to do with you. You are an interloper. This body belongs to someone else- to Samael. And Samael belongs to me. As I belong to him. None of this is up to you.”

Sam shifted, trying to relieve the irritation from the cream. It was spreading across his body now, stinging like hot pepper.

“It’s not yours,” he insisted, letting his head fall forward. His damp hair obscured the rest of the room. “It might have been once. Not any more.”

“And you’ll stay down here until you realize you’re wrong,” Cas answered. He was working on Sam’s calves now, almost to the ankle. “Until you’re able to understand that this- all of it- happens with or without your consent. I truly do not care.”

“Well he?” Sam asked. His eyes were squeezed shut, and he was trying not to gasp. After the pain of the whipping, this was nothing, but somehow the immediacy of the current discomfort managed to eclipse the memory. He breathed in deep. “Will he remember all this?”

“He’ll be alive to remember,” Cas insisted. “He’ll understand.”
“I hope he doesn’t,” Sam said. He was panting now, but grinning nonetheless. “I wouldn’t. I hope he hates your fucking guts. I hope he spends the rest of his life staying away from you and your sick obsession.”

“I’m willing to take that risk,” Cas answered. He stood and went to the sink. The water ran for a very long time- Sam assumed he was washing his hands.

When he came back into view, he picked up the can of shaving cream again, shaking it vigorously.

“No, you said-” Sam protested, but Cas cut him off.

“This, I’m doing with the razor. I’ve done it a thousand times, there’s nothing to fear.”

The foam was cold on Sam’s cheeks, a sick counterpoint to the throbbing discomfort in the rest of his body. It occurred to him that Cas would take everything- beard, eyebrows, hair, everything. But he didn’t. He smoothed the foam over Sam’s face and throat, and then went back for the blade.

“Be still.”

Sam closed his eyes and tried to comply. His heart thundered in his chest as the blade scraped along his throat, millimeters from his racing pulse. Every second, he anticipated the deep bite of metal into his skin, the hot gush of blood down his chest.

It didn’t come.

Cas finished and wiped the remainder of the foam from his face. Sam kept his eyes down. This most recent development was humiliating, but a far cry from the worst Cas could do.

The man kept toweling him off, using the towel to remove the cream from his chest and legs and groin. Sam expected the pain to ease, but it really didn’t. Not until Cas began refilling the bucket, scrubbing the remains of the cream away under a stream of warm water.

Sam watched, sick, as the hair simply washed away with the cream. He looked ridiculous. His legs were smooth like a girl’s, and his junk looked disgustingly pink without the dusting of pubes he’d become accustomed to having there.

Cas could barely touch him there without sending spikes of pain up his spine. When Cas began to work the sponge over his ass, Sam hissed in pain, tears rising to his eyes. The whole area felt raw and horrible.

When it was over, he stood dripping and miserable, listening to the shutter click.

Chapter End Notes

Do not put nair on your junk. Don't do it. Listen to Wise Elder Hazel, who has made mistakes so that you don't have to.

Cas isn't done. I just split this up into two chapters because it was getting insane.

I was hoping to get writing done over Thanksgiving break. Did I do that? No I did not. I have 12,607 words left to write before the end of Nano (I'm 75% of the way there) and that works out to 2,500 words a day. I don't think I'm gonna make it, you guys.
Also thank you for all the comments on the last chapter, I love all of you to death and I am loving your ideas and predictions and your fear feeds the dark thing that lives inside me, so that's... good.
When he woke up, Cas was back.

Sam didn’t remember falling asleep. Cas had untied the rope around his wrists and ankles and lowered him, shivering, to the floor.

There weren’t any windows in the basement, so it might have been ten minutes or eight hours. No way to tell.

His shoulders were numb where the duct-tape binders wrenched them back. He felt like it was the kind of numb that would hurt a lot, if he could feel it.

Cas’s grace spread down his spine, alleviating the numbness and replacing it with a deep, dull itching. In a way that was almost worse. Sam shifted, trying to roll his shoulders, but there was too much tape binding his arms. He was functionally immobile.

Cas’s knife clicked open and Sam groaned. Like he wasn’t having a bad enough goddamn day already.

Drops of cool liquid landed at the nape of Sam’s neck, and it only took him a few seconds to realize something was different.

Rather than the searing burns he’d come to expect from the blood, this felt... better.

Cas’s hands were slippery, working the blood over his shoulders and upper arms, his elbows, all the way down his wrists. It occurred to him to wonder how Cas was working the liquid through the tape, but he was too relieved to ask any questions. It soothed like aloe and Sam could have cried with relief.

“I have to keep you down here for a while,” Cas told him, almost apologetically. When I come back in the morning... I have some ideas, but you have to understand, I can’t let anyone know you’re here.”

Sam said nothing, just stayed still and quiet as Cas worked through the rest of the spell.

So, it must be almost sunset, then.

Cas gave him another one of the pills- a whole one this time- and Sam took it gratefully. By the time Cas returned with a pillow and a comforter, he was three quarters of the way unconscious.

“She looks like her mom,” Castiel remarked. Sam said nothing, just raised his finger to his lips, glaring.

The child in his arms had no reaction to the murmured words.
Castiel was joking, of course. Isobel was pale and freckled, her grey eyes striking and her hair a gleaming auburn. Her child- a fortnight early and almost too tiny to bear- was bald-headed and wrinkled, her skin a patchy, swollen red. Maybe with time, she would grow to gain her mother’s beauty, but from where she lay now, there was no resemblance.

The two of them were both sleeping deeply. Sam didn’t begrudge them that, they’d had a long night. For a while, he’d feared he would lose both of them. He understood well the workings of the human body, the way it reacted to the different substances and plants that it interacted with. It was a fascinating topic of study for him- and one that came well in handy in times like this. Not for the first time, he’d wished he could give his grace to humans- the way he could give it to others of his own kind.

For now, all he could do was hold the tiny thing to his chest, warming her with his own body while she slept.

Castiel came to stand behind him, one hand resting on his shoulder as they looked down at her scrunched face.

“Will she make it?” Castiel asked softly. Sam didn’t respond. Castiel understood the meaning of his silence, and didn’t press further. They sat without speaking, listening to the soft breathing of the exhausted humans. Outside, the sun rose.

Sam awoke shivering. His head pounded angrily and his arms had once again gone painfully numb. He lay on his belly beneath the blanket that Cas had brought, but the concrete was frigid beneath his body. He closed his eyes, knowing that sleep was impossible and knowing that there was no other escape from this.

The fluorescent lights were still on, filling the room with a cold, stark light. Sam looked around again, seeing nothing new. A washer and dryer. Sink. Work table. Bare walls, bare ceiling, bare floor.

He was desperately thirsty.

It occurred to him that he would need to use the bathroom eventually. He’d have to choose between screaming for Cas and soiling himself.

Again, his brain reminded him, and he winced.

Cas had that on tape. Sam screaming and begging and pissing himself with fear.

And then the other thing.

Sam shifted his legs, feeling the smooth glide of skin on skin. Maybe that’s why he was so cold. He was bare as a girl. As a porn star.

Sam’s heart raced.

Cas wasn’t going to fuck him on camera- he couldn’t. He wouldn’t. He saw it as lovemaking, he wanted it to be gentle and consensual, he wouldn’t use that as a weapon... would he?

Sam grit his teeth. If Cas offered him another one of the pills, he wasn’t going to take it. He
wouldn’t put himself in that situation. No matter how bad it hurt or how much he wanted to escape his predicament, he wouldn’t give Cas the satisfaction of getting off for him.

There was a noise from upstairs and Sam started, trying to turn onto his side and failing.

Maybe it was nothing. The house shifting. Or maybe it was Cas waking up.

Hope welled up against Sam’s will. If Cas was up it meant the grace and the blood and food and water and maybe another blanket. But it also meant another rape and he refused to accept that. Refused to categorize Cas’s presence into pros and cons. He wasn’t that far gone yet.

The basement door opened, letting in a few seconds of daylight.

“Are you awake?” Cas asked from the top of the stairs. Sam grunted an affirmative.

Cas came downstairs empty handed, and Sam tried not to be disappointed.

“The workers will be here in an hour,” Cas explained. “We need to be done by then.”

Sam turned his face down into the pillow. He didn’t want to look at Cas. The man was wearing nothing but a pair of sweatpants, his feet bare on the cold floor. He knelt beside Sam, pulling the comforter back. Sam shuddered, though whether from the cold or the dispassionate treatment, he wasn’t sure.

“These are healing well,” he told Sam, stroking his wrist. Sam didn’t bother trying to jerk away. He couldn’t go anywhere with his arms taped, and he wouldn’t give Cas the pleasure of being reminded.

Cas’s grace spread up his arms, relieving the numbness and bringing back the itch. For a moment, Sam’s shoulders bloomed with pain before that, too, was healed.

He wondered how much permanent nerve damage had been reversed in the last few days.

Cas opened a vein and once again spread the blood up and down the length of Sam’s arms, and once again the blood was like a balm, easing the discomfort. By the time he was done, Sam felt almost normal again.

This was his normal now.

Cas yanked at his hips, drawing him up onto his knees. Sam’s back arched, and for a moment, Cas did nothing. Sam clenched his eyes shut, knowing that Cas was admiring the newly-hairless look of his ass and balls, and knowing there was nothing he could do about it.

At least he wasn’t taking a photo.

Cas’s fingers were slick as they probed at Sam’s ass. Sam turned his face into the pillow, trying to hold back the tears as Cas fingered him open.

“Would you rather I didn’t?” Cas asked harshly, his hands withdrawing. Sam said nothing, and Cas scowled. A moment later the head of his cock pressed against Sam’s hole. Sam whimpered; there wasn’t nearly as much lube as usual, and Cas had only just added a second finger. The cock pressing against him was only half-hard, but he could feel Cas stroking himself.

Cas leaned forward, covering Sam’s body. He panted as he spoke.

“Would you rather I do it like this? Take you dry and unprepared, leave you bleeding and torn?”
Sam said nothing and Cas waited, angry.

“Fine then,” he said at last, and shoved forward into Sam’s helpless body. Sam cried out at the suddenness of it, the deep and unexpected pain. He bit his lip, forcing himself to stay silent while Cas fucked him ruthlessly.

Despite the violence, it took longer than usual and by the time Cas was done, Sam had mostly collapsed onto the hard floor. When Cas pulled out, he could feel come or maybe blood dripping out of him. Cas wiped himself clean using the towel from yesterday, and retreated up the stairs.

Sam didn’t try to move. He was exhausted and sore and he couldn’t think of a less humiliating position to switch to. He pressed his knees together, but that’s about all he could do. The warm, sticky liquid felt awful between his thighs.

The door slammed open again and Sam looked despite himself.

Cas was carrying a couple cinderblocks, a foot square and eighteen inches long. They looked heavy. Sam imagined one coming down on a hand or foot- he didn’t know how fast he healed now, but something like that would keep him crippled for a day, at the very least.

Cas carried them to the center of the room, dropping them onto the floor.

“Would you like to ask for anything, before we do this?” Cas asked. Sam thought instantly of water, but shook his head. If Cas wanted him to beg, he could fuck right off.

Cas watched him for a few seconds, then took hold of his shoulder and yanked him to his feet. He dragged Sam over to where the bricks were placed, long sides parallel, about two feet apart.

“Stay there,” Cas ordered, then released his arm and went back to the worktable. Sam saw him fiddling with a length of rope. He jerked a knot tight as he turned, and Sam realized that he’d formed it into a noose.

He backed away before he could even think of a reaction, but Cas caught him easily and pulled him back.

“This won’t strangle you unless you let it,” Cas said brusquely, slipping it over Sam’s head and pulling it snug. The rope was scratchy against the skin of his throat, and Sam had to breathe slow, reassuring himself that he still could. Cas threw the loose end of the rope around the beam above Sam’s head, pulling it uncomfortably tight before tying it off. Sam rose up onto his toes, trying to take the strain off.

“Up on the bricks,” Cas instructed. Sam looked down as best as he could, noting their location. He stepped up onto them, lessening the pressure on his throat. His legs were once again spread wide, and he could feel something wet trickling past his knee. He didn’t react. He wasn’t going to ask Cas to wash him again.

Once again, Cas bound his wrists to a hanging rope, pulling them tight until he was forced to lean forward. With the addition of the bricks and the noose, he was now in essentially the same position he’d been forced into yesterday.

Sam looked around for the cane, desperately hoping that there wasn’t going to be a repeat performance. He spotted it laying forgotten on the workbench, next to the camera.

Cas lingered behind him, admiring his handiwork no doubt. Sam said nothing. He wasn’t going to beg for mercy and he wasn’t quite brave enough to risk antagonizing Cas further.
When he came back into view, he was holding a sponge and a roll of duct tape. Sam looked up at him, craning his neck to glare.

“Open your mouth,” Cas said simply.

“Fuck off,” Sam retorted. Cas squatted down in front of him, until they were eye to eye. He held up the sponge for Sam to see.

“This is new,” he said, meeting Sam’s eyes. “It’s clean. It doesn’t need to be. Open your mouth now, you get this. Make me force you, and I’ll use it to clean the mess between your legs first. You have five seconds.”

Sam stared at him, gauging his sincerity. There was no hesitation in Cas’s eyes. He’d do it.

Sam closed his eyes and opened his mouth, wincing as the folded sponge was shoved between his jaws. It tasted unpleasant, artificial and stale. The air he pulled through it felt unnatural, but at least he could breathe.

Cas tore off a strip of tape, pressing it over Sam’s eyes and throwing the room into darkness. A second later, Sam heard the pull of more tape off the roll, and the end of another strip was pressed to his cheek. Cas wound it twice around his head, blocking his mouth.

“Here’s how it’s going to go,” Cas told him. Sam could tell he was moving around the room, though the specifics remained unknown. “It’s going to take them at least three days to repair the damage you’ve done. Maybe more. I’m going to tell them that I have a large and anxious dog who I have confined to the basement for everyone’s safety. Any noise you make is going to be explained away as such. In the meantime...”

Sam jerked as something cold touched his thigh.

“You remember this, I assume?”

Sam whined, his breath coming faster as the cane trailed along the side of his hip.

“Good. If I hear you, you’re getting one of these. Maybe on your ass, maybe not. Maybe I’ll heal you; maybe not. Is that clear?”

Sam nodded, his hair falling across his downturned face.

“Excellent. So no screaming. I would also suggest that you not move. Step off those bricks and your arm will come out of it’s socket. If you’ve never had that happen, I assure you that the pain is excruciating. If you’d like to test it, I’ll reset your shoulder before I go upstairs.”

Sam shook his head vehemently, his toes curling against the cinderblock as though they could grip the cold surface. He had a sudden fear that Cas would push him, but the touch did not come.

“Beyond that, I haven’t loosened the collar around your neck, so even if you do decide to dislocate your shoulder, you won’t be going far. You can’t suffocate- you’re too far along for that. But it will be incredibly uncomfortable, to say the least.”

Sam pulled in a deep breath, trying not to react. Already the muscles in his lower back were beginning to protest the exertion. He stood up on his toes, trying to straighten his back a tiny bit. Cas said nothing, but Sam could hear his footsteps on the stairs.

There was the sound of a switch flipping, and Sam realized that he was now hanging in darkness.
Not that it made any difference to him.

Some indeterminate time passed and the pain in his calves began to outweigh the pain in his back. He lowered himself back down onto his heels. His back and shoulders immediately picked up the chorus.

Upstairs, people were moving. He heard the door slamming open and the sounds of men’s voices.

Sam debated for nearly ten seconds before beginning to scream.

He didn’t bother with words, putting all his efforts into volume. Even inside his own head, he could tell that he wasn’t getting much. His voice was muffled by the tape and the sponge, turning his cries into a low moan. Even that, he was only able to manage for a few minutes, until his throat began to burn and his voice went hoarse.

He tried anyway, letting even the quietest sobs escape until there was nothing left. He couldn’t breathe. The tape covering his mouth let only slivers of air through. He pulled in deep breaths through his nose, begging himself not to cry. If his nose started running he’d suffocate, no matter what Cas seemed to think. There wasn’t any amount of magic healing power that was going to replace oxygen.

He stood up on his toes again, straightening his back and giving the muscles there a little relief. Almost immediately he began to get an ache in his calves and the arches in his feet. It wasn’t until he began to tremble that he lowered himself back down again.

The pain only moved.

Upstairs, he heard power tools whirring as his escape attempt was erased.

Chapter End Notes

Guys I've gotta do 2600 words for the next four days straight if I'm gonna make nano. That's this whole chapter, FOUR MORE TIMES.

I'm not sure I can do it. Wish me luck.

Thank you for all the kind reviews and speculation and descriptions of your bodies' visceral rejection of the story matter.

For those of you who find yourselves desperate for a new chapter, may I recommend "The Collector" by John Fowles? Similar storyline, slightly less magic.

Alternatively, With Understanding. Similar magic, less violent rape.

The more astute among my readers may have noticed that the tags have changed. I've added some more stuff and I've also checked off the "major character death" button. I reserve the right to *uncheck* that button later, but if you are not *prepared* for one (or more) of these characters to die, you should probably stop reading.
Everything hurt.

Sam had no idea how much time had passed. He’d begin counting hammer strikes, assuming they were at least a second apart, but a second worker had picked up a tandem project and he’d lost the ability to distinguish.

Keeping up a count inside his own head was impossible. His mind wandered and broke the sequence, and the seconds seemed to draw out into minutes as his body screamed at him. He was desperately thirsty now, though he’d grown used to the hunger. His shoulders felt as though they were about to wrench free of his back, and there was no longer any position that did not tax his overstrained muscles.

For a short time, he’d felt the growing need to urinate. He’d staved it off as long as he could, until, humiliatingly, he’d been forced to relieve himself onto the floor. He was positioned above the drain, and it occurred to him that Cas had anticipated that.

Fortunately he hadn’t eaten enough to have to deal with any other physical requirements.

He grit his teeth an focused on breathing, trying to gauge the time through the measured inhales and exhales, but before long he was panting and dizzy and he dismissed the plan.

Slowly, he began to wish that Cas would come back.

He shoved the thought away, reminding himself of the tearing and the mess in his bowels, painful indignities that would almost certainly be repeated when Cas returned.

He was exhausted but he didn’t dare go to sleep. If he slipped off his cinderblock pedestals things would only get worse for him.

It seemed like days passed before he heard the basement door opening and the lights flicking on. He almost sighed in relief, sickened by the rush of gratitude that flowed through him.

“I told them you were a basset hound,” Cas said coldly. The blood turned to ice in Sam’s veins. He tried to speak, tried to protest, but the gag stole his words and his voice was gone anyway. He heard Cas approaching and he knew what was coming. He’d earned himself another stroke of the cane and he couldn’t handle it. Not on top of everything else.

He pleaded with Cas not to do it, tears streaming down his face and his breath coming hard through minute gaps in the tape covering his mouth. He couldn’t do it. There wasn’t air.

“One stroke,” Cas told him. The cane lay across his thighs, just below his ass, and Sam realized that it just barely brushed against his balls. Cas drew back and Sam moved, rising onto his toes with the last of his strength, straightening and moving his junk out of the way.

The cane came down hard and Sam screamed with everything he had left. His legs gave out immediately and he would have fallen if it weren’t for Cas’s arm around his waist, holding him up and steadying him.

“I told you not to,” his captor said sadly. Sam whimpered as Cas stroked the curve of his ass, avoiding the ruined muscle of his thighs.
A moment later he reached up, tearing the tape away from Sam’s mouth. Sam opened wide and Cas removed the sponge, as well. It was several seconds before Sam could speak, instead focusing on drawing deep, greedy breaths.

“What do you need, Sam?”

“Heal it, jesus, Cas, I can’t-”

“Say please.”

“Please!” Sam screamed, the word coming out hoarse and ragged. Cas hesitated and Sam repeated himself, quiet now.

“Please, Cas.”

The cold feel of grace flooded Sam’s body, removing the aches and pains that had tortured him for the previous hours. Cas withdrew, letting Sam hold his own weight, and Sam was horrified to hear a string of gratitude bubbling from his own lips. He shut it down, hanging painfully from the binding, tears running down his face.

“Are you going to scream tomorrow?”

“No,” Sam whimpered, and he meant it. If they hadn’t heard him today, they wouldn’t hear him tomorrow- or they’d write him off as a muzzled dog.

He couldn’t even take solace in the idea of a rescue, now. He imagined the basement door opening and the workers crowding down to find him there- naked, hairless, his arms mutilated and come dripping from his hole.

His face burned at the thought.

Cas worked the blood into his arms, providing the first hint of relief he’d felt that day. Cas was gentle with this, making sure not to miss a single spot. Sam furrowed his brow, confused, and tried to move his arms. Sure enough, they were still bound tightly together, mummified in dozens of turns of tape. So how was Cas-?

The line of questioning was interrupted when water began to run. Cas had withdrawn and was now, presumably, washing the blood off his hands.

The blood that had absorbed into Sam’s arms tingled, like mint or menthol. It felt freezing in the cold air of the basement.

He heard Cas moving back toward the workbench and a second later, the click of the shutter closing.

“How’s it from my good side,” he mumbled. He couldn’t imagine why Cas would want a picture of this.

“It’s recording,” Cas told him. Sam sighed, wanting to cover himself and unable to do it. “This is a lesson I’d like to teach once.”

Sam paled at that. What else could Cas possibly-?

“Do you remember what we talked about this morning?”

Sam frowned, wracking his brain. Cas had said a couple things this morning, he wasn’t sure he’d
said anything back. Cas was circling him, and he was having difficulty keeping track of the other man’s position.

A reedy whooshing noise filled the air, and Sam realized that Cas was holding the cane again. His body screamed at him to run or fight, but he could do nothing but stand there, bent over with his ass stuck out.

“I don’t- which thing, we talked about—”

“You indicated that you’d prefer not to be prepped,” Cas reminded him, and Sam’s face burned. He remembered now.

“Sam, I want you to think very hard, and tell me what’s coming next.”

The ground dropped out from under Sam’s feet. He couldn’t… not on the camera…

“Sam,” Cas warned. Sam took in a deep breath.

“You’re going to… we have sex. Next,” he finished lamely. It sounded wrong. They weren’t having sex. Cas was going to rape him, maybe violently. But he couldn’t say that, couldn’t make the words pass his lips.

“Is there anything you can do to prevent that, Sam?”

Sam exhaled slowly.

“No,” he said at last.

“Why?” Cas prompted, and Sam remembered this from last time. He knew the answer Cas wanted.

“Because I’m helpless,” he said quietly.

“That’s right,” Cas said, louder. “You’re helpless. Now with that in mind, would you like me to prep you?”

Sam’s brow furrowed. He thought of the cane and the camera and this morning’s rough, violent intrusion. He thought of the blood on his thighs and the way he’d been sore for hours.

“No,” he answered, and his voice was only marginally louder now.

“What?” Cas asked, immediately, and Sam took strength from the hint of confusion in his voice.

“No,” he repeated, louder. “I don’t want you to touch me a damn second longer than you have to.”

Pain bloomed across his ass, and for a split second, Sam thought Cas had caned him again. But the sting was too broad, faded far too quickly, and Sam realized that Cas had slapped him.

The realization came seconds before another blooming slap, on the other side this time, and it was so ridiculous that Sam laughed. It was a dry, humorless sound, nearly silent in his parched throat, but it was a laugh nonetheless. His entire body screamed with pain, he’d been in pain for days, and Cas was gonna punish him with a *spanking*?

Fingers twisted in his hair, yanking his head back, and Sam yelped as his shoulder twisted painfully in the joint.

“I’ll touch you when *please*,” Cas whispered, and Sam could feel him fumbling at the front of his
jeans, grinding his hips against Sam’s bare and bloodied ass. He heard the zipper go down and he
grit his teeth, ready for the violation of being fucked dry.

It didn’t come.

Cas released his hair and took hold of his hips, rutting his half-hard cock along the crack of Sam’s
ass. It slipped a little against the blood from the cane, but that quickly dried into a tacky mess.
Cas’s movements were jerky and uncoordinated. Sam, for his part, was preoccupied with not being
pushed forward off the bricks. He had to lean back, hard, against Cas’s thrusts. As much as he tried, he was still occasionally pushed forward and off his balance, the rope yanking at his wrists and shoulders, making him whine.

Cas withdrew a few inches, and Sam could hear him stroking himself, the dry sound of skin on skin. He braced for another blow or the inevitable impaling, but it didn’t come.

“Damn you,” Cas muttered, and he reached around to Sam’s face, hooking two fingers in his cheek.
He yanked back and Sam cried out in pain. Cas was expecting it, because when his mouth opened,
two fingers slipped into his mouth, wiping something sticky onto the back of his tongue. He gagged, trying to shake his head free, but Cas was faster, clamping his hand over Sam’s mouth.

“Swallow,” he ordered. Sam tried to shake his head. He didn’t have the moisture to spit the stuff out. It was horrid and salty on his tongue and he realized he knew what it was. He bucked harder, but Cas held firm.

“Swallow it or I’ll cane you again, I swear to god,” Cas hissed, and Sam did what he was told. He gathered up the tiny bit of moisture in his mouth and forced it down. Most of it was still on his tongue, but he couldn’t spit it out any easier than he could swallow it.

It seemed to satisfy Cas, in any case, because he released Sam’s face and left him to hang.

“The fuck was that?” Sam muttered, only half expecting an answer.

“It needs to be inside you. The method of entry is inconsequential.”

“This whole time, you could have done that?”

“Rather than what?” Cas asked dully, and Sam got the feeling that he was walking away.

“Rather than... what you’ve been doing,” Sam finished.

“Would you prefer it? I’ve been worried about teeth.”

Sam faltered, considering and hating himself for considering.

“Do whatever you want,” he muttered at last. He wasn’t going to express a preference on how he’d like to be raped.

“I have been,” Cas replied.

Sam felt hands at his throat, loosening the scratchy noose. He slipped it over Sam’s head and then, a moment later, removed the blindfold as well.

“Would you like to ask for anything?” Cas asked, looking into his eyes.

Sam blinked, trying to get used to the sudden light. There was still tape residue in his eyelashes, he could feel it.
He wanted to ask for a lot of things. A shower, for one. One of those little blue pills. A glass of water, his pants. To be cut down, to have his arms freed, to have his hands healed. A blanket. An apple. A phone call.

“No,” he answered, glaring up at his captor. Cas looked down at him, his expression carefully blank.

“Are you sure?”

“Fuck you,” Sam answered. The pain in his shoulders was already returning, despite Cas’s healing only a few minutes before.

Cas looked at him a few moments longer, then shrugged. He turned the camera off and went back up the stairs.

He shut off the light when he reached the top, plunging Sam into darkness.
Sam didn’t sleep.

He didn’t sleep and he didn’t scream for Cas.

He wouldn’t beg.

He hung silently in the darkness, shifting his weight to relieve the pain in one place or another, only to find the agony exacerbated somewhere else.

He no longer knew what day it was. He’d been here longer than a month, that much he was sure of.

He thought of Dean, and the letter he’d written. September 23rd, he’d promised to call. As early as he could.

Sam let his head hang down. Free of the noose, his chin nearly met his chest. He could feel his hair falling across his eyes, but he could do nothing to push it back. It’s not like it was blocking his view.

It was past the 23rd. Maybe days past.

Sam imagined Dean waiting impatiently, pulling out his phone to check his messages. He realized he hadn’t specified which phone he would call.

Dean was probably calling Bobby fifteen times a day to ask if he’d heard anything yet. Or maybe they didn’t have a case, and Dean was at Bobby’s, playing solitaire on the beat-up kitchen table, trying not to glance at the wall of receivers.

Sam snorted.

Right, like Dad wouldn’t have a case. John Winchester wasn’t going to take a vacation just because his disobedient son had gotten himself into trouble. And if John was hunting, Dean was with him.

Sam wondered how long it would take Dean to quit looking at the phone. How long it would take him to figure out that his little brother was just gone.

It was possible Cas had never sent the letter. That it was sitting, forgotten, in the bottom of his office drawer, out of Sam’s reach. It was possible that Dean didn’t know at all, that he thought Sam had just tossed his phone and gone on with his life.

Sam didn’t know which one was worse.

He didn’t want Dean to know about this. He’d thought it was bad those first couple days, when he could imagine his brother bursting in and finding him tied to a bed. That was nothing, compared to this.

His thoughts wandered along this track as time passed. He gave up trying to relieve the pressure on any particular body part. It all hurt, and he no longer had the strength to try to hold himself up. He
focused on his breathing, focused on counting, anything to mark the passage of time.

Eventually the door opened again. The lights flickered on but Sam didn’t look up. There was nothing to see. Cas wasn’t going to give him anything he didn’t ask for, and he wasn’t going to ask.

“Mornin’” he mumbled when Cas came into view.

Cas looked like shit. There were dark smudges under his eyes and he pretty clearly hadn’t showered yet. His hair was ruffled and untidy, almost black under the bluish glare of the fluorescents.

“How are you doing this morning, Sam?”

“Oh, just great,” Sam answered. His mouth was dry and his tongue was sticky. He was slurring his words, or maybe he was just too tired to hear right. Cas set his jaw.

“Anything you wanna ask for?”

“’m good,” Sam answered. His head dropped lower, wrenching at his shoulders, but he was too tired to hold it up any longer. The harsh lights hurt his eyes.

Cas’s hand rested on the nape of his neck, and Sam felt grace flooding through him, taking away some of the pain.

The itching in his arms was worse than he remembered, and he wondered if there was something in the tape that he was having a reaction to.

The blood was just as soothing as the days previously. This time, Sam felt that there was definitely something between Cas’s hands and his skin. He couldn’t turn to see what it was. He wondered if it was the tape, and whether he’d simply been unable to feel the barrier in previous sessions because of... what?

He was too tired to think it out now. He waited, enjoying the small amount of relief he was granted, knowing it was likely to be the best part of his day.

Cas didn’t turn the camera back on, before asking Sam whether he’d like to be prepped. Sam told him to fuck off and once again got a mouthful of come for his trouble. He didn’t close his mouth when Cas began to touch himself- he was intending to try to bite the other man when he got the chance, but Cas was too quick for him.

Cas ordered him to swallow and Sam went through the motions, but there wasn’t anything in his mouth to swallow with. His tongue was swollen, making it hard to even pretend, but he managed.

Cas put the sponge back in his mouth. It was damp this time (to muffle the sound, Cas said) and Sam pulled eagerly at the cool water while Cas taped his mouth.

Sam didn’t exactly realize when Cas left. He noticed when the lights turned off, and only belatedly did he realize that it meant his captor was gone.

There was nothing else to be pulled out of the sponge, and so he left it alone.

Noises started up, upstairs, but Sam didn’t try to scream again. They wouldn’t hear him, and Cas would cane him again, and for now, his throat already felt dry and sore. He didn’t see any point making it worse.
He didn’t realize when he started passing out. He would be standing, legs spread, slumped in his bindings, and then suddenly a lightning pain up one arm or the other, and he would realize he’d fallen too far. He’d jerk upright, trying to relieve the strain.

But then, moments or minutes later, the pain would come again.

He was passing out, he realized. It was only a matter of time before he outright fainted, and when that happened he was going to dislocate his shoulder, and then he really would scream.

Cas had forgotten to put the noose back.

At least he wouldn’t strangle, Sam thought.

Everything was black, but the blackness at the edge of his vision was tinged with red. It was moving, like television static, in a way Sam didn’t like at all.

Someone was knocking on the door, a rhythmic wooden banging that went on and on.

*It’s Margaret,* he thought dully. *She wants to get that damn kite to fly."

He smiled, the pain fading into the background as he pictured the auburn-haired child banging at his door.

He tried to call to her that he was coming, but there was something in the way. He couldn’t speak.

Pain shot up his arm and the lights flickered on. The banging had stopped, though how long ago, he wasn’t sure.

Was it nighttime again?

He tried to look up the stairs, to see what was waiting for him at the top, but he didn’t have the strength. He had a memory of something important, something better than this, someone waiting for him-

Cas stepped into his vision and the half-formed thoughts vanished.

“Do you know how long it’s been?” Cas asked, but his voice was fuzzy, like it came from far away. Sam thought about it. At least a day, since Cas hung him up.

He couldn’t shrug and this mouth was too full to speak. He didn’t bother chasing the answer any further.

“You can’t stay like this forever, you know. Eventually, you’ll ask me to take you down.”

Sam didn’t react. Right now, he didn’t think he could beg if he wanted to. He couldn’t put the words together and he didn’t have the energy to try.

His cheeks stung as Cas ripped the tape off his face. He spat the sponge out, glad to be temporarily rid of the bitter, artificial taste. Cas was squatting down in front of him, looking up into his face. Sam couldn’t make his eyes focus.

He didn’t really want to see Cas in focus, anyway.

Cas leaned up, his tongue wet on Sam’s chapped lips. The cold feel of his grace soaked into Sam’s skin, but the pain and confusion lessened only a little bit.
Cas had said that his grace couldn’t replace food. Maybe it couldn’t replace water, either.

Sam let Cas kiss him, didn’t react to the feeling of teeth nipping at his lower lip. He let his eyes slip shut, sinking further into the darkness where Cas couldn’t get to him.

He was aware of Cas moving around, and maybe he said something else, but Sam wasn’t listening. He was only aware of the pain in his arms, spiking to wake him whenever he wandered far enough to collapse against his bonds.

He wondered what it would feel like, when he eventually fell. If the dislocation would turn the pain into something steady enough to finally sleep.

Cas was looking into his face, saying something else, but Sam paid no attention. Cas could fuck off. He wasn’t going to beg. Everything else had turned foggy and dull, but that was still vibrant and clear. He wasn’t going to beg.

He kept that as his light in the darkness, as time crawled along, eternal in the darkness. He didn’t know if it was actually dark or if he’d just managed to keep his eyes closed. He thought they were open, but there was no way to tell, for sure.

The sponge was gone, and he drew a labored breath through his mouth. The air burned through his dry throat.

_It isn’t her fault_, he thought dully. He hadn’t understood before, what it was like to endure this as a human. He didn’t hold a grudge, he’d never held a grudge, he could imagine... but he’d never known.

His foot hit the floor and a new pain blossomed across his back. He’d expected one shoulder to go, but it wasn’t, it was both of them. The ligaments burned like fire-

-not like fire there’s nothing like fire-

-as they twisted in their bonds, but Sam could do nothing to arrest the fall. He didn’t have the strength to catch himself, didn’t have the fortitude to stand. He’d have been sobbing, but there wasn’t moisture to spare.

The lights flicked on and Cas was there, and it occurred to Sam that he might have been screaming. He wasn’t sure. He clamped his mouth shut, biting his tongue hard enough to draw blood.

The warm liquid flooded his mouth and he kept his lips tight, determined not to waste the precious drops.

He wouldn’t beg, he wouldn’t, he wouldn’t-

Cas cut him down, and Sam felt the sting of a knife blade on his arm as the man sawed through the tape binding his arms.

“God damn you,” Cas was muttering, and Sam smiled. He kept his eyes shut- they were dry and the light stung them. “God damn your stubborn hide.”

Sam swallowed a mouthful of blood, letting it soothe the dryness of his throat. He risked trying to open his eyes, but the light was too much. He shut them again, wincing.

Cas’s hands rested on either side of his neck, the frozen touch nearly burning as he forced his grace into Sam’s body. Sam could feel the bones in his shoulders sliding back into place, the sinews and
ligaments righting themselves for the first time in days.

Cas’s arms were around his chest and he realized he was sitting on the floor. The concrete was freezing against his ass and thighs, but his back was warm where it pressed against Cas’s chest. Like a phantom pain, he thought he could still feel his arms there, trapped between the two of them.

He cracked his eyes open again, willing his irises to constrict.

He wanted- and at the same time desperately didn’t want- to see his hands.

He could feel Cas holding one of them, stroking his thumb along the skin, but it felt like there was something in the way, like the tape-

His eyes adjusted and he saw what Cas was holding. It was the same stunted limb from before, ending in the same dulled point of flesh. It seemed longer now, but more than that, it was covered with short, waxy spikes.

Sam closed his eyes again, leaning his head back.

He wasn’t healing. Whatever was wrong with his arms, it wasn’t healing. Or it was- just, not back into hands.

He leaned his head back against Cas’s shoulder, too exhausted to be repulsed. Cas held him, pushing more and more of his grace into Sam’s failing body, whispering into his ear in a language Sam didn’t understand.

When he next opened his eyes, he was staring up at the ceiling. He could see the frayed end of a rope hanging next to the noose, and he realized Cas might have put him down. His head was pounding, or maybe that was a noise coming from somewhere. His mouth tasted bitter and he realized Cas must have done the spell while he was out.

He was too tired to be mortified.

The air was cold on his naked body, and he realized he was laying on top of the comforter. He reached for the far edge, pulling it over himself. It was barely large enough to cover him.

He blinked and Cas was there, his fingertips resting against Sam’s lips. They were cold and at first Sam thought it was grace again, but a trickle of moisture ran down his chin and he realized it was an ice cube. He opened his mouth, taking it gratefully.

Cas’s fingertip lingered on his tongue and Sam bit him. He expected a slap in return, braced for it, but Cas did nothing.

“You’re as stubborn as I remember,” he said gently. Sam crunched the ice cube between his teeth and didn’t respond.

Cas stayed a long time, or maybe it wasn’t long at all. Sam drifted in and out of awareness and whenever he awoke, Cas was there. He gave Sam grace and ice cubes and small pieces of bread and it wasn’t until later that Sam realized that all through it, the sounds of people had come from upstairs.
For those of you keeping track, we are now on day 33 of Sam's captivity.

I wrote 5,400 words yesterday ahahahahaha I'm dying.
Day 34

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Sam woke up to daylight.
He blinked, not sure what to do with this information.
The early morning light trickled in through the window, doing little to illuminate the darkness of the room.

Cas’s room, Sam realized, recognizing the color of the walls. This was Cas’s room. He was sleeping in Cas’s room, in Cas’s bed.
Sure enough, the man himself was lying asleep right next to him, one arm resting casually across Sam’s belly.

Sam jerked away, his motion stunted when he realized that his feet and hands were shackled together. He overbalanced on the edge of the mattress, then went over with an indignant shout that had Cas sitting up, wide-eyed, searching the room for the source of the noise.

Sam wasn’t paying attention because he was looking at the short chain cuffing his wrists together and he has wrists and above his wrists were his hands and he made another undignified noise. He wiggled his fingers back and forth, paying no attention to Cas’s perplexed observation until something moved in his peripheral. One of the pointed, spike covered things came into view, moving to poke gently at his newly-grown hands and Sam screamed, batting at the thing.

Cas collapsed back onto the bed, groaning.
Sam was trying to swat at it, but it was dodging him, flailing like it was trying to shake itself loose. He could see the wiry muscles of the thing flexing as it moved, and when he tried to follow the source, it circled around his back. He spun, but could see nothing.

“Must you carry on like that? Really, Sam, you’re like a dog chasing it’s tail.”

“The fuck is that?” Sam screeched in response. The thing was inching toward his chained hands again and Sam wasn’t sure he could fight it off for long. He grabbed at it, hating the waxy feel of the spikes beneath his hands, and another came at him from the left, stabbing at the hands gripping its twin.

Cas groaned again, rubbing his eyes as he sunk to the floor. He batted the spiked appendages away easily, pushing Sam onto his back and straddling his belly.

“Pay attention,” he grumbled. He closed his eyes and his brow furrowed, and a moment later the room was plunged into almost complete darkness as two huge, furled wings unfolded from Cas’s back. The feathers were inky black and terrible and Sam found himself too terrified to scream.

And then, just as quickly, they were gone and light was once again falling on the far wall.

“The fuck is that?!” Sam repeated.

“They’re wings,” Cas responded, already sounding tired of this conversation. “And you’ve had
them for four days now and I know you’ve already seen them. Shut up and go back to sleep.”

He rose easily off Sam’s body and sat back on the bed, scratching at his hair.

Sam kept his eyes fixed on the stilled wing tips.

Four days.

It was four days since he’d tried to escape.

Sam let his head rest heavily on the floor, staring at the plaster ceiling.

He’d promised to call Dean two days ago. That made today September 25th, he’d have to-

“Did my calendar survive?” he asked. Cas stared at him a second, then scowled.

“No, Sam. Your calendar did not survive. Nothing in that room survived. I won’t begin to understand what the hell you were trying to do with that wire-wrapped monstrosity-”

“Seems self-evident to me,” Sam interrupted. Cas gaped at him.

“You would have died in the woods, you goddamned fool. It was the end of the twenty eighth day, the spell was irreversible. Thus the wings.”

Sam looked at the ceiling, feeling chastised despite himself. The wing-tips were unmoving, lying on the floor beside him, blessedly still.

“It was a nightmare, when I’d gotten the fire mostly out and realized the chain was broken,” Cas told him. “The sun was coming up and I had no idea where you’d gone. I was terrified I wouldn’t find you in time, and then to see you lying in the mud... you weren’t breathing. I was almost too late.”

“Serves you right,” Sam muttered. “I wish you’d gotten lost.”

Cas said nothing for a very long time.

“You can’t mean that,” he whispered at last.

Sam didn’t look at him. He stayed on his back, the wings surprisingly comfortable beneath him, staring up at the ceiling.

Did he mean it? Would it have been better to die in the forest?

He thought of the days since his recapture... and the days to come.

The restraints weren’t nearly so thorough now. Why would they be. It’s not like he could escape. Twelve hours away from Cas and he’d die in agony. And even if he lived...

He closed his eyes, trying to feel the wings as part of his body. They still felt like arms but if he focused, he could scratch the tip of the left one against the floor.

What would he do with those? Could they be amputated? Or would they just grow back?

He imagined the look on Dean’s face- on Dad’s- if he showed up back home.

The prodigal son returning, mutilated and defiled, the blood of some unknown creature beating
through his veins.

It occurred to him that his father would kill him. Dean would protest, but in the end... he’d do as
John demanded. Same as if Sam had come home a vampire or werewolf or any other iteration of
the monsters they hunted.

The realization sat like a lump in Sam’s throat, but he didn’t blame them. He’d do the same for
them. He’d rather have his body on a pyre than be responsible for killing someone innocent.

Cas was watching him, he could feel it.

“Yeah,” Sam said quietly. “Yeah, I think I do.”

They didn’t go back to sleep. They stayed there, neither of them speaking, as the sun began to rise.

Cas eventually went out to the kitchen and came back with a plate of sectioned grapefruit. Sam
thought Cas might make him beg for it, but he didn’t. He sat on the floor next to Sam, the plate
between them.

Sam took a section, chewing the pulp off the rind. He didn’t say ‘thank you.’ But he wasn’t going
to let the opportunity go to waste. For all he knew, he was about to be dragged back to the
basement.

“Why aren’t yours horrible?” he asked when the grapefruit was gone. Cas twitched, like he’d been
startled out of some reverie.

“What?”

“Your wings. Why aren’t they all gross and horrible.”

“Yours aren’t horrible,” Cas said. He sounded genuinely put out. “They’re new. The feathers are
still growing in. When you’re grown, they’ll be tawney and speckled and beautiful. Samael used to
be quite proud of them.”

“I think they’re gross,” Sam reiterated. He sat up, pulling his knees up to his chest. He was still
naked, and he hated the realization that he was getting used to it.

The wings picked up on whatever thought he was having, because they wrapped around his knees
as well. He wrinkled his nose, staring at them.

“Can’t I make them go away? Like you do?”

“When you’re older,” Cas told him sagely. Sam scowled. They were beginning to itch. It was
almost time to do the spell again.

Sam pulled his knees tighter, resting his head on his knees. He didn’t want to think about it.

Cas picked up the plate and carried it back into the kitchen.

When he returned, he didn’t sit down beside Sam again. Instead, he leaned against the doorway,
watching.

“What now,” Sam asked. “Back down to the basement?”

Cas shook his head.
“No, I think that experiment has failed.”

Sam snorted.

“What, you didn’t think I hated you enough to outweigh my will to live?”

“No, I didn’t,” Cas snapped. Sam leaned back against the bed. He suddenly felt better.

“So what, then?”

“A deal?” Cas asked, hope in his voice. Sam glanced over.

“What have you got to offer, cyanide?”

Cas held up a little orange bottle, rattling the contents. Sam swallowed.

_Don’t. Don’t. Don’t._

“I’ll give you a whole one. All you need to do is... keep your mouth open.”

Sam grimaced.

“While you give me your little ‘gift of life,’ you mean.”

Cas stared back at him.

“We can do it the other way, if you’d like. I’ll even do you a favor and skip the prep so you can revel in the absolute pinnacle of martyrdom the way you like.”

“Fuck you.”

“No, it’s the other way around. One and a half. Final offer.”

Sam looked up.

“Uncuff me.”

Cas nodded.

“Deal.”

He popped open the bottle, snapping one of the tablets in half and handing it over alongside a whole one. Sam took them with his cuffed hand, swallowing them dry.

He knew he shouldn’t.

But he knew this was inevitable and more than anything, he didn’t want to be here for it.

When he’d swallowed them, Cas unlocked him and helped him up onto the bed.

The blanket was dark, like the walls, and it felt heavenly after the days he’d spent in the basement. Cas backed away letting him get situated in peace.

Sam pulled the blanket up over his hips, giving himself that illusion of privacy. He pulled at the pillow, shoving it under his head and burying his face in it. He was going to go back to sleep. He was going to pass out and whatever Cas was going to do, he wasn’t going to be around for _any_ of it.
Cas gave him twenty minutes, actually going as far as leaving the room, giving Sam time to process the drug. Sam could hear him moving around out in the kitchen, but he didn’t care what was going on out there. The next eight hours were a total wash, maybe another eight hours after that, if he could talk Cas into the same deal for the nighttime spell.

“Ready?”

Cas spoke to him from the doorway and Sam didn’t even turn his head. He felt the bed dip, and the click of Cas’s knife opening.

The first drop of blood onto his wings was like balm, the itching vanishing instantly under Cas’s fingers. Sam found himself arching up into the touch, trying to move the wings one way or another to help Cas reach the spots that still felt uncomfortable. Cas was laughing a little bit as he spread the sticky liquid over the spiked appendages.

“I used to groom them for you, you know,” He said after a while. “We didn’t always have to hide them. A long time ago, we wore them proudly and they would get wet and dirty just like the rest of us.”

Sam hummed. It still felt like Cas was touching his arms, even though those were folded under his head. It was a weird feeling- almost like a physical touch version of seeing double.

“Samael would come home all skewed and disheveled like he’d rolled down a hill,” Cas continued. “I’d sit just like this for hours, making sure all the feathers lay flat and even. And the molts-”

“Ugh, you molt?”

Cas chuckled.

“Yes, Sam. Our kind molts. It’s much less uncomfortable than what you’re going through now, but it’s not a lot of fun.”

“I’m not going to do it,” Sam declared.

He was being petulant, but to be truthful, he didn’t feel particularly uncomfortable right now, at all.

His wing-tips were long enough to reach his knees. Cas was between them, straddling Sam’s thighs, and he was lifting and stroking the naked limbs, one after another. After the unceasing pain of the last few days, it was actually kind of amazing.

Sam closed his eyes, checking out of his body, not paying attention as Cas made his way back up the wings to Sam’s shoulders.

He shifted a little bit when Cas switched to his shoulders themselves, working the tension out of his neck and upper arms.

“Don’t need blood there,” Sam muttered.

“The muscles are changing to accommodate the wings. Weren’t they tight?”

Sam shifted a little. They were tight, but he assumed it had something to do with the way his arms had been tied back. Which was also Cas’s fault so if he wanted to spend his morning fixing what he broke, then fine.

Sam drifted off, not really noticing when Cas’s hands were joined by his mouth, sucking hot little
bruises into Sam’s throat and back. He noticed a little when Cas began to work his way downward, rubbing hard, tight circles into the teen’s spine. He opened his mouth to protest, but through the drugged fog it occurred to him that when Cas was done feeling him up, Sam was getting a pearl necklace, so he let it drop.

Cas moved down his body, massaging over his hips and thighs and ass and it wasn’t until Sam felt teeth nipping at his thigh that he actually said something.

Cas shushed him, rising up to murmur in Sam’s ear. His body covered the younger man’s, a solid weight holding him to the bed.

“I did this for you before, do you remember? How good it was?”

Sam blushed, because he did remember. He shifted against the blankets, trying not to think of how Cas’s tongue had felt against the tender skin. As much as he tried to forget, his body was determined to remember. His cock began to harden against the sheets.

He couldn’t make a denial come out, and that was good enough for Cas.

Sam buried his face in the pillow, moaning as he felt Cas pulling his cheeks apart.

“I don’t-” Sam started, but Cas’s mouth was on him and he arched up into it. He liked it and he was humiliated that he liked it. It occurred to him that he was still stripped totally hairless down there, and that made the whole thing worse.

Cas reached up between his legs, closing his hand around Sam’s cock and stroking gently. Sam pushed down into it, trying to increase the friction, but Cas only loosened his grip. His fingertips stroked lightly along the length of Sam’s shaft.

“Harder,” Sam whined, and Cas withdrew. Sam barely had time to open his eyes before Cas was above him, flipping him over and pushing his legs wide.

“God, look at you,” Cas whispered. Sam tried to push him away, tried to close his legs, but Cas’s body was in the way. Sam looked up at him, a little dazed, as Cas pulled his shirt over his head and pushed his pajama pants down. He was already hard, his cock digging into Sam’s hip when he leaned in to mouth at Sam’s throat.

It was too much, the skin there was too sensitive, and Sam tried to shove him away but Cas wouldn’t budge. He worked his way down at his own pace, pinching at Sam’s nipple while he caught the other one in his teeth.

“Cas... don’t....”

Cas ignored him, nipping his way across Sam’s iliac crest and dragging his tongue up the length of Sam’s cock.

Sam groaned, arching up into that tight heat, wanting it to stop and wanting it to continue, too. Cas’s arm was across his hips, holding him down, and as Sam twisted, he felt Cas’s other hand slipping up his thigh. His eyes flew open.

“Don’t!” he started, but it was too late. Cas had one hand around his shaft, stroking him quickly, while at the same time, fingers slipped into his wet hole, unerringly finding that place inside him-

Cas pulled off with a pop, stroking his fist over the head of Sam’s cock as he came. Sam whimpered, feeling the hot, wet spurts landing across his belly and chest. Cas kept up the pressure
inside him, rubbing in hard little circles until Sam was writhing beneath him, the stimulation on his 
cock and ass too much to handle. Cas leaned back down, licking the last drops of come off the 
head of Sam’s dick and Sam might actually have screamed.

“That’s wasn’t the deal,” Sam muttered, turning his head when Cas leaned down to kiss him. Cas 
mouthed at his throat instead, rutting slowly against the crease of Sam’s thigh.

“That wasn’t *specified,*” Cas corrected, and Sam scowled.

“You’re making a mess,” he mumbled, arching up so Cas could feel the sticky fluid trapped 
between them.

“I know,” Cas said, biting at his ear. “Change your mind yet? I bet I could make you come again.”

He ground his hips down against Sam’s belly, illustrating his point. Sam wrinkled his nose, 
pushing Cas away. Cas let him, sitting up and shrugging.

“Your loss. Close your eyes.”

Sam did, trying not to think about what was going on above him. Cas moved up his body, 
straddling Sam’s chest and pinning his arms to the bed. Sam could hear him panting, the dry sound 
of skin on skin. He tried to retreat back into the fog, but his stomach wouldn’t stop twisting.

Cas’s fingertips were on his lower lip, drawing his mouth open. Sam pressed his tongue against the 
bottom of his mouth, hoping like hell he wouldn’t have to taste it.

Cas let out a whimper and Sam felt hot come landing on his cheek. He scrunched his eyes shut, 
trying not to think about it.

Some of it landed in his mouth, and Sam swallowed it, keeping his eyes closed. Some of it was in 
his eyelashes, and he didn’t want to open them.

It was tacky in his mouth and he couldn’t get rid of the taste. Above him, Cas was panting.

“Let me up.”

“In a second.”

Sam lay still, his captor’s come drying on his face, and tried not to feel as disgusting as he was sure 
he looked.

“Cas, let me up.”

Cas said nothing, but his thumb swiped across Sam’s cheek, collecting a smear of the fluid.

“Let me *up,*” Sam shouted, struggling against Cas’s weight, and then Cas did move, rolling off 
him. Sam wiped at his eyes, blinking. There was a bathroom attached to Cas’s room and he stalked 
toward it, snatching up a towel and using it to wipe himself clean. His movements were slow, 
uncoordinated.

“If you’re going to sleep off the rest of your high, you’re gonna have to do it in here,” Cas called 
from behind him. “Someone lit your bed on fire and I’m *disinclined* to acquire a replacement.”

Sam hesitated at that. He turned back to look at Cas, but Cas was in the corner, rummaging in a 
bureau drawer. Sam caught sight of plaid flannel and he crossed the room in three steps, snatching 
up a pair of pajama pants.
“I’m taking these,” he declared, staring down at Cas. Cas raised an eyebrow.

“Help yourself. The ones that fit you are in the next drawer down.”

Sam opened his mouth, not sure how to respond to that. He yanked the drawer open—sure enough, it was filled with the clothes Cas had bought him to wear here.

His face burning, he pulled out a pair of sweatpants and put them on. It was hard keeping his balance.

Cas watched him silently as he climbed back onto the bed, pulling the blankets over his bare shoulders.

“Go away, Cas,” he muttered, but he was out before Cas had a chance to comply.

Chapter End Notes

THE FUCK IS CAS'S END GAME HERE?!?!?!?

Kudos to everyone who guessed 'wings.'
In case you're having trouble with the visualization, featherless wings look kinda like this.

And when feathers first begin growing in, they're called pinfeathers and they look like this.

(You all read everything by NorthernSparrow, right? She's an actual bird scientist and she does really accurate physiological wing descriptions and thanks to her I have Knowledge that is Difficult to Explain.)

And uh, this chapter has a soundtrack. Somebody sent me their video edit and I've watched it like fifteen times and listened to this song on repeat for the last like 24 hours straight. Definitely check it out.

What else.... did I already plug "The Collector"? By John Fowles? Yeah if you like this, you'll like that.
Cas nudged him awake and Sam groaned. His eyelids weighed a hundred pounds and Cas was gonna make him go have dinner.

“Fuck off,” he grumbled, but Cas was persistent.

“M not getting up.”

“You don’t have to,” Cas told him. Sam cracked an eye open. It was getting dark.

“Take these,” Cas instructed, pushing something against Sam’s mouth. Sam opened, letting whatever it was, in.

He recognized the dry shape of the blue capsules.

Two of them.

He frowned up at Cas, but he accepted them anyway. Cas nodded.

“And this.”

He had a glass of something in his hand, and Sam took it gratefully, propping himself up on one elbow. The cup was full of something sweet, thicker than juice but still thin enough to drink. He finished half of it and gave the cup back.

Cas told him he should drink some more, but Sam was asleep before he got the chance.

At some point, Sam woke up and had to piss like a racehorse.

There was some little nightlight in the bathroom which was good because it was pitch black out.

He must have slept all day.

Better than the alternative, he thought dully. He finished his business and stumbled back to bed. Obliquely, he was aware that Cas was asleep beside him, but he couldn’t bring himself to care.

Everything was fine.

Except he was cold. His pants were missing again.

The bed was warm and he snuggled down into the mattress, pulling the blanket over himself. In the process he pulled it off Cas, who grumbled and yanked it back. Sam held tight, defending his territory, and in the end, Cas moved closer and went back to sleep.

He woke up with a lurch and a pounding headache. He got to experience it for barely twenty seconds before Cas’s mouth was on his, Cas’s tongue slipping between his lips, icy and
depressingly welcome.

Cas rocked against him and Sam realized that the older man was actually inside him already.

He tried to shove him off, only to realize that his hands were chained to the headboard.

“Get off,” he groaned, twisting under Cas’s weight.

“I’m trying, sweetheart,” Cas muttered back. His face was buried in the hollow of Sam’s throat, his breath hot and sticky on Sam’s skin. Sam bucked, trying to push him away, but it seemed to have the opposite effect. Cas groaned, his fingers tightening on Sam’s hips. Sam winced— that was going to leave a bruise.

Cas rolled to the side, one leg still over Sam’s thigh. His hand rested across Sam’s chest, splayed over the smooth skin. Sam jerked, trying to get away.

“How are you feeling?”

“Shitty and confused, thanks,” Sam snapped. He yanked at the chains. “Let me out.”

“In a bit. You want some more papaya?”

Sam blinked.

“What?”

“It’s what you were drinking yesterday. It’s blended and thinned but yeah; papaya.” Cas looked up at him. “The first time you had it, you didn’t eat anything else for two months. Our hosts thought you were insane. I only disagreed for the first couple of weeks.”

Sam blinked again.

“What?”

Cas sighed.

“Nevermind.”

“I want to be unchained, Cas.”

He wanted Cas to quit snuggling him. Forty eight hours ago the man had whipped him until he bled, so what the fuck was this.

Cas sat up, rolling his shoulders.

“You’ll be wanting your phone call then, too, I guess.”

Sam’s eyes widened.

“You’ll let me do that?”

Cas grinned at him.

“Sure. I said I would, didn’t I?”

“Yeah, but...”
Sam didn’t know how to finish that sentence. Didn’t Cas know what he would say? He didn’t know where he was, but he knew where Cas’s exit was, and how many remote structure fires had there been that week? It would get it narrowed down, at least-

Sam’s thoughts froze and he looked slowly down to where one of his wings was lying innocently on the bed beside him. The spikes were longer now, and getting fluffy at the ends.

_They’ll kill you_, the little voice whispered. _They’ll know what you are._

He closed his eyes.

If they killed him, they killed him. They’d kill his maker, too, and there would be two less monsters in the world.

“I thought you might be conflicted,” Cas told him gently. “After what happened yesterday.”

Sam’s eyes flew open.

Cas had rolled onto his belly and he was looking at Sam with a cheshire smile. Sam’s blood ran cold.

“What happened yesterday?”

“I thought you might not remember. That’s one of the side effects of those pills, when you take enough of them. You were pretty out of it.”

“What happened, Cas?”

Cas leaned up, his lips brushing Sam’s ear when he spoke.

“You begged,” he whispered.

Sam felt tears rising. He jerked at the cuffs again, feeling his wrists bruising with the pressure.

“I didn’t. I wouldn’t.” He turned his head a fraction, glaring into Cas’s eyes. “You tortured me for days and I wouldn’t beg. I don’t believe you.”

Cas leaned in momentarily, pressing a kiss to Sam’s lips. Sam yanked back.

“It took a few hours,” Cas admitted. “And I had to tie your hands out of the way. That would have spoiled it.”

“What are you talking about?” Sam whispered. His stomach was turning.

The hand on Sam’s chest wandered downwards, over the stretch of his belly, toward his soft cock.

“I’m talking about finally being able to make love to you the way I used to,” Cas said, and there was a smile on his face as his eyes trailed down over Sam’s body. Sam stared at him, horrified. “I kept you on edge for an _hour_, fucking you gently until you were almost... there...”

His fingers danced over the stubble forming on Sam’s groin. Sam turned his hips away but Cas caught him by the thigh, pressing him back down.

“And after all that,” Cas carried on, still admiring him absently. “You begged me. You begged me so desperately that I had to give in. I’m not heartless.”
“You’re a fucking liar,” Sam hissed. Cas shrugged, looking back up at him.

“You can watch the tape, if you like.”

Sam’s heart froze. He couldn’t breathe.

“You didn’t.”

“Sure I did. Didn’t you see it? It was sitting right there on the dresser, making a nice little record of our time together.”

Cas pointed and Sam followed his gaze. Sure enough, the little silver camera was sitting on the wood dresser top. It was dark now, but that proved nothing. Sitting beside it was a piece of printer paper, face down.

Sam yanked at the chains again, feeling the cuffs digging into his skin.

“You’re lying.”

Cas got up without a word, striding wordlessly across the room. He picked up the sheet of paper and returned, holding it so Sam could see.

“I thought you might think that,” he said quietly, watching Sam’s face. Sam didn’t look back at him. He was staring at the printout.

It was black and white, probably a result of the printer, but the image was clear.

It was him. His hands were tied to the bedposts, his legs wrapped around Cas’s waist. Cas was in the midst of thrusting up into him, and Sam’s whole lower body was lifted off the bed. One of Cas’s hands was blurred, moving fast over Sam’s cock, and Sam realized that the video still was taken from the moment of his orgasm.

He didn’t want to look at his own face, but he did.

His eyes were open. His brow was furrowed and he was staring up at Cas with an unreadable expression.

Sam turned his head away.

“Why would you do that.”

Cas set the photo down, leaning in to nuzzle against Sam’s shoulder.

“Because I have no intention of keeping you chained up for the rest of your life. I can’t keep you in a cage. It’s untenable and what’s more, I don’t want to. I want you to be happy, Sam.”

Sam stared at him, incredulous, but Cas carried on.

“I want to give you something,” he said hurriedly. He rose again, discarding the sheet of paper as he returned to the dresser. He withdrew something bright and green and plastic, holding it up so Sam could see.

It was a phone.

A smartphone, in a hell of a case, but still, a smartphone.
“It’s for you,” Cas said quickly. “There’s some monitoring on it, but nothing that’ll let me listen to your conversations or read your texts or anything. You can talk to anyone you want—whenever you want. You can even send pictures.”

Sam’s mouth went dry.

“What do I need to do for it?”

“Nothing,” Cas stressed. “It’s a gift. I know I’ve separated you from your family and that it’s worn on you considerably and I never wanted to do that for longer than I needed to. And I don’t need to any more.”

Realization dawned over Sam, and his face hardened.

“You think I won’t tell them where I am. You think I won’t go to them because leaving you means I’ll die.”

Cas nodded.

“You’ll die, and my agent will send another letter to the address you gave me in Kansas. Singer salvage looks like a permanent residence, I think it’ll work for some time into the future, right?”

Sam gaped. Cas waited to see if he’d speak, and when he didn’t, Cas went on.

“I looked into the name and address you gave me. Your uncle Bobby has an eclectic list of charges accumulated. Someday you really have to tell me what your family’s wrapped up in.”

“No,” Sam whispered.

“Don’t worry. They’re not in any danger. I’m not telling you this because I plan to send assassins. Just a letter. Or, a small package, rather. There are a couple DVDs inside, I’m assuming your brother knows how to load them onto a laptop.”

Sam crushed his eyes shut.

“That’s why you took the photos.”

“Mmm,” Cas agreed. Sam tried to say something, but there was a lump in his throat that he couldn’t get around. Cas reached for him, stroking his hair back out of his face.

“No one ever has to see them, Sam. The parcel I sent to the agency was sealed. I trust them implicitly and they are more than used to receiving such requests from me. They’re the ones who forwarded the original letter in the first place.”

Sam couldn’t look at him. All he could imagine was the expressions unfolding on Dean’s face... on Bobby’s...

They’d know how he spent the last weeks of his life—chained and helpless, violated and in pain. Whether they were looking for him or not... they’d never forgive themselves for being unable to save him. They’d see what he’d become...

A monster. An addict.

A whore.

Tears leaked from Sam’s eyes and Cas kissed them away, his lips feather-light against Sam’s
lashes.

“They never have to know, Sam. No one has to know. All you have to do is stay with me.”

“Stay with you and keep fucking you, you mean,” Sam whispered. Cas froze against his side.

“I’ll make it good for you, I promise,” he murmured, letting his hand rest on Sam’s chest. “You begged me, Sam, you really did. You wanted it and I gave it to you and you were happy. Look at your face and tell me—”

He reached for the photo again and Sam kicked out at him. He tanked against the cuffs, feeling hot dribbles of blood running down his arms and ignoring them.

“I was high, Cas! And you know it! You did it on purpose!”

“And so what if I did?” Cas shouted back, taking hold of his arms. “If that’s what it takes? What am I supposed to do, just let you die? Let you stew in your own misery until you starve or slit your wrists or just wander off into the woods again?”

“Yes, you bastard! You let me die!”

“No,” Cas answered, and his voice was dangerously low. “No. Not again. I don’t care what you’re trying to prove, I’m not letting you die for it.”

“Is that what happened last time? Did he kill himself to escape you?”

Cas hit him, open palmed across his face, and Sam’s vision swam.

“Don’t you dare,” Cas growled. Sam stared up at his captor, grinning through a mouthful of blood.

“Was it your fault, Cas? Did you forget to chain him up one night?”

“I would never have—” Cas faltered, like he was thinking of something far away. “I didn’t have to, we were happy—”

“Happy like I am?” Sam asked acerbically.

“No! No, nothing like...”

Suddenly, the feeling of Cas’s body was gone. He stood, moving to the window and staring out.

Sam watched him go, glaring.

The words had been meant to wound, but now that they’d been said, he couldn’t shake the idea.

Had Samael tried to run away?

Sam didn’t think so. Cas might have been misguided, even delusional... but the drawings he’d done of Sam were as accurate as photographs. If the same were true of the drawings of Samael... Sam couldn’t picture him trying to escape from Cas.

And the dreams.

They were more than dreams, he was beginning to feel sure of it. They were more like memories and in those memories, he and Castiel had been in love. He didn’t doubt that.

Sam scooted up, trying to reach something closer to a sitting position. It was awkward with his
hands cuffed, but he wasn’t letting Cas off that easy.

“What happened to him? Really.”

“He didn’t leave me,” Cas insisted. He kept his focus outside the window, somewhere in the forest. “He wouldn’t have—”

He let out a little laugh, looking down at the floor.

“I had to take care of him sometimes, you know. I’d leave in the morning and come back and he’d be right where I left him, wrapped up in some book or essay. He’d be at his desk, reading and making notes and writing rebuttals and he’d stay there for hours. Days, maybe, if I hadn’t been there to pull him away and get him to sleep or eat.”

Cas finally looked back at him, smiling a little.

“There’s a lot of him in you. His determination and his single-mindedness and his intelligence. He was a force to be reckoned with, and so are you. I wish...”

He trailed off. Sam didn’t prompt him, just sat, waiting.

“I wish you could know him. I don’t think you’d hate this all so much, if you knew who you were going to be, when it’s over.”

“I’m going to be gone,” Sam fired back. “And someone else is going to be using my body.”

Cas made a pained face, but he quickly covered it up. He went back to the bureau, picking up a small set of keys that Sam hadn’t seen before.

Silently, Cas unlocked his wrists. Sam rubbed at them, not looking down.

The blood was still tacky, but the wounds themselves were already gone. Cas handed him the phone and Sam took it.

For a while, all he could do was stare at it. There was service- the little icon said he had three bars, not to mention wi-fi. He pressed the home button and the screen came up, half a dozen bubbly little icons sitting in rows. He pressed the one shaped like a phone receiver.

He paused again when the rows of numbers popped up.

There was a gotcha here, somewhere. It wasn’t going to work. He closed his eyes, unable to look at it.

“Can you... can I have a minute?”

“Of course.”

Cas rose easily, snagging a pair of discarded sweats off the floor as he left the room. He didn’t look back at Sam, though Sam watched him go.

When he was gone, Sam turned his attention back to the phone.

He knew Dean’s number off the top of his head, of course. And his dad’s, and at least three of Bobby’s. But Dean’s was the one that sprang to the forefront of his mind.

His hands shook a little as he punched it in. He held the phone to his ear, his eyes closed, listening
He was expecting a woman’s mechanical voice to inform him that service was not available. Instead, after the third ring, there was shuffling sound and the sound of Dean’s casual “yeah?” Sam’s fingers tightened on the plastic case. He opened his mouth, but nothing came out.

“You want something or not?” Dean asked, a hint of annoyance in his voice.

“Dean?”

His voice sounded thin and ragged, Dean would know something was up, but Sam didn’t care.

“Sammy? Jesus fuck, is that you?”

“Yeah, I’m okay-”

“Where the hell are you, man? I’ve been hauling ass all up and down the west coast for three weeks now!”

“You get my letter?”

“Yeah, way to be fucking cryptic, asshole. Who the fuck did you meet that would make you drop off the face of the earth for a whole month? Jenna Jameson?”

Sam smiled, but didn’t laugh.

“Seriously, man. I’m in Seattle, you’re in the city, right? This is where the postmark was from.”

“No, I’m...” Sam trailed off. He couldn’t have Dean coming here. Not now. “I can’t tell you where I am.”

“Why not, Sammy.”

Dean’s voice had a hard edge, and Sam felt his throat tighten.

“I can’t tell you that either. But I need your help.”

Sam glanced out to the living room. He could hear Cas moving around the kitchen. He lowered his voice, speaking straight into the phone.

“I’m working a case.”

Chapter End Notes

Guess who finished NaNo?

Me.

Hazel has written a book. Hazel is free.
This is not a real chapter, sorry.

I've been getting a lot of questions about the wings and several people have asked me to do drawings.


Here you shall find some brief anatomical diagrams showing the wings and how the wings connect to Sam's body, where they were during various scenes, etc.

(Dammit Jim, I'm a writer, not an artist- )

I didn't do one of him lying on his back, but if he were to lie on his back, he would just kinda lie 'on' them and they would not bother him much.

They're also spindly and horrible right now because they are naked. They will fill out.
“A case.”

Dean’s voice was flat, and Sam could tell that his brother didn’t believe him.

He opened his mouth and for one wild moment, he thought he was going to blurt out the whole story; the kidnapping, the spell, the wings, everything.

But he managed to keep it in. He clenched his eyes, repeating the lie.

“Yeah, a case. I ran into it on… on the way down.”

“You didn’t make it to Stanford.”

Sam closed his eyes, his throat suddenly tight.

“No. No, I didn’t.”

“That’s all you’ve fucking talked about for the last five years, what did you run across that was so important that you just abandoned it?”

Sam wasn’t sure he could answer. His throat was closing, and he knew Dean would be able to hear it. His brother’s relief was giving way to irritation.

“I’m not sure what it is, exactly,” he answered, fighting to keep the tremor out of his voice. “I was hoping you could talk- talk with Bobby? See if you can figure anything?”

“Where are you, Sam. I’ll come meet you and we’ll take it down.”

“I can’t!” Sam exclaimed, and he had to take a breath before he could continue. He could almost see Dean’s expression in the silence. “I know a couple things. These creatures- they’re immortal. They have feathered wings, but they hide them. They have magic, the power to heal… but I think maybe they can only heal their own kind. And they reincarnate.”

“I’m guessing you already tried the old standbys?”

Sam glanced toward the doorway, but it was empty. He dropped his voice anyway.

“A silver blade had no effect. I haven’t been able to use a gun, but I doubt it would do much good. They heal very quickly.”

“Hmm. How’s it killing people? Local authorities turn up anything?”

Sam closed his eyes.

“Nobody’s dead yet. As far as I can tell, there’s only one victim. They… they’re under a spell.”

There was silence on the other end of the line.

“Let me guess. You ‘met somebody’ and they’re in the clutches of something evil.”
Dean scoffed, and Sam could almost see him shaking his head.

“Damn, Sammy, you have the worst luck. What’s the spell doing, any idea?”

“Yeah. It’s a soul transference, or something like that. The creature is trying to bring someone back from the dead. Another of their own kind.”

“Using a human as the mold.”

Sam glanced at the door again.

“Yeah. But getting less human by the day.”

Silence on the line.

“How far… ?”

“I think it might be reversible,” Sam answered. He tried not to speak too quickly. “Or it might… it might not be permanent. Maybe if the creature dies, it will break the spell.”

“We might not be able to save them, Sam,” Dean said quietly, and Sam closed his eyes.

“I know. I know that. Just… please? See what you can find?”

“You’re sure you won’t just tell me where you are?”

“Dean, I can’t.”

Dean sighed.

“Yeah. Okay, sure. I’ll look into it.”

“Thanks. I owe you one.”

“But Sam?”

“Yeah?”

Dean paused.

“Be careful, okay?”

“Yeah. Sure.”

The phone disconnected and Sam just held it, the darkened glass pressed to his skin, the silence deafening. It occurred to him that he could call back, that he could tell Dean to check fire tower records, to bring backup.

He could tell them the videos were coming, beg them not to watch…

He closed his eyes.

This could all be over. If he could stand to be that selfish.

“Sam?”

“What?” he snapped, turning toward the doorway where Cas now stood.
“Breakfast is ready.”

Sam rubbed his face.

“Yeah. Be right there.”

Cas left, and Sam quickly got dressed. He couldn’t wear a shirt, but he had jeans and underwear, and that was better than nothing.

He wrapped a blanket around his shoulders and went out into the living room. Halfway through the door he realized he wasn’t walking normally. He was adjusting for the weight and the resistance of a chain that was no longer there.

Silently, he turned toward the front door. For the last month, it had been a good five feet out of his range. Might as well have been 5,000 miles.

He crossed the living room, pulling the door open and standing in the morning sunlight.

There was nothing special about the front of the house. The driveway was the same one Sam had staggered up, five days ago. White wicker chairs sat unassuming on the deckboards, dappled sunlight playing over the surface.

Sam walked toward the stairs, the plastic boards rough under his bare feet.

The last time he’d been on these steps, Cas had been carrying him. He’d seen them upside-down in the dark, his hands still bound with twine.

He walked down them on his own power now, only stopping when he felt the rough gravel of the driveway beneath his feet.

The illusion of freedom was broken when Cas came up behind him.

“Do you want to have breakfast on the porch?”

“I want to see the video,” Sam answered, surprising himself a little. Cas came closer, but Sam didn’t turn around. “I want to see what happened.”

“Sam… I don’t think…”

“I want to know,” Sam insisted. He still didn’t look back.

“If you wish,” Cas answered, and Sam thought he might be sick. He took a half-step back, lowering himself onto the porch stairs. It occurred to him that he might be about to sit on one of the spindly, naked wings, but he needn’t have worried. The disparate limbs seemed able to handle themselves, crossing neatly at the small of his back and curling around the sides of his hips. The spikes were longer this morning, but not as sharp. The ends were beginning to fray.

“I thought you said they were brown,” Sam noted, pinching one of them between his fingers. The spike frayed further, raining white powder over the steps.

“They will be,” Cas assured him. Sam frowned at his fingers, then wiped the oily powder off on his jeans. Now that he was paying attention to them, they were beginning to itch.

“They look white to me.”

“They’ll darken.”
Sam nodded, then took hold of one of the spikes and yanked at it. It didn’t come loose, just it sent a jarring flare of pain across the area that his brain was still interpreting as his ‘shoulder.’

“Don’t!” Cas told him, and Sam noted the alarm in his voice. He looked over his shoulder.

“Why not?”

“You’ll hurt yourself, for one,” Cas answered, like he was explaining to a child.

Sam yanked at the feather again. This time Cas caught his hand pulling it back.

“It’s not me,” Sam told him. There was a small bead of blood forming around the shaft of the feather. “These aren’t me.”

“Yes, they are.” Cas stroked the abused feather, flattening it back down amongst the others. “They’re your flesh and blood, and these are rooted in the bone. Your bone. Dislodging them will prove quite a bit harder than you think.”

Sam leaned away from him, but the wing had a mind of its own. It stayed in Cas’s grip, submitting to the slow stroking of the feathers.

“I want to see the video,” Sam repeated, focusing his concentration and pulling the wing away from Cas. Cas let it go.

“Eat your breakfast, I’ll show you afterward.”

“Not hungry.”

Cas sighed, rubbing his forehead.

“We’re doing this again?”

“I’m not ‘doing’ anything,” Sam snapped. “I woke up chained to a headboard and it put me off my breakfast. I’m not hungry. Fucking leave it.”

He didn’t look to Cas, but he could tell Cas was staring.

~~~~~~~~

It was exactly as bad as Sam had feared.

Cas slid a silver disk into the computer, waiting silently as it loaded.

The contents sprang up automatically, three video files and a collection of photos. Sam brought up the photos one at a time, forcing himself to look.

His arms were taped behind him, pinning his wings against his back. At the time, Sam had thought that Cas was working his blood through the tape, but from the back, it was clear that he’d had easy access to the secondary limbs.

So that was one mystery solved.
Sam clicked through them, watching as his bound form developed bruises, then lacerations, then healed, only to have the process repeat.

He was aware of Cas, standing behind him, watching silently.

Sam opened the first video. Immediately he saw himself naked, bent over with his bound arms yanked high behind him. The strain of the position was already clear on his face. Sam forced himself to meet his own eyes as they stared in horror at the camera.

He watched Cas circling around behind him, talking to him, telling him what was going to happen. Sam kept his attention on his own face, the growing pain and despair as the futility of his situation set in.

The picture was clear enough to trace the journey of the cane as it arched down into him. Immediately, there was blood. On the screen, Sam lurched forward, his shoulders wrenching dangerously as he tried to pull away from the pain.

Sam slapped the spacebar, freezing the video as he scrambled out of the chair. He barely made it to the sink before throwing up the coffee that had served as breakfast.

He closed his eyes but the image was burned in. The sound of the speakers crackling as they tried to relay his screams.

He ran the water, splashing his face.

“I told you,” Cas muttered from the office door. Sam gave him the finger, straightening up.

Cas looked like he was going to protest again, but Sam ignored him. He sank back into the desk chair and hit the spacebar again.

Instantly, the speakers roared to life, and Sam watched runnels of blood run down his legs.

Cas hit him again, and Sam could see himself trying to scream but failing to breathe.

Cas paused then, his arm drawn back for another blow. His eyes were trained on Sam, his grip wavering as he watched his prisoner gasping for air.

The third blow came down, checked at the last second.

Sam stared, watching the creature on the screen, listening to himself beg. Cas’s hands wavered a centimeter over the curve of Sam’s back, like he was waiting for permission.

Sam heard himself begging, pleading with Cas to heal him, and Cas’s hands descended.

Instantly, the tension dropped out of Sam’s body, the rigidity of pain disappearing in a moment.

The video froze and stopped, the window closing and leaving the two of them staring at the row of icons.

Sam reached for the mouse, unsurprised to see that his hand was shaking.

“Sam-”

“Shut up.”

Sam opened the second video. The change was obvious- strips of tape covered his eyes and mouth,
and his body was smooth and hairless where it hung in the bindings.

Cas didn’t cane him this time- that part was already over.

Instead, Cas asked if he wanted to be prepared, and for the first time, Sam saw the shock and dismay that Cas expressed when he received the reply.

Sam watched Cas’s fingers digging into his hips, the pain on his own face as he was shoved forward. He watched Cas give up the attempt and take himself in hand instead.

The frustration in his face was obvious, and for the first time, Sam turned around to look at Cas’s current incarnation, standing silently behind him.

Cas’s hand was plastered over his face. He watched from between two fingers.

The video ended.

Neither of them spoke.

Sam leaned forward, and set the third video to play.

This one began in Cas’s room. Sam was sleeping in Cas’s bed, the dreamless sleep of the drugged.

At first, Sam wasn’t sure that the video was even playing. Nothing happened. There was no sound.

And then Cas appeared, at the corner of the frame, standing beside Sam’s sleeping form.

Gently, he stroked Sam’s forehead, pushing a lock of hair out of his eyes.

“What are you saying?” Sam demanded, spinning around to confront the man behind him. Cas didn’t answer. He just watched the screen, his face unreadable.

“What are you saying?” Sam repeated. Cas’s voice continued to echo from the speakers.

“You should remember,” Cas said quietly. “It was your language too, once.”

“It was his,” Sam snapped, and something broke in Cas’s face.

“It’s ours,” he said quietly. His eyes didn’t leave the screen. “I’m telling you I love you.”

“While you rape me,” Sam hissed. Cas opened his mouth, maybe to protest, but before he could, the speakers crackled again.
Sam turned slowly back to the screen, needing to confirm what his ears were telling him.

On the video, his own mouth was moving, his words slurred but undeniably his.

“What is that?” Sam asked, his voice rough. He felt the touch of Cas’s hand on his shoulder, before he heard the response.

“You’re begging me,” Cas answered. “It’s enochian.”

Chapter End Notes

Not as long as I hoped. But we got the rest of the conversation with Dean. So there's that.
Any hits on that language?

You’re sure it was “enochian”?

No. But that’s what it sounded like.

Your source is fucking with you. It’s a made up language. Some douchebags came up with it playing DnD in the 1600s.

There’s no mention of it before that? This guy seemed to think it was old. Really old. Like, Sumerian type old.

Well then he shoulda said fuckin’ Sumerian, shouldn’t he?

Seriously Sam, somebody’s playing you.

Wings? Immortality? Fuckin’ enochian?

So?

Angels, dude. Your source says you’re hunting a fuckin’ angel.

What does the lore say?

It says you’re an idiot and you should come help me gank this wendigo before I get my nuts chewed off, that’s what it says.

Isn’t dad with you?
He figures it’s time I started handling hunts on my own.

After all, you are.

Sam had nothing to say to that.

He let the screen go dark, leaning back against the rough bark of the tree. It was getting close to sunset and his wings were itching like crazy. He rolled his shoulders back against the bark, enjoying the minor relief it provided.

He stood and turned back towards the house. It was probably a half an hour walk back, but he had plenty of time before it got dark.

~~~~~

Cas said nothing when Sam returned. There was a smear of something dark across one cheekbone, which meant he’d been out in the barn again.

Sam was spending his time in the woods. He was sick of this house and sick of Cas and sick of being cooped up with nothing to do. The woods were only slightly less monotonous than the house, but at least he could be alone.

Cas had food on the table and Sam ate it without tasting. The phone was heavy in the pocket of the windbreaker Cas had bought him, and though Sam listened, it never buzzed.

~~~~~

Sam slept in Cas’s bed. He left his phone in his pocket, the jacket wrapped around it, shoved under his pillow. It was possible that Cas could monitor it without accessing it, but Sam didn’t think so. He never let it out of arm’s reach.

When Cas fucked him, he reached under the pillow and felt the hard rectangle, reassuring himself that he would escape this. He’d figure it out. He and Dean would figure it out.

~~~~~

Cas reached for him at night. He ran his fingers through the growing feathers, scratching at the tender skin in a way that Sam tried hard not to find satisfying.
It SOUNDS like a proto-language.

Sam moved the scrubber back half an inch. On the screen, Cas was cuffing his hands to the headboard. Sam arched up against him, his cock leaving wet streaks on Cas’s thigh.

Sam closed his eyes, listening to his own voice.

Basic, monosyllabic. Lends credence to the claim of how old it is.

Wendigo’s dead, by the way. Thanks for asking, your concern is heartwarming.

On the video, Sam spoke faster, his voice interrupted by the rattle of the chains as he protested his confinement. Cas’s head dipped over his chest, and the words stopped.

Sorry. Kinda preoccupied.

Yeah, I got that from the whole ‘not calling for a month’ thing. Seriously, man, where are you? I’ll come pick you up, we’ll take your proto-whatever and go see what Bobby can make of it.

Sam swallowed hard.

I can’t.

Yeah, yeah. I know.

Can’t leave your damsel to fight an angel all by herself.

You know I would if I could.

Whatever. I’ll let you know when I’m back at Bobby’s.

Bitch.
He didn’t cry anymore. He didn’t fight, and he didn’t cry.
For the most part, he tried not to think about it.
He didn’t make Cas come and get him. They didn’t talk about it.
Sam stripped and lay on his belly and Cas did what he needed to. That was all.

“I’m going into town. Would you like to come?”
Sam raised an eyebrow.
“That’s just mean, Cas.”
He spread his wings slightly, ruffling the feathers as if to remind Cas of why, exactly, he could not go into town.
“You could stay in the car,” Cas suggested. “Put a blanket around your shoulders. It shouldn’t raise too much attention.”
“Or maybe you could just put a leash on me and tell everyone I’m your service animal.”
Cas pursed his lips. Sam ignored him. He was sitting in the yard, twisting a couple long pieces of grass between his fingers, thinking.
Or he had been, until the front door had slammed and Cas had come striding across the yard.
“I’m trying to be nice, Sam. Do you want to go, or not?”

Sam went.
His wings settled in, flush with his back, the main joint only a few inches above his shoulders. Cas threw a sheet over the seat, and it covered him fairly well. Enough to survive a cursory glance, at any case.

It took a very long time to get to the end of the driveway. Sam watched in vain for the place where he and Cas had come out of the forest, but all signs of his escape attempt seemed to have vanished.

At the end of the gravel drive, Cas turned onto a track only slightly more qualified to call itself a road. Sam watched out the window, noting the changing colors of the trees.

Fall.

It was fall.

Sam closed his eyes, and tried not to think about that.

“How’s Dean?”

“Fine,” Sam answered, not turning around.

“Was he glad to hear from you?”

“He’s been looking for me.”

Cas made a noise deep in his throat.

“It must have come as a relief to him, to know that you’re safe.”

“I am not safe, Cas,” Sam groaned, opening his eyes. They were travelling along the side of a mountain. Sam could see the switchbacks he’d tried to count, when he’d first awoken in the back of the truck.

Down in the valley, he could see signs of human development, but the mountain itself was untouched, aside from the road.

“You really like your privacy, huh.”

“It suits me.”

“It didn’t suit him,” Sam said, frowning. There were pieces of a memory coming back to him now.

“He liked people. He helped them.”

“Yes,” Cas answered. He didn’t add any more.

“Will you move?” Sam pushed. “When he’s back. Will you move closer to people?”

“No,” Cas answered. His voice had taken on a harsh edge. “No, I don’t think so.”

They made a switchback, Cas turning the wheel hand over hand to make the turn. Sam thought of how easy it would be to grab the wheel, to send them both careening over the edge.

Would it kill them?

He didn’t know.
The wheel straightened and the urge was gone. Before too much longer they passed into the trees. Sam continued to stare out the window.

“What if he wants to?” he asked at last. Cas sighed.

“Being near people is not safe for us. Now more than ever. What protected us in the past will not be enough now.”

“So just you and him, shuttered away on the top of some mountain somewhere?”

“Yes.”

“Sounds awful.”

“It is preferable to the alternative,” Cas answered. Sam doubted it, but also doubted he’d change Cas’s mind on the subject.

“Will you really live forever?” he asked instead.

“We both will. As long as I can keep us safe.”

“Do you get older, though?” Sam asked. He glanced over to Cas as he asked, trying to disguise his interest as simple curiosity. Cas was nodding slowly.

“I don’t believe we were ever children. At my earliest memory, we were breaking the threshold of adulthood. I believe we were created in that form.”

“By who?”

“I don’t know.”

“So in all this time, you’ve aged, what, fifteen years?”

Cas glanced over at him then, a smile touching his lips.

“Are you afraid you’re never going to grow up, Sam?”

It hadn’t occurred to him, but it seemed as good an excuse as any.

“Thought I might have a couple more inches coming to me,” he answered, shrugging.

They made another turn.

“You do,” Cas informed him, keeping his eyes on the road. “We’re about the same height now, but you’ll eventually be taller than me.”

“What if…” Sam paused. “What if you slowed the spell down? Gave me a couple more years, to catch up to you, you know?”

“No.”

“It’s gonna look weird though, where you’re so much older than me-”

“Cultural norms shift faster than you can imagine, Sam.”

There was a hint of warning in his voice, and Sam decided to drop it.
They passed another house, at last, and Sam’s eyes widened when he realized there were children playing in the front yard.

Six weeks.

He hadn’t seen another person in six weeks.

Suddenly he couldn’t breathe. He drew in a long, deep inhale through his nose, focusing on the feeling of the air inside him.

“Are you alright?”

The truck slowed, but Sam waved off the other man’s concern.

“Just… it’s been a while.”

Cas nodded. Sam looked out the window, picking at the denim of his jeans.

“What was it like? Just appearing one day and being a teenager.”

“It was very pleasant to exist,” Cas answered. He was smiling again, Sam could hear it in his voice. “I don’t pretend to know what part of the globe it might have been, but it was warm and temperate and very good for us. We spent many years simply looking around us.”

They came to an intersection; Cas went left. Sam looked for a road sign but saw nothing.

“There’s so much to see, Sam. And you’ll see so much of it, I promise.”

Not if I’m stuck at the top of this damn mountain, Sam thought, scowling. Not if someone else takes over my body and I cease to exist.

“Did you already know… what was it? Enochian?”

“We were created with it, yes. Samael and I, and the others.”

“There are others?”

Sam tried to keep his voice level, to keep the interest from showing.

“Not many. There were several hundred to begin with. I don’t know how many have survived. We mate in groups of two or three, beyond that, we’re not particularly social creatures.”

“I noticed.”

Cas glanced at him, but let it slide.

“I’ve thought of looking for others. We have… ways of finding each other. But… it wouldn’t replace what I lost.”

They passed another house, this one apparently unoccupied.

“Can I meet one of them?” Sam asked suddenly.

“Not yet. When the spell is complete.”

“Why? Why not sooner?”
“You’re not ready.”

“Ready for what?” Sam prodded, but Cas didn’t answer.

~~~~~

They drove for more than an hour before reaching anything that could be termed ‘civilization.’ Sam didn’t know whether Cas had chosen an out-of-the-way town, or if he literally just lived that far out in the wilderness.

In any case, Cas seemed to know where he was going, navigating the streets with an air of familiarity. Sam looked out the window, picking out familiar logos and signs. It had come as a shock to realize the seasons had changed; it came as another to see just how much things hadn’t changed.

Cas hooked right, pulling into a parking lot. He maneuvered into a remote corner.

“I’ve called this in ahead of time,” he told Sam, removing his seatbelt. “This won’t take more than fifteen minutes. I’ll leave the engine running, so the music and climate control will work.”

“It’s A/C,” Sam said, fiddling with the knob. “Nobody says ‘climate control.’”

“It’ll work,” Cas repeated. When Sam didn’t answer he rolled his eyes and left, slamming the door behind him.

Sam waited a few seconds for him to retreat, then pulled out his phone.

It’s definitely Enochian.

~~~~~

True to his word, Cas was back in less than ten minutes, though what he’d bought, Sam didn’t know. The back of the truck rolled up and Sam heard voices. Something heavy- or several something heavys- were loaded into the back.

Sam pulled the sheet closer around his shoulders, wondering if any of the workers would come around his side of the truck. Beneath the thin fabric, he could feel the feathers beginning to stand on end.

Cas’s voice cut through the babble, though Sam couldn’t tell what he was saying. It sounded like it might be Spanish. Whatever he said, the others laughed and Sam heard their voices retreating.

Several seconds later, Cas’s door opened and he got back inside.

“Any trouble?”
“What trouble could I possibly get into, I can’t even leave the fucking truck.”

“Just checking.”

The engine roared to life and Cas kicked it into gear. Sam glanced back.

“What did you buy?”

“Raw materials. I have a new project I’m working on.”

Sam nodded. Nothing that would further his goals, then.

Time for the consolation prize.

“Go straight,” he said when they reached the main road. Cas glanced at him, startled, but complied. Sam pointed out the sign he’d noticed while Cas had been gone.

“There. Go in there, they sell ground hazelnut coffee, and I want it. Lots of it.”

Cas wrinkled his nose.

“I have coffee at the house.”

“Not this coffee.”

Cas stared at him.

“The brand I have is imported. It’s harvested from plants which have not been modified through selective breeding, and is the closest to the original—”

“And the shit they sell in there probably doesn’t even come from actual plants, but if it weren’t for you, I could go buy it myself.”

Cas froze, a retort dying on his tongue. Sam stared at him, refusing to give an inch.

Cas put the truck in park.

Chapter End Notes

This was a boring filler chapter. Sorry.

I'm still hammering out some major plot points which I am slouching toward, here.

I do enjoy the speculation, though. A surprising number of people commented on the last chapter to express disbelief that Dean would fall for the 'my friend needs help' routine.

That's interesting. That's very interesting.
“As fast as you can,” Sam said, looking down at the freckled girl in front of him. “Watch for the cliff face. Are you ready?”

Margaret nodded solemnly, her small fingers clutched around the bobbin of string. Sam nodded.

“Alright. Go.”

Margaret went like a jackrabbit, the wind in her face as she pelted through the grass. She held the kite high above her, releasing it when she felt the wind catch. It rose into the air behind her as she ran. She played out string to give it altitude.

From their place on the picnic blanket, Castiel and Isobel cheered her on, their words of encouragement mostly lost in the gale.

She was letting out the string too quickly, Sam could see it from where he was standing, but he remained silent. She needed to be able to feel it herself, in the strength of the wind and the tension on the string.

Sure enough, she realized her error and tried to reign it in, but it was too late. The kite flipped, barreling toward the ground.

Sam and Margaret met beside the fallen toy, looking down as she re-wound the spool.

“It went pretty high that time,” Sam offered. Margaret scowled.

“I can’t get it to stay up. It’s never gonna fly for me like it does for you.”

Sam laughed.

“I’ve flown many kites in my time, child. You just need practice.”

She finished winding the spool and picked up the toy, brushing a smudge of dirt from one corner.

“Can I go again?”

Sam glanced to the picnic blanket, where Isobel was telling Castiel a story that had them both howling with laughter.

“I think so.”

~~~~~

Sam woke up to the smell of hazelnuts.

The bed was empty and he quickly spread out across it, twisting in the sheets and enjoying the last ebbing moments of his dream.

The house was quiet, which meant Cas was probably out in the barn already. He spent a lot of time
out there, more or less willing to leave Sam to his own devices.

It’s not like he was going to burn the house down again.

Sam groped under the pillow, pulling his jacket out and retrieving the phone.

_Bobby wants to know why the sudden interest in monsters with wings. You’re gonna have to pony up an explanation at some point, dude._

Sam scowled and rolled over. Nothing new then.

His own research was at a standstill as well. Lots of lore, lots of legends, but nothing about reincarnating monsters with wings and healing powers. Certainly nothing new on the language Cas had mentioned- the language Sam had been speaking on the video.

Sam had been trying to work on a transcription when Cas had gotten fed up and taken the DVD away. They’d had a fight about it. Cas said it wasn’t good for him to focus on it like he was, and Sam had snapped back that there was nothing _about_ this that was good for him.

In any case, Cas didn’t give the DVD back, and though Sam had torn the office apart looking for it, he hadn’t found anything.

Sam considered sending a message back to Dean- once again trying to reassure him that he had everything handled… but he didn’t have the energy to lie, and Dean was becoming more and more suspicious with each passing exchange.

Leaving the jacket on the bed, Sam slipped the phone into the pocket of his sleep pants. The smell from the kitchen was drawing him in, and when he left the bedroom, he was pleased to see a half pot of coffee waiting.

The _good_ stuff, not Cas’s paleo-organic shit.

Cas himself was nowhere to be found, which suited Sam just fine. He poured himself a mug and took it out onto the porch. It was just on the cool side of comfortable, but the sun was shining, and that was something.

Sam took a sip of the hot beverage, looking out over the empty yard. The hair on his skin was standing on end, but that was just the cool, damp air.

His wings itched.

He left the mug on the wicker table and walked out into the morning sunlight. It felt good on his skin and he closed his eyes, enjoying it.

Then, slowly, he let his wings unfold.

He tried to keep them tucked behind him most of the time. He didn’t particularly like looking at them, and in any case, they tended to knock things over. At least since the feathers had come in, they’d been more or less waterproof.

The first time he’d gotten out of the shower, they’d done some kind of weird jittery shake, throwing droplets in all directions but leaving the plumage more or less dry.
Sam didn’t like to think about them, about how they seemed to have mannerisms and reflexes all
their own.

Now, as he looked at them, the feathers began to spread wide, absorbing the sunlight.

They weren’t like bird wings. He’d spent some time looking at the anatomy of various bird wings,
and these were not like those. For one thing, they were jointed in five different places,
differentiating them from the arm-like bone structure of most birds. It made them almost
prehensile, and Sam didn’t like to think about that, either.

The feathers, though, looked similar to bird feathers, or at least the bird feathers Sam had seen. On
the inside, and in the areas closer to his back, they were small and fluffy. They grew longer and
more sturdy as they approached the ends.

Fully extended, the primary feathers added a good eighteen inches to the wingspan, which Sam
estimated was something like ten feet.

And they weren’t brown.

That’s the thing that Sam liked best about them.

Cas had been sure that the feathers would come in brown and tan and gold, but they hadn’t.

Every single feather was white. The small feathers on the underside were mottled with fine
striations of gray, and the longer flight feathers were tipped with a gleaming silver, but everything
else was snow-white.

Cas didn’t know what to make of that. In every other aspect, Sam was identical to the man he’d
known before. Everything except for the color of his feathers.

He’d speculated that they might change, later on in the transformation. Sam hoped they didn’t. He
hoped they stayed white forever, a silent and everlasting reminder of the body that had been stolen
to make Cas’s future possible.

He raised his hands above his head, stretching out the last of the morning’s lethargy. His wings
followed his arms’ lead, straining themselves outward and temporarily relieving some of the
irritation.

A small sound caught his attention and he turned his head slightly.

Cas was leaning against the doorway to the barn, watching him. His t-shirt and jeans were spotted
with paint, and he was wearing a pair of rough leather welder’s gloves, reaching almost to his
elbow.

Sam scowled and looked away, pulling his wings in tight. He stalked back up onto the porch,
dropping into a wicker chair and sullenly retrieving his coffee.

Cas didn’t move, just stood there, watching.

Sam pulled his legs up onto the seat, crossing them underneath him so he could rest his elbows on
his knees. He was suddenly very aware of his bare torso, and the fact that Cas was pretty obviously
enjoying the view.

Stupid.
Sam didn’t look back, and a few minutes later, the back door slammed.

Suddenly the sweetened coffee was bitter in his mouth. He stared at the dregs in the cup and sighed. He stood and dumped the rest onto the grass, before returning inside.

~~~~~

Cas did the backs in the morning, and the insides in the evening.

That meant that in the morning, Sam got to lay on his stomach, his wings draped prone over the sides of the bed, while Cas worked his blood into the skin.

He had to work at it, digging his fingers deep into the plumage to reach beneath them. It had to hurt; he’d slashed both his palms wide open to give him enough to work with, but to Sam it was like a balm. The irritation faded immediately, and it was growing less and less by the day.

Like he was healing.

He relaxed into it, ignoring Cas’s weight on him as the other man’s hands carded through the feathers.

“Did I get it all?”

Sam rolled his shoulder, wordlessly bringing the tip of his left wing closer. Cas saw the place he had missed and a moment later, his fingers were working his blood and grace into Sam’s skin.

He made his way back up the wing, his touches growing stronger when he reached the muscles joining the wings to Sam’s shoulders. There was a new set of bones there- Sam could see them when he looked at himself in the mirror- and the added muscles were often weary at the end of the day.

Cas said he would get used to it, that the connecting tissue had to grow from nothing, it made sense that he would tire easily.

In any case, Sam had a hard time telling Cas to stop when he did this. His hands were firm and sure as he navigated the unfamiliar muscle, and Sam could almost forget where the interaction was going.

Still, it couldn’t last forever.

Cas’s hands delved lower, toward the downy feathers where the wings tapered into Sam’s lower back. He stroked along the muscles of Sam’s spine, and Sam caught the scent of the massage oil Cas had taken to using. It had a spicy, earthy smell, and it seemed to leave warm streaks along Sam’s body.

It also meant that the platonic part of the interaction was over.

Sam buried his face in the pillow, holding it tight between his fingers as he tried to keep his body lax. If Cas noticed, he didn’t remark. His hands slid lower, cupping the soft part of Sam’s ass, his thumbs slipping between the cheeks.

And this was the part that Sam hated the most, when Cas’s slick fingertips began to circle his hole,
seeking ingress and **getting** it, because Sam couldn’t fight this and if he tried then Cas would hold him down and do it anyway and-

Cas’s lips were soft against the hollow of his shoulder.

“Breathe, Sam,” the man reminded him, and Sam nodded. He inhaled deep, letting out a breath that turned into a hiss as Cas breached him.

Cas did his best to make it good and Sam did his best to ignore that, keeping himself rigid and still, refusing to participate. He knew Cas was watching him, was looking down at Sam’s naked body, watching Sam stretch to accommodate him. When Cas looked down, he could see where Sam was spread wide for him, could see himself fucking into Sam’s ass and Sam *hated* it.

The best he could do was keep his face buried, keep his tongue between his teeth so he’d never make a sound.

He could deny Cas that, at least.

Cas leaned down, his body flush with Sam’s as he thrust slowly inside. It didn’t hurt- Sam had learned to relax enough that the indignity was worse than the pain. Cas promised to make it good for him, and he tried; Sam could feel his cock swelling against the sheets, an automatic response to what Cas was doing. But he wasn’t going to get off on this. Never again.

Cas finished inside, peppering his shoulders with soft kisses, and Sam ignored him. He ignored the feeling of Cas softening and slipping out, ignored the last light stroke of his hands. Instead, he stood up and headed silently toward the shower, his pants a tight bundle against his chest.

When he got out, Cas was gone.

~~~~~

**What about harpies?**

**What about them?**

**According to the lore, they’re winged women**

*they’re supposed to have wings instead of arms*

*But one of Bobby’s books does reference an ability to regenerate*

*Regenerate, or reincarnate?*

*Fuck if I know, I had to spend three hours on the phone with some egghead in Santa Clara just to*
get it translated that much

Must have been torture

don’t joke

*He conferenced in a colleague and to talk about pre-grecian verb tenses*

*I damn near fossilized with boredom*

Sam rolled his eyes, smiling at his brother’s characteristic disdain for anything that didn’t involve weapons or Patrick Swayze.

*So you’re thinking that angels and harpies may be separate mythologies from the same original creature?*

*Could be? Story changes in the telling.*

*I’ll see what I can do to confirm. In the meantime, see what you can find out about the lore. There might be something in there about how to counteract their magic.*

*Yeah yeah. Hit the books, Dean. Don’t worry, Dean. Cover for me with Dad and Bobby, Dean.*

*You owe me for this.*

*I know, man.*
“I was born at night, kid, but it wasn’t last night.”

Sam’s vision was going dark. He couldn’t breathe.

“Bobby, please.”

“You thought you’d be able to hide this from your daddy an’ me?”

Sam’s hand tightened on the handset. Bobby couldn’t know. He couldn’t. He couldn’t.

“You brother all of a sudden pulls outta the field to hit the books, on angels and harpies of all the blessed nonsense things, and you thought I wasn’t gonna connect those dots?”

“I needed help on a hunt,” Sam whispered, and Bobby scowled.

“You ain’t hunting shit, kid. It’s hunting you. Has it got to the wings yet?”

“What wings?”

“Don’t play stupid with me, kid, I’ve been lying about this shit longer’n you’ve been alive. Have you got the wings or not?”

Sam sank to the forest floor, bark scraping across his back as he did.

“Yeah. I’ve got ‘em.”

“Then it’s too late to quit the spell cold turkey.”

“Yeah,” Sam answered, leaning back and pushing the hair out of his eyes. “Yeah I figured that one out on my own. You got any idea on how to reverse this?”

“Maybe. Angels aren’t like regular folks. Each body’s only got half a soul. They can regrow the dead parts, but they need a new body to grow it in. That make any sense?”

“Reincarnation,” Sam summarized. “A tiny seed of the dead partner, that they can grow inside someone else. Does Dean know about this?”

“Not yet. But he’s on the right trail.”

Sam closed his eyes. Matter of time, then.

“We need to find a way to… I dunno. Un-grow the seed. Keep it from overwhelming the vessel it’s growing in. Something.”

“Nothin’ on that, as far as I can tell. Once the soul starts growing, the roots go deep, and fast. Though…”

“What?” Sam asked, sitting up.

“Just, from the way this is laid out here, the spell works through the acceptance of gifts.”
Sam choked, but Bobby apparently didn’t notice.

“Being trapped by food or drink is pretty much a folklore staple- goes back to Childe Rowland and the legend of Persephone, to name a couple. Eat something in fairyland and your ass is stuck there. Only this isn’t a one-time gig. So what’s she givin’ you every day? Pomegranate seeds?”


He didn’t bother to correct the gender. It didn’t matter and it might keep his family away from the truth a little longer.

“You been takin’ ‘em? These lives?”

“Haven’t had a choice, trust me,” Sam answered. Bobby hesitated then, hedging around a question neither of them really wanted to address.

“Are you gonna tell my dad?” Sam asked instead.

“No. And Dean neither. But you’re in a shitpile of trouble, son. Fore this is over, you’re gonna need all the help you can get.”

“I know. I’m just not sure I’m ready for the kind of help that dad’s gonna resort to.”

There was silence on the line and Sam pulled his wings tighter around himself, acknowledging Bobby’s silent agreement.

“He might not be the threat you think he is,” Bobby said after a while. “According to everything I’ve got here, only thing that can kill an angel is another angel.”

“Yeah? What about a soul growing in a human vessel? Think he can kill that?”

“Don’t snap at me kid, I’m tryin’ to help.”

Sam sighed, rubbing his palm across his face.

“Sorry Bobby. I know. Just… kinda feels like I’m running out of time here.”

“You ain’t wrong there. I’ll keep digging into this spell, see what I can find. In the meantime, you need to come clean with your brother. He’s running himself ragged worryin’ about you.”

The line went quiet before Sam could answer, or come up with an excuse to offer. Not like he had one. Bobby was right. It wasn’t fair to string Dean along like this.

Sam tilted his head to the side, letting it rest on his feathered shoulder. The limb reacted by pressing back up against him, snowy-white down brushing his face.

“I just need to figure out how to hide you,” Sam told it.

Not that he hadn’t tried.

Cas was able to make his appear and disappear more or less at will, but no matter what Sam did, he couldn’t figure out how to make them even flicker. He’d asked Cas, but the angel had only replied that he was too young to do it.

Sam scowled at the feathers.
Maybe Samael’s life force hadn’t rooted deeply enough to give Sam anything useful, just these giant ugly growths.

Sam’s phone buzzed that evening. His fingers were wrapped tight around it, muffling the sound while Cas took him from behind.

Cas faltered, unsure about how to react to the interruption, and Sam responded by shoving his hips back, bringing his captor to completion almost immediately.

He knew how to do that now.

How to press Cas’s buttons.

How to get it over with just a little faster.

Sam didn’t do it often- he didn’t want to give Cas the idea that he was into it; that he had any interest in bringing the older man any kind of pleasure whatsoever.

But sometimes, Sam just didn’t have the energy, the strength to deal with Cas’s slow lovemaking. He felt his cock hardening and he didn’t have the willpower to try to force it back down.

So he just… got it over with.

This time, though, Cas didn’t pull out. He lowered his body down over Sam’s, pressing a soft kiss to the junction of Sam’s shoulder.

“Maybe you should leave that out in the kitchen,” he murmured after a moment.

Sam’s hand tightened on the device.

“But unless you wanna fuck me in the kitchen,” Sam answered back. He wasn’t letting the little thing out of arm’s reach. It was, quite literally, his only hope.

Cas hesitated, like maybe he was going to take Sam up on the offer, but instead he simply withdrew.

Sam’s back felt cold without Cas’s body heat, and he pulled his wings down over himself to try to capture some of the residual heat. He listened to Cas dressing, and waited for the click of the door closing before he withdrew the phone.

It was a text message from an unknown number.

_I can help you._

Sam stared at it for a few seconds, before sending back the most obvious response.
Who is this?

Almost immediately, he got the icon indicating that the other person was typing a response.

A friend.

Yeah? Running a little short on those these days.

The reply came through almost instantly.

I understand your hesitation. Your situation is precarious, to say the least.

Sam raised an eyebrow. Whoever his mystery savior was, they talked a whole fuckin’ lot like Cas.

So what makes you my friend?

I know how to break Castiel’s spell. I might be the only person alive who does.

Sam’s eyes widened. Castiel. This person knew Castiel’s name.

He hadn’t given that information to Bobby- or Dean.

Which spell would that be?

The one to bring Samael back.

I know how this spell is cast. What it takes, to nurture the old soul inside you.

I know what he’s doing to you, Sam.

How he’s hurting you.
Sam read the lines over and over again.

They were too vague, he knew that. It didn’t exactly take an expert to know that having a spell cast on you *sucks*.

*What do you know?*

*I know my brother. He’s gone mad since losing his mate. I know he’s grooming you as a replacement.*

*I know how he’s giving you his life force. I know he’s taking you to his bed.*

Sam looked over his shoulder, glancing at the door.

*And you know how to break it? How I can get free?*

The response was slow in coming- too slow for the short message that followed.

*I do.*

*So tell me.*

*You can’t do it yourself. You’ll need my help.*

*Where are you?*

Yep. There it was. Sam frowned at the screen, before shoving the phone back underneath the pillow.

He wasn’t telling anyone where he was. For all he knew, this was Cas testing him. He didn’t think Bobby or Dean would take this route… but his dad might. Or another hunter.

He pulled the phone back out.

*How did you get this number?*
Again, the response was slow in coming.

*I tricked someone and took it from them. They do not know. You have not been betrayed.*

*That’s super reassuring, thanks. How’d you even know who to trick?*

*It’s difficult to explain.*

*For my brother, this has been a long time coming.*

*I have been watching.*

*That’s fucked up.*

*Nonetheless; the truth.*

*So how do I know you’re not some hunter coming here to kill us both?*

This time, the response took so long that Sam assumed his mystery friend had gone away. He shoved the phone back in his pocket and headed for the shower, taking his bundle of clothes with him.

The phone buzzed again just as he was rinsing shampoo out of his hair. He paused a second, telling himself it could wait.

Then he shut off the water and crossed the tiny room, leaving a soapy puddle on the mat. He shook the water off his hand and picked the phone up.

It wasn’t a text message. Instead, the mystery number had sent him a photograph.

Sam stood, dripping suds onto the carpet as he stared at the picture.

*It was taken in a mirror, the angle canted to the side to reveal the trappings of an anonymous hotel bathroom.*

*The photo showed a woman’s body, hip to shoulder. She was turned with her side facing the camera, the curve of her breast visible in profile. Auburn hair tumbled down almost as far as her elbows, breaking like water over her shoulders and the pair of golden wings spreading from them. Sam glanced at the half-fogged mirror, looking at his own back.*
The anatomy was identical. He knew that even without checking. Everything from the downy feathers to the extra shoulder muscles were perfectly replicated. Only the color of the feathers differed.

*Does this assuage your doubts?*

Sam dropped the phone, wrapping a towel around his waist before cracking the bathroom door. The bedroom was empty. Cas was nowhere to be seen.

Silently, Sam crossed the room, pulling open the top drawer of Cas’s bedside table. Right there on the top was the photo, the same framed picture of the smiling young woman.

Squinting at it, Sam carried it back into the bathroom, picking his phone back up.

It wasn’t the same woman. They both had flowing red hair, but that’s where the similarities ended. The woman in the frame had a much slighter build, and a fairer complexion.

Sam looked at the other angel for a long time, trying to see something—anything—familiar in the shot.

There was nothing.

He snapped a photo of the framed picture, sending it back to the mystery angel.

*Do you know her?*

Almost immediately he got a reply.

*No. Who is she?*

Sam paused, but decided to answer honestly.

*I don’t know.*

He got nothing in response to that.

He put the photo back in the drawer where it belonged, wiped up the water pooled on the bedroom floor, and got back in the shower.
Who is this mystery woman? Is she trustworthy? Is she really an angel? Is she telling the truth about the woman in the photograph?

More importantly, can Cas’s spell really be broken? She’d have no reason to lie, right? Right?

I welcome speculation on this.
Sam had been walking for an hour, and he still felt like he wasn’t far enough from the house.

Cas definitely wasn’t following him. Sam knew when he was being followed, but more than that, Cas never followed him. Ever since the stunt where Sam had nearly burned the house down (and been punished viciously for his efforts) the angel had seen fit to… more or less leave him alone, actually.

One of Sam’s wings caught on a branch, reminding him of the nature of his captivity. As long as the spell was working - as long as Samael’s soul was still rooted and growing inside him - Sam had a room at the Hotel California.

When he figured he was far enough, Sam retrieved his phone, staring at the screen.

He’d deleted the texts from his mystery contact, but memorized the number.

She’d been in constant communication for several days now, always persistent, always reminding him that he was running out of time.

Like he didn’t know. Like he was lying down and spreading for Cas twice a day without the acute knowledge that time was passing.

Her persistence, though, that’s what was scaring him.

Altruism was one thing. A desire to help someone who couldn’t help themselves.

This wasn’t that.

Whoever this angel was, she had her own set of motivations, and Sam had no idea what they were. Ideally, she had some deep-seated grudge against Cas, some desire to see him miserable and alone.

Less ideally, she had something against Samael. Or Sam.

Glancing around one more time, Sam dialed.

She picked up on the second ring with a relieved “hello, Sam.”

Her voice was deep and rich - she sounded young, but Sam knew better than to assume.

He inhaled, looking around the deserted forest despite himself.

“I think… I think I can use your help,” he said at last.

“Oh, thank god,” she answered. The relief in her voice was palpable and for a moment, Sam found it easy to believe. He shook it off.

“I want to know how to kill him.”

There was silence on the line.
“Kill… Castiel?”

“Who else?”

The angel exhaled slowly.

“I will show you how to break the spell. I’m not sure…”

“Not good enough,” Sam countered. “As long as he’s alive, I spend my life looking over my shoulder, wondering if he’s out there, planning to try again.”

“He won’t be able to.”

“That doesn’t mean he won’t try.”

“Sam…”

“No, that’s the deal,” Sam insisted. “You tell me how to kill him, and I’ll tell you where we are.”

For a few seconds, there was nothing but the crackle of static.

“Even if I told you how to do it, you wouldn’t be able to. Not on your own.”

Sam grit his teeth.

“Then you have to help me.”

A rustling now—her hair was brushing the speaker as she shook her head.

“I can’t, Sam. Please, you have to understand, he’s my brother.”

“He’s a monster,” Sam growled, his hand tightening on the handset. “You know what he’s doing.”

“I know,” the angel said. Her voice was sad, and for a moment, Sam thought he’d won. “I need time. This is not a decision I make lightly.”

“You know how to reach me,” Sam answered sourly. His finger hovered over the icon to end the call, but her voice continued from the speakers.

“Wait!”

He raised the phone back to his ear, cutting off her request.

“You can’t pretend you didn’t see this coming.”

“No,” she sighed. “It’s a predictable request.”

“And?”

“I don’t want to kill him, Sam. But I can give you some information. I assume he has healed you?”

Sam snorted.

“Once or twice, yes.”

“That energy goes both ways. You can use your life force to heal him, as well.”
“I already knew that. What else have you got?”

“You can use that same energy to hurt him.”

Sam sat up a little straighter. Suddenly, the colors of the forest seemed a little brighter; he could hear his heartbeat in his ears.

“Hurt how?”

“Enough to disable him. Maybe kill him, if you were determined.”

“How do I do it?”

The angel sighed.

“Like I said; you can’t. You don’t have the focus and your energy isn’t strong enough. But I could. If you tell me where you are.”

“I’ll test it,” Sam answered. His mind was racing. “If you’re right, I’ll tell you where to find us.”

He hung up before she could answer, his heart beating furiously in his chest.

There was a way he could fight. He could win this- if all he needed to do was get stronger, and learn to focus. Whatever this was, this power Cas was giving him, he’d use it for himself.

“How’s that for ironic,” he muttered, grinning at the sky.

The phone buzzed and Sam answered without looking at the screen.

“What?”

“Where are you?”

Sam’s good humor vanished, and he couldn’t help the sudden fear that Cas had spoken from just behind him, close enough to touch-

He turned quickly, scanning the surrounding trees. Nothing.

“Out. Why.”

“I have something for you.”

“I’ll get it tonight.”

Cas sighed.

“I’d like it if you came back. I’m asking nicely.”

Sam paused, a retort on the tip of his tongue. He didn’t have to be back until just before sunset. That was their unspoken agreement and although Cas obviously didn’t like it, he hadn’t made any indication he was planning to chain Sam to his bed again.

Still. Sam wasn’t too excited about pushing it.

“Give me an hour,” he said instead, and hung up the phone before Cas could say anything else.
The cotton was soft under Sam’s fingers as he turned it around, trying to figure out the purpose.

“I told them it was part of a movie costume,” Cas explained. “Though I had to guess your measurements. I wanted it to be a surprise.”

Sam didn’t answer; instead, he pulled the shirt on over his head. Cas was a good guesser; it fit.

The front seemed like a normal shirt, complete with sleeves. Two slits ran up the back, letting his wings poke through. The panel that fell between them was shaped like an inverse T, with velcro lining the edges of the short bars. Matching strips ran down the sides of the shirt, beginning just under Sam’s ribs and extending down to the hem.

When the velcro was attached, it almost looked like a normal shirt. It was pulled around the base of his wings snugly enough that he actually felt warm.

“I saw you out in the sun, the other day,” Cas said, almost like he was explaining himself. “I want you to be able to do that. To… enjoy that.”

Without you ogling me, Sam thought, but there was no malice there. The box contained five cotton tees, all in dark colors. Beneath them was a thick flannel, long-sleeved.

It occurred to him that he was going to need a coat. It was getting colder every day, if he still had the wings when it started to snow…

He cut the line of thinking short, glancing sharply up at Cas like he thought the angel could see his thoughts. Cas was looking at him almost nervously, waiting for Sam to say something.

“Thank you,” Sam said, trying to put as much sincerity into the statement as he could muster. Cas immediately smiled, and when he leaned forward, Sam didn’t pull away.

Cas’s lips were warm and soft, and Sam felt the accompanying rush of energy running through his body.

He focused on that, imagining it gathering in his chest like a ball of lightning. He thought he could feel it flicker and grow and before he could lose his nerve, he shoved it away.

Cas flinched back, his hand flying to his mouth as though Sam had bitten him.

Instantly, Sam realized he had made a mistake. He hadn’t really expected the attack to work- and now that it had, he had no explanation for it.

He rubbed his hand across his mouth, acting as though he had been hurt, as well.

“What was that for?” he snapped, glaring at Cas. “I was being nice!”

Cas frowned, dabbing his fingers against his lip, looking for blood. There was none, but Sam could see a mark on his lower lip, red and raw, like a burn. As he watched, the mark lightened and disappeared.

“I don’t know,” Cas mused, rubbing at the spot. “Are you alright?”

Sam bit his lip slightly, hoping it would redden enough to pass.
“Felt like you shocked me.”

“Hmm,” Cas mused. He was still frowning. For a second, Sam thought he was done for, but Cas just shook his head, dismissing the incident.

Sam picked up the shirts and carried them into the bedroom, tucking them carefully into his drawer. It wasn’t quite cold enough for the flannel, so that went into the drawer, as well.

It was getting full. Sam wasn’t quite sure how he felt about that.

He remembered his backpack, full of secondhand clothes, lost on the side of the road somewhere. Dean hadn’t found it after all, and Sam spared a thought for what had become of it.

The phone was heavy in his pocket and Sam almost reached for it, when Cas interrupted him.

“I have something to ask.”

Sam eased the drawer shut.

“Yeah?”

“I’d like to draw you.”

“Been doing that since I got here, Cas, don’t bullshit me.”

Sam turned around, leaning against the bureau, crossing his arms. Cas looked taken aback.

“How… what?”

“The chain was long enough,” Sam said, gesturing at the nightstand. “I found the book… I dunno. Weeks ago.”

“Oh,” Cas said quietly. He had the decency to look embarrassed, at least. “I’ve done sketches, from memory, but I’d like to do something better.”

Sam frowned, considering.

“What’s in it for me?”

“What do you want?”

Sam paused, letting the obvious answer hang in the air between them. He didn’t bother with it.

“There was a photo of a girl… my age. Red hair. Who is she?”

Cas raised an eyebrow.

“That’s what you want?”

“That’s what I think I can get, yeah.”

“Deal. You let me do a drawing, and I’ll tell you.”

Sam held up a finger.

“I’m staying dressed. None of that ‘draw me like your french girls’ shit.”
Cas crossed the room, retrieving the sketchbook from the drawer. He looked at it for a long time.

“It’s not about that,” he said quietly. “I’d like to see you again, the way you were the other day. When it was just you and the sunlight. There was a time when we were both that content.”

He sighed.

“You saw me and you pulled back, like you were trying to hide from me. There was nothing lascivious at play, but I understand nonetheless. Thus the clothes.”

Sam shoved his hands in his pockets, fingering the edge of the phone. His wings pulled back again, pressing flat against his back. It wasn’t a conscious movement.

“Come outside?” Cas asked.

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If he could forget the fact that Cas was watching him, it actually was a nice day.

Sam sat in the grass, his wings spread out on either side of him. He was playing with a flower, twisting it back and forth. Mostly just to pass the time.

Cas was sitting a couple yards away, his sketchbook on his lap, glancing occasionally at Sam but keeping most of his attention on the drawing.

“So who is she?” Sam asked. “In the photo. Is she another thing like you?”

“No, she’s human,” Cas answered. “Human, from a long line of humans. Her name is Celeste Middleton.”

He paused, looked back at Sam, and went after a section of the drawing with a rubber eraser.

“... and?” Sam prompted after Cas had returned to the drawing.

“And she’s a functional orphan,” Cas said. “Her mother has been brain-dead for years, her father is dead. I’ve been funding most of her upkeep since she was eight, not that she knows. She thinks it’s a series of grants set up by anonymous philanthropists. I was going to send her to college, too, but she ended up pulling enough scholarships that she doesn’t need my help. Smart woman.”

“Why her?”

“That’s a different question,” Cas answered. “You said I had to tell you who she was. Not why I know her.”

Sam started to stand up, but when he looked over, Cas had the beginnings of a smile on his face. He was still drawing.

“You’re an asshole.”

“And you should be more careful with your bargains. As it happens, Celeste is not a secret. I would have told you for free.”
Sam slumped back down, pulling at a strand of dry grass.

“I knew her family,” Cas explained. “A very long time ago. They were friends of ours, but we had a… a falling out. I suppose you could say. At the time, the family had a young daughter. I took it upon myself to look after her wellbeing. It’s a… tradition I’ve been following for several generations now.”

“What did you fight over?” Sam asked. This time, Cas was silent for a long time. Long enough that Sam almost asked again.

“Politics,” Cas answered at last. There was a hard edge to his voice now, but there was something sad there, as well.

“Did Samael know them?”

“Yes, not that it matters. Why do you want to know?”

Sam shrugged.

“If you’ve got a picture of her, means I might meet her someday. I guess I’m just getting a little cabin fever.”

“Would you like to go out again?” Cas asked. “I’ve been thinking of getting a different vehicle. If we had tinted windows, you’d have a wider range of motion.”

“I thought she might be another of your kind,” Sam said, unwilling to change the subject. “I still don’t know anything about them. I was thinking… maybe I could meet another one. Like you.”

“Later,” Cas answered. “After the spell is done.”

“Why, though?” Sam pressed. “Right now they’re like, the only people I could possibly talk to.”

“You can’t talk to them either,” Cas said. There was a hint of warning edging into his voice. “Sam, trust me on this.”

“After, then,” Sam amended. “When the year is up, you’ll let me talk to them?”

“When the year is up, you can do anything you like,” Cas said. He was spending longer looking at Sam, less time looking at the paper.

“Do you have a favorite? Like a best friend?”

“We’re nomadic,” Cas said. He seemed to remember what he was doing and went back to drawing. “I spent most of my time with Samael. We ran into the others on occasion, travelled with them for a decade or two, here and there… but I wouldn’t say I have a favorite, no.”

“Were you living with anyone when you met Celeste’s family?”

Cas frowned.

“No. Why?”

Sam shrugged.

“Just making conversation.”
Cas gave him a long look, and Sam wondered if he’d pushed it too far.

But in the end, Cas just went back to drawing. Sam’s grip tightened on the phone in his pocket.

Cas wasn’t going to give him anything else- and he was going to get suspicious if Sam kept poking around. The redheaded angel was definitely up to something shady… but the closer it got to nightfall, the less Sam found himself caring.

Chapter End Notes

Hoooly CRAP!
Two months!
This might be the longest I’ve ever gone without updating.

So, right after I posted the last chapter, my workplace went suddenly and unexpectedly out of business. As the only person working there who knows how to use eBay, it became my sole responsibility to bring in the cashflow to keep the payroll checks floating while we finished closing. I literally had two weeks to inventory, catalogue, and liquidate 20 years worth of accumulated nonsense.
And oh man. You guys.
I sold computers older than I am. I sold VHS tapes. I turned a pile of broken computers into a smaller pile of working computers. I was putting in nights and weekends right up until I went into labor. A week early.

And man, you guys are lucky I haven't permanently lost the ability to write whump fics. I've been on the other side. 0/10, would not recommend. I almost died, you guys. No bueno. (Don't worry, I told Gertie how the fic ends, if I kicked it, she would have filled ya'll in.)
Also my house was filled with family members which always kinda kills my muse. I can't channel my inner psychotic rapist when my Dad's in the house.
Fortunately the baby doesn't seem to be interfering with the reception so: here's the new chapter. May the next one come faster.
Sam woke suddenly in the dark, flailing at the shape above him. Cas’s hand closed over his mouth.

“**Quiet,**” he hissed. His head was tilted, like he was listening.

When Sam stilled, Cas removed his hand.

“Get dressed,” he whispered. “Get your jacket and go out the back. Wait for me.”

“What time is it?” Sam asked, sitting up and rubbing his eyes. He felt like he’d just fallen asleep.

“Just before three,” Cas answered. “I was not making a suggestion.”

Sam’s windbreaker was under his pillow, wrapped securely around his phone. He unwrapped it slowly in the dark, draping it over his shoulders. He tapped the phone, bringing up the last few messages from the mystery number.

The glare of headlights swept across the living room wall, drawing their attention.

“**Fuck,**” Cas growled. He hastily buttoned a pair of jeans before grabbing Sam’s arm and yanking him up off the bed. “**Come on.**”

“How did you know?” Sam asked instead. He made no movement toward the door, much to Cas’s ire. “That she was coming?”

Cas’s eyes widened in the dark.

“Sam, what did you do?”

His grip tightened on Sam’s arm, and Sam jerked away.

“I got help, you dumb fuck. You thought you could just say ‘no’ and I was gonna drop it? Just sit here and sulk patiently until time ran out?”

A car door slammed and Cas’s gaze darted from the front room back to Sam.

“How is it?” he asked. “How did you even-?”

Sam ignored him, stalking toward the door and the light beyond. He felt Cas try to catch hold of his wing and it flared off, pushing him away.

He didn’t turn back to look at where Cas was waiting, didn’t listen to what Cas was saying. He could hear footsteps on the wooden porch stairs.

Cas caught his hand just as he began twisting the deadbolt.

“I will try to protect you.”

Sam stared at him, momentarily dumbfounded.

Cas was trying to frighten him, that much was obvious. If Sam ran- if the other angel couldn’t find
him- then there was nothing standing in Cas’s way. It was a laughably transparent ploy.

And Cas was a very good liar.

Sam twisted the lock and yanked the door open, making Cas step back to avoid being hit.

The angel on the porch was caught in silhouette, her headlights forming a halo around the red of her hair.

Sam flipped the switch by the door, illuminating all three of them, and then he stood back, crossing his arms.

The new angel nodded at him, before turning her attention back to Cas.

“Hello, Castiel.”

“You haven’t been invited, Anna.”

She frowned, gray eyes narrowing.

“I’d prefer to do this amicably, brother. There’s no reason for us to fight.”

Sam snorted and Cas rounded on him.

“Shut up, Sam.” He turned back to Anna. “What happens here is none of your concern. You know Samael- he has done you no wrong.”

Anna stepped across the threshold, reaching for Cas. To Sam’s irritation, Cas let her arms encircle him. He leaned down, letting his forehead rest against hers. His arms remained at his sides, even as her hand rose to stroke at his hair.

“I remember. He was a good man. But Samael is gone, Castiel. He and Daniel are beyond our reach. As it should be.”

“No,” Cas answered. “He’s there. I can feel him. He’s right there.”

“No, Castiel.”

“Yes, and the same is true for Daniel and the others. You could see him again, Anna.”

She gave him a small smile.

“I’ve been watching Daniel for centuries.”

The air behind Anna began to shimmer and Sam stepped slowly back. Cas sagged in Anna’s hold, and Sam glanced behind him, gauging the distance to the kitchen.

“I cannot let this continue, Castiel. Samael was my brother, as well. His loss pains me. Do not make it worse.”

Cas’s shoulders hitched and his arms rose, holding his sister close. His lips pressed gently to her forehead and Sam took another step back.

“I have to,” he said sadly, and Anna’s wings burst from her back.

Castiel was only a second behind her, but it was enough for her to send the first volley, her hands
glowing where they fisted in Cas’s shirt. Cas howled and Sam turned on his heel and ran for the kitchen.

The sound of glass breaking filled the room as he scrabbled at his target, yanking the drawer open. Cutlery rattled and for half a second Sam feared that Cas was a step ahead of him again- but no, the knife was there, gleaming in the overhead lights.

His fingers tightened around the handle just as something hit the wall with a sickening crunch. Anna groaned, rising slowly from where she’d crumpled to the floor. Sparks of light meandered over her skin, searching out damage.

“Leave it,” Cas barked, but Anna launched herself at him, driving him backwards, beating at him with her wings. They went through the doorway into Cas’s office and Sam momentarily lost sight of them. He followed quickly, trying to keep himself out of range.

Cas had Anna pinned to the floor, his hands around her wrists, one knee digging into her chest. His wings were arched back, protecting his shoulders and face.

As Sam watched, Anna’s grace pulsed into Cas’s hands, raising welts and blisters as it travelled up his arms. He grimaced, but didn’t release his grip.

“Stop it!” Cas shouted, but Anna ignored him, continuing to beat at him with her wings. He grimaced and released her wrists. For a moment Sam felt relieved, until he saw Cas’s fingers tightening around her throat. At close quarters, Cas had the advantage simply by right of being so much larger.

“Don’t make me do this,” he growled, but Anna didn’t slow her struggles. Her palms pressed flat against Cas’s chest, glowing with the power of her grace. Angry red burns bloomed like wildflowers across his flesh, and he screamed.

Sam held the knife tightly, watching for an in. He didn’t want to get hit by one of Anna’s wings by accident. Cas wasn’t paying attention to him at all- his attention was focused on his sister.

Anna was weakening. The glow of her grace dimmed, and Cas began to heal despite the onslaught. Her motions slowed and Sam realized what he was going to have to do.

He pinned his own wings back, not confident enough to try to use them, and heaved himself at Cas. The two of them were more closely matched, and Sam was able to knock the angel down simply with the use of momentum. They landed in a tangled heap on the floor.

“Sam!” Cas growled, trying to shove him off, but Sam was ready, swiping at him with the blade.

Cas cried out as the serrated edge swiped across his palm, cutting deep. Sam could feel a satisfied grin crossing his face. A second later, Cas’s wing was slamming into him, knocking him off balance.

He hadn’t expected that- he’d spent hours sparring with his brother, but they’d always been limited to four limbs. Still, he was nothing if not resourceful. He threw himself into the fall, trying to roll them both until he was on top again.

It backfired, leaving him on his back, Cas crouched above him.

“She’s not here to help you, Sam,” Cas growled, but Sam wasn’t listening. He swung the knife again, angry and desperate. It caught Cas across the cheek, but it was shallow, and began to heal almost immediately.
Cas grabbed for his wrists, but before he could get a grip, Anna was behind him, her arm around Cas’s throat.

“Get off him!” she ordered, pulling Cas backwards and off Sam. He scrambled to his feet, shifting his grip on the knife. There was a strip of leather in Anna’s hand and as he watched, she struggled to wrap it around Cas’s throat. She was mumbling words in a language Sam didn’t know. Across the surface of the leather, written symbols pulsed in time with her cadence.

Cas fought back against her, even as he choked and her grace burned across his skin.

“You can find him again, Castiel,” she pleaded. “You can find him every time, as I do with Daniel. They live wonderful lives, Castiel, and I will teach you to watch!”

The band closed around his neck and for a second, Sam thought it was over. But before Anna could secure it, Cas let out a feral scream and threw them both backwards, slamming them into the wall.

Anna released her grip with a gasp, her hands flying to her collarbone. Sam thought it might be broken. She dropped the band of leather and Cas reached for it.

Sam reacted without thinking. If Cas destroyed the collar, they’d never be able to contain him. Whatever else happened, Sam needed to give Anna another chance.

He launched himself at Cas again, and the two of them went crashing through the basement door.

They hit the stairs hard, Sam on top, and Sam heard something crack. Cas let out a pained gasp and then they were rolling, tumbling down the rest of the stairs.

Sam hit the floor hard, a sharp pain registering in his belly just seconds before his head bounced off the concrete. His vision swam. He knew he couldn’t let Cas back up, and that Anna was counting on him… but even when Cas’s face came into view, Sam couldn’t bring himself to attack. His body felt heavy and far away.

Cas was bleeding- there was blood on his face and hands and he was saying something that Sam couldn’t make out.

Something else moved and Sam realized that Anna was down here too now. Sam’s knife was in her hand, the blade stained with blood. She raised it swiftly to Cas’s throat, pulling him back away from Sam. Sam allowed himself a tiny smile, letting his head fall to the side.

They’d won.

Anna was saying something as she pinned Cas to the ground, her knee between his shoulder blades. She was fastening the collar around his neck and he was struggling. Anna paid no attention- whatever Cas was trying to do, it wasn’t going to get her off him.

Instead he was reaching for Sam.

Sam tried to pull back, but his vision was almost completely dark now, and his limbs weren’t responding to his commands. One of his hands lay outstretched on the concrete floor, and as he watched, Cas’s fingertips pressed into his palm.

Healing grace flowed into him, cool and familiar, and the blackness closed over his head.

Chapter End Notes
Someone over on tumblr asked what would happen if this all took place in Alaska or Greenland or something when it stays dark for like... weeks.

And then there are like 45 minute days and then its daytime for weeks.

I don't know.
Sam woke up to the sound of a match lighting.
He rolled toward the sound, grimacing at the sticky feeling coating his clothes and feathers.
Blood. He was lying in a pool of mostly-congealed blood.
Ugh.
Anna lit the candle sitting in front of her, barely glancing to Sam as she did.
“Is he dead?” Sam asked, sitting up and checking for injuries. Nothing hurt.
Anna inclined her head toward the corner of the basement. Sam was surprised to see bruises raising along one cheekbone.
The basement was dim, lit mostly by Anna’s candle and the light seeping down from upstairs. Sam had to squint to see what she was indicating.
Cas was sitting on the floor, his head slumped forward. Sam felt a thrill run through his belly, but no; Cas’s chest rose and fell with shallow breaths.
“You promised,” Sam hissed at Anna. She stared back at him, her expression unreadable.
“If you want his grace out of you, he needs to be alive,” she said evenly. “It needs somewhere to go. In the meantime, I don’t think he’s a threat to either of us.”
Sam looked back, his wings raising defensively.
Cas didn’t react to their conversation. He hadn’t moved at all, beyond the slow, shallow breathing.
Sam edged closer, peering into the darkness.
Cas’s wings were nowhere to be seen. His legs splayed out in front of him, and his arms were pinioned above his head. The candlelight flickered off metal, and Sam realized that Cas had been restrained with his own handcuffs. They must have still been down here, from the time when- from the last time.
A metal spike had been forced through one of the chain links, before being pounded into the wood above Cas’s head. The spike had a wide head, preventing the chain from slipping off.
“How secure is that?” Sam asked, not taking his eyes off the cuffs.
“As long as the collar stays on, he’s functionally no better than a human,” Anna answered. “He might have had a little residual grace left, but I think he used most of it healing your wounds.”
Sam looked down at himself, noting for the first time the hole in his shirt and the tacky blood covering his middle.
“The knife,” he realized, looking back to Anna. “When we went down the stairs.”
“Not the smartest decision you’ve ever made,” she said. She wasn’t looking at him- she had a collection of dried green things in front of her, and was methodically shredding them. “He broke a couple ribs, but you landed on the knife and your head hit the floor hard enough to cause major internal bleeding. Even with your burgeoning grace, you would have been dead before I managed to get down the stairs and heal you.”

“It worked, though, didn’t it?”

Anna nodded.

“In the future, do not make tactical decisions which require your opponent to save your life. Are you ready?”

He shook his head.

“I don’t know this magic. Tell me what it does, first.”

Anna rolled her eyes.

“And if you find it not to your liking, then what? We unchain him and you go back to life as it has been?”

“I’ll cross that bridge when I come to it. First I want some info.”

Anna pursed her lips, but said nothing. Sam raised his hands, counting off on his fingers.

“First off, are you guys really angels?”

“It’s as good a moniker as any,” Anna answered. She abandoned the dried green things and folded herself into a cross-legged position. Sam carried on.

“So that means you only have part of a soul, right? And your mate has the other part?”

“It’s more like… you’re familiar with magnetism? Two magnets. They call to each other. And they are… more complete when they are joined. If one is destroyed, the other… it still calls, but there is nothing to call to.”

“But angels are reborn, right? Reincarnated? But I’m not… calling to him or whatever.”

Anna shook her head.

“No, you have been reborn, and you are… I don’t know the word. Tired. The call is not there. When Samael died, his soul was… drained. Destroyed. Only a small part made it back. Into you.”

“But now it’s growing,” Sam said. Anna nodded.

“Yes. Castiel is using his life to fill you again. Your soul gains power and it begins to call. It calls to the scattered parts of Samael and it calls to Castiel. When he is finished, Samael’s soul- in it’s entirety- will reside within you. And Castiel will no longer call for what is not there.”

“So then who am I? Me or him?”

Anna’s face suddenly became very hard.

“I do not know. What Castiel is trying to do has never been done. Our role is to watch the humans- not to interfere and not to change and not to guide. A small part of Samael resides within you, but
you are not Samael’s, nor Castiel’s, to use.”

Sam felt something hard growing in his throat. He wiped absently at his face, not sure of how to respond to that.

“Thank you,” he said at last. For a moment, Anna looked sad.

“I wish I had found you sooner,” she said quietly. “I’ve long suspected that Castiel may come for you someday, but when you left, I did not think to follow… the chances of your encounter were…” she shook her head, and Sam frowned.

“What do you mean, ‘when I left?’”

Anna glanced up.

“I came alone, you noticed?”

He hadn’t, but now that he thought about it, it seemed obvious.

“You lost your mate too,” he said. “Daniel.”

“No,” she confirmed, nodding. “I have followed him through dozens of lifetimes. From the first time you were reborn, I recognized you.”

There was a muffled sound from the corner and Sam jerked, his wings flaring in surprise.

Cas was awake, and staring at Anna with a mix of incredulity and rage. For the first time, Sam realized that there was a strip of cloth forming a makeshift gag.

“How many times…?” Sam began, and Anna shrugged.


Cas made another sound, yanking at the chain restraining him. Sam resisted the urge to inch away. Anna scowled into the darkness.

“There is so much of my brother in you,” she said to Sam, though she kept her eyes on Cas. “I see it in new and beautiful ways with each new lifetime. I know and love Daniel in ways that never would have been possible if I had forced myself upon him, the way Castiel has done to you.”

Cas was staring back at her, silent and furious. His hands twisted within the cuffs, making no difference whatsoever.

“You didn’t deserve this,” Anna said quietly, turning back to Sam. “Your life was precious in its own right.”

Sam couldn’t look at her. His hands went automatically to his shirt hem, only to find it tacky with blood. He tried to think of Stanford, the lost scholarship… but right now all he could think of was seeing his brother again. His father. Bobby.

Getting rid of these damn wings.

“So I just need to get him out of me,” he said. It came out sharper than he intended. “His power or grace or… whatever.”

Anna nodded.
“Castiel’s grace must be disentwined from your soul. It is drawn back to him- if the two of you are separated, it will tear you apart trying to return to him.”

Cas shouted something else, yanking at his chain. Sam ignored him.

“And that’s what the spell will do?”

“That’s what the spell will do,” Anna confirmed.

Cas struggled, getting his knees under him and yanking at the chain with all his strength. He was smeared with blood- Sam’s and his own. Sam glanced back to Anna.

“Alright. Tell me what you need me to do.”

“Nothing at all,” she answered, picking the dried leaves up again. “I’m familiar with this kind of magic- it’s what I use to find Daniel. All you need to do is wait.”

She went back to shredding, and Sam braced himself, turning back to Cas.

A rivulet of blood was winding down Cas’s forearm. Sam watched it, waiting for it to staunch.

It didn’t.

Cautiously, Sam edged closer, ready to attack if it looked like Cas was getting free. As he got closer, he realized that the metal spike hadn’t moved at all. It wasn’t even bent. The chain links were whole and undamaged- the only effect of Cas’s struggles was the deep grooves bitten into his wrists. That was where the blood was coming from.

Anna was right. Cas wasn’t any stronger than an average human.

And he wasn’t healing, either.

Sam’s eyes swept over his bare torso, the blood dripping off one elbow, the fine red line where Anna’s knife had pressed against his throat.

Sam laughed.

It wasn’t a good laugh. Even hearing it come from his own mouth, Sam knew that, but he couldn’t bring himself to care.

It was over.

Over.

Cas was staring up at him with wide eyes, trying to say something around the gag.

Sam leaned in closer, his lips almost close enough to brush Cas’s ear.

“I’m gonna kill you fast. In case you were worried.”

He drew back, his lips pulling into a smile as he watched Cas’s face change. Those blue eyes were fixed on him, and for the first time, Sam wasn’t scared.

And then Cas was shaking his head, mumbling desperately through the gag.

Sam hit him.
“Sam!”

He turned around, looking back to where Anna was sitting. She’d risen up onto one knee, prepared to intervene if Sam escalated any farther. He grinned again, not looking back at Cas.

“I’m done. You ready?”

“Yes. Come back.”

He crossed the basement and knelt in front of her.

She sliced up a number of soft pale roots, setting the knife aside and dropping them into a small earthenware bowl. Sam didn’t look too closely at what else might be in there.

Anna held up her book of matches, but paused before striking one.

“Once I light this, you’ll need to inhale the smoke. It may be distasteful but-”

“I’ve had worse,” Sam said. “Light it.”

She paused, but lit the match anyway, dropping it into the bowl. Within a second the contents were engulfed, and a thin grey smoke rose into the air. Sam leaned in, closing his eyes and breathing deeply.

It smelled awful.

The last time he’d made his escape, the air had been filled with the scent of burning plastic and polyester. This was worse.

He almost gagged but managed not to, taking at least three deep pulls before the fire fizzled out.

He sat back on his heels, breathing deep to try to get the sting of the smoke out of his throat. His eyes were watering and, more frustratingly, his wings were doing some distressed little jerk-flap motion.

“How long does it take to separate?” he asked, looking himself over. No lights, no motion… no pain, which was unexpected but welcome.

“I still need the catalyst,” Anna said evenly.

Against the wall, Cas was shouting into his gag, yanking at the cuffs for all he was worth. Sam spared him a glance, but kept most of his attention on Anna.

She picked up the knife that Sam had used to attack Cas.

“His grace will be stripped from you,” she said, “and the soul of the next vessel will be purely your own.”

Her meaning struck home just as she lunged, plunging the knife through the air where Sam had been only seconds before.

He dodged back, his wings pulling him off balance as he searched for a way out.

“You bitch!”

“I’m sorry, Sam. But what has been done here is an abomination. I cannot allow it to continue.”
Sam was unwilling to get much closer to Cas, but his back was coming up against the wall. Anna moved toward him again and he ducked to the side.

“There’s gotta be another way,” Sam begged. He moved along the wall, circling, trying not to glance at the stairs. Each step brought him closer to Cas, who was squirming against his bonds.

Anna shook her head, still trying to reason with him as she advanced.

“There isn’t. I wish I could tell you otherwise.”

“What about a different catalyst, something that could knock us apart-”

Anna’s wings flared wide, trying to cut off his escape. Sam retreated further, risking a glance behind him to make sure the path was clear.

Anna took the opening, darting forward and laying a gash across Sam’s arm. He shouted, lurching backwards, and that’s when Cas moved.

The angel jacknifed, bracing against the wall and shoving forward. His heel connected solidly with Anna’s knee, and she went down with a scream. Sam didn’t wait to assess the damage. He bolted for the stairs like his life depended on it, taking them two at a time.

He wasn’t sure where he was trying to run to- he’d tried to outrun an angel in this house before. More than once.

*New plan*, he thought desperately. *New plan. What’s new. What’s new.*

Blood was dripping off his arm and he stripped his shirt off, wrapping it tightly around the wound. If nothing else, he couldn’t afford to leave a trail.

*What’s new.*

He had grace now. Not a lot but some.

He heard a racket on the basement stairs and moved, escaping out the back door and heading for the garage.

That’s where the weapons were. It was his best shot, no matter how poorly it had gone last time.

He pelted across the yard, grimacing at the screech when he shoved the huge rolling door open. The lights flickered on automatically, illuminating the workshop.

*Sharp and long,* he thought, looking around. *Sharp and long.*

“Sam?”

There was a spear on the table. Sam stared at it openly, unwilling to believe that he’d caught a break for *once.*

He picked it up, feeling the weight settling in his hand. It wasn’t a spear *exactly,* just a length of pipe with a sharply slanted edge. But it was heavy, and solid, and that was better than nothing.

Anna appeared in the door and Sam hefted the makeshift weapon, staring her down. She blinked in the light.

“This doesn’t need to be this hard,” she said, and Sam snorted.
“That’s what he always says, too.”

“Put the pipe down, Sam. This incarnation is ruined, and we both know it. There’s no way to put this back on it’s original path. Come back inside. I can put you to sleep. You’ll never remember any of this.”

“Oh, fuck off.”

There was a small cut on her cheek and Sam focused on it, feeling cautiously hopeful. She and Cas were both exhausted; they’d used too much power in the fight. Neither of them were healing the way they usually would.

Sam had one chance, and that was it.

He jabbed with the sharp end of the pipe, and Anna didn’t even flinch.

“Walk away,” he growled, and was not at all surprised when she didn’t.

The standoff lasted a little over a minute. Sam refused to back down an inch; if she got to the side of him, he’d never be able to swing around fast enough to attack.

Anna quickly figured out that she wasn’t getting inside, so she did the next best thing, and threw the knife.

She threw it hard and accurately, but at the end of the day, it was just a kitchen knife. The tip buried itself in Sam’s chest and he didn’t even look at it, instead taking the opportunity to lunge toward her with the pipe.

His aim was off, but only a little. It went into her chest just below the breastbone. She went down hard and Sam followed through, forcing the weapon through her body and into the ground.

At this point a vampire or werewolf might howl and evaporate into a cloud of smoke. Not Anna.

Anna screamed, a horrible, gurgling sound that made Sam want to clap his hands over his ears. Her hands closed around the pipe, yanking weakly at it. Sam didn’t let go. Blood was pouring from the wound, but blue sparks circled around it, seeking to heal.

Sam dropped to his knees and shoved his hands under her shirt, making contact with the skin of her belly.

Gritting his teeth, he shoved every single scrap of power into her, hoping that he’d have what it took to finish her off.

He could feel himself getting weaker, feel his limbs getting weak and his wings drooping.

Blue sparks danced over his hands, but Anna had gone limp under him. The rush of blood from the chest wound slowed and stopped. When he finally forced himself to look at her face, her gray eyes were dull and empty.

He sat back hard, landing on his ass in the gravel. His wings trembled, and he barely had the energy to hold them up. He wanted to sleep for a decade.

He was going to have to burn her body. Just to be safe.

Sam looked into the darkened forest, picturing the hours of work ahead of him, gathering the wood and building the pyre. He’d done it before, but never alone.
He thought of his phone but… there was no one he could call for help. Not now.

His last best chance was lying dead on the ground in front of him. He’d never had a hope to begin with.

Sam shoved his fists into the gravel, letting his rage and frustration and sorrow out in a long, unbroken scream. It went until he ran out of air, and left him panting helplessly.

The sun was beginning to rise.

Chapter End Notes

So Gertie and Bubbles were betaing for me, and about halfway through this chapter, Bubbles is just like...

Am now terrified that Sam’s gonna die and Anna will deliver baby Sam to Dean and be like “this is fine.”
This is not fine.

Agreed. This is not fine.
Hahahahahaha.

But hey! Now we know how to kill angels. Probably.

I wonder how Cas is gonna react.
Day 82 (Cont'd)

Chapter Notes
See the end of the chapter for notes

Sam planned, and that kept the despair from clawing its way out and consuming him.

It was touch and go for a while, sitting outside on the gravel and waiting for any sign of life from Anna.

None came.

Still, he hadn’t lived this long by making stupid, horror-movie mistakes.

He shoved the pipe further into the ground, pinning the angel like a butterfly, and then he went back into the barn to look for something sharp. He came back with an ice breaker which was… pretty much perfect, actually.

Sounds started coming out of the house right along the time he was separating Anna’s second arm from her torso. They continued as he segmented the rest of her body and dragged the limbs into the barn. The head he left in a bucket, just to the side of the house.

He didn’t know if she could regrow all that, but at least it would buy him time to build the pyre.

He identified the noise in the middle of searching Anna’s car. It was a midsized sedan, and while searching the inside he’d painfully banged the largest joint on his wing against the frame and nearly given up on… well.

Everything.

The registration was in Anna’s name, as was the insurance card he found in the center console. So there wouldn’t be a rental company triggering the lojack, which was some small mercy.

The noise, of course, was screaming. And since there was only one other person still alive, it had to be Cas. He’d either hurt himself or he was simply grief-stricken. Either way, Sam was in no hurry to ease his pain.

Instead he went inside and collapsed onto the couch, listening to Cas and drinking a glass of orange juice and watching the sky brighten.

His wings were getting itchy, and he hated everything.

For the first time, he considered just calling his dad. Maybe John would shoot him. Maybe he wouldn’t. Sam thought maybe it was worth the gamble, if it meant he could just stop dealing with this nightmare.

The birds began singing morning songs, and Sam poured out what was left of the juice. He snagged a loaf of bread off the counter, and went down the stairs.

Cas was a mess.

He’d pulled hard enough to cut the skin on both wrists now, and blood was dripping freely down his arms. He was healing very slowly, if he was healing at all.
The collar was still safely fastened around his throat, but Sam suspected that the fight with Anna had been the main source of his woes.

His face broke into a tired smile the moment Sam appeared on the stairs.

“I thought she’d killed you,” he rasped. Sam didn’t answer. He went straight for the utility sink and the bucket waiting underneath it. He didn’t bother waiting for the water to get warm. It was mostly frigid when he dumped it over Cas, but it took care of most of the blood.

Cas let out a little cry, but didn’t bother protesting. He watched silently while Sam crouched down in front of him.

“How much blood do we need, to make this spell work?”

Cas frowned, like he was thinking, and Sam hit him with an open palm.

“How much, Cas?”

“I don’t know!” Cas gasped. “It’s a symbolic act, so probably just a few drops?”

“What about the other thing?”

“The semen?”

Sam hit him again, hard enough that there was blood on his lip when he righted himself.

“Same concept,” Cas said. His voice was wrecked.

Sam ran his hand up Cas’s arm, getting a palmful of the fresh blood dribbling down. He wiped it on the largest joint of each wing, watching as it was quickly absorbed into the feathers.

“Grace,” he demanded, reaching out and letting two fingers rest on Castiel’s forehead. Cas sighed, bowing his head with a look of concentration. A trickle of grace flowed through Sam’s fingers. It wasn’t as much as he was used to, but he had a feeling that it was all Cas could spare.

“Last thing,” Sam said. He wrinkled his nose as he pulled the bag of bread open. “Here’s how this goes. You’re gonna get yourself off and put the absolute minimum quantity required on a slice of this. Clear?”

“No,” Cas said, shaking his head. “Take the collar off. We’ll go upstairs and do it properly.”

Sam kicked him, letting his boot sink into Cas’s belly. Cas gagged, heaving. If he weren’t immortal, Sam might have been worried.

“Wanna try that one again?”

“Sam,” Cas said quietly. “You’re exhausted. I can give you more of my grace, but it needs time to replenish. Take the collar off. Get some rest. I’ll handle all of this.”

Sam actually hesitated.

He was sore and tired and he had so much still left to do…

And for a moment, it was so tempting to just go upstairs and go to sleep and let Cas take care of everything.
Then he remembered the cost and shoved the wing away.

“Minimum quantity required,” he repeated.

They were Cas’s handcuffs and the key was sitting by the washer. Sam found it quickly and unlocked Cas’s left cuff. The angel immediately reached for the collar, only to have his hand deflected as though by a magnetic field. He tried again, with the same result.

Scowling, he took the proffered piece of bread.

“I hope you understand how undignified this is,” he muttered, when Sam turned his back.

Sam almost kicked him again, but calmed his mind by thinking of the barn.

Everything that Cas had threatened him with, was still out there. Waiting.

He ignored the sounds that Cas made, only turning back around when Cas grunted, indicating that he was finished.

Sam steeled himself. He took the piece of bread back from Cas, wrinkling his nose at the whitish smear across it.

Trying not to think about it, he folded it in half, and in half again, crushing it between his palms and then tearing it in half. The remaining lumps could be swallowed without chewing, and that’s what he did.

He didn’t know if it would work, but it was better than the alternative.

“Close the cuff back around your wrist,” Sam instructed. Cas didn’t move. Sam stared at him and for a long moment, they were at an impasse. Then Cas dropped his arm, very deliberately letting his hand rest on his knee.

Sam nodded once and turned back toward the wall. It didn’t take him long to locate what he was looking for— the iron bar that Cas had used during Sam’s captivity. Sam lifted it, testing its weight.

“I’m not leaving this basement without immobilizing you,” Sam said. “You can put your wrist back in the cuff, or I can break your arm. Your choice.”

“You wouldn’t,” Cas snapped. “You may not be Samael, but I know you better than that. You’ll kill if you’re fighting for your life, but you wouldn’t just torture someone.”

Sam said nothing. The pipe seemed suddenly very heavy. He let the end drag along the concrete as he crossed the basement.

With what seemed like a herculean effort, he hauled the bar up like a baseball bat, letting it rest on his shoulder.

“Don’t make me do this.”

“I’ve never made you do anything.”

The blow landed just above the shoulder, harsh crack dulled by protective wrappings of muscle and sinew. Cas’s eyes widened just a fraction, his mouth dropping into a tiny o of surprise.

Sam didn’t wait for him to recover, just swung and struck again, this time aiming for the largest joint on Castiel’s left wing.
It broke with a horrifically wet sound, the entire wing suddenly turning inward, unable to support its own weight. Cas screamed then, curling around his bad side, trying to inhale but unable to stop the sound coming from his throat.

Sam dropped the bar, letting it clatter to the ground, too loud in the enclosed space. He crouched in front of Castiel, taking hold of his wrist and yanking it above his head. Cas didn’t resist; couldn’t, with his arm so badly damaged.

Sam locked the cuff without a word, backing away before Cas could gather his wits.

The angel hung panting, his left arm bent in two places, his wing trying to right itself.

Sam turned and was up the stairs in a moment, his hands pressed over his ears to drown out Cas’s keening.

The keys to the cuffs were safe in his pocket, and Cas couldn’t touch the collar. Couldn’t break free. Couldn’t heal himself.

Sam was safe. For now.

He didn’t stop until he was out the back door, falling to his knees and retching into the grass. He didn’t throw up, which was good- the bread trick had worked, but he wasn’t in a hurry to repeat it.

His wings spread out over the grass, soaking in the morning sunlight, and Sam shivered. He was missing his jacket and it was cold.

Inside, Cas was screaming.

Sam pulled himself to his feet and trudged toward the barn.

Chapter End Notes

Short chapter is short.
In case ya'll are keeping track: it is November 19th.

Sam woke up late. The sun was up and the itching in his wings was more unbearable than usual.

He stretched out across the empty bed, groaning when his skin touched cold sheets.

He stumbled into the bathroom to piss, barely avoiding banging his wing on the doorframe. He leaned back against it as he brushed his teeth, trying to scratch the bone-deep itch that was settling into the limbs.

In some distant part of his consciousness, he knew it was the blood. Cas’s blood. It wasn’t doing the work it was supposed to, not when he was only putting token smears along each shoulder.

He remembered how Cas used to rub it in, the relief…

On cue, there was a noise from the basement. Sam frowned.

He dressed quickly, pulling on a pair of thick wool socks. The concrete in the basement was cold.

On the way to Cas’s office, he glanced out the window.

The pyre was mostly built now.

A week had passed since Anna had died, but the temperature had been in the low 40s and it had rained, almost nonstop. Finding dry wood was a problem, but after two days with no sign of regeneration, Sam realized he could take his time.

He took the stairs slowly, grimacing at the change in the air.

Basements were always cold, but the chill in the upstairs air made it seem frigid. The air was thick, humid. And there was a smell.

Sam realized he was going to have to rig up a hose or something.

Cas was still slumped against the back wall, groaning weakly. Sam didn’t know where he found the energy.

Blue eyes flicked up toward him, but they held none of the hope that Cas had originally shown. The angel was resigned, now, which gave Sam a sick sort of pleasure.

If he was being honest with himself.

Cas looked up when Sam crouched in front of him, looking over his handiwork.

The collar was doing its job- there were more than a dozen lacerations up the inside of the angel’s broken arm, and none of them were healing. Likewise the arm itself, or the mutilated wing behind
Reaching out, Sam pressed his fingers against Cas’s elbow, wringing a few sparks of grace out of the skin. Cas shuddered.

Below the break, the skin was dark and swollen, pulpy under Sam’s fingertips. He had no doubt that the humerus was shattered- looking at this, he wouldn’t be surprised if it was infected, too.

Cas’s eyes were glassy, rolling to the side, observing Sam without reaction. There was a sponge in his mouth, taped into place after he’d tried to eat the bread Sam had given him.

Sam opened a new wound on his arm, watching the blood trickle toward Cas’s shoulder. He scooped it up in his palm, spreading it hastily over his own feathers.

The itching didn’t decrease in the slightest, and Sam grimaced.

He stood, brushing his hands off on his jeans. He crossed to the dryer, where he kept the loaf of bread and the handcuff keys.

There were only a few pieces left. He’d have to figure out who Cas ordered groceries from.

He quickly unlocked Cas’s good arm, pressing the slice of bread into his palm.

“Get to it.”

Cas shook his head, and Sam sighed. They’d reached an arrangement days ago.

Ignoring Cas’s mumbling, he crossed the basement, to where the iron bar was leaning against the far wall.

When he turned around, Cas had shimmied his jeans down his thighs. They were spread as far as the material would allow, and Cas’s hand was between them, pulling at his cock. He groaned, a weak and frustrated sound, and Sam realized the reason for his protests.

He leaned against the wall, spinning the bar between his hands.

Watching.

Cas stroked himself, his palm dry against soft flesh. He tried to tilt his hips into it and only succeeded in jarring his other arm.

A scream of pain escaped him then, his good hand forming a loose fist against the concrete.

Sam watched in fascinated horror.

He remembered the first time, suddenly. Remembered being pinned on his belly, thrashing helplessly under Cas’s weight, the hard length of Cas’s cock driving into him, tearing him and hurting him and—

Cas tried again, pulling ineffectually at his soft dick, and all Sam could remember was the pain and humiliation and disbelief.

He felt a laugh clawing its way up his throat, and he shoved it back down. Some small strangled noise must have escaped, because Cas looked up at him.

The look in his eyes was angry, and suddenly it made Sam angry, too.
“This isn’t my fault,” Sam snapped. Cas didn’t reply- couldn’t, with the tape over his mouth, but Sam carried on anyway. “This whole fucked up situation is on you! The least you can do is hold up your end!”

Sam crouched, taking fistfulls of Cas’s grubby jeans and yanking. Cas twisted, trying to take his weight on his good arm before the motion could jostle the bad one. He made no attempt to cover himself, only watching as Sam balled his pants up and threw them into a corner.

“I wouldn’t be able to get it up, either,” Sam said, looking him over. The angel was coated in a week’s worth of grime. Dried blood streaked one side of his bare chest, and his legs were only slightly cleaner.

“Maybe I should go get the camera,” Sam mused. He crossed to the sink, filling the bucket with water. “You’ve got a video of me pissing myself, it’s only fair I have one of you.”

He turned, heaving the frigid water across Cas’s naked body. Cas let out a cry.

Sam tossed him a sponge, letting it land on the concrete near Cas’s hip.

He began refilling the bucket.

“Think that would be enough to offset yours?” he asked, not waiting for an answer. “If I die- if I kill you- my family gets videos. Letting them know I’m dead, and how I suffered before it happened.”

He threw another bucketload across Cas, watching the water creep toward the drain.

“It’s starting to look like that’s inevitable,” he said evenly. He wasn’t sure about it until he said it, but now he realized it was true. “I’m going to die here. And they’re going to see what happened.”

Cas shook his head and Sam splashed him, letting the water strike him dead in the face.

“But I was thinking of making some videos of my own,” Sam carried on. “Just to let them know I got mine. That I went down swinging. That’s what I’ve been doing up there, you know. These last couple of days.”

Cas was staring at him, unmoving, and Sam hit him with the water again.

“Scrub. I’m not doing this all day.”

Cas took the sponge, tenderly rubbing at whatever spots had the least bruising. Sam watched for a moment, oddly fascinated with the way the water was trickling along his ribs.

“I’ve been thinking,” Sam said absently, mostly to himself. “About all the stuff you’ve got out in that barn. The blowtorch and what not. That’s what I’ve been doing up there, you know. These last couple of days.”

Cas glanced up sharply at that. Sam threw some more water.

“It’s not for you. It’s for Anna. It takes a long time, with just one person. To pile up that much wood. It’s all wet, you know. It’s been raining for a week. And I’ve been very tired. But that’s how I occupy my time, now.”

Sam knelt down, next to Cas’s shivering form.

“I think about you,” he said quietly, making sure Cas could see his face. “I think about you, and all
the things I’m going to do to you, before we die.”

Cas’s eyes widened at that, and Sam let himself laugh.

He didn’t like the sound of it.

“What was it you always said? Don’t fight it, you’re powerless?”

Sam leaned in, almost close enough for Cas’s hair to brush his cheek.

“I think we’re both powerless, Cas. I don’t think there’s any point in either of us fighting. Not any more. I think our roles are already written out. We just need to play them.”

Before he knew he was going to do it, his hand dropped between Cas’s legs, his palm resting on the angel’s soft cock.

“Try it again?” he asked, his voice going soft. “For me?”

Cas glared at him then, defiant, taking hold of Sam’s wrist and pushing his hand away.

Sam cackled.

“You shy now? When did you get shy?”

It wasn’t hard to wrench Cas’s arm back up above his head, or fasten his wrist into the cuff. He actually growled, yanking at the chain when Sam straddled his thighs. Instantly, cold water was seeping through his pants, but Sam didn’t care.

“This doesn’t do it for you?” Sam asked, all fake disbelief. He took hold of Cas’s cock and pulled—maybe too hard, judging by the wince. “Just pretend I’m the one who’s tied up and hurting, that ought to do it, right?”

Sam let a little grace seep through his fingers, into Cas’s flesh. Almost immediately, Cas hardened in his grip. Sam grinned.

“Thought so. Though I’ve been wondering. Is it me?”

He let go of Cas for a moment, long enough to spit on his hand. Cas looked appalled.

“You know. When you’re holding me down and fucking me, hurting me while I beg you to stop—do you get off on it because it’s me? Or are you thinking of him.”

Cas made a sound of pure rage, bucking his hips upwards into Sam. Sam barely moved. Instead he reached up with his free hand, hooking two fingers through the warded collar.

“You’re not the one with the power any more,” he growled. “And I suggest you get used to it.”

Grace slipped through his fingertips again, burrowing into Cas’s belly, ripping an orgasm out of him. His cock twitched weakly, come bubbling over Sam’s hand.

Sam watched, disinterested. The warm liquid ran down the back of his hand, dripping onto Cas’s thigh.

Sighing, he raised his hand to his mouth and licked a stripe off the curve of his thumb.

Salty. Bitter. Same as before.
Cas was still staring at him, his expression mostly hidden behind the tape.

Sam raised his hand, wiping the remainder off along Cas’s cheek.

“See you in a few hours.”

Chapter End Notes

:D
“Sam, what the fuck?”

Sam said nothing, just allowed his wings to curl tighter around his body. They were large enough to fully cover him now. He’d given up trying to pretend it wasn’t comforting.

He pulled a pillow to his body, wrapping himself around it.

“Hey, Dean.”

“It’s been a week, you little shit. I’ve been calling you for a week. I thought you were dead.”

“Sorry.”

“Sorry? That’s what you’ve got? Sorry?”

Sam took a breath.

“I called to say goodbye, Dean. And… there’s some stuff you should know, before it’s over.”

“Bullshit,” Dean answered, but his voice was strained. Sam heard a car door slam. “Bullshit. I’m coming to find you, Sam, and we’re going to fix this. Hear me? You’re gonna be fine.”

“No, I’m not,” Sam said, and he was amazed at how calm he sounded. “I know how to take this thing down- but I’m going down with it. There isn’t another way.”

“No, Sammy, Sam, listen-”

“There’s going to be an envelope or something that shows up,” Sam pressed on, ignoring Dean’s voice. “With some photos and some- some videos. Burn them. Please. For me.”

There was silence on the line.

“Sam… that… it showed up yesterday, man.”

For a long time, there was only the silence of the empty bedroom. Silence from outside. Silence from downstairs.

“Did you…”

“Yeah. We saw. The letter said… said it would only get sent if you were both dead. Said-”

“Don’t fucking tell me,” Sam hissed. “I don’t want to know what he told you. He’s crazy, Dean. He’s crazy, and a monster, and… and he made me into a monster, too.”

“No. You’re infected or whatever, but we can fix it, Sam. Whatever the fuck is going on. There’s gotta be a way to fix it.”

“It’s too late,” Sam whispered. “I can’t go back, now, Dean.”

“Then we’ll cut the fucking wings off and pretend!” Dean shouted, and Sam swallowed back a sob.
“It’s not the wings, Dean. It’s… it’s inside me, now. I can feel it. Like something rotten.”

“We’ll fix it,” Dean said again, weaker this time. “Sammy… please. You’re stronger than this. You can fight it. I know you can.”

“I can’t,” Sam whispered. “I’m not. I… I didn’t -”

“He _made_ you, Sam! You’re not responsible for what he _made_ you do!”

Sam thought of Cas’s skin, cold under his hands, the mottled flesh of the broken arm.

Cas’s come, hot and salty on his tongue.

“He doesn’t make me,” Sam whispered. “Not any more.”

“Sam, _listen-_”

“The hunt here is over,” Sam insisted. “There’s nothing left to kill. Let it go.”

“You know I won’t,” Dean said. His voice was thick. “You know I won’t. You’re my brother, and I’m bringing you home. One way or another.”

“I know. Goodbye, Dean.”

Sam ended the call and disabled the antennae, preventing any further attempts at communication. For a while he just lay still, letting the warmth of his wings encircle him.

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“I finished the pyre,” Sam said quietly. Cas didn’t raise his head.

He was awake- he’d looked up when Sam came down the stairs. But he was unresponsive now. Whether through animosity or plain exhaustion, Sam didn’t know.

He settled against the wall, close enough that Cas’s good wing could wrap around his shoulder. Sighing, he leaned over and removed the tape from Cas’s mouth.

“I think that arm’s gonna kill you,” he said quietly. Cas hummed. “And then me, I guess. Not long after.”

He twisted his phone around in his hands.

“I was thinking, while I was out there, I was thinking about how I’d turn everything back on you. The look on your face when you figure out how bad that cane fucking hurts. I was thinking it would fix things. But now…”

He tapped the phone, bringing up the camera application. He went to the most recent photograph, holding it so Cas could see.

It was the table out in the barn, the one Cas had strapped him to. Set neatly along the edge were all the tools Cas had threatened to use. The tin snips. The fucking torch.
Sam held it out until he was certain that Cas had seen. Then he flicked the screen off and stuck it back in his pocket.

“I don’t think it’ll help. Not after what… what I did yesterday.” Sam leaned back against the wall, looking up at the musty ceiling. “It’s not fair. I hate you. I hate you so much. And I thought that if I hurt you enough, I could get rid of it. I could just… force everything about you, out of my life. But I don’t feel better.”

Cas turned his head slightly. He was shivering weakly, though from the cold or the fever, Sam didn’t know.

Sam knew basic first aid, and he knew what trouble looked like when he saw it. Even if he weren’t familiar with the myriad signs of a beating, it would be obvious that Cas wasn’t in good shape.

It made him sick.

He reached out, letting his hand rest on Cas’s hip. Cautiously, grace began to trickle from his fingers, seeping into Cas’s skin.

The angel flinched, but Sam kept going. The shivers subsided, and Cas relaxed somewhat.

He wasn’t healed. Not even close. But some of the pain was gone.

Sam could do that much, at least.

“I’m not letting you out of here,” Sam said quietly. “But I figured you should know, I’m going to go outside and light the pyre. Do you want to say anything? For… for Anna?”

“Nothing you need to hear,” Cas rasped. “I’ve said my own goodbyes.”

Sam nodded.

“Dean got the tapes you sent.”

“So much for that plan,” Cas said, and coughed. “I have to admit, this is a unique contingency.”

“He doesn’t hold any of it against me, in case you were hoping for that.”

“I wasn’t.”

“Well… good.”

Sam rose to his feet, shaking dust and cobwebs off his wings.

“He’ll find this place eventually. Not soon enough, but eventually.”

“I suspect there may have been some clues in the parcel they received,” Cas said. Sam shivered. He fluffed his wings, trying to get some of the maddening itch to dissipate.

“It took longer than I thought to build the pyre. After this one is burned, I think I’ll have time to build another one. So Dean and my dad don’t… don’t have to.”

Sam looked over Cas’s naked body again, trying to gauge the damage.

“Yeah. I think I’ve got time to build another one. And then… I’ll be done. I guess.”
Cas looked up at him, and for one moment there was such pure misery that Sam almost went to him.

“Don’t let it end like this, Sam. Not after everything.”

“After everything?” Sam tipped his head back, staring at the ceiling, blinking back the tears that burned in his eyes. “After everything, I think this is the only way it can end.”

“Sam-”

“Bye, Cas.”

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There were a bunch of old newspapers in the barn. Sam figured Cas probably used them as packing material or something. They burned well enough, either way.

Anna’s consummate parts were wrapped in newspaper and then saran wrap and then, just for good measure, Sam had put them in cardboard boxes and aggressively sealed them shut. He’d seen monster parts crawl over a mile to rejoin the whole; he wasn’t taking any chances.

He didn’t bother opening the boxes or removing the plastic- after eight days he wasn’t interested in taking another look. He stacked them on top of the brush pile and struck a match.

He went quickly around the pyre, lighting the paper in at least eight different places. Within a few seconds, the smaller brush had caught, and flames were beginning to lick at the medium branches.

If Sam had done this right, and he was fairly sure he had, the resulting blaze would be hot enough not to give off much smoke. There shouldn’t be a repeat of the fire tower incident.

The medium branches caught, and the bark on the larger logs began to crack and peel. Wisps of white smoke crept out, twisting on the heated eddies.

Despite it all, the air above the pyre was clear, shimmering in the fall chill. Sam watched as flame licked along the edges of the cardboard boxes, turning the paper black.

Ten thousand years old, and that’s how it ended. An anonymous cremation on a mountain in Oregon.

Sam wiped at his eyes. Tried not to imagine Dean standing here, lighting a second pyre.

Sam’s breath caught for a second, terror overwhelming him as he imagined the fire all around him- but he’d be beyond it by then. He had a few days, at most. Maybe less. If he finished the second pyre and Cas was still alive, then… then Sam would put them both out of their misery. Split the rest of the little blue pills and slit Cas’s throat, see where that got him.

It occurred to him that John might burn the two of them together. Heave them both up on top of the heap and light it. Two monsters, one pyre.

Sam stared at the shimmering heat and wondered what it would look like when his wings went up, each feather bursting into a tongue of flame.
The wind shifted, blowing in Sam’s direction, and the dry smoke hit him suddenly, smelling like ash and burning flesh and-

-pain. -

Sam hauled in a breath, the smoke searing his throat.

There wasn’t air; not to breathe, not to scream.

Desperately, he scanned the crowd, desperate.

Afraid.

The pain was like nothing he’d ever felt, it threatened to overrun his mind as he searched familiar faces for blue eyes and dark hair.

He saw Margaret, her bruised cheeks streaked with tears. He wished he had a way to console her, but there was nothing.

The wind shifted and the fire roared, smoke obscuring his vision. Sam shut his eyes against the onslaught. His clothes were burning.

Agony ebbed and flowed as the flames destroyed his flesh and his grace strove to repair it.

He cast out, beyond the range of what he’d been able to see, and he searched for Castiel. One last touch, one last word-

The ropes holding him blazed and snapped, and Sam went to his knees. The wooden platform was alight, glowing red-hot against his palms.

Screaming, Sam let his wings burst free. It was his last chance, his last-

There wasn’t time. The fire was too hot, his grace too far gone. His wings collapsed with the rest of him, burning even as he tried to take cover beneath them.

Castiel was gone. Sam couldn’t feel him anywhere.

The platform cracked, gave way, and Sam felt something puncture his belly. The last of his grace ebbed, and blackness overtook him.

Chapter End Notes

So in the last chapter Sam felt 'viciously driven toward vengeance but at the same time uncomfortable with the violence he was committing.'

I am both pleased and uncomfortable with the way I was able to make so many of you empathize with that feeling.

I feel like if there is a hell, the fastest way to recruit the damned would be to write fics
like this. Like, I've made a couple hundred people root for a rapist and then root for
the torture of said rapist. I'd be willing to bet that a few of you are itching to see him
escape.
Chapter Notes

Part Two.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Many times in his long life, Cas had pondered his own death.

Humans lived short lives and clung to the belief of an afterlife. A place free of pain where they would be reunited with their loved ones.

Castiel’s kind had no such hope. Their perished siblings walked the Earth, innocent of their past, doomed to fall and forget, in an endless cycle.

While the pain in his body worsened and spread, Castiel thought of an afterlife.

Splintered bone punctured his skin, open air giving way to infection. It consumed his marrow and spread to his blood. His skin grew hot and then cold, his teeth chattering in the frigid air. The taut, shiny skin over his shoulder rivaled the emptiness in his belly, the ache he had felt ceaselessly for the last five hundred years.

Of all the ways he had pictured dying, he had never considered this. Angels did not get sick. They did not die in accidents. And they did not kill their brethren.

Countless times, Castiel reached for his grace, finding it always outside his reach.

And so, slowly, Castiel died.

He couldn’t breathe and his heart beat wildly, trying to preserve his failing vessel. He thought he could smell smoke, and it seemed to him that Samael had been talking about a fire.

It occurred to Castiel that after he died, he would be able to go upstairs and join Samael. It was only his vessel that was confined here. If he could only be free of it, he could leave the pain and the exhaustion behind and simply sit by the fire that his beloved had built.

He closed his eyes, feeling his racing heart skip one beat, then two. He couldn’t breathe, but then again, he didn’t need to.

With one slow exhale, his heart stilled and he felt nothing more.

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There was no out of body experience. No rapid reliving of his long life and many deeds.

He did not float out the window and look down invisibly upon his former home. He did not find himself standing in the basement, comforted by a shadowy figure as he regarded his own lifeless
There was no tunnel, and there was no light.
There was nothing.

The ruined bone slid back into place with an agonizing scrape, and if it weren’t for Samael’s voice in his ear, Castiel would have screamed.

The aches of his body ebbed and flowed, returning and receding, as Samael’s grace flooded through his veins. He gasped, lungs filling fully for the first time in days.


Castiel’s wings healed and then receded, giving way to the sensation of Samael’s arms around his shoulders. Castiel reached out, returning the embrace, feeling the heat of Samael’s body beneath his fingers.

“I’ve missed you so much,” he whispered, falling easily back into their mother tongue. The emptiness inside him throbbed, a pale shadow of what it had been. “My beloved.”

“I remembered dying,” Samael whimpered.

Castiel opened his eyes for the first time. He could see the familiar curve of Samael’s shoulder, the chestnut gleam of his hair-

And Sam’s wings, white as the driven snow, folded upwards to encircle them both.

The memories came flooding back, and Castiel was filled with a despair so great it felt like nothing.

There was no afterlife, no joyful reunion with those he had lost. Not for him.

Not for his kind.

The pain inside him flared, gnawing its way up his throat.

He let go of Sam, slumping back against the wall.

“I was gone,” Castiel said dumbly. “You brought me back.”

Sam was frozen, staring at Castiel like he couldn’t remember how he’d gotten here.

“I remembered,” Sam said again. He suddenly looked confused. “And it…it hurt…”

He placed his hand over his belly, rubbing absently, frowning.

And just like that, Castiel was furious. He threw himself at Sam, tackling the boy onto the concrete and pinning his wrists.

“It hurt?” he shouted, somehow pleased about the fear on Sam’s face. “Did it hurt, Sam? When I
died? *Did it?*

Even through his anger, the emptiness inside him reacted to the proximity, dimming just a little when Castiel leaned in.

“That’s what it *feels like,* ” he hissed, “to have your *soul* ripped in two. To have half of it burned away *forever.* ”

Sam shoved at him, but Castiel held on, slamming Sam’s shoulders back against the concrete floor.

“Do you understand now? Why I had to do all of this?”

“Oh, I understand,” Sam growled. Too late, Cas remembered the collar, and then Sam was rolling them over. His hair fell across his face, shrouding it in shadow. “All your pining and bullshit about how much you loved each other, but I *remember.* I remember dying, Cas. And I died *alone.* ”

Cas stared up at him, horrified. The emptiness clawed at him.

*Suddenly he was on that road again—falling to his knees, feeling as though his viscera had been ripped from his body. He looked down to the gravel, expecting to see his own blood puddling beneath him, but there wasn’t so much as a drop. Mica specks sparkled in the daylight, and Castiel was certain that he was dying.*

“I tried to come back,” he whispered. “As soon as I realized, as soon as I knew, but it was too late—”

“You were too far,” Sam finished. His voice was accusatory.

“I was scared!” Castiel screamed at him, and he could feel tears in his eyes. “You don’t understand, *you never* understood…”

Sam stared down at him, confused and utterly human. Castiel needed to state this case, but the one who needed to hear it was long dead.

It was time to deal with the living.

“You were never meant to feel that, Sam,” he said quietly. “When I saw your face… when I realized who you were… so many possibilities went through my mind. In none of them, did you ever experience the loss of a mate.”

“Stow your altruism,” Sam hissed. “*You tortured* me.”

“This is worse,” Cas answered. Sam hesitated, then closed his eyes.

“Yeah,” he said finally. “*It is.*”

Castiel set his jaw.

“So now you know. What it’s like, to hurt so bad you’d do *anything* to make it stop.”

Sam grimaced and sat back, denim scraping against the damp concrete. Castiel sat up, watching him.

Sam’s hands clenched and relaxed, all the anger and frustration seeking an outlet that could never be found. Castiel knew that feeling, but he had nothing to offer that would make it better.

“You didn’t even think about it, did you,” he asked, watching Sam’s face. “*You felt that I was*
gone and you came straight down here and dragged me back.”

“I didn’t think it would work,” Sam muttered. “I’m not sure I even wanted it to work.”

Castiel nodded.

“Fortunately for both of us, it did,” he said, climbing to his feet. He offered Sam a hand, and to his surprise, Sam took it.

When their fingers touched, Sam shivered, even as the emptiness inside Castiel dimmed. He pulled Sam to his feet, but didn’t let go.

Neither did Sam.

The human just stood, silent, looking at their clasped hands.

“Why does it feel like that?” he asked quietly. Castiel smiled.

“Because I am a part of you. Your grace knows mine.”

Sam looked up at him then, and there was fear in his eyes. It broke Castiel’s heart, to see it there. None of this had been part of the plan.

Sam was collateral, a necessary sacrifice… but Castiel had never planned for him to suffer so.

Carefully, as though approaching a spooked animal, Castiel leaned in. His free hand rested gently on Sam’s shoulder, and when Sam didn’t pull away, Castiel kissed him.

It was soft and chaste. For a moment, Cas imagined that he was holding his mate, and that the absence wasn’t burning his heart away like an ember.

He could feel Samael there, just a whisper, a ghost of an echo, but there.

And Sam didn’t pull away.

Chapter End Notes

I don’t know how to do the upside-down smiley face, but if I did, this is where one would go.

This chapter is very very short and I'm sorry about that, but I haven't updated since July so... I figure I owed ya'll something.
Castiel woke Sam gently, ready for an outburst if one came.

It didn’t.

Sam stayed curled on his side, pillow hugged to his chest, still half-asleep as Castiel tugged at his sweatpants. Cas stroked his bare hip, fingers trailing down Sam’s thigh.

For weeks, Castiel had tried to entice Sam with physical pleasure. He knew exactly how Samael liked to be touched, and he assumed that Sam would share the same preferences. He was both right and wrong. Sam liked the same touches, but they weren’t enough to placate him.

Or at least, they hadn’t been.

Not until Sam had felt the wrenching emptiness of losing a mate.

Now, Sam’s grace reacted to Castiel’s touch, soothing the human where simple physical contact had failed.

Castiel’s hand slid between Sam’s thighs, stroking against his entrance. Sam shifted, still not quite awake.

Castiel slotted himself against Sam’s back, making space between Sam’s wings. He nuzzled against the feathers while he teased at Sam’s hole. He went faster than he would have preferred, slicking his cock up and pressing in after only two fingers worth of stretching. Sam winced, letting out a little cry, but Castiel shushed him and he quickly adjusted.

“We have to hurry today,” Castiel whispered. Sam’s feathers were standing on end, and Castiel knew that if he reached between Sam’s legs, he would find the teen aching and hard. “We should have gone last night.”

Sam moaned, his hands balling in the sheets. He still wasn’t ready to touch himself while they made love. Castiel wasn’t going to push, though sometimes he did Sam the favor of doing it for him. Castiel didn’t like leaving his mate hard and unsatisfied. He wasn’t a monster.

Today, though, he didn’t have time to stroke through Sam’s reluctance. He finished quickly and pulled out, ignoring the wet spot on the bed. He slashed his palm open, smearing a quick line of blood across each of Sam’s wings. His grace trickled through his fingertips, drawn into his mate’s body.

“Sam,” he prompted, nudging one shoulder with bloody knuckles. “Can you…?”

Sam reached up, fingers twining with Castiel’s, and a moment later, the laceration across Castiel’s palm healed.

“Thank you.”

Castiel sat up, stretching. The collar sat heavy on his throat as he rose, heading for the scent of coffee already brewing. That was currently his second largest problem.
He poured two mugs and when he turned back, Sam was standing in the bedroom doorway. He blinked sleepily, and for a moment he looked so much like Samael that Castiel almost cried.

“Get dressed,” Castiel told him, passing over one of the mugs. Sam collapsed into a chair, holding the warm ceramic between his hands.

“You’re one to talk,” Sam grumbled.

“I’m getting coffee,” Castiel pointed out. Sam raised his mug as counterpoint, not taking his gaze off the window.

Castiel rolled his eyes and went back into the bedroom. The bureaus were almost empty, nothing remaining but old t-shirts and a few unmatched socks. He pulled on his clothes from the day before, doing one last check of the room.

Empty.

The sketchbooks and photos were packed away, along with anything that could identify him or Sam. Castiel had no doubt that the boy’s family would be ransacking the house within the week, looking for any clue as to where they had gone. He wrinkled his nose at the thought.

The truck was packed- had been packed for two days now, if Castiel wanted to be honest. They should have been long gone from this place, but he was hesitant to do anything that might break Sam’s good mood.

Here, Castiel had contingency plans. Out there… anything could happen.

He picked up Sam’s clothes, carrying them out into the living room and dropping them into Sam’s lap. He closed the bedroom door behind him.

Seventy five years, he’d been living in this house.

It had been quiet. Peaceful.

To tell the truth, Castiel knew he’d have to leave someday. He’d thought he could wait until he had Samael back… but he could never stay in the home he’d shared with Sam. Not after what had happened. What he’d had to do.

Sam dressed with his normal early-morning grogginess, pouring what was left of the coffee into a thermos. Castiel watched, noting the way his wings moved, balancing him without having to try.

It was be difficult, moving Sam with those wings. But Castiel wasn’t quite ready to risk the alternative. Sam was still too volatile.

One of the wings brushed along Castiel’s shoulder when Sam passed, and he couldn’t help himself. He reached out, stroking his knuckles along the length of the flight feathers. Sam shivered, not looking up at him.

“Are you ready?” Castiel asked quietly. Sam nodded, and stepped out into the sunshine.

Castiel followed him to the car, carefully not looking at the side yard, or the mound of ash lying there.
He’d seen enough pyres in his lifetime.

The truck had no rearview mirror, and so Castiel did not look back.

Homes were not worth committing to memory. There were too many to count. Houses rose and fell like the trees they were built from, sprouting and growing and returning to the earth. They were subject to time in a way that Castiel was not, and would never be.

“Where are we going?” Sam asked. Castiel glanced over, noting the way the dappled sunlight moved over Sam’s wings.

“Wherever we want,” he answered.

“That’s a bullshit answer,” Sam said, scowling. “We’re in a moving vehicle, you’ve got to be going somewhere.”

“I was thinking of heading east.”

“Well we can’t exactly go west, now, can we?” Sam scowled. Castiel wracked his brain for some answer that would satisfy his charge.

“Where do you want to go?” he asked, finally. “Anywhere without people.”

Sam shifted, turning his back to the window. Castiel kept his eyes on the road.

“You really don’t have a plan? A safehouse or something?”

“I have three safehouses,” Castiel answered. “One of them is in New York and one of them is in Brazil.”

“And the third?”

“India. But we can’t exactly get you on a plane.”

“New York then, I guess,” Sam said, settling back into his seat. “I don’t speak very good Spanish, so.”

“Would you like me to teach you?”

“No.”

Castiel didn’t reply to that. Ahead of them, the road brightened as it left the forest and began making switchbacks down the side of the mountain. Across the valley, Castiel could see the glint of another vehicle.

There were only six residences reachable by this road- and two were summer homes. Castiel knew his neighbors’ comings and goings by now. He wondered which of them this was.

“I speak Spanish,” he said, somewhat lamely. It would be a long drive if it they crossed the whole country in stony silence.

“I know,” Sam answered.

Castiel took the switchback slowly, mindful of the weight of the truck. Across the valley, the car had vanished into a tunnel.
“The Spanish that they speak in central America is actually different from the one spoken in-”

“I don’t care, Cas,” Sam snapped. His feathers were standing on edge, and Castiel took the hint. He glanced back across the valley, hoping to catch a glimpse of the approaching vehicle as it left the tunnel.

Nothing.

He kept an eye on the tunnel mouth, wondering what was taking the car so long. The tunnel was not long.

He took another switchback, putting the valley on Sam’s side. The teen kept staring out the window, regarding the open expanse the same way he’d looked at the stone cliff face.

Castiel tried to think of something to say. Something that wouldn’t set Sam off.

Not for the first time, he considered teaching Sam to hide his wings.

It would certainly make the trip easier, not to mention earning him Sam’s gratitude.

If he could be sure that the human wasn’t a flight risk-

The car came skidding around the corner so fast that Castiel almost hit it. He slammed on the brakes, resisting every instinct to veer to the side. There was nowhere to veer to. The car skidded past them, brakes squealing.

The truck’s tires skidded across the gravel shoulder, and for a second, Castiel thought that they would go over. He threw the truck into reverse and hit the gas.

There was a squeal of metal as they hit something solid. Sam was thrown from his seat, bouncing off the dashboard with a grunt of pain.

He wasn’t wearing his seatbelt, Castiel realized. What were they doing behind us?

He verified that they were parked on terra firma, then leaned over to check Sam. He was dazed, but fine. There was blood in his mouth, but his split lip was already healing.

“What did we hit?” Sam groaned.

“Another car,” Castiel answered. “Stay here. I’ll check them.”

He hurried to unbuckle his own seatbelt. The people in the other vehicle were likely unharmed, but if they came around to the cab and saw Sam-

Castiel heard car doors open and he rushed to do the same, making as much noise as he could to try to draw them away from Sam’s side of the truck.

“Gotta take those corners slower,” he called. He could hear someone muttering.

Cas turned the corner to find himself facing the barrel of a shotgun. The man holding it was staring at him with a grim smile.

“People keep telling me that,” the man said.

“Sammy!” came a voice from the other side of the truck. Castiel felt his heart drop. He didn’t turn his head to see the man who’d called Sam’s name. The last thing he wanted to do was spook the
older man holding the gun. He heard a car door opening, and the sound of muffled voices.

“Looks like we got here just in time,” the older man said. “Turn around, toward the cliff face.”

Castiel hesitated. He got the feeling that if he got within stumbling distance of the dropoff, he’d never come back from it. He raised his hands slowly, the universal symbol of peace.

“Dad!” the younger man shouted. “He’s here! Sam’s alive!”

“Lucky for you,” the older man growled. “Move.”

Castiel edged toward the gravel shoulder, trying to think of any way to buy himself time.

“Sam?” he called out, cautiously. “Are you alright?”

The older man cocked his shotgun.

“You say another word to him, I’m gonna aerate your middle parts.”

“I’m fine, Cas,” Sam said, coming around the edge of the truck. “Meet my dad, and my brother Dean.”

“We don’t have time for this,” Dean said. There was an edge to his voice that Castiel couldn’t quite place. “We have to get off the road. If another car comes along—”

“The road’s practically abandoned—”

“And it would be just our luck,” John finished. “Yeah, all right. Dean, you take the truck down to the next overlook point and park it. Sam, you’re with me.”

Castiel didn’t need to ask where his part was. He turned his head. If he was going to die, he at least wanted to see it coming.

He didn’t expect John to flip the gun around and bring the stock down hard.

Chapter End Notes

Nanowrimo is upon us again.
Everything was fuzzy.

Castiel went down slow, almost too slow, and nobody even tried to catch him. He saw a flash of white feathers, where Sam stood beside his brother. He didn’t close his eyes. If he was going to die, he wanted Sam to be the last thing he saw.

There was no gunshot. Instead there was a blooming pain in his ribs. Someone had probably kicked him. He couldn’t tell.

Sam turned in slow motion, heading for the black car that his family had appeared in. Castiel tried to say his name, but got another boot for his trouble.

He was shoved onto his belly, his hands jerked behind him. He could feel cord tightening around his wrists, and it occurred to Castiel that he might not be about to die.

He was jerked up by the collar and dragged toward the black car. Not the backseat- the trunk. Unsurprising, really. He tried to catch his balance, but John was walking too quickly.

Sam stood beside the front seat, an old blanket draped over his wings, regarding them impassively. Castiel tried to speak to him, but his tongue felt too big for his mouth. He considered whether he might have a concussion.

John said something muffled and unintelligible, and then Castiel was toppling over, surrounded by the darkness of the car’s massive trunk. The door shut with an impressive amount of noise, and then everything was dark.

Shapes swam in front of Castiel’s vision, pulsating in time with the ringing sound in his ears. He wanted to sleep, suddenly, even though it was only a few hours since he’d woken up.

It seemed a very long time ago, that he and Sam had been in their own bed. He’d been in a hurry to get out the door. He knew the house wasn’t secure any more; it hadn’t occurred to him that they might be attacked on the road.

Castiel pressed his face against the carpet, trying to ground himself. He couldn’t go to sleep. He wasn’t going to heal which meant he had to keep his mind sharp. Winning a physical altercation was out of the question. He needed to focus.

The carpet was thin and rough, and he could feel it leaving dirt smudges across his cheeks and forehead. This was a working car. Tools went back here.

Castiel rolled around, trying to find anything sharp. There were a couple of duffel bags to his side, but he couldn’t find a zipper with his hands beginning to numb. He exhaled again, drawing in a slow breath through his nose.


Castiel gasped, breathing through his mouth, trying to clear the scent out of his mind. It wasn’t strong, but it was there. Smoke, and old magic.
Sam’s family were hunters.

The edges of his vision went red and he shook his head, scratching his face across the dirty floor. He couldn’t get overwhelmed. Modern hunters didn’t know about his kind. They wouldn’t know about the collar unless Sam told them.

The revelation surprised him less than it might have. Sam always had been a little too blase about the things he’d seen in Castiel’s home. And there’s the matter of the sterling silver blade that the teenager had kept concealed in the sole of his boot.

Quite frankly, Cas probably should have figured it out before now.

The car took a curve a little too fast, drawing Castiel out of his thoughts.

Strategy. He needed a strategy. If he could get the collar off, he could get himself and Sam away from these two. If not... well if not, they’d probably hack him into pieces and light him on fire, whether Sam protested or not.

Or maybe they wouldn’t.

Castiel hadn’t been completely truthful about the package he’d sent to Sam’s family. He’d implied-no, if he was being honest, he’d outright said, that he’d sent them videos of Sam’s degradation and torture. And he’d considered it, but in the end, he couldn’t justify doing that to them. They were innocents in all this, and there was no point in traumatizing them just to punish Sam.

And so he’d sent one video. Himself and Sam, just after their lovemaking session had completed. Sam lay on his back, his wings spread out to his sides, sleeping peacefully with Castiel’s head on his shoulder. The clip was thirty seconds long, enough to show the rise and fall of Sam’s chest, the way Castiel’s hands moved over his body without waking him.

Sam’s own letter said that he’d met someone. All Castiel did, was play along to that ruse. A video of a domestic couple, to be sent only if one of them were dead.

Of course, he hadn’t counted on a family of hunters realizing that the wings were real.

The car slowed, gravel clattering against the underbelly, and Castiel remembered John’s instruction to abandon the truck at the first overlook. A moment later, one of the car doors opened and shut. Castiel heard voices from inside the car, but he couldn’t make out what they were saying. He could hear the three of them going back and forth- and it didn’t sound like they were getting along.

The car started moving again, and the sound of the engine drowned out anything Castiel might have overheard. He closed his eyes, blocking out even the slivers of light that made it into the car’s darkened trunk. There wasn’t anything further he could do here.

He slowed his breathing, trying to meditate, but all he could think of were hunters.

Normally when he got like this, it helped to think of Celeste, or her mother, or any of the brilliant, red-headed women who had come before her. It started with Margaret, of course.

Castiel still remembered stumbling into the village square, the way the silent crowd had parted for him, unwilling to meet his eyes. He remembered seeing the pyre for the first time. In the hours since his soul had been ripped in two, it had burned to a fine white ash.
Castiel remembered the shape of wings, burned black into the cobblestones. He remembered turning to the so-called holy men, already on their knees, begging forgiveness for their mistakes.

To err was human, and what could be a greater error than mistaking an angel for a witch?

Castiel’s memory faltered there, but he knew that there had been no forgiveness in his heart that day. Angels- true angels, after all- were terrifying and vengeful, the soldiers of god, and while Castiel had never met the god who supposedly created him, he wrought god’s justice unto those men with an assurance he’d never felt since.

He remembered the way the ashes burned, the way the white powder clung to the blood on his arms and clothes as he dug through it, searching for something, anything, that would give him hope. But there was nothing left to heal. Not so much as a single feather remained. The pyre had burned that hot.

He could hear the villagers encircling him- men and women he knew, people he’d lived amongst for years. They’d known Samael. And still, they’d built his pyre and dragged him to it and they’d watched, and done nothing.

“Who was it?” he asked. The ash was in his throat and his voice was ragged. “Who named him?”

The crowd was silent, shuffling uncomfortably. They all knew how the witch hunters worked. A witch could save themselves from death by giving up the names of those in their coven. It didn’t matter that there was no coven.

Someone had named Samael. Samael and his partner, who lived outside the town and never seemed to age. Samael who could speak in tongues and heal the sick.

“Who named him?” Castiel repeated. There was no answer. These people had learned to hold their tongues, but the lesson came too late. Castiel closed his fist around an ember, refusing to let it go even as the skin burned and split and healed and burned again. Someone gasped, and Castiel dropped the ember.

He’d have that name. One way or another.

Chapter End Notes

I forgot they actually speak Portuguese in Brazil. I think I was thinking of Peru, but Brazil was on my mind because of the recent election.

If you're American and you haven't yet, please go out and vote.

Thank you everyone for the feedback.
Hello everyone.
As you might have seen on my other fic, I got approved for ECT and it's unlikely I'll be writing any more in the future. As a result, this fic is being officially discontinued.
I'm sorry to have brought you all so far only to drop it now.

What I can do, is tell you how it would have ended, as far as my current storyboarding goes.

(Or if you prefer you can skip my ending and go see what Aceofcrows has in store for us: https://archiveofourown.org/works/17738105/chapters/41849867#workskin. )

First off, the flashback 'arc' is mostly discontinued. Samael died during the witch hunts in Ireland roughly 500 years ago. Castiel saw the writing on the wall and wanted to leave, but Samael was unwilling to abandon Margaret and Isobel. Castiel left, feeling pretty certain that Samael would see reason and follow him shortly.

When Margaret was taken by the witch hunters and tortured, she gave up the names of the angels. The witch hunters found Samael home alone and quickly determined that he was, in fact, a witch. Castiel felt his mate die and returned to the town, but it was far too late. The terrified townspeople realized that they had killed an angel, and were certain that Castiel was there to bring God's wrath down upon all of them.

Castiel killed the witch hunters and turned his attention to the rest of the town. He might have actually torn through most of the onlookers, except that Margaret came forward. She told Castiel that it was her fault that Samael had died, because she had given his name up to save herself. Even though she was clearly terrified, she maintained that the rest of the townspeople were innocent and that if Castiel needed revenge, he should take her. Blinded by rage and loss, Castiel almost killed her, until he saw the marks on her body from where she had been tortured, and he realized she had no choice.

Castiel left the town without further bloodshed and spent quite a few years wandering. When he came back to himself, he searched out Margaret's descendants and became their absent benefactor. Caring for those Samael would have loved is one of the only ways he stayed rooted in reality. The red-headed woman in the photo in Castiel's nightstand is a descendant of Margaret and Isobel. (Also it's Charlie but that never actually comes into play anywhere.)

Back on the mountain cliff:

John and Dean bring Sam and Cas back to a deserted motel in the middle of nowhere. Dean beats the shit out of Castiel, insisting that Cas break the spell on Sam. Castiel insists that it cannot be done. Within a few hours it is time to complete the ritual again, and Sam insists that John and Dean give them privacy for it. They are not actually aware that rape is part of the spell, because Castiel never actually sent the sexual videos he took.

The next day, John and Dean try forcibly separating Cas and Sam, convinced that it will break the spell, but they give it up when Sam begins having seizures.
The morning after that, John announces that the key to the spell is proximity. He orders Dean to take Cas and drive him as far away as possible. Castiel begs Dean not to do it, insisting that Sam will die if the ritual is not completed. As Castiel begs, Dean realizes that it is John's intention to kill Sam if he cannot be returned to his human form. Dean turns the car around and helps Castiel and Sam escape from John, turning them loose in a stolen car.

Unbeknownst to Cas, Dean tells Sam a piece of lore that he's discovered in the meantime; if Sam can manage to fall in love with Cas before the year ends, then Samael will not be able to replace him. Sam will still be an angel, but Samael's soul will not replace his. Sam is horrified and convinced that it's impossible, but Dean says they have no other leads.

From Cas's point of view, Sam suddenly becomes less argumentative. He starts more conversations and isn't as openly hostile. He tries to enjoy sex more. The two of them move from place to place, jumping around the country, trying to stay off John's radar, and Castiel finds himself falling in love with Sam.

A few weeks before the spell is due to end, Castiel finds himself completely torn. Sam is so close to full-angel that Castiel cannot tell the difference between the torn soulmate bond, and the pain of simply missing someone he once loved. He fears that if he gets Samael back, the pain of losing Sam will become so great that he will never feel whole again. He begins to realize that what he's doing to Sam is murder, and he does not know if he will be able to forgive himself. Moreover, he does not know if Samael will forgive him, either.

Anguished, he confesses to Sam that he wishes he could stop the spell from completing. The two of them dig into the lore, trying to find some other way to break the spell, but nothing comes up.

Sam, now struggling with his own feelings, spills the beans. He says that he began being nice to Castiel as self-preservation, but as time as gone on, the feelings had developed into something genuine. Experiencing the angelic bond for himself, he more fully understood Castiel's motivations in the beginning of the year.

Castiel asks Sam if he loves him, and Sam responds that he does not know. Castiel hurt him, deeply, and may yet hurt him more. While he has come to trust Castiel and regard him affectionately, parts of him are still angry and afraid.

With hours left until the end of the year, Castiel and Sam perform the ritual one last time, making love under stars in the Arizona desert. Castiel tells Sam that he loves him, and Sam does not respond.

Castiel wakes up the next morning to an attack. Now fully powered and free of the requirements of the spell, the other angel kills him without revealing his identity.
Anyway that's how I was gonna end it probably.

If anybody wants to take a shot at writing any part of this, their own ending, anything; please do. I'd love to read it.

Please don't take it personally if I don't respond to comments, I am reading them and loving them all, I promise, but I am very tired. I will try to answer questions/tie up any loose ends, if I can.
A note to let you all know that this fic has been picked up by Aceofcrows

https://archiveofourown.org/works/17738105/chapters/41849867#workskin

And it is magnificent so if you’re itching for more I highly recommend hitting the subscribe button.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!