

Brothers in Arms

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/11687235) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/11687235>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	Graphic Depictions Of Violence
Fandoms:	Flashpoint (TV) , Criminal Minds , Criminal Minds: Suspect Behavior
Language:	English
Series:	Part 3 of A Wounded Soul
Stats:	Published: 2017-08-02 Updated: 2017-11-07 Words: 7,255 Chapters: 2/?

Brothers in Arms

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Summary

Sam is excited to see an old friend, but Team One doesn't know what to make of the man. Follow Sam as he reconnects with an old friend, Team One as they get to know more about one Sam Braddock, and two brothers in arms whose past comes back to haunt them. **A Bit of a crossover with Criminal Minds and Criminal Minds: Suspect Behavior** Follows "A Brother's Revenge"

I do not own Flashpoint or Criminal Minds

Chapter 1

"Okay boys and girls. Let's calm down!" Ed commanded as he tried to suppress the smirk on his face.

Team One had just experienced their first prank, courtesy of their blonde sniper, since they lost Lew. It brought a smile to the Team Leader's face, knowing that the Team was finally figuring out how to move forward after losing one of their own.

Sam laughed as he leaned against the armrest of his chair, put his hand to his mouth to cover his smirk, and swiveled back and forth in his chair. He had finally brought Spike out of his funk from the last few weeks. He had known that if anyone could help Spike move forward after the loss of Lew it would be him. Killing Matt and having no one at all there for him had almost obliterated his own soul. He couldn't let that happen to Spike. Not if there was anything he could do about it.

"I still can't believe you did that Sam!" Spike complained.

Spike ripped off the duct tape that was holding the air horn in place under his chair. Tossing the offending item across the table where it came to a stop right in front of Sam. Righting his chair Spike rubbed his right ear again in an attempt to clear the ringing that the blast from the air horn had caused.

"Do we need to call EMS Spike?" Wordy asked in his caring, fatherly voice as he tried to hide his own laughter.

"Yeah, we can't have you on duty if you're not at one hundred percent." Jules chimed in from where she sat next to Sam.

The laughter brought on by Sam taping an air horn under Spike's chair, and the girly squeal that echoed down the halls when Spike sat down, was just what she needed this morning. She was still working through the loss of Lew and the laughter was good, for all of them.

"Alright everyone. That's enough. We don't want Greg thinking that all we do is play around whenever he leaves." Ed commented from his place at the front of the table.

"When is he coming back?" Leah asked, having forgotten the details in the midst of the morning's playful antics.

"Later this morning. He had a late flight back last night that ended up delayed so he'll be in once he gets a bit of sleep." Ed sipped his coffee. "Which is why this morning we are training. We are going out to the range. Jules, Sam, bring your Remi's. I don't want you two losing your edge."

Spike couldn't keep in the burst of laughter at Ed's words.

"Right, like Samtastic and our very own sexy sniper could lose their edge." Spike laughed.

Jules glared across the table at Spike. The only person that was allowed to get away with calling her a sexy sniper was Sam, and that was only once in a blue moon. Especially seeing as she was still trying to lock away her feelings for him.

Leah simply rolled her eyes as the Team stood and headed to the armory to gather their weapons and ammo. She was glad the Team was finally moving forward. She wouldn't say they were moving on exactly, that took more time. But, they were able to be more themselves now and that was a good thing.

Once on the range they started with their Glocks. Each working on their accuracy, speed, and groupings. Ed kept a close eye on his Team to make sure they weren't losing their edge. They were the best for a reason and their skills on the range was one of those reasons.

Ed would put himself, Ed, and Sam through their paces with their Remi's a bit later. He had an idea up his sleeve and he was curious to see if the SRU's best sniper was up to the challenge.

SRU Dispatcher's Desk

"Hello love, I'm looking for a Sam Braddock."

Winnie looked up at the unfamiliar voice. She noticed a handsome man with black hair standing next to her desk offering her a sexy smile. The dispatcher had heard an accent but couldn't quite place it just yet.

"And who might you be?" Winnie asked, offering the handsome man a smile.

"Mick Rawson. I'm an old friend of Braddock's." Mick answered.

Mick could see the effect that he was having on the pretty dispatcher and he almost laughed. He never intended to make them swoon, but his accent usually caused it to happen anyway.

"Is he expecting you?" *British!* Winnie realized after hearing the man speak again. She always was a sucker for a British accent.

"No, I thought I'd surprise him." Mick winked.

"His Team is out back training right now. You can wait here until they come back in or I can deliver a message if you'd like."

"Oh come on love. Surely you can just point me in the right direction?" Mick put on his biggest smile.

"No, she can't."

Mick turned at the voice behind him. The sight that met him was a fully uniformed SRU officer carrying an MP5 in his right hand.

"Winnie, is this man bothering you?"

"No Rollie." Winnie smiled. The Brit may have been getting on her nerves but she could hold her own. "He's here to see Sam but Team One's on the range. I told this gentleman here that he can either leave a message for Sam, or wait until Team One comes back inside."

"And who are you?" Rollie asked, turning his attention once again to the newcomer.

Mick smiled at the man. This was obviously a man in charge and who had clearly come back from dealing with a situation. Mick could see the concern in the other man's face and knew he had better speak fast if he didn't want to be forcibly removed from the premises, or even better, tossed in a cell.

"Name's Mick Rawson. I'm an old friend of Sam's and have just learned he's here in Toronto. Thought I'd stop by and see an old mate." Mick explained again.

The profiler in Rollie said that this man had to be a former military buddy of Sam's. That thought intrigued him. Sam didn't seem to talk about his time in the military much.

"Winnie, I can escort him back there." Rollie offered as he turned and passed his weapon to his Team Leader. "I'm sure Sam will be anxious to see an old military buddy of his."

Mick's eyebrows shot up. So, this man knew he was former military. He figured the soldier persona must be harder to get rid of than he thought.

"Come on, this way." Rollie turned and headed to the outdoor range.

The two men walked in silence. Rollie was observing the British man while Mick was taking in his surroundings. Mick could see an obstacle course, a track, a shoot house, and a shooting range behind it all.

As they approached the shooting range Mick could see five people gathered around behind a sixth person who was laying prone on the ground. He would recognize a sniper position anywhere. *That must be Sam*, he thought with a smirk.

Rollie stopped several yards away from the range and the visitor did the same. They waited and simply observed Team One for a long moment.

"Okay Sam, that was your current SRU record. Think you can hit one further out?"

Mick could hear the challenge in the petite brunettes voice and he smirked. Braddock never was one to stand down from a challenge.

"Only one way to find out." Sam muttered.

Seconds later a shot was fired. A tall, bald man was looking through binoculars off into the distance. "Good hit Sam. Looks like we have a new record, again."

"See if you can go farther." A tall, skinny man with black hair encouraged.

Moments later another shot. Another ten seconds of silence. Another report from the bald man that it was a perfect shot.

Mick could hear the hint of irritation mixed with pride in the bald man's voice as he told Braddock his shot had been good. Taking a couple of steps forward he watched as Sam sighted, and shot at another target.

Rollie simply stood back and watched. He was curious to see if Sam really knew the man or not.

"You are *on point* today Braddock." Bald man stated.

"Does that mean it's another Sam day?" The brunette asked, clearly attempting to sound irritated.

"Every day is Samtastic day."

"Does he ever miss?" Mick asked with a smirk. Those were the exact words he spoke oh so many years ago when he first met Braddock.

Sam had his eye to the scope as he searched out another target just beyond his last. The Team had been challenging him to best his distance record. He had been doing so just a couple of yards at a time and was lining up his next shot when he heard the familiar Welshman behind him. His head whipped around to look behind him. Standing a few yards behind the Team, near Rollie, was a man Sam had thought he'd never see again.

"Mick?!" Sam stood and walked past the Team. "Mick Rawson! Man, I never thought I'd see you again. It's been what, close over two years now? What bring you to Toronto?"

Mick closed the gap between them and grasped Sam's outstretched hand. The men pulled together in an embrace that spoke of deep friendship, brotherhood.

"Heard you were here. Had time off. Thought I'd come up and see an old mate." Mick smiled as they released each other.

"Sam?" Ed asked as he crossed took a couple of steps forward and crossed his arms.

"Right!" Sam turned and looked between Team One and Mick. "Mick this is Team One. Ed Lane, Jules Callaghan, Leah Kearns, Kevin Wordsworth, and Spike Scarlatti. Our Sergeant, Greg Parker, will be along later today. Guys, this is my good friend, Mick Rawson."

"Pleasure to meet you all." Mick smiled as he reached to shake hands with Sam's team.

"So, Samo, where do you know Mick from?" Ed asked curiously. He noted the look of curiosity on Rollie's face too and knew his old friend had been thinking the same thing.

"We met in Afghanistan." Sam answered simply, after a moment of hesitation and meeting Mick's eyes.

Jules read more into what wasn't said than what was. For Sam to be good friends with this man means that Mick had to be in the military. Jules wondered if he was Special Forces just as Sam had been.

"Well, let's head inside and get some coffee. Greg should be getting in soon anyway." Ed suggested after consulting his watch.

Sam slapped Mick on the back. "Let me just grab my Remi. We'll be right behind you."

Team One turned and headed into the barn, each quietly wondering just how well their sniper knew the Brit.

Sam returned to the range, ensured his Remi's safety was on, and picked up the extra ammo before turning to follow the Team.

"So, how long are you in Toronto?" Sam asked curiously as the two men fell in step with each other.

"A week. My team is on leave for a bit." Mick answered, unable to hide a hint of sadness from his voice.

"What Team?"

"I work with the Behavior Analysis Unit of the FBI now. Sam Cooper is head of my team."

"Cooper? Really?" Sam hadn't heard that name in years either.

"Yeah. Was offered the position as head of a Red Cell in the FBI and was told he could choose his own team. He called me, passport didn't matter."

"I can't wait to hear all about it."

The two walked in silence for a moment.

"So, how is the lovely Natalie these days?" Mick asked.

Sam turned and glared at his friend. His gaze was met head on.

"How's Jenna?" Sam asked in response.

"Touché." Mick turned and kept walking.

Mick followed Sam into the building and to the armory. As the FBI agent took in everything around him he covertly observed Sam's team.

"Just gotta clean this real quick then I can give you a tour." Sam commented as he laid his Remi out on a small bench to clean.

"Never know when you're going to need it, eh?" Mick commented.

"We could get a Hot Call in any minute. Gotta make sure my gear is ready should I need it." Sam answered with a smile.

"Just like the good ole days."

"Not quite, but similar." Sam smiled softly.

"So, mate, how long have you been in Toronto?" Mick asked, making small talk.

"About two years now." Sam answered as he worked to quickly take his Remi apart to clean.

"I never thought you'd leave the Army."

"Yeah, well, things change."

"Matt still in?" Mick leaned against the cage behind Sam and didn't miss the fact that Sam went completely rigid at Matt's name.

"No." The simple answer. Sam couldn't elaborate here, or now.

Jules noticed Sam's reaction to the inquiry about Matt and decided to step in and move the Brit's attention away from Sam for a while.

"So, Mick, where are you from?"

"Wales." Mick answered simply. He hadn't missed Sam's reaction either and decided that now was not the time to push the issue.

"You flew all the way over from Wales to see Sam. You two must be really good friends then." Jules offered a small smile.

"From DC actually." Mick addressed the first of her comments while trying to avoid the second.

"As in Washington, D.C." Spike asked curiously as he came to stand just outside the gun cage, arms crossed.

"Yeah."

"Mick here works for the FBI now." Sam commented. He too was trying to keep the conversation away from Afghanistan.

"How did you manage that?" Leah wondered aloud. "I wouldn't think they'd let non-citizens in the FBI."

"Well this time they did." Mick didn't like where this conversation was going either. As he looked at the brunette he got the feeling that she was profiling him. He almost laughed at the thought. *This will be an interesting visit.* He thought.

Sam finished reassembling his Remi, slid it back into the case, and returned it to its place on the wall. He had been listening to everything being said around him and figured it was time to rescue his friend.

"Come on Mick. Let me show you around." Sam draped an arm around Mick's shoulder as he steered them away from the Team.

Jules stood rooted in place and watched them walk away. She was intrigued. How did Sam *really* know the man, how close was their bond, and why did she get the feeling he was profiling her? It seemed she would have to wait to get her answers.

"Your Team seems very...interesting." Mick commented as he faced Sam in the workout area of the SRU.

"They are." Sam answered with a smirk. "So, how is Cooper these days?"

"Good. He excels in his role as the head of our Team. He's asked after you."

"I was thinking about you two a while ago. Wondering where you were, what you were up to, if you were still in." Sam admitted as he glanced around to see if anyone was listening in.

"Yeah, well, I just needed a change and Cooper called at the right moment." Mick took a deep breath in. "It seems like you fit in well here."

"I'm trying. It hasn't always been easy though."

"Maybe later you can tell me all about it." Mick glanced over to the dispatcher's desk and noted Sam's entire Team watching them. "I think we've got your Team wondering about me."

"Let them wonder. It'll make for some interesting conversation over the comms later." Sam smirked. "Hey, it looks like Greg is back. Come meet my Sergeant."

Team One quickly averted their gaze as soon as they realized they had been caught watching Sam and Mick.

"He's clearly military." Jules commented quietly.

"Rollie got the same vibe off the man." Ed commented as he snuck another glance over his shoulder.

"Do you think Sam will ever tell us how they *really* know each other?" Spike wondered in a loud whisper.

"It doesn't matter." Leah stated matter of factly. "If he wants to share with you then he will. If he doesn't, well, he deserves a bit of privacy."

Jules stared at Leah for a minute, a bit surprised. But, the more she thought about it the more she realized her teammate was right. Each of them had things they kept close to the vest. Sam had more than the rest of them but that didn't mean he didn't deserve to have them.

"Greg! Welcome back!" Ed smiled at seeing his friend entering the SRU.

"Hey Team. It's good to be back." Greg smiled as each of the Team welcomed him home, minus Sam.

Greg looked around, searching for their blonde sniper, when he saw him off to the side.

"Mick Rawson? I didn't think I was going to see you again." Greg commented as he went to shake the other man's hand.

"Greg Parker. I didn't realize *you* were Sam's boss." Mick firmly shook Parker's hand.

"Wait, you two have met?" Sam asked curiously.

"Let me go gear up and I'll meet you all in the briefing room." Greg answered in response.

As Greg walked away he laughed to himself. He knew Rawson had said he was headed to Canada to meet up with an old friend, but he had never imagined it would be Sam. *This will be interesting.* He thought.

Ten minutes later the Team, and Mick, gathered around the conference room table.

"So, tell us how the conference was." Wordy set a fresh Timmy's in front of Greg.

"The conference was great. The BAU really knows their stuff when it comes to profiles." Greg smiled as he sipped his coffee. "I'm going to talk with Commander Holleran and see if there is a way to bring them up here for a training. Our negotiators can learn a lot from them."

Mick hid his surprise and the idea. He wondered if Hotch would go for it. *Of course he will.* Mick thought.

"Does their method really work? I mean we profile all the time but can they really tell as much about a person with just a few moments of interaction as you say they can?" Jules asked curiously. She knew they profiled all the time but from what Greg had told them the BAU was a hundred times better at it than they were.

Greg smiled. "Why don't you ask Mick."

Sam turned in his chair and looked at his friend. "So you're in a unit in the BAU of the FBI?"

Mick allowed the slightest upturn of his mouth in response.

"Well? Are your methods as good as rumors say?" Jules asked.

All eyes were now on Mick.

"Ed Lane. While not in command of this Team he is clearly an authority figure. He has tactical experience, is a sniper, and is very protective of his team. He is married and has a child. He is the second most senior member of this Team. Ed is good friends with Wordsworth. He also likes his coffee with two creams and two sugars. A Double Double." Mick responded.

Ed simply stared at the man. *How did he get all that and only spoke to me for a minute?* Ed wondered silently to himself.

Jules couldn't help but wonder if Sam had been talking to his friend about the Team. *No, when Sam first saw him he said it had been over two years. He wouldn't have responded the way he did if he had been talking to Mick.*

"Team One, Hot Call!" The claxon alarm sounded as Winnie called out to the Team.

"Hey, I gotta get to work." Sam stood and turned to his friend. "I'm on shift for the next nine hours but you can crash at my place." Sam handed over his apartment keys.

"Winnie, can you get Mick my home address please." Sam called out.

"Sure thing Sam." Winnie answered as she typed away at her computer.

"Sorry...."

"Don't worry Mate. Duty calls." Mick slapped Sam on the shoulder once. "Go do what you do best."

"Feel free to make use of anything at my place." Sam called over his shoulder as he ran down the hall to gear up.

Mick watched after his friend for a long moment. He couldn't wait to sit down with Sam later and see how his friend was *really* doing. Something was haunting Sam today. Mick hoped that he would be able to help. Finally, after Team One left the building, he turned back to the dispatcher.

"Here's Sam's address." Winnie handed over a sticky note. She hadn't missed how easily Sam invited the man into his home. She may not be a profiler but she could see that these men had a very deep friendship.

"Thanks love." Mick offered on last, huge smile before walking away.

As Winnie watched him leave Greg came over the comms and asked for her assistance. Everyone would have to wait until later to find out just exactly who Mick Rawson was, and how they knew one Sam Braddock.

Intrigued

SRU SUVs

The day had been long and Sam was getting tired. The team had gone from one hot call to another non-stop today. Hopefully, once they finished packing up their gear from this one they would get to go home. Their shift ended in thirty minutes. However, he refused to voice his desire knowing that would just jinx them.

"So, Sam, Mick Rawson?" Jules glanced at Sam.

"What about him?" Sam simply kept packing the gear into the back of the truck as he talked.

"You seem to be really good friends with him. You meet him while you were in JTF2?"

"Maybe." Sam almost smirked.

"Come on Samtastic. Tell us how you know a man from England."

"Wales." Sam corrected, remembering the first time he called Mic an Englishman.

"Same difference...right?" Spike was grinning from ear to ear from where he stood next to Leah in front of the command truck.

"Not at all," Leah answered for Sam.

"Team One, Hot Call!" Winnie's voice came over the radios in the SUV's. "Potential suicide."

"Location?"

"Highway 401 and Keele St." Winnie supplied as she continued to type away. "Reports are of a distraught young man on the bridge."

"Thank you, Winnie, we are on our way."

Sam closed his eyes for a moment and drew in a deep breath. The 401 was dubbed the Highway of Heros. All the fallen soldiers traveled that route upon return home before being sent to their final resting place. Why someone would choose to end their life on a highway dedicated to those who gave their lives Sam would never understand.

"Winnie, we need the highway shut down. Divert around that bridge." Ed ordered as he drove as fast as possible through traffic.

"Already on it."

Greg was already in the process of transitioning from the last call to this one. He needed a clear head if he was going to talk down a potential suicide.

"Winnie, do we have an ID on the jumper yet?"

"Not yet Boss."

As three SRU SUV's screeched to a halt just off the bridge Team One piled out and orders were issued.

"Ed, Sam, get these people back in their cars and clear the bridge."

"Maybe we can get an ID off this guy from his vehicle," Sam suggested even as he turned to usher people back into their cars.

"Good thinking Sam. Keep me posted." Greg smiled, their rookie was making progress.

"Leah, Spike, witness statements. Jules, you're my second. Wordy, cover us. Let's go see if we can't keep this man from jumping."

Moments later Greg, Jules, and Wordy approached the man sitting on the rail of the bridge.

"Sir, my name's Greg Parker with the Police Strategic Response Unit. I was hoping you could tell me what brought you out here today." Greg kept his tone gentle and his words kind.

"I have an abandoned car. Checking it out now." Sam reported as he opened the unlocked car. As he peered inside his breath caught and his heart sank. "Spike."

"Yeah, Sam?" Spike turned to where Sam was searching the abandoned car.

"I found his car. I have an Army uniform, might be our subject."

"Do you have a name?" Spike ran for the command truck.

"Corporal Leon Sommers," Sam answered as he continued to look through the console in the car.

Moments later Spike had his answer. "Jules, sending a picture to your PDA."

Jules looked at the screen and sighed. "Boss, it's him."

"Thanks." Greg turned his attention back to the young man who hadn't said a word since they had arrived. "Leon Sommers, can you tell me why you're standing on this bridge today?"

The soldier whipped his head around to the officer standing to his left. "How do you know my name?"

"My team found your abandoned car."

"Oh." The simple response before his attention went back to the highway.

"Leon, can you tell me why you came out here today? Are you planning on jumping?"

"Boss, I have his service file. He appears to be the perfect example of a soldier. No bad conduct reported, stellar performance reviews, he's even due for a promotion in the next

couple of months." Spike reported as he filtered through the man's files.

"So what would bring a soldier with a perfect record out to a bridge to end his life?" Jules wandered quietly.

"A lot can drive a man to suicide that would never end up in his file," Sam answered simply.

"Leon, come on buddy, talk to me." Greg pleaded. He really didn't want to watch this young soldier end his life today.

"It's supposed to be safe," Leon whispered barely loud enough for Greg to hear.

"What does that mean?" Ed's brows furrowed as he looked to Sam.

Sam just shrugged his shoulders as he closed the door to the soldier's car.

"He just keeps repeating 'it's supposed to be safe'." Jules looked around trying to figure out what he meant.

"Maybe someone's after him," Wordy suggested.

"Leon, is someone after you?" Greg asked cautiously. That might drive a man to suicide if the circumstances were just right.

Greg was met with silence.

"Spike, does he have any family? Anyone we can call for some insight?" Greg needed insight into this soldier's mind.

"His parent's live in Ottawa."

"I'll call them." Jules stepped back out of earshot of the man on the rail to call his family.

"He also has one older brother. Deceased."

"What happened?" Ed turned from directing the uniformed officers to keep the crowd back. He glanced down at the 401 to make sure traffic was still being diverted.

"Working on it."

"Boss, I talked to his parents. They never realized he was suicidal. They are on their way from Royal York where they are staying this week. They did share that his brother, Andrew, was one of the fatalities in the tanker explosion last month." Jules shared. "He was moving from Ottawa to Toronto for a new job. Leon had just returned from a tour in Afghanistan and was helping. He was following in a second vehicle and saw it happen."

"So he gets back from Afghanistan, only to watch as his brother is killed in front of him. Thanks, Jules." Greg sighed softly.

"Boss, that explosion. In the mind of a soldier, that would look a lot like an IED..."

"I hear you, Sam."

"Let me talk to him." Sam took a few steps towards where his team stood on the bridge.

"I don't think that's such a good idea." Ed still remembered the few times they tried working on Sam's negotiation skills and being called a jackass.

"Come on, I know where he's coming from. Just let me try. Please!" All of Team One could hear the desperate pleading in Sam's tone.

"Alright, Sam. Talk to him. I'll be right here, my hand on your shoulder." Greg finally gave in. He figured that if anyone could get through to Leon it would be Sam.

Sam took a deep breath as he approached the Boss. Greg offered him a small reassuring smile before squeezing his shoulder once. That alone told Sam that Sarge had faith in him and supported him.

"Corporal Sommers, my name is Sam Braddock."

Leon's eyes met Sam's blue ones. Only the second time he had looked away from the road below since Team One had arrived.

"Braddock? You serve? "

"Yeah," Sam answered simply. "You wanna tell me what's going on?"

"I can't do it anymore. Home is supposed to be safe. I mean, isn't that why we're over in the sands fighting? To keep our home safe?"

Sam had Leon's full attention in a matter of seconds whereas Greg had yet to get the man to look at him, even after half an hour.

"Yeah, it is. We go over there to protect our homes, our families, our friends, those that can't protect themselves."

"Then why is it that I don't feel safe? Am I the only one that feels this way? That there are people waiting to kill me around every corner? We spend every moment over there, waking or sleeping, on high alert. All our senses primed and ready should we be attacked. We learn to watch rooftops, alleys, every car that passes us on the street knowing that any one of those places could hold someone that wants to kill us. We never truly sleep all night for fear of an attack, our weapons always within easy reach.

"When we come home we aren't supposed to have to worry about that. We leave behind the suicide bombers, the nightly attacks, the constant sound of gunfire, the snipers and insurgents on every block. We're supposed to be safe, to *feel* safe!"

"I hear ya. It's not that easy though, is it? You come home thinking that you can transition seamlessly into life here again but it just doesn't work that way. You jump every time you hear your mom in the kitchen and she bumps or drops a pot, thinking it's gunfire. Every time you go for a run you find yourself scanning alleys for suicide bombers or rooftops for the

muzzle of a sniper waiting to shoot you. Traffic makes you nervous because you never know which car next to you is the next suicide bomber. A walk in the park, something that should relieve stress, only makes you stress more. You find yourself worrying about landmines or tripwires on the paths." Sam drew in a deep breath. "I hear ya!"

"You think..." Leon looked up for a moment and drew in a deep breath as tears threatened. "What's worse is just when you think you're getting back to normal, finally making that transition, something happens to transport you right back there."

Sam knew Leon was talking about his brother's death. Wracking his brain he tried to find the best way to move forward.

"You're doing good, Sam. You've made a connection." Sarge praised from his place just behind Sam.

It was like a lightbulb went off in Sam's head. He unconsciously reached for the wristband that Leah had given the Team after Lew's death. Drawing in a deep breath he knew what he had to do.

"When I left the Army..." Sam swallowed down the lump that was forming in his throat. "... it was because I had seen one too many friends die. My specialty was long-range marksmanship, a sniper. I had to watch over and over as friends got hurt or died because I wasn't fast enough, or good enough. That kind of toll weighs on a man."

Sam took a step forward, never breaking eye contact with Leon. "When my best friend died I couldn't take it anymore. I left the army and came home. I thought I'd be safe here. But your experiences over there never leave you. For months I couldn't even go for a run without taking my weapon with me, scanning the streets and rooftops every second I was out. Some habits are hard to break.

"Just about the time I felt like I had finally made it, I had made the transition, something happened. One day at work a teammate, a friend, stepped on a landmine."

"No!" Leon's eyes went wide.

"Yeah. It was a CR-38. The man that planted it glued the hole shut so it couldn't be re-pinned." Sam tuned out the harsh breathing that was coming from Spike over the headset. He needed to keep his focus on Leon.

"A thirty-eight?"

"Yeah. We had no options, not any that wouldn't kill the rest of the Team anyway. He didn't make it."

There was a long moment of silence.

"I could do nothing but watch." Sam drew in a shaky breath. "I *watched* as a teammate, a friend, a brother, was blown up right in front of me."

"My brother died right in front of me." Leon looked stated as he wiped a tear from his cheek. "I was helping him move from Ottawa to Toronto for his new job. We had both of our cars packed to the brim with all his crap. But we never made it to our destination."

Sam waited. He knew that Leon would simply need to let out all his emotions.

"Coming down the highway I was several cars behind him, got held back at the toll. There was a tanker just in front of him a bit." Leon drew in a shuddering breath. "I can still see it like it just happened. One second everything was fine, the next the tanker went up in a ball of flames. Andrew never even had time to hit the breaks. The flames engulfed his truck instantly and caused it to explode."

"Coming back, you never think you will see something like that again. Sure, we're used to seeing cars explode from IED's, we're used to dealing with landmines, snipers, and constant gunfire. But those things don't belong here."

"It's like nowhere is safe." Leon turned his gaze back to the highway below.

"You need to give him hope, Sam. He needs to know that that explosion was a once in a lifetime accident. He needs to find a reason to keep living, a light at the end of his very dark tunnel." Greg encouraged.

"When my best friend died over there I lost sight of why I joined in the first place." Sam shared as he took another step forward. "I lost sight of the fact that I just wanted to make a difference. That I wanted to protect people, save them from the evil in this world. I had to find another way, a different purpose in life than just taking out targets from over a mile away.

"When I came to the SRU I was lost. So very, very lost. But you know what, I found my purpose in life again." Two more steps forwards. Sam could almost reach out and touch Leon where he sat on the ledge. "I learned that I could still make a difference. I could still protect the innocent from the evil in this world. That I could do all that and not just from behind a scope a mile away.

"Yeah, there are days when this jobs sucks. Days when things happen that rock me to my core. Days like when Lewis Young gave his life to protect the innocent people of this city. Those days are hard, knowing that things like landmines don't belong here. But then there are the good days.

"The days where we keep a madman from killing little kids in a park. The days where we are able to talk a man bent on revenge out of shooting his son's killer. An act that would take him away from the family that so desperately needs him. The days when I sit up in a sniper perch, protecting my team, from a tripped out druggie who is waving a gun around like it's a piece of candy." Sam's voice softened as he took the last two steps towards Leon. "The days when we talk to a young soldier who is going through the worst time of his life and show him that there *is* a light at the end of the tunnel."

"I don't know what to do..." Leon dissolved into a flood of tears.

Sam reached out and pulled the young man off the ledge and wrapped his arms tightly around him.

"You remember. You remember the good times. Andrew's laughter, his smile, the way his eyes lit up when he was happy. I didn't know your brother, but I can guarantee you this. He wouldn't want you to end your life. He would want you to live. You find something you can do to honor his memory, to make a difference."

"Good work Sam." Greg couldn't help the small smile. Their rookie had done it, Sam had talked a suicidal soldier down from the ledge.

"Sam, Leon's parents are here," Jules stated into the comms from where she stood next to Leon's parents.

"Leon, your parents are here. They're really worried about you." Sam took a small step back, keeping his hands on the other man's shoulders.

"They're going to be so disappointed in me." Leon looked down in shame.

"No. Not disappointed in you. Disappointed in themselves."

"Why?" Looking up Leon made eye contact with Sam yet again.

"Because I can guarantee you they are lost in their own pain. So lost that they didn't see how badly you were hurting. They couldn't see that the way Andrew died reminded you of all the ways you've lost brothers. They couldn't know that Andrew's death would make you question your life's calling." Sam turned Leon to see his parents.

"They know now. They know that you're hurting and that they need to be there more for you. But you..." Sam turned to look at Leon and pointed directly at him. "You can't keep this in anymore. You have to talk to them, share with them, confide in them. If you don't then they won't know how to help you, Leon."

Leon nodded once as he stared at his parents.

"I know how hard it is, losing someone as close to you as you were to Andrew. If you ever want to talk, give me a call." Sam pulled out a business card and wrote his cell number on the back. "Transitioning is not easy in the best of circumstances. I want to be there for you if you'll let me."

"Thank you." The emotions Leon was feeling were overtaking him once again, making it impossible to give more than that short answer.

"Come on, let's get you back to your family."

Team One watched as Sam guided Leon towards his waiting parents and the emotional reunion that ensued. Sam had done extremely well and each was beyond glad that Sam had been able to talk the young, distraught soldier off the ledge.

"Winnie, tell the Uni's that they can release traffic on the highway," Greg instructed before walking to Sam. "Great job Sam. I'm proud of you."

"Thanks, Sarge." Sam drew in a deep, cleansing breath.

"Okay, Team. Let's pack up and head back." Ed instructed.

Team One was just starting to climb in the trucks when Leon approached Sam with his parents close behind.

"You've saved my life twice now." Leon smiled softly. "A couple years ago my Unit was cut off and under attack. We thought we were done for when all of a sudden a .50 cal started mowing down the enemy as a JTF2 Unit showed up.

"I was with an injured buddy, out of ammo, and hostiles were coming right at me, guns raised and ready to fire when they suddenly started dropping. You saved my life. I never got to meet you personally but later I asked the name of the sniper. Your Unit had moved out of the area before I ever got a chance to find you and thank you. I recognized your name today."

Sam simply stared at the man for a long minute. "I remember that mission. You were escorting an HVT back to base when you were ambushed."

"That's right. You and your boys were right there for us when we needed you." Leon reached out to shake Sam's hand. "Thank you for saving my life, then and today."

"I'm just glad I could be there when you needed someone." Sam simply answered. "Take care of yourself. Call me if you need to talk."

"I will."

With that, Sam climbed in the passenger seat of the SRU SUV, leaned his head back, and closed his eyes. Jules drove in silence back to the barn.

SRU Headquarters

"Constable Braddock, you did good work today. I know negotiation isn't your strong suit but you did well today. Great work."

"Thanks, Sarge." Sam could feel a blush creeping up. He really just wanted to get out of here. Mick was waiting at his apartment and right now all he wanted to do was grab a beer, kick back, and relax with an old friend.

"So, Sam, Mick Rawson?" Spike asked with a mischievous smirk.

"What about him, Spike?" Sam asked tiredly.

"How do you know him?"

Clearly, Spike wasn't going to let up.

"We served together." *Will he let it go at that?* Sam wondered, even though he already knew the answer.

"Was he Special Forces? What kind of work did you do together?" Spike was intrigued about Mick, and how Sam knew him.

"If I told you, we'd have to kill you," Sam smirked before getting up and walking out.

Making quick work of changing Sam was soon out the door to go home. Spike's curiosity was greater now than ever before and he vowed to get his answers soon! Sam, on the other hand, was determined to give as little info as possible.

Sam's Apartment

Mick turned off the television after the news report. It had been interesting watching Sam work. A news crew managed to get a good vantage point just downwind of where the man was sitting on the bridge so sound carried and they had gotten every word spoken between the two on camera. The news report shared the tragic story of the accident that caused the brother's death, as well as reminding Toronto of the circumstances surrounding the death of Constable Lewis Young.

As he listened to Sam talk to Leon Mick's own heart ached. It had been hard losing Beth. But he realized that he had someone who understood completely what he was going through. Mick was more thankful now than ever that he decided to take his leave and spend it visiting Sam.

Somewhere in Toronto

He couldn't believe his luck. Two of his targets were in the same city, one staying with the other at his apartment. His luck was looking up. As he packed up his gear he began planning his next move. They would soon pay for what they did.

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