

grab my hand, i'm drowning

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Summary

“Dean...” When Dean looks up, Cas shakes his head slowly, and those piercing blue eyes are filled with tears. It hits Dean like a punch to the gut. Cas moves closer, and Dean lets him. Cas reaches for his face, and damn it, Dean lets him. “There is nothing, nor has there ever been anything, in the entirety of this -- or any other -- world’s existence, more real than my love for you.”

Notes

Sorry not sorry.

Based solely on [This tweet.](#)

Title from ["Trauma" by NF](#)

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Dean kicks the door shut with a little more force than he means to, and sinks onto the cot with his face in his hands. The cot squeaks out a complaint under his weight, and the pipes groan behind the walls when someone down the hall flushes a toilet. He's sick and tired of bunking in a goddamn high school, he'd just about kill for a shower, and right now the back seat of the Impala would be more comfortable, but it's what they've gotta do. Anything to save the fucking world, right?

He's exhausted, and can't remember the last time he slept. He needs just a coupla hours, and then he'll be good to go -- if he can even manage to fall asleep.

The door slowly creaks open, and he drops his hands to find Cas closing the door behind himself, his gaze fixed firmly on Dean's face. "What?" Dean asks. It's a little too snippy and forceful, and he huffs, closes his eyes, and tips his head. "Sorry," he mutters. "I'm fuckin' exhausted. What's up?"

Cas doesn't seem to bristle at Dean's attitude. He's used to it by now. Instead, he pushes forward and settles on the empty cot opposite Dean. Sam's taking watch, so it'll be abandoned for a few more hours, at least. Cas seems to know this when he shrugs out of his trench coat. He's still watching Dean, but he doesn't speak.

"What?" Dean asks again, softer and more vulnerable than he's comfortable with.

"Do you want to talk about it?"

"About what?" Dean scoffs.

"Your..." Cas pauses and looks away when he licks his lips. Dean's eyes follow the movement, and he silently kicks himself for it. His gaze snaps up to Cas's when Cas turns to look at him again. "Crisis of faith."

Again, Dean scoffs. "Never had much faith to begin with, Cas. Can't have a crisis if it ain't there."

Cas knows him to goddamn well, and his chest feels tight when Cas tilts his head. "Dean..."

"Nunna this is real, Cas," Dean breathes. He grips the edge of the cot and closes his eyes to steel himself. "So why fuckin' bother?"

"I told you, Dean." Cas's words are emphatic, and it makes Dean's heart ache. "We are real. You and me--"

"How do you know that, huh?" Dean pushes off and paces toward the door, scrubbing a hand over his face. "Every goddamn choice we ever made, every move, every feelin', it was all for what? Chuck's sick game? The, uh, the fuckin' Winchester Gospels?"

"No." Cas stands to meet him when he paces back.

“How’d you figure?” Dean drops his hands to his hips and shakes his head. “The things I feel, Cas--” his words catch in his throat. His gaze falls to the floor, and he drags a shaky breath. “You told me you loved me,” he squeezes his eyes shut, “and there ain’t no way that’s real.” Though his voice is hushed, it seems so loud in that little classroom. He doesn’t mean to say it, he doesn’t think. Or maybe he does. If now’s not the fucking time to talk about it, then when?

“Dean...” When Dean looks up, Cas shakes his head slowly, and those piercing blue eyes are filled with tears. It hits Dean like a punch to the gut. Cas moves closer, and Dean lets him. Cas reaches for his face, and damn it, Dean lets him. “There is nothing, nor has there ever been anything, in the entirety of this -- or any other -- world’s existence, more real than my love for you.”

Dean gasps, trying to catch the wind that’s been knocked out of him, and those stubborn tears spill down his cheeks. Cas wipes them away with his thumbs. He wants, so fucking desperately to believe that. That this, Cas, these feelings, are real. But after everything... he doesn’t know-- “How?”

Cas crowds his space and leans in. Their foreheads bump together, and Dean can feel Cas’s breath warm on his face. “Do you feel this?” His thumbs smooth over Dean’s cheeks again, and Dean closes his eyes in response. “And this?” His lips brush Dean’s tentatively. Slowly. And it feels like instinct when Dean’s mouth moves against his, when his lips close around Cas’s. Their tongues brush, and he grips at Cas’s shirt, then lifts a hand to bury in his hair, desperate to cling to every sensation. To ground himself in this reality.

“Whatever may come,” Cas whispers when they break, and Dean rests his forehead against his, “I will choose you. I will defy Heaven, defy Him, defy what’s been written in the gospels, forever. Of that, you can be certain. Trust in that.” He takes Dean’s hand and presses it to his chest, covering it with his own. “No matter what else happens, no matter what He does or says... believe this. *I* am real, Dean. You are real. *We*...” He licks his lips, his eyes searching Dean’s, and Dean wants to cry.

“Are real,” Dean finishes with another kiss. Closing his eyes, he rests his forehead against Cas’s and tilts his mouth away. “If this ain’t, Cas, I--” He presses his lips together and huffs. “I can’t. I can’t do it. I can’t lose you, too. I can’t let--”

“We won’t let Him win.” Cas’s hand settles at the hinge of Dean’s jaw, his fingertips dipping into Dean’s hair. “When the dust settles, we will still be standing. Together.”

“Together,” Dean repeats. He wants to believe so badly. He wants so many things. He just *wants*. And so, in lieu of sleep, he pushes Cas back against the door and sets about on his mission to feel. To feel like this is real. To feel like Cas is real. To just fucking feel something other than rage and hatred and exhaustion.

Real, he tells himself, reveling in the heat of Cas’s skin against his own; in the incendiary brush of Cas’s lips; in the heavy breaths echoing on the tile floor. *Real*, he tells himself as they break together, flushed and desperate. *Real*, he tells himself when Cas brushes back his sweat-damp hair and presses a kiss to his forehead. *Real*, he tells himself when he drifts off to sleep with his head in Cas’s lap.

We are real.

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