

Ride Of

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Ride Of

by [fizzyblogic \(phizzle\)](#).

Summary

I wrote this in 2005, so it's set in season one. Back in those early days of the fandom, there was TONS of sexswap, and I read all of it I could get my hands on. Then I got an idea for one of my own, wrote this much, and ... then life happened and I forgot what else I was going to do with it. *hands*

It started with a howl.

Brian Johnson had been creeped out already by the late night and dark alley, keeping the hands in his pockets balled into fists, but when he heard that howl, something in his spine froze.

A swoop of wings. That was weird, too. *Just a big bird*, he told himself, walking a little faster.

Just a big bird, with big wings, out on a hunt.

*Yeah, because **that's** reassuring.*

Just a bird, that's all. Not going to hurt me. It's looking for mice, that's all. Just a bird.

Just a bird that's circling this dark, deserted street in the middle of the night.

Brian Johnson's last thought, after he felt something catch his shoulders, before the pain imploded, was *Amy*.

~*~

"I don't know, Dean." He listened. She had that tone to her voice, the one that always meant *I want to see you*. He wanted to smile, he really did, but it just didn't feel like a victory any more.

"Come on, Cassie. I don't know how long it'll be before I'm around there again."

"Probably not all that long, how much travelling do you do anyway?"

"Never could get one past you." Dean sighed, ran his hand down over his face. "Please, Cassie," he said, quiet. "Please, just ... let me see you. That's all I want."

There was silence, then breath. "Alright, fine. Come by on Friday, we can ... look, I'm not saying anything can happen between us, you know we can't — I can't — you just know, Dean. But maybe..."

"Maybe?" Dean would have crossed his fingers, but he didn't believe in it.

"Look, all I'm saying is, I've got a free weekend, and maybe we could spend it together. I am *not* saying anything other than that," she cut across his relieved exhaling.

"Thank you, Cassie, that's — that's perfect. You won't regret it." Dean leaned back against the wall, not even caring that he didn't know where it had been. Well, it had been here, but, okay, who had been here with it.

"Yeah, well. We'll see about that." Cassie was shaking her head, he could practically see it from five hundred miles away. "I'll see you on Friday, Dean."

“Looking forward to it,” he said to the dead line. Flipped his phone shut, launched himself away from the wall and went to find his brother.

“Everything alright?” Sam asked, squinting at the dawn sunlight.

“Yeah. I just, you know, I have something to do this weekend.” He looked away. “In Mississippi. So, either we’ll be done by then on this next job, or you can handle it for a couple days, okay?”

“Mississippi. You mean Cassie.” Sam was smirking. Dean hated it when Sam smirked.

“Shut up and get in the car,” he said, shutting the door.

Sam got in. “So it *is* Cassie. What, you two hooking up in the middle of a job?”

Dean gunned the engine and checked the rear view. “Zip it, little brother. Anyway, job might be done by then. You sure this definitely sounds like our thing?” He pulled away, got them onto the road.

“Two disappearances in as many weeks, small town, and someone reported a wolf sighting. Sounds like ours.”

“Could be some wolves got loose from some nature reserve, had themselves a buffet.”

“Nice, Dean. Real nice.”

“Sorry. But I’m just saying, could be something better handled by a wild animal rescue team.”

“I don’t know. Guy who disappeared yesterday was on his way home from a party, vanished somewhere in a residential area, just into thin air. Nobody saw or heard anything.”

“No wolves?”

“They haven’t been connected to the disappearances, Dean, it’s just weird. If it was wolves, wouldn’t somebody have found bodies? We’ve looked into a lot less than this.”

Dean conceded with a neck incline. “So these victims. Any connection, apart from the vanishing act?”

“Not that I can see so far. Hector Barriton, mid-thirties, firefighter, he was the first. Wife and two kids, one three-year-old and a baby. Second was Brian Johnson, forties, divorced, no kids, works as a foreman in a factory that makes upholstery. They lived in different areas of the town, both disappeared at night, and a friendship between them hasn’t been mentioned in any of the reports.”

“So basically we’re looking for something that takes guys in the middle of the night. Well, that narrows it down.” Dean shook his head. “What were they doing out at night? Were they alone?”

“Yep, both were alone. Johnson had just come from a party, Barriton was on his way home from work, he vanished right off his own driveway.”

“Man.” Dean paused. “Alright, once we get there, we’d better start talking to Barriton’s wife, find out who his friends are, talk to his work buddies. Make sure he didn’t just take off. Did Johnson have a girlfriend?”

“Paper didn’t say.” Sam tapped his notebook with his pen. “I’m guessing no, they’d have interviewed her.”

“Right. So we’ll talk to his boss, his colleagues, his ex-wife if we have to. Find out if he had a reason to disappear or if he really was taken. We’ll leave the wolves until we find that out, at least.”

~*~

By the time they got to Willsfort, they had identities all worked out. Dean flashed his smile, the one that opened doors, and they found out Johnson’s address; an apartment he’d shared with a friend.

The friend turned out to be in his early twenties, not much older than Sam, and looked at their badges carefully before letting them in. “What can I do for you, detectives?” he asked, voice resigned. Weary.

“We know this is a difficult time for you, Mr Thomas,” Dean opened, “but if we’re to find Mr Johnson, we’re going to need your help.”

“I already talked to the police,” Thomas said, just verging on defensive. “Why don’t you ask them?”

“Because we’d rather we heard it from you,” Sam put in, gentle without being overtly so. Dean had to admire the kid, he knew how to win them round.

“Okay.” Thomas took a deep breath. “We were at this party, at Lisa’s house. She’s a friend of ours, Lisa Dale,” he said to their questioning looks. “Brian left early, wanted to come home and sleep. He’s been having these headaches lately, most nights he takes some Advil and goes to bed early. I offered to walk home with him, but he told me to stay and have fun. I was ... there was this girl, I really like her and I was finally getting to talk to her, and Brian, he said not to worry about him and just go be happy.” Thomas smiled, on the verge of tears, trying not to show it. “That was — that *is* Brian, you know? He always wants you to be happy.”

“How did you meet him?” Sam asked, softly.

“At work. My last year of high school, I needed to save up, my parents — well, they’d set up this college fund for me, but there wasn’t enough in it, so I got a job at the factory. Brian really took me under his wing. We kept in touch when I left for college, and — well, my parents both died when I was younger, but Brian was there when I graduated. He was,” Thomas smiled serenely, “he was so proud of me. He said once that I’m the son he never had —” He broke off, voice cracking. Dean looked away.

“I’m sorry,” he said, voice not entirely even himself. “We’ll find him. We will.”

“Mr Thomas, does Mr Johnson know a Hector Barriton?”

Thomas blinked. “Hector Barriton? Isn’t that the guy who disappeared last week? No, Brian didn’t know him.”

Dean stood. “Thank you for your time, Mr Thomas. If you think of anything,” he held out a card, “anything at all you want to tell us, just call.”

They stepped out onto the pavement outside. “So,” Sam said.

“Yeah,” Dean agreed.

“No connection between the victims.”

“Unless Mrs Barriton can think of any,” Dean nodded.

~*~

“Good afternoon, I’m Detective Deacon, this is Detective Taylor, we’re from the —”

“Yes, I can read. Hand me those badges.” Mrs Barriton was small, defensive, coiled tight. Were worry not creasing her face and making her snap at them, Dean would have found her hot. She turned blue eyes to them. “Come on in,” she said, opening the door.

“Thank you, ma’am.” Sam smiled at her sympathetically. Dean never could quite get that smile right, but when Sam did it, it always seemed to put whoever they were talking to at their ease. Mrs Barriton, however, was an exception. She just showed them to the living room, handed their badges back.

“The police have already been here,” she started, “but I guess I’ll have to go through it again,” she added as Dean opened his mouth. He closed it and half nodded.

“Please,” he added, courtesy in the syllable.

She sighed. “Hector’s shift changed about three weeks ago. It does that every six months, and this time he was on the four-to-four shift. I was in bed that night, heard his car getting in, looked at the clock. It said 4:23, and I meant to stay awake for when he got in, but I guess I was half-asleep anyway. I woke up again at seven, his car was still there, but he’d never come inside.”

“How do you know he hadn’t?” When Sam said it, it didn’t sound accusatory, just curious.

“He hadn’t come to bed, and he hadn’t eaten. He always comes in hungry, so he has breakfast — I leave him something to heat up in the microwave, on his time it’s dinner, but it was still in the refridgerator the next morning.”

“Could he have eaten at the station that night, maybe?” Dean asked.

“No, he was on call, and none of his colleagues saw him eat. Besides, he has allergies, they don’t have anything he could eat there. He didn’t take anything in, either.”

“These colleagues, was he close to any of them?”

“He *is*, yes. Most of his friends are the people he works with, we have a few over to dinner sometimes. Toby Montgomery, that’s his best friend. They’ve known each other since they qualified. They trained together.”

“Tell me, has your husband ever mentioned a Brian Johnson? Do you know anyone of that name, does he?”

“Brian Johnson?” She thought for a minute, nothing in the pause indicating hesitation, just searching. “No, not that I can think of. Why?”

“He disappeared yesterday, not five days after your husband. Both vanished into thin air, we’re just trying to see if there’s a connection.” Dean quirked his mouth up. “Don’t you worry, we’ll find them both.”

“There’s no need to patronise me, Detective.”

“I’m very sorry, ma’am, I didn’t mean to sound patronising.” Definitely a prickly one.

“Mrs Barriton, about the night that your husband disappeared. Do you remember anything strange about it, anything odd at all?”

“It was four in the morning and I was half asleep. If my ears played some tricks on me —”

“Did you hear something?” Dean asked. Sat forward.

“No, no, I heard nothing. Like I said, I was half asleep.”

“But you thought you heard something?” Dean pressed.

“It’s okay,” Sam said as she hesitated. “Whatever it is, it might help us.”

“Look, you have to bear in mind, it was the *middle* of the *night*.” She bit her lip.

“But?” Dean prompted.

“But ... okay, I thought I heard wings. Feathers, you know? Like a bird, only, this was big. *Really* big. I must have been dreaming. That’s all.”

“Thank you for your time,” Sam said to her as they left. She nodded and closed the door. “So?” He turned to Dean.

“So, maybe a great big eagle snatched him.”

“Dean! Come on, man. This is weird, right? Our kind of weird.”

“Maybe. Or maybe she really was just dreaming.”

“It’s worth looking into, though. Go on, admit it. I was right.”

“Whatever,” Dean got into the car. Sam just grinned and got in beside him.

“Where to next?”

“Well, Thomas said Johnson had been having headaches. I say we check out his medical records, and talk to his boss. And we’ll need to talk to this Toby Montgomery, Barriton’s firefighter buddy.”

“Okay, well, why don’t we split up? You take Johnson’s side, I’ll talk to this Montgomery guy.”

~*~

Dean had pulled so many strings that day he was almost sweating. *Good thing I died a few months back, wouldn’t want this leading to me.* Still, here he was, talking to Brian Johnson’s doctor.

“Look, I don’t like telling you all this,” Dr Markscroft shifted in his seat. “Breach of patient-doctor confidentiality ...”

“But this is all in his file,” Dean reminded him, smile just enough, “which, may I remind you, I have the authority to read. I would just rather I heard it from you.”

“Yes. Well. Like I said, Mr Johnson came to me last week, said he’d had strong headaches for a couple months. He thought they would go away, but they didn’t, so he came here.” He paused. “Listen, Detective, I know he vanished. I read about it, I feel bad for his family, but I am wondering why you’re looking into his case but not my daughter’s.”

“Your daughter’s?”

“She disappeared, two weeks ago. The police won’t do anything, they just say she ran away. She didn’t *run away*, Detective, my Alice was a good girl. She was up in the woods with her — with her friend Ruth, and neither of them came home. We’ve looked everywhere, but all we found was Ruth’s cell phone. It was crushed, like something had trampled it.”

Dean paused. “Can you show me where you found it?”

~*~

Sam shouldered the crossbow. “So if these girls disappeared, why didn’t I read about it?”

“I don’t know, Sam. The doctor said the police just figured she’d run away. Not really news, right? Teenage girl runs off, back in a few weeks. Only this one didn’t have a reason.” Dean stopped, pointed. “Right there. Picking up anything?”

“Yeah, if I ... over here,” he said, holding out the buzzing EMF detector. Dean hurried over, crouched down to examine the ground.

“Well, that’s weird.”

“Yeah. There’s nothing *there*. Just ... trees.”

“Well, you know, we’re in the woods. That’s where the trees tend to be.”

“Yes, but unless they’re evil trees —”

“Or evil rocks with symbols on them.” Dean brushed fallen leaves away and held up what looked like a broken piece of a stone tablet. “Check it out. Ever seen those before?”

Sam frowned. “I don’t know.”

“Come on. Looks like we’ve got some research work to do.”

Sam opened his mouth to say something, then stopped. “Hey, did you hear that?”

“What?”

“Sounded like ... howling.”

“You mean like wolves?”

“Yeah. You know, Toby Montgomery said he’d seen a wolf on the outskirts of town yesterday. Nobody believes him.”

“Well, I — uh, Sam? I definitely heard that.”

“Does it sound like a wolf to you?” They had unconsciously drawn closer together, putting back to back. Dean pulled a gun out of his waistband.

“That sounded like a wolf.” He listened, carefully. “Hey — do you hear wings?”

Sam looked up. “Dean, get down!” he yelled, pushing them both to the ground, looking up again, neck straining from the angle. “Shit.”

“What, what is it?” Dean followed his line of vision, eyes widening. “Holy ... Sam? *Sam*, what *is* that thing?”

“I don’t know, but I suggest we run.” They scrambled up, pelted away as fast as they could. Two wolves sprang out from the trees, followed them. Dean shot one between the eyes. The wingbeats came closer, louder.

Up in the air, a creature shaped like a woman stretched out under enormous black wings. It made no sound but the beats, but to look at it was downright unsettling; not only because it looked so much like a human except for it being more than seven feet tall, surely, and the blue-black tinge to its skin and the black wings and a face that could not be less human — but also because it carried a shield that light did not bounce off. Sunlight didn’t glint on it. It was just ... void.

Whatever it was, it swooped.

“*DEAN*,” Sam screamed, the air moving as wings beat closer to the ground than they should, disturbing the trees. He turned, aimed, shot a bolt into the shoulder of the thing. It barely noticed, Dean clamped tight in its talons.

“Go, Sammy, just run,” Dean shouted, knife in one hand, gun in the other, thrashing and slicing every part of the creature he could reach, six feet off the ground, seven, eight — Sam shot it again. It shrieked, a high sound like metal burning and a nation weeping, and dropped Dean. He scrunched, rolled, flecked with the creature’s blood and his own. It gathered its wings and flew, high, sudden. The wolves retreated.

“Dean? Dean, Dean, Dean.” Sam ran over to where his brother had landed, dropped to his side. “Hey, Dean, man, you alright?”

“I don’t feel good,” was the answer, before Dean passed out.

~*~

At first, he didn’t know what had happened. He just knew he had one hell of a headache, and he felt weird all over. Really weird. *How much did I **drink** last night, anyways?*

He groaned. “Light, hurts,” he grunted. His voice sounded different. That was weird. “Sam? What happened?” It came back to him as it always did when he woke up, all in a rush. “Did you get the tablet thing? We should find out what that was.”

“Hey, er, Dean. You’re up. How are you feeling?”

“Very weird, actually. Could you turn the light off? It’s really bright.”

“Okay.” The pain under his eyelids subsided as cool darkness invaded. “That better?”

“Yeah, thanks.” He cracked one eye open. “I still feel really, really weird. Not bad weird, just. Do I look any different?” He looked at his brother. “Sam? What, what is it? Is it my face, is there a scar?”

“It’s, um. It’s not just your face.”

“Not *just* my face? Oh, man. Well, you know, chicks think scars are sexy, right? Right. Of course they do.”

“Um, Dean? You might want to ... uh ... here.” He handed Dean a mirror and stood back, biting his lip.

“What? Is it hideous?” Dean tilted the mirror until he could see himself but ... no, no, that couldn’t be him, that — oh holy fuck. “What. The hell?”

“I don’t know, you just ... you passed out in the woods, I was carrying you to the car, and you started ... convulsing. I thought maybe you were having a fit of some kind, then I noticed your wounds were kinda ... well, you had its blood on you and I thought maybe it

was poisonous or something, so I got you cleaned up as best I could and then ... well, then I noticed you were kind of, changing.”

“Changing.” It wasn’t a question. It was incredulity.

“Yeah. It was fucked up, Dean. And it was *fast*. You started growing things, and, uh, shrinking others, and. Well.”

“Shrinking? *Shrinking*?” Dean looked down. “Oh crap. Oh crap. What the *hell* did this to me?”

“Calm down, Dean, okay?”

“Calm down? *Calm down*? I’m a fucking *woman*, Sam, in case you haven’t noticed! With breasts, and everything!” He stopped. “Well, okay, I can see an upside to this. Maybe.” Then his eyes widened. “*Cassie*. What the hell am I going to tell her? I’m meeting her in two days. I can’t go looking like *this*.” He angled the mirror. “Though, I am kinda hot, wouldn’t you say?”

“That’s not the issue here, Dean.”

“Okay, okay. You did get the tablet, right? Any idea where those symbols are from?”

“I checked them out on the laptop, turns out they’re an ancient Scandanavian language. Could be some kind of spell, from the looks of it. Then I looked in Dad’s journal, and get this. This town? It got its name from an old legend. The original white settlers included one guy who was the last in some Viking line. Very proud of his heritage, used to claim he was descended from one of the Norse gods. When he and the other settlers came here, there was a fight, them against the native Americans who lived here, and the story goes this guy called up a Valkyrie to help him defeat his enemies. But this Valkyrie got greedy, started attacking his men, so he caught it, and buried it in the woods, put a binding spell on the place so that it would stay sleeping and dormant forever. They built the town near the woods to keep an eye on it, a kind of fort against the will and wrath of the Valkyrie.”

“Very poetic. So wait, Dad knew about this?”

“Looks like. I don’t know if he’s ever been here, but he’s aware of the legend.”

“But he didn’t send us here?”

“No. Probably for a good reason. Valkyries take heroes, Dean. They’re supposed to take them to Valhalla to fight for Odin in the last battle at the end of the world. They fly over battlefields and take the fallen heroes. They also ride on wolves instead of horses.”

“Heroes, huh? Must be why the firefighter was taken. What about Johnson?”

“I don’t know, maybe he did something heroic. We should talk to his ex-wife.”

“Right. So we’re dealing with a Valkyrie, then?”

“I’d say that thing was a Valkyrie, yeah. What I don’t get is how the spell was broken. That was some powerful stuff, and just breaking the tablet wouldn’t do it. Who’d *want* to, anyway?”

“And how the hell did it turn me into a woman? Because I kinda noticed how we’re not talking about that.”

“I,” Sam sighed. “I don’t know, Dean. Maybe something in its blood reacted with yours, maybe you got hit by some kind of god-mojo when we shot it.”

“Do you think killing it will turn me back?”

Sam looked at him. Her. Dean. “I don’t know,” he said. “I ... look, why don’t I go and get you something to eat. Or some coffee, or, something.”

“You okay, Sammy?”

“It’s just, weird. I mean, you’re a *woman*, Dean, and I — I need some air.”

“Okay.” Dean lay back. “I could do with some Advil, I have a pounding headache.”

“Advil. Gotcha.” Sam stood, all the space around him absorbing his awkwardness. “I’ll be right back.”

“Right.” Dean closed his eyes, head back against the pillow. *Even my own brother won’t look me in the eye.*

He sighed, held the mirror up again. *Start small. Okay.* He looked.

My eyes are no different. Hair’s pretty much the same, except it looked kinda better on me before. My nose is the same. Mouth, well, that’s changed. Nice shape, actually.

Focus, Dean. Take stock. He got up, stumbled into the bathroom, stood back and looked in the mirror over the sink.

“Well,” he said out loud, “I really am kinda hot.” He cupped his breasts, one in each hand, feeling the weight of them. *So this is what it’s like to be a girl. Nice.* He smiled, curve of his mouth, and looked at his reflection. “Hey, I could get used to this.” He turned around, examined his backside. “Nice and peachy,” he grinned, grabbing it. “Oh, I am just grabbable all over.”

“Please stop saying disturbing things,” Sam’s voice came from the other room. “Are you decent in there? I brought your Advil.”

“Sweet, sweet nectar,” Dean sighed, taking the box from him and popping two out. He swallowed them with the bottled water beside his bed.

“So, how are you holding up?” Sam asked.

“Look, dude, would you look at me? Sam? *Sammy*. It’s me, okay? I’m still your brother.”

“No, you’re my sister, *Deana*.”

“Oh, that’s nice. I nearly get killed by some Norse god, and you’re snapping at me. Well, isn’t this just wonderful?”

“Stop it, Dean, just ... I’m sorry. This is really fucking weird. I watched you turn into a woman today, and I don’t —”

“What? You don’t what?” He took a step forwards.

“I don’t know if I can get you back.” It was quiet, almost soundless, but Dean would have caught it anyway. Because that was Sam-and-Dean. They practically knew what each other was thinking.

“Don’t, don’t say that, don’t even think it.” Dean put a hand on his arm, and Sam flinched. “Look, I know it’s weird, it’s weird for me, too, but it’s happened, and we are going to find that Valkyrie and kill it and then I’ll be me again. Not that I’m not me now.”

Sam looked at him. He looked at him for a very long moment, and then he nodded. “Sorry,” he said, just as quiet. “I just ... didn’t want to look at you, and not see you in there.”

“Hey, just because I’m a chick, that doesn’t mean we can have a moment, okay? No moments.”

“I don’t believe you,” Sam grinned, and Dean had never thought he’d be so happy to see his brother smile. “You become a woman and you’re *still* emotionally stunted.”

“Oh, so I’m emotionally stunted, am I?”

“That’s not what I — no, no, Dean, you’re not. You’re just not ... you know, you’re kind of like a guy in a woman’s body. Shouldn’t you have all those hormones and, you know, girly stuff?”

“Hey, I’ve got girly stuff, okay? I’m just, still me. I’m still Dean. Just ... think of it as an upgrade.”

Sam raised an eyebrow. “An upgrade? All this time, and you had breast envy? Is that why you like them so much?”

“Chicken and egg, dude. I have a pair of tits I can just touch and look at whenever I want, no slapped hands or faces. Is that good because I like breasts, or do I like breasts because secretly, all I want is a pair?” He paused. “Well, not so secret about wanting a pair of breasts around.”

Sam shook his head, trying hard not to laugh. Then he figured, why the hell not. “I’ll say one thing for female hormones. They make you philosophical.”

“Hey, I was plenty philosophical before.”

“Oh yeah? Name one existential discussion we’ve ever had.”

Dean made a *pfft* noise. “Since when would I discuss it with you?”

Sam blinked. “Since I’m your little brother who you tell everything to?”

“Not everything. Now, why don’t you find out what you can about the history of this place and that binding spell. I’ll try and figure out where it might be hiding. Bring me everything you can about Valkyries, their habits, what they eat, anything that might lead us to it.”

“Okay, I’ll hit the library. You coming?”

“I’ll stay here, wait for the Advil to work. Take a look at Dad’s journal, see if there’s anything else in there. And, uh, Sam?”

“Yeah?”

“Knock before you come in when you get back, okay? I might not be decent.”

“Dean, are ... never mind. I don’t want to know.”

“See you later,” Dean said, firmly.

“I’m gone.” Sam picked up the laptop, headed out. Dean sat back on his bed. He was going to look in the journal, do some calculating, but first there was one other thing he wanted to do.

A little experimenting.

~*~

“Knock knock?”

“It’s okay, Sam, I’m decent.”

The door opened. “We never had to do this before. How come you never have to ask if I’m decent?”

“Shut it and hand me those donuts.”

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