

## So Let It Be Written By Scribblesinink

Where would Bobby keep the damn tools?

*Somewhere in the workshop behind the house.* Dean answered his own question. Tiptoeing out of the back door as dawn broke, he made his way across the yard. Flicking on the overhead light when he stepped into the ramshackle shed, he stopped dead in his tracks. This wasn't gonna be as easy as he'd thought....

He stared in dismay at the cluttered workbench in the corner, its surface barely visible beneath a random collection of broken gadgets, rusty gizmos and devices designed for obscure purposes. Why did Bobby have to be such a damn pack rat?

If Dean were honest, he had to admit it wasn't that much different from the Impala's trunk—except that, when it came to his baby, Dean knew exactly what she carried, what it could be used for, and where to find it.

Well, at least he'd recognize what he was looking for on sight. Dean recalled how Bobby had handed him the hammer and chisel, so many months ago, when Ellen and Jo had—his mind shied away from finishing the thought. After losing as many good people as they had in the last few years, he'd have thought he wouldn't have any grieving left in him, but Jo and Ellen were still a raw nerve.

*You'll know,* Bobby had said, and along with the tools, he'd given Dean a rough sketch to a location nearby. And Dean *had* known. Once he'd found the spot marked with an X on Bobby's map, seen the smooth rock face and discovered the many names someone had reverently carved into its surface, he'd understood what Bobby was asking him to do. What Bobby, with his legs all busted up the way they'd been back then, could no longer do himself.

Had Bobby picked up the tradition again after Crowley healed him? Well, didn't matter. Either way, this time it was Dean's responsibility—although he'd be hard-pressed to explain why. After all, he didn't even remember pulling the trigger.

Still, Dean thought he should feel worse about Gwen's death than he did. She'd been his cousin, after all—three times removed or something, sure, but still family. However, so much shit had gone down recently, he found he no longer had the energy to lose sleep over stuff done while possessed. Besides, it was kinda foolish to beat yourself up over something you couldn't even recall doing.

But Gwen hadn't deserved what happened to her; Dean knew that much. She'd been a decent hunter, so he reckoned he owed her more than a funeral pyre and a booze-fueled *So long*. And that was why—.

*Ha!* Finally discovering what he was looking for under a discarded machete covered with rust

spots, a frayed power cord that lacked a plug, and a pair of heavy-duty coil springs, Dean gathered up the chisel and hammer, planning to go out to Bobby's rock and be back before breakfast.

As he turned away from the workbench, a long shadow fell across the floor of the shed.

"Dammit, Sam..!" Dean snarled, recognizing his brother. "Stop sneakin' up on me. I almost shot you." As soon as he'd caught the first glimpse of the shadow, alerted more by instinct than sight, he'd shifted both tools to his left hand and his right had begun reaching for the gun stashed behind his back.

"Sorry." Sam shrugged. "Whatcha doing up so early, anyway?" He frowned a little, gaze falling to the tools in Dean's hands. "With those?"

"Um, I...," Dean mumbled, suddenly embarrassed. Any explanation he could come up with only sounded silly in his head. Scratching names into stuff was a bit of a wuss thing to do, wasn't it? Like those lovesick fools that wrote *Bill Loves Annie* on bathroom walls in bars, or cut it into the bark of trees. There was a reason he'd gotten up at the crack of dawn to sneak out while Sam and Bobby were still sleeping.

Then he decided, *what the hell*. After that speech he'd given Sam and Bobby yesterday...

"Come on." Dean brushed past Sam, out into the early morning chill. "I'll show you."

oOo

A little puzzled at his brother's behavior, Sam followed Dean around the house to where the Impala was parked. Just as Dean was about to dump the tools he'd liberated from Bobby's shed in the trunk, Bobby stuck his head out the screen door. The scent of freshly-brewed coffee drifted past him. He yawned, "Where you two headin' off at this ungodly hour?"

Sam knew better than to take offense at Bobby's gruff tone. Instead, he shrugged and shot Dean a pointed look, as curious for the answer as Bobby.

But Dean never got around to explaining. Bobby's gaze landed on the tools in Dean's hand and his surly expression softened. "Ah." Now it was Bobby's turn to direct a meaningful glance, this time at Sam, before he shifted his attention back to Dean, lifting a questioning eyebrow.

*Huh.* Sam watched their silent communication. *Curiouser and curiouser.*

Dean shrugged and finally dropped the tools in the trunk. They clattered against the guns and ammo boxes. "I figured Sam should.... You know."

Bobby gave a curt nod. "I guess it's about time, yeah."

Sam furrowed his brow in annoyance, glaring first at Dean, then at Bobby, and then back at Dean. "Would someone—?"

"You'll see." Bobby and Dean answered as one before Sam could get more than two words out. It would have been funny if they hadn't both looked so serious about it.

"Okay." Sam shrugged, more confused than ever but not wanting to push the issue. He figured they'd tell him eventually.

"Gimme a sec, I'll come along." Bobby ducked back into the house without waiting for a reply.

Five minutes later, the Impala was grumbling out of the gates of Singer Salvage Yard, Dean at the wheel, Sam in the shotgun, and Bobby in back, clutching a thermos that Sam hoped contained the coffee he'd been smelling.

They didn't go far. By Sam's estimate, they couldn't have driven more than two miles from the house before Dean turned the Impala onto a dirt track. They bounced another half mile across the ruts before Dean stopped at the edge of the woods and cut the engine. The creak of the doors was loud in the early morning stillness as they all got out.

Dean got the tools out of the trunk, and slammed the lid shut. He took a step from the car and then stopped, squinting into the forest as if suddenly unsure where to go next.

"This way." Bobby didn't seem to have any doubts about their direction as he set off down a narrow trail leading into the trees.

With Sam in the middle and Dean bringing up the rear, Bobby led them along deer trails and barely visible paths for about fifteen minutes, winding through the trees and cutting through the undergrowth, before he stopped suddenly in a clearing. "Here."

Sam glanced around. Early sunlight dappled the mossy grass on the side where they stood. Across from them, still mostly in shadow, a rock wall rose up out of the dirt to a height of about twenty feet. Sam didn't see anything that looked like what they might've wanted him to see. What was so special about this place?

He opened his mouth to ask, "Where?" but before he could give voice to his bewilderment, Dean brushed past him. Sam watched as his brother headed straight for the rock. The side facing them was smooth and bare but—Sam squinted to get a better view. Hm, looked like something had been written on the wall.

*No, carved into it*, he amended silently as he moved closer. Something that looked like names, dates, neatly lined up in columns.... His eyes widened in surprise as he realized that more than half of the rock wall was covered with inscriptions. Wondering what to make of it, Sam glanced over at Dean and Bobby, but the older man was busying himself with the thermos he'd brought, and didn't look up to meet Sam's gaze. Meanwhile, Dean was laying out the tools in the grass in front of the wall. Sam turned back to study the marks a bit more closely.

With the way the inscriptions were organized in long columns, it reminded him a bit of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington; Sam recalled visiting it during a school field trip

when he was ten or eleven. Leaning forward, he tried to read some of the words that had been cut into the rock, wishing the light was better.

Once his eyes had adjusted to the gloom, he breathed in sharply. "These are hunters' names," he whispered, stunned.

"Started it when my wife died." Bobby's voice was rough. "Been keeping it up much as I can."

"And way I figured," Dean added, speaking for the first time since they'd left Bobby's house, "we've got some more carving to do."

Sam nodded absently as he traced his fingers over some of the cuts. He'd been wrong: it was *exactly* like the Vietnam Memorial. Except this one was for a war waged in the shadows instead of on TV. *Their* war.

On Sam's left, the inscriptions were older; he could tell by the way the edges of the letters had been weathered smooth. He took a sideways step to the right, where the names were newer, the cuts more sharply defined—and inhaled sharply as one name jumped out at him.

*John Winchester 2006.*

"Dad." He touched his father's name, chest suddenly tight. They never did learn why Dad and Bobby had had their falling out, but apparently it hadn't been bad enough for Bobby to not add John's name to his list.

Sam continued to read on along the names, some unknown to him, some vaguely familiar, until his gaze struck on another name he recognized. This one caused his mouth to go dry. He shot a nervous glance over at Dean and Bobby, but they didn't seem to be paying attention to Sam or to which names he was reading.

Sam turned back to face the rock and read the name again. Steve Wandell.

*That one's on me.*

Or rather, Wandell's death was on Meg, but it had still been Sam's hands that had killed the hunter. Sam shuddered with the recollection of how it had felt to be powerless inside his own body.

Not wanting to think about it, he forced his focus away from the name commemorated on the rock, and back to Dean and Bobby. He realized they were arguing about how to spell *Campbell*.

"P." Grateful for the distraction, Sam ambled up to them.

They both twisted to stare at him. "What?"

"Campbell. There's a p in it. M, p, b."

Dean shot him a glare, and Bobby snorted, crossing his arms in front of his chest. Shaking his head once, Dean knelt at the foot of the rock, bracing himself against the ground with one knee. He brought up the chisel and hammer, and carefully placed the chisel's head against the rock, at a spot a little beneath the last name Bobby had entered, and chipped away the first flake in the first letter.

Sam watched him for a while but soon discovered it was a rather monotonous process. He returned to study the rest of the names.

He wasn't surprised to soon find others he knew. Pastor Jim; Caleb; Daniel Elkins; several people he'd only heard about. Then: Gordon Walker.

*He's on me too.*

But Sam felt far less guilt over Walker's death than he did over Steve Wandell—and not just because Walker had hunted *him* in turn. The man had been turned into a vamp by the time Sam had killed him, and Sam suspected Walker probably would've thanked him if it had been anyone else but someone Walker regarded as the anti-christ. Chuckling a little uncomfortably, Sam quickly moved on.

Until he ran into another name that turned his blood cold. *Dean Winchester 2008.*

Involuntarily, Sam shot another look at his brother. Dean was still chipping away at the rock, his shoulders hunched in concentration, thankfully very much alive.

Abruptly, another thought struck Sam. If Dean was on here.... He scanned ahead, not really reading anymore, merely looking for the familiar pattern until it jumped out at him. Making sure not to get in Dean's way, he brushed his fingertips over the words: *Sam Winchester 2010.*

He made a small noise in the back of his throat, not sure himself if it was a sob, or a laugh, or something else.

Dean paused in his chiseling, peering up at Sam curiously before transferring his gaze down to where Sam's fingers rested against the rock. Understanding dawned in Dean's expression and he bit his lip, apparently unsure what to say.

"Here." Bobby put one hand on Sam's shoulder and offered him a plastic cup of hot, steaming coffee with the other.

"Thanks." Sam's voice sounded strange in his own ears as he accepted the coffee. He sipped at it, grateful for the chance to regain his bearings. It wasn't every day you saw your own death immortalized in stone.

Bobby squeezed his shoulder for a moment longer before letting go. A few heartbeats later, the light *tap-tap* of Dean's hammer against the butt of the chisel rang out again, echoing through the forest. Sam went on sipping his coffee, once more letting his eyes wander.

His throat clogged up again when he found Ellen and Jo. Their names were chiseled in a different style than most of the other names, the letters cut a bit more crudely and—Sam suddenly remembered the night after they'd died: Bobby had sent Dean on an errand. He hadn't been willing to explain to Sam what it was and Sam had let the matter slide quickly, too caught up in his own grief and anger to push Bobby very hard. Now he understood.

"Done." While Sam had been reading and taking trips down memory lane, Dean had finished up with the last L. Handing the tools to Bobby, Dean brushed the grass off his knees, while Bobby took Dean's place.

Sam noticed Bobby's hands were more expert at handling the hammer and chisel than Dean's had been. *Small wonder*, Sam decided, looking back along the wall, trying to count the names and giving up after he reached more than three dozen.

So many....

Making quick work of the task, Bobby was done much faster than Dean, leaving Rufus Turner the last name on the wall—though Sam very much doubted he'd be the last casualty of the current war. With a final touch of his fingers to the name, Bobby ponderously pushed himself back to his feet. Dean gathered up the jacket he'd shucked earlier after the sun rose and the temperature went up with it. "Let's go."

"Wait," Sam called, not even thinking about it before he spoke. He held out his hand to Bobby, palm up, and dipped his head toward the tools the older man was holding. "My turn."

"What? Who—?" Then Dean's brows drew down and his eyes darkened. "Dude. No."

Sam met his brother's gaze. It wasn't as if he didn't know how Dean felt about it and why: after their grandfather's betrayal, Dean would think Samuel's death was good riddance to bad rubbish. And yet....

"He was a hunter, too, Dean," Sam pointed out gently. He'd already checked; Samuel Campbell had never made it to Bobby's wall, not the first time he'd died, back in 1973. Sam reckoned that back then, Bobby had still been happily married to Karen, enjoying her pies and blissfully unaware of the dangers that lurked in the dark.

"Really? After all he's done to you? To us?" Dean turned to Bobby, looking for support. "Bobby?"

Bobby shook his head. "Not my decision." He offered Sam the hammer and chisel. "That's up to you boys."

Sam balanced the tools on his palm. The hammer was heavier than it looked.

"Sam, seriously?" Dean tried one last time.

Sam lifted his gaze back up at Dean. He considered reminding Dean that Samuel had also been family, but then thought better of it. Dean had made it quite clear that his blanket

apology didn't stretch as far as that. So instead, he gave a small, one-shouldered shrug, and offered the only reason he knew Dean would accept. "I have to do this, Dean."

Dean gave him another long stare, as if trying to see into Sam's soul, then he nodded, curtly and unwillingly, but a nod nevertheless. Sam cracked a small smile of thanks, before turning his attention to the rock. He knew Dean probably thought he was feeling guilty, but honestly, he wasn't. Part of him agreed with Dean: what Samuel had done was beyond forgiveness. But at the same time, the other arguments were true as well: Samuel Campbell had been a hunter, and he had been blood.

Sam was clumsy at first, the tools unfamiliar in his hands, so the first three letters ended up looking a little jagged. But after that, he gradually got the hang of it, finishing without messing up too badly.

It was past mid-morning by the time they got back to the car, hot and sweaty and starving for the breakfast they'd skipped. Sam's stomach growled, loud enough in the quiet morning air that Dean chuckled and slapped his shoulder. "Damn, dude."

Bobby peered up at the sky for a moment before turning toward them. "I'm thinkin' pancakes, boys. My treat."

Sam's jaw dropped, while Dean whipped round so fast from where he'd been opening the driver's door to gape at Bobby that he nearly fell over.

Bobby's cheeks colored beneath his straggly beard. "What? It's too damned late in the morning to start cooking breakfast." He adjusted his cap, pulling the visor a bit further down over his eyes. "Unless you knuckleheads have a better idea?"

"Hell, no!" Dean smirked in Sam's direction. "Pancakes sound great to me. Right, Sasquatch?"

Sam grinned back, for once not minding the nickname at all. "Yeah, they do. Let's go."

**Disclaimer:** this story is a transformative work based on the Warner Bros. Television/Wonderland Sound and Vision/Eric Kripke/Robert Singer series *Supernatural*. It was written for entertainment only; the author does not profit from it. Please do not redistribute elsewhere without author attribution.