

Title: Split-Second

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Rating: PG-13

Pairing: Jack and Daniel

Category: Angst. First Time.

Series: Moments

Season/Spoilers: Season 5. An episode tag for "Menace"

Synopsis: This time, Jack doesn't walk away.

Warnings: None.



## Split-Second

### Moments Part One

A slash story by Biblio

My wrist is blessed numbness, but the rest of me...

I guess I've picked myself up from worse. As Jack kept insisting, she - it - was just a machine. The Asgard will take her apart with a little less finesse than I imagine they would've when she was - functional, but I can't romanticise it. The end result would've been the same.

The machine still yield valuable data but that life, with all its childlike power and potential, is gone. Something unique has been erased and all that's left is circuitry and the accustomed taste of failure.

I think I should get out from under the shower; it's been a while. Sam and Teal'c are waiting in her lab in case I - they won't wait too long. The Asgard will be here soon and I don't, I really don't need to see Sam finishing what Jack started. The water pounds down, as hot as I can stand it, and I don't want to move. I don't want to think. I'm bathed by heat and the air is sharp with the tang of mint from my shampoo.

I think I'll just hang here for a while.

Eyes closed, I feel the water. Hot needles batter the tension from my shoulders as I roll and tilt my head, heat slides over my chest and pools, slipping down my belly. Lethargy is a rare feeling for me, but it's good.

"Daniel."

My eyes snap open and I brush at the curtain of water over my eyes, instinctively pushing my hands over my temples and into my hair, then stand nursing my arm and blinking back stinging tears as sickening pain stabs from my abused wrist.

"Jack!"

Jesus, Jack is right in front of me! How long has he been there? I didn't hear a thing. He's staring at me and suddenly, I feel terribly exposed, my few minutes of precious privacy stripped away. He looks so, god, he's more than haggard, he's old.

Am I supposed to be mad at him? I don't remember. I feel so heavy and I wish I was numb.

I barely take in the fact that he's naked when he steps into the small cubicle and plants a hand either side of my face, crowding me, startled, against the steamy tile.

"Jack?" What - what does he think he's doing?

"When you were in the gateroom with it," Jack explains tersely, "Carter told me you were in trouble."

"I - I know," I stammer, my heart beating rather quickly. I didn't really see Jack naked, I didn't see anything but his face, but I'm excruciatingly aware of it now. His nearness is overwhelming to me. "Sam made a full report in the debriefing."

"I needed you to know," Jack says seriously, "When I came in after you, I came knowing you were in trouble."

I have no place to go and all I can see are his eyes, huge and dark, so hot they're scaring me. Nothing he says is making much sense. He's too near to me.

"Don't stand so close," I whisper.

The rigidity goes from Jack's outstretched arms and he moves closer, into the water, into my space, reaching up to rest his hand against the side of my face.

I feel suffocated; there's too much heat.

"Please, Jack."

"I knew," Jack says, staring and staring, his gaze restless over my flushed, rosy face. "I knew before I got in there how it would go down. No," he corrects himself. "I knew from the start. You care too much and I knew it would break your heart."

"Reese," I respond in a hard voice, knowing exactly what is meant by 'it'. "Her name was Reese."

"It could only go bad, Daniel. It always does."

For me, it does. I'm in love with this man, and it's not that he knows and doesn't care, I could take that. Being ignored is nothing. Even pity...I never thought he could hate me for it.

"I wanted to save you."

It's easier to talk about Reese than this, how this stupid sonovabitch I love is making me feel so small. "You made a split-second decision," I say wearily. Sam did say. They thought Reese had lost control of the - Jack is shaking his head. What, I think wearily. What now? Can't he just make his point and go?

"I wanted to save *you*," Jack insists with unsubtle finality. "Believe it or not, I wasn't thinking a whole lot about saving the base at that point. Mostly, I was thinking about *you*. Losing *you*."

"Me?" My immediate reaction is, why?

"This is the part where you tell me you're nothing special, although in way you already did."

I'm not processing this. Too busy trying to work out when I got so important to Jack and why he's been such a jerk I blinked and missed it.

"Stupid sonovabitch," Jack prompts.

"I stand by it."

Jack moves closer, a breath away from me now. A breath I don't really have. I swallow hard and lay my head against the tile. I'm shaking so hard he can see it and I hate this feeling. I hate what he can do to me when he feels worse than nothing. I'm no coward, though. He's pushing me but I can push back. Whatever advantage he thinks he has, cornering me like this, at my most vulnerable, he's about to lose. I take hold of his hip with my good hand, astonished by his solidity and the sharp bone firm against my palm.

"You're an idiot," Jack says without heat.

"What are we - what are you doing here, Jack?"

"Split-second decisions. You plan for something, weigh all the consequences, you have it fixed in your mind."

"You did it," I snap, struggling with everything as Jack strokes my hair with single-minded intensity. "You killed her."

"I meant to."

"To save me, I know, you said," I respond impatiently, trying hard not to shiver from his touch. "Jack, stop. I don't want you touching me."

"A split-second," Jack murmurs as if he doesn't hear me, "And I let you slip away."

"What is this?" I'm confused and my sudden anger is ugly.

"I'm making love with my best friend in the locker-room showers."

"No." God, I sound so strained. I've wanted to hear these things from him for a long time but not now, not when I'm trying, not when I'm ready to move on. "No, Jack. You can't even - you can't." He can't, he knows, and because of that, he's hurt me. He's gone out of his way to do it. "I'm not yours for the taking," I say bitterly. "I don't care what brought you here like this or what you think you're doing, I'm not going to have sex with you so you feel better about - what? What do you want, Jack?"

"The same thing I've always wanted."

His gentle tone is grating on nerves already raw.

"I want you."

"You're just working this out now?" I retort derisively.

"Split-seconds, Daniel," he repeats patiently. "I think I know what I'll do and then I can't."

"Nothing has changed." No. "No." I'm wrong about that. "Something has changed. It's actually worse that you feel some of what I've been feeling and you still - you pushed me away!"

"Daniel," Jack cuts me off.

"No! I'm talking now! It was easier to take when you hated me, Jack!"

"I don't. I can't. Some days, I hate myself, but you? I love you."

Numbly, I shake my head. I don't believe him.

"I'm tired and bitter and god knows I'm no prize, but for what it's worth, I've loved you for a very long time, Doctor Jackson," Jack promises tiredly. "Maybe since we met. I don't know. And you're right. I can't."

I look up and he puts a hushing finger over my lips.

"You know all the reasons I can't, why I need to wait, why I always let you get away from me. It doesn't change how much I love you, how much I want you." He smiles then, a difficult smile. "How long I was prepared to wait for you. I just never expected -"

"I'd feel the same," I blurt out, suddenly understanding what changed between us. He's almost blaming me for making it more difficult for him, but not quite, and I don't know how to react.

"I know you're straight as a ruler but I always knew if I came to you, you'd give me a chance."

"You had it all planned out," I say at last, with somewhat shaky sarcasm.

"Pretty much," Jack nods, staring fascinated into my eyes. "Then I had to deal with that whole totally inexperienced and wanting it *bad* not being the same as straight thing."

"I do not want it *bad*."

"I do," Jack promises, his eyes molten. "Most of the time I could eat you alive."

My hand is on Jack's hip and he hasn't batted an eyelid, too much of a guy for that, but when I reach up to rest it over his collarbone, he shudders.

"Daniel," he whispers hoarsely. I'm rocked off balance as his arms clamp around me and his weight pins me without finesse to the wall.

"I feel sick." I'm terrified. He's all over me and part of me wishes - god, it isn't enough.

"Sick?"

"N-n-nauseated," I stammer painfully. "Oh, god." Jack is just - he's incredible. All his muscle and bone, and soft, soft skin - gorgeous. I don't know what to do and he's here, holding onto me like I'm holding him up. I bury my face in his skin and breathe him in as he wraps himself even more tightly around me.

"I heard you in here. I almost walked away," Jack whispers. He's trying to comfort us both, I think, but his body is restless, hungry. "A split-second, Daniel."

I was never quite able to imagine how it would be for me, to feel Jack's cock harden against my own. There was always time in my dreams, but this is real and Jack is urgent. Demanding. He's between my legs now, pushing into me, rubbing his cock over mine. He makes a noise, a purr deep in his throat, very satisfied by the friction, or maybe by me, my stunned acquiescence. I don't know.

He nuzzles his chin against my shoulder, his hands smoothing the streaming water over my back. He likes me leaning like this, I realise. He likes me with him this way. He knows that I want him, he feels how my body is pounding. He wants to make love, he needs that, I think, but I haven't said yes.

"What do you want?" I ask uncertainly.

"I want to turn you around and fuck you boneless," Jack warns me thickly, hissing triumphantly as my cock thumps reflexively.

I pull away from him and search his face, brick red with the heat and the water and raw with such emotion. I stretch up then and touch my mouth to his, pulling away almost as quickly. After a beat of heavy, questioning silence, Jack lowers his face, I raise mine, and we kiss at last, not easily and not well. I'm so angry with him, with myself. I'm not ready to let go of being defeated, not ready to trust. I don't know anything, and like Jack, I feel too much.

Jack is rough and yet he's oddly tender as my stiff mouth relaxes beneath his. I'm clumsy and nervous, but he isn't rushing me. He's tasting me, sucking on my lips, savouring. He coaxes and I want more, hooking my good arm tight around his neck and opening to him. He groans as he slides deep into my mouth, shuddering convulsively. How long has he wanted me? My tongue is stiff against his sleek, limber pressure and I wish I were more responsive to his passion.

He pulls away and takes my face in both his hands, softly says my name. He kisses me gently on the lips and says my name again, like he means it. He means everything.

I pull him back down to me. No stiffness now, only heat as we kiss and hold each other, the water pouring down, the tang of mint sharp in the air, the first stirring of hope in too long a time, and my Jack all around me.

**FINIS**