

I've had this story on my hardrive for a week or so, and finally moved it to another computer with internet capabilities. I had some time to edit it, so hopefully it's refined enough to be read.

Beware, there's some light Iggy/Fang slash, though if you want to think of it as strong friendship, that's okay too. I know a lot of people don't like slash, and if you don't think you can handle it, please don't read.

Other than that...uhm...I hope you guys enjoy my first fic for the series. *grins*

Belt Loops

By Death's-Head Hawkmoth

Disclaimer: Characters belong to James Patterson.

Summary: An Iggy Drabble...with some Iggy/Fang slashiness, because I need to write some slash before my reputation dies. *Dies!*

Notes: Not much to say, except that I'm having a lot of fun with this pair, in my head.

His hands love the reassuring curl of belt-loops, along with many other things. Alone, he can hook his thumbs into his own loops, or waistband, or pockets, striding with his shoulders thrown back and his spine curling outward. With the others, he can reach down, find a loop or waistband of theirs, and walk after them safely.

Usually, he finds Fang, who's closest to him in height. Sometimes, when Max and Nudge are nearer to him, he stoops his shoulders a bit and goes along with them. Max's hair always brushed over his arms before it was cut; long, lank curls in need of a wash *sliding* around his limbs, sending minute tremors through them. Individual strands were the worst, ticklish and frightening, sickening him slightly.

Though used to it, he hates the feel of unwashed hair.

Nudge is hard to follow as well, because she makes even more noise close-up, and is very excitable. She bounces on the balls of her feet, twists every which way to look at things, or rushes off in odd directions-always forgetting he's there.

When Angel is paying attention, she makes a good leader. She can tell him where to go without speaking. She and her brother are still young enough to take his hands, and guide him without embarrassment. Yet, they too are unreliable, for their childish world is narrow and capricious and divided. Two guides are rarely better than one, when they can at any time choose differing directions.

Thankfully, Fang is usually there to fall back on. He isn't hard to find, either, when Iggy sets about trying to reach him. Angel and Gazzy have quicker, lighter footsteps, as they try to keep up with the rest of the flock. Nudge, as already said, bounces happily quite a bit of the time, and all of them are known to talk and make small noises on any journey. Max's footfalls are heavier, and she walks resolutely ahead of them; and his own steps, when alone in a strange place, are slow and quiet and cautious.

If Fang does not find him first, he can locate the boy by sound or touch. He searches for the slower footfalls, long pauses for long legs, no voice to accompany them. Reaching out, he grasps for a high, broad shoulder, or a thick forearm. Fang even has his own *smell*, which Iggy knows to be more eagle than the hawk or falcon of the others, than his own very faint, night-musk of an owl. He does not know what part of him knows this, but it's there, and it's true.

He runs his hands down the broad back to the waist, finding belt loops, thinking 'black', knowing it was the color he always 'sees'. *The absence of light, of everything*. After a time, he took to linking his thumbs through the side-loops, and cupping Fang's hipbones in his skilled fingers, in his sensitive palms. Being led by the other boy, he's allowed to focus on him rather than where they are going.

The world falls away- a somewhat frightening sensation -and he's left with Fang's breathing, and Fang's radiant warmth. His shirt is worn, soft, just short of threadbare. In these moments, Iggy presses his hands into the fabric of those jeans, trying to feel the strength, lightness, and fragility of bone. He feels like he can push himself inside of them, and rest in the hollow spaces, memorizing how it feels to walk without caution or sensitivity. Iggy wants to be there, rocked to sleep by the sway of hips, a lullaby sung by the infinite veins. It would be perfect- dry and warm and comforting. Everything would soothe him, and he would be safe, and the world would be quiet, *because it was Fang*.

When Fang stops, Iggy knows it before anyone, because he can feel the digging of toes and the locking of knees in his fingertips, and he can sense the roll of a hip as it comes to rest. Despite this, he still forgets to follow the movement, and bumps clumsily against the other boy. His long legs and bony knees knock together, his head dips forward, and he meets a soft cheek with his own. His hands loosen in surprise, and for a second he doesn't move at all-never closer or away. It's like heat-vision, he can map out the shape of the other boy in how Fang fits against him, and what's warm, and what's not.

One day, while they were walking through a forest, Fang put his hands on Iggy's. They were warm, dry, and rough. The trees were all around them, and they were alone- the flock -and it was safe- safe, dry, quiet, the world rolling away beneath their feet. Iggy's hands could feel a pulse, could feel bone and warmth on every side, and for a moment his hands were surrounded by Fang. He understood the way Fang walked and moved and felt, completely, and the world was perfect in his black-sight, because it was more like a soft dream than blindness.

His breath was silent, strangled. He didn't let it in or out, didn't care. In its place there was eagle musk and earth, rain and smoke.

They kept moving, Fang didn't let go, and Iggy leaned against him. The sway of hips and fluttery pulse lulled him.

And the world was quiet, because it was Fang.