"I am exhausted," Finn laid down on his back, next to the campfire. His chest rose high and fell deep as he breathed.

"Same," Sam sighed in a moan, collapsing next to him. "We need a break." Finn groaned in approval.

Their bodies were entirely spent after the past few days. From dawn to dusk they trained, studied, worked, magicked and trained again. Their mana pools were continuously being drained by their practice and study, as was their stamina. They strained their bodies day after day, mentally pushing the discomfort away for as long as they could. And today they had finally reached their limit. Both of them realised this, as they lay spent next to the fire. All either of them could do was wait for the food to finish cooking. And hopefully, have regained enough energy to eat by then.

"How about we take the day off tomorrow, just enjoy the scenery for a bit?" Finn asked.

"Oh yes! I need a day off. If we hike to the top here I bet we will get an amazing view, but-"

"But that means we need to hike to the top. And I am not sure I am going to be able to move anymore tomorrow."

They had learned by now that the system, although it did increase their physique, it changed nothing about the sore muscles you had after a workout. They silently endured the ebbing waves of pain in their muscles, eyes closed and softly drifting off to sleep. Until the kettle started to bubble softly.

Finn got up, groaned, and then took the lid off. A thick scent of spices greeted both of them. Hungry, they quickly filled their plates and devoured the food, practically inhaling it.

"God this is good," Sam managed to squeeze out in between two loud slurps.

"I know, thank god we brought those spices."

"I don't even know if it's the spices or our hunger, and I don't care. This feels like a meal for kings and I am loving every bit of it."

Finn chuckled after her comment, so much that he almost choked. Which made both of them laugh. Both cried out in pain not much later as their laughter made them move their shoulders and arms, making them fully aware of the soreness of their muscles.

After their dinner, they started to clean and put away their equipment. The wooden waster swords, their towels, their notebooks and everything else they used for their training and study. When they finished they sat together near the fire, sharing a large blanket. Silently looking at the flames. Finn put his arm around her and Sam put her head on his shoulder. Their time together, and the things they had gone through, had made their bond tight and close.

"This is nice." Sam said in a soft voice.

"Yeah, just enjoying the fire. Each other. Peace and quiet."

"We earned some after these days," Sam looked up at Finn. "You know, I'm glad I am here with you."

Finn chuckled and poked at her sides. "Same, if I had been here with one of the guys they would have driven me crazy by now."

Sam knocked his side with her fist. "Dummy. I mean I like being here with you. I mean I like you." She looked at him again.

Finn smiled and blushed but wrapped his arm around her a bit firmer. "I know, just playing. I like you too. And being here with you. And holding you in my arms while we look idly at a campfire. Pretty romantic now that I think about it." They both chuckled and Sam started to fiddle with Finn's sweater.

"You know," She started. "I really do like you Finn. Like a lot. Perhaps the most I have liked a guy in my life." She looked up at him, into his eyes. "In a way, I never liked one before either." She started to blush a little now, so did Finn, and her speech became a little stuttered as she continued on, her eyes focused on his sweater now. "What I mean to say- is, well. That I, you know, I kind of-"

"I know," Finn's voice was soft and gentle, almost a whisper into her ear. He put a hand on her cheek and gently made her look into his eyes again.

"No really Finn, I want to-" Her words ended abruptly as he kissed her. The kiss was gentle and sweet, and continued on long.

"Hmmm," Sam had closed her eyes on instinct. "Okay, I think you know what I want to say." She said with big eyes. They both chuckled again and Finn gave her three pecks. Then pulled her close to him for a tight embrace.

"Of course I do, I feel the same you know. I always have, maybe even before you did." He gave her a teasing glare.

"Oh shut up," Sam laughed as she poked at his sides, trying to tickle him. "How long then?" She asked as she settled into the cup of his shoulder again.

"It's hard to put a single moment or time on it."

"Try, for me?"

"Well, if I had to give a single moment," Finn said, leaning his head back in an overexaggerated attempt to think. "It would have to be the time when we tried to climb higher into the tree of our treehouse. And when I didn't dare to come down, you helped me. You just took my hand, squeezed it and talked me through getting down. Probably the only reason I was able to forget my fear of heights, was your smile." Finn smiled at her. Sam gave him a quick kiss.

"Cute, but you are remembering that wrong."

"I choose to." Finn said with a grin. "But really, that day I realised I liked you a lot. Not just because you helped me, but what it meant to me that you helped me." Sam smiled and blushed. "So your turn now, when did you start to feel like you do?"

"Last night or something?" They both chuckled and this time Finn was poking her.

"C'mon, tell me. I just told you, fair is fair."

"Well, do you remember when I cut my own hair?"

"Of course, I'll never forget how you looked." Finn laughed and Sam joined him.

"Yeah, it was something…"

"You looked like a failed scarecrow or something."

"Hey!" She slapped his arm but couldn't help but chuckle. "Well I guess I did look odd."

"A little."

"And everybody laughed at me. For weeks."

"Well, you did have a funny look."

"Shut it." Sam tried to give him a stern look. "But back then, you were the only one not laughing. You even told me I was still beautiful. And I guess that is when I started to really like you." Finn smiled and kissed her head.

They sat cuddling in silence for a bit, watching the fire.

"How come it took us so long to admit this?" Finn finally asked.

"No clue." Sam said almost directly. "Or well, maybe I was scared it would blow up and I'd lose you?"

"Yeah, something like that." Finn pulled her closer to him. "But I am glad we finally opened up about it though. I really like you." Sam chuckled and kissed him.

"Same."

Suddenly they both jolted up, gasping as they both felt a tugging sensation. One of their spells had just been triggered. A quick inspection of the magical tug told them it was one of the spells that specifically only triggers by bigger forms. So no chance it had been a rabbit or cat or somesuch.

"You felt it too, right?" Sam asked, but she knew the answer already.

"Yes, we need to go and check. It's probably nothing but-"

"But we should make sure, yes."

They grabbed a waster sword and a flashlight each. Leaving their small camp, making sure to hang the tarp in front of the small opening again, to keep the light behind it hidden. They hadn't set five steps into the dark night before a voice startled the both of them.

"Well hello there young ones. Lovely night isn't it?" The voice was female and sultry, mocking in a way as well. The tone making it clear that the speaker regarded them as little more than children. It made Finn's hairs stand up on the back of his neck.