

Let It Take You

Thandie

Achievement in Innovation: Shortlist 2009

The review below may contain spoilers for *Supernatural* up to season 4.

Nicky: As an epic story that veers toward AU in its ending, *Let It Take You* is an intriguing experiment in the interaction between vidder and viewer. Its surrealism in presentation and audio editing is thrilling and intriguing, particularly in the first half of the vid.

Brad: Oh god that first half just had me glued to the screen. I don't even know the show or the characters, except through vids, and I was mesmerized and leaning forward, wide-eyed. It's amazing! Probably the most attention-grabbing opening I saw this year.

Nicky: I read this vid as comprising three parts: the first part is Castiel's rescue of Dean from hell, followed by Castiel watching Dean's plight, caught between heaven and hell, and wishing that he could help Dean escape. The final part is an AU ending where Castiel succeeds in removing Dean from all this, giving him a new shot at life.

Brad: That came through for me as well, which, again, is quite an achievement considering the fact that I don't really know the show and am relying entirely on the vidder's narrative skills.

Nicky: What intrigues me is that each of these three parts needs to be interpreted differently by the audience. Castiel rescuing Dean from hell is canon, but the source visuals are few and Thandie was able to supplement this with external source and clip choices that are meant to be read out of context, such as Castiel fighting Alastair around 1:19 - 1:30.

Brad: I spotted quite a bit of footage I recognized from added sources, particularly a few horror movies, but it felt so at home here in the context of the show and the vid's story that I never questioned it. It was only after going back through it a couple of times that I thought "Oh that's from *Hellraiser*," etc. And even then it felt like it belonged here, and that's what I really admire: It's easy to add source, but it's tough to properly incorporate added source the way this does, and fold it into the source imagery.

Nicky: From the very start with the disjointed audio editing and fragmented, beautiful images both from within and without source, the hell segment is frantic and haunting, with the fantastic visual-audio match to the drum fill at 1:17 being a particular highlight for me.

Brad: The sense of musicality all through this section is just spectacular. I love all of the little on-bass push-ins like the one at 1:23. Such brilliant use of added motion for impact.

Nicky: By contrast, Castiel watching Dean and Sam's place in heaven and hell's grand plan is pretty much all canon footage to be read in source context. The moments that particularly

stood out for me are the moments with striking audio-visual sync, such as 2:11, or with simple but haunting effects work such as the zoom in at 2:36.

Brad: Canon or not, I don't know that I've ever gotten such an overt sense that Castiel is sympathetic to Dean's plight from a vid, and again that says a lot about the vidder's execution of the concept.

Nicky: The story takes an unexpected turn at 3:10, where Castiel ostensibly follows canon in allowing Dean to escape from the green room to save Sam, but instead sends him to an AU paradise, freed from all his troubles and doubts. It's quite a curveball that, again, calls on particular input from the audience to interpret the resulting lake images out of source context.

Brad: On the other hand, coming at it from the perspective of someone who *has* no source context, it works perfectly! Though I'd imagine the bulk of the audience would have contextual baggage attached, and the vid's success would require jettisoning that baggage at the proper time, taking a leap of faith with the vidder.

Nicky: Let It Take You requires active input from the viewer throughout the viewing process. Like most vids which require a certain suspension of disbelief from its audience, it may be met with varied responses. For me, the very experimental nature and scope of the vid is an impressive feat in innovation.



THE FOURTH WALL
