

On The Porch

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by [mistral](#)

Summary

Scotty takes Jim home.

Leaves rustled across a fresh grave in a farmyard in Iowa. The sky had been pure blue when he'd headed this way but thunderclouds now threatened in the distance. He sighed heavily. He was tired, so very tired. He'd traveled many a mile to bring his friend home to his final resting place. Placing an orchid upon the grave, he turned to the house, picked up his bag, and began to walk. Somewhere in the distance a dog barked.

Reaching the porch of the ancient home, he looked at the small brass plaque fixed to the wall next to the door. BIRTHPLACE OF JAMES T. KIRK was all it said. Fixed to the window in the upper half of the front door was a simple sign. TOURS M-F, 10 am-5pm. He shook his head slightly and snorted, a combination of disbelief and contempt. He tried the door but it was locked. Two rockers sat upon the porch, cherry wood relics of another era. He'd met Kirk's parents on a few occasions late in their lives and could picture Winona and George sitting in the chairs, rocking gently with glances and smiles every so often, staring up at night to wonder at their son's fate. He'd done the same thing himself more times than he could count, only instead of staring at the Iowa sky he'd gazed into glasses of scotch in Aberdeen. Wherever you found depth and meaning was enough, he supposed. His bones ached.

"I've lived too long," he thought, "All of my young friends, those wet-behind-the-ears officers I was forced to obey, have passed into the dustbin of time. There's no one who knows who they really were, warts and all." He glanced at the sign in the window and snorted again. He sat in one of the rocking chairs, oblivious of their status as historical objects. Hell, he was an historical object, himself. He figured nobody could begrudge an old man a moment of rest. For a minute or two he just appreciated the easing of his tired body. Then he looked up at the dark clouds rolling in over the expansive corn fields that surrounded the house, reaching all of the way out to the simple dirt road he'd traveled on to get here. The apple trees that lined it bowed in the wind. "The Captain was lucky to grow up here," he thought. "What a might beautiful place this is. It's not Scotland, but it has a wild beauty not unlike it's most favorite son." He was mildly surprised at his own introspection.

He unfastened the Velcro holds on his bag and pulled out a bottle of Romulan ale. It was clean and neat but the label had begun to curl with age. He then took a tumbler out of the bag and set it between his legs. Struggling slightly and cursing under his breath, he managed to pry the cork out of the bottle. He rested it on the arm of the other rocker.

"I can't believe Starfleet let this lay amongst my stuff all those years, Captain, but I'm glad they did." He was speaking aloud now, but he didn't imagine there was anyone within a quarter mile to hear. He carefully poured a couple of fingers into his glass. The wind whipped the corn as the storm rolled in. "There's a fey fealin' to the air," he muttered to himself. Carefully setting the bottle on the porch, he lifted his glass to the grave he'd just left. "Ta the best captain in all o' Starfleet," he said loudly, fighting the wind for acknowledgment. He tossed the drink back in one gulp and shuddered as it went down. "Gah, why couldn't you ha' loved proper scotch?" he asked the wind. The sky was dark now and the wind suddenly died down. There was a pause in the weather, and he thought back to a man long dead that he'd once worked with on the Enterprise, an Amerindian named Joshua Thomas, of all things. Joshua had called moments like this svaha, the pause in the storm. He coughed once and, as if on cue, the rain began. It was a straight downpour, coming in sheets. The leaves of the apple trees bounced under the raindrops. Down, up, down, up. He wished he's brought a sweater, for the rain seemed to have brought a chill with it.

He sat and watched the torrent fall, refilling his glass once or twice and always making the same toast. Time passed on a wet afternoon as he remembered good times and bad that he'd spent with his captain. The storm continued, unabated. The chill in the air began to get to him and he considered risking the wet to make for his groundcar. "One more drink," he thought. He poured another and was surprised to see that half of the bottle was gone. "Have I drank that much?" he thought. He lifted his glass to repeat his toast and the cork, forgotten on the arm of the other rocker, dropped to the porch. He glanced over at it, bleary, and then at the chair itself. It was rocking back and forth, slowly and gently. The rhythm was steady, and he noticed the little cushion on the seat had an indent in it.

He blinked. He'd seen many unusual things amongst the stars, had far outlived any other human through sheer luck and had adapted as best he could to a new world but he felt a chill at the sight. "Perhaps the wind," he thought, but there was no wind. The rocker continued to move steadily, creaking slightly with age. Scott watched it for a few moments more and then drained his glass. He set the glass by the other rocker and carefully lifted the old bottle of ale from his right, only to set it back down on his left by the other chair.

"You had a wild time of it, never a moment for any of the simple pleasures. I think you've earned your time on the porch. I'll just be leaving

you this to enjoy as well.” He stood unsteadily, his knees protesting. “I’ve got to go teach a few young men what it takes to be a miracle worker, so if you’ll excuse me...” The other rocker continued to go back and forth in the still air. Scott picked up his bag and nodded. “Right,” he said, “Enjoy your peace now, sir. You’ve done more than enough.” He saluted the empty chair and trudged down the porch and into the rain. “The best captain in Starfleet,” he muttered as the storm soaked him.

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