

way up there, i actually love it

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by [Lysippe](#)

Summary

“You’re a hard woman to track down,” Joseph said, the image crackly but clear enough for Christine to see the way his lips turned up, eyes crinkled in that familiar fond smile.

“No,” she said, “I’m not.”

“No, you’re not.”

Notes

Mild spoilers for SNW 02x08.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Joseph had left her a message a day for four consecutive days - all left unopened - before Christine finally answered his call. She didn’t have any particular desire to *not* speak to him, aside from an enduring desire to never think about the war again, but, well, that wasn’t going too well in the first place. She just... froze, every time his name popped up in the corner of her PADD, staring blankly at the screen until it flicked back out of view, a blinking ‘new message’ alert in its place. She would say he needed to learn how to take a hint, but even she didn’t know what hint it was she was trying to send. And Joseph had always been annoyingly good at reading her like that. Even, apparently, when she wasn’t around to read.

“You’re a hard woman to track down,” Joseph said, the image crackly but clear enough for Christine to see the way his lips turned up, eyes crinkled in that familiar fond smile.

No one was ever fond of Christine. Charmed by her, sure, but not *fond*. She’d found it a little unnerving the first time. A lot more so, now.

“No,” she said, “I’m not.”

“No, you’re not.”

“Was there a reason you decided to blow up my PADD out of nowhere after a year?” she asked, and it sounded testy, a little mean, but. They had moved on. Her, not particularly successfully, if she was being honest. But Joseph was back in Starfleet if the badge on his chest was anything to go by. Back on the path of adventure and righteousness and whatever else it was Starfleet officers were constantly in pursuit of.

“There’s a civilian exchange program,” Joseph said mildly. “I’m sure you’ve heard of it. My employer is working with yours, to ah... borrow epigeneticists for a time.”

Christine had heard of it. Almost nonstop, actually. Some of her younger colleagues, eager to prove themselves outside of the lab, had been talking about it for months. And the more tactful of her older ones had strongly encouraged her to apply, suggesting that she may find her skills *better suited* to life aboard a starship.

“Yeah,” she said. “I’ve heard of it.”

If Joseph was at all deterred by her evident lack of enthusiasm about the topic, he was doing a particularly impressive job of not showing it.

“There is an opening on my ship. I believe you should apply.”

“What ship is that?”

Not that she would know one ship from another, but it would at least buy her a minute to let the information sink in.

“The Enterprise.”

Okay, she knew *that* ship.

“And I’d what... come work with you?” She hadn’t actually looked into the program. No part of her had ever seriously considered applying, and if *academia* had too many rules, how would she ever survive on a Starfleet ship?

“For me, technically. I’m the Chief Medical Officer. But yes, that would also mean working with me. Is that a problem?”

The question was sincere, but Christine could see the twinkle in his eyes, hear the teasing lilt in his voice. It felt strange, given everything. Unnatural in an entirely welcome way.

“Nah,” she said. “You know it’s not.”

“Perhaps it would prove to be an easier fresh start than leaping headfirst into academia has been?”

Was it really that obvious? It probably was. Christine was always that obvious.

Still, Joseph had always been good to her. She wouldn’t hate working for him. Probably wouldn’t hate working on a starship, either. Definitely wouldn’t hate the chance to get out of the lab, out from under the judgmental eyes of her colleagues. She had turned out to be a much poorer fit for academia than she anticipated when she went to grad school. And she would get to see the stars.

In a way that would probably involve less viscera and lasting psychological trauma than the last time.

She grinned, mostly sincere. “Well, put in a good word for me. Someone’s got to.”

End Notes

Prompt: Old Friends and Fresh Starts

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