

A Better Place

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A Better Place

by [B_Radley](#)

Summary

A mother reflects on how far they've come.

Notes

For my friends. Hope I do this justice.

Mary Elizabeth Decker watches her daughter as she holds hands with the young half-Deltan woman, a couple of years younger than her. Mary takes in the rainbow flags and the general air of celebration at the annual Pride Commemoration parade in San Francisco.

The crowds are huge and all are laughing and singing as they walk or ride on floats. A remembrance of a time in Earth's history that how someone loved another was at best only ignored, and at worst subject to arrest or even death at the hands of bigots.

She smiles as she sees her daughter, tall and strong and entirely comfortable with herself, laughing at something that Kitana says, before reaching over and kissing her. Around her, she sees only abject joy, as Decker leans into the kiss.

Joy at the expression of love.

The freedom to be who you wanted to be, and to love who you wanted to, without question, without threat.

Maybe even without labels, as acceptance grew.

Something that had been hard fought for over the last three hundred years on Earth.

Next to the pair, Kit's younger brother, a full Deltan reaches over to kiss the young Andorian man next to him. Examples of two cultures that had never experienced bigotry or hatred for who they loved, at least not that Mary has ever found in the last several thousand years. An acceptance that the bigoted humans of the past would've found perplexing about the Andorians, with their aggressive warrior culture.

Humans who hadn't known their own history of warrior cultures.

Her eyes fall on a tall man standing alone, watching the parade. Admiral Mike Walsh smiles at her. He doesn't march, but he looks at his own daughter laughing and celebrating, a member of a form of a Deltan bond with three other young women and a young man. A bond of the heart, the mind, and the body. A bond that had also once been larger, with the addition of a Rigelian hvast, one of five distinct genders of his people.

The late progenitor of the little boy who sits on Mike's shoulders, watching as his mother laughs with at least two other members of the prelanka-soné, including Walsh's daughter Morgan. She sees nothing but love on Walsh's face. Mary smiles as she thinks of how that bond may have already grown, by at least three.

Including her own daughter.

Mary looks up as a tall shadow passes near her, where she sits, watching the parade. Her heart does beat faster as Kim Sinclair reaches down and touches her forehead to Mary's. For about the millionth time, she wonders how the hell she had let Kim walk away.

Why she hadn't been able to make the marriage work, after nearly twenty years, for more than just Decker's sake.

She doesn't wonder anymore, as Kim moves her lips down to Mary's. She senses the warmth from Kit's Threads as she and Decker walk up to them.

For the first time in several months, Decker's eyes are free of the pain and grief, even slight, at the loss of her classmate, who she had been building something with. A classmate who had died in her arms, in the midst of a battle.

Mary doesn't think about loss anymore. Only what had been gained, as thousands celebrate around her.

They celebrate themselves, loved ones, and those who have gone before.

She gets up and follows Kim to a place less public.

Rear Admiral Mary Elizabeth Decker doesn't even look to see if Decker and Kit are finding their own less public place.

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