

Now and Later

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Now and Later

by [SLWalker](#)

Summary

It's when you're not looking that you end up falling in love.

Notes

The sequel to Dara's awesome gift. <3

- Inspired by [Half of Each Other's Mess](#) by [daraoakwise](#)

Somehow, Corry ended up taking an adorable disaster of a prodigy home and then also ended up *keeping* him.

If by *keeping*, one meant that Scotty stayed over at the house pretty much the entire week of spring break, having been drawn in by decent food and Cor's mother, anyway. And maybe peripherally by Corry himself, given their flirting. And maybe for some other reasons that Corry didn't yet understand.

By the time they had made the ten minute walk to the house from Kiss My Mast, Scotty was finally stuffed with a high enough number of lobster rolls to fill an apparently hollow leg. But he'd still brightened right up when offered yet more tea from Mom -- loose leaf in a ball and with water from a kettle this time, though he side-eyed the mug from the co-op, the one with the cartoon lobster on it -- and then he proceeded to chatter at the both of them all the way up until he seemed to slam face-first into a wall and almost fell asleep sitting up at the table, all floppy hair and lowering lashes and a faint sway in place.

Before the week was up, Cor would learn more about that -- enough to know why Scotty looked almost *surprised* by the fact he was about to nod off sitting there, enough to start to understand how anyone could go from talking a klick a second to practically unconscious, eventually enough to realize just how *lost* he was -- but in the moment, Corry just prodded and nudged the guy until he was upstairs and safely ensconced in the guest room with a bundle of towels, washcloths, a toothbrush and directions to the bathroom for whenever he was awake enough to get there.

Beyond the fact that he wasn't about to get fresh with someone under his mother's gaze, Corry was still working out whether or not he was interested in Scotty in that fashion; while they were only a year and seven months apart in age, all appearances to the contrary, there was something about the guy that just screamed *vulnerable* in ways that made Corry want to protect him first and sort out the nature of their interactions second or third.

That feeling got about a million times worse when he reached out to steady Scotty at the top of the stairs, and Scotty leaned into his hand with a shiver, essentially activating every single caretaking instinct Cor had in under three nanoseconds; it definitely didn't feel like someone just seeking stability. Or-- not the physical kind, anyway.

If not for the fact that he was worried Scotty would just fall asleep standing, like a horse, Cor would have wrapped arms around him right there and just let him stay there until he wanted to be let go of. No questions asked, no ulterior motives.

(Eventually, Corry would do just that.)

In Maine, March was still winter, but even winter had its beautiful days.

Corry had woken up to find their overnight houseguest freshly showered and making for the door; he spotted Scotty in the hallway at the bottom of the steps, hanging up Cor's sweater on a peg and looking a kind of-- maybe sheepish, maybe guilty, maybe wistful, certainly unaware he was being observed.

Not one to let someone escape without even making sure they had breakfast (and not wanting to let this one go yet regardless), Corry just spoke up from the landing and said, "Hey, give me about ten minutes to throw on some clothes and you can ride with me up to Damariscotta for some groceries. I can buy you some breakfast while we're up there, there's this cute little coffeehouse on the strip that makes a mean omelet. And then, if you want--" and he made sure the emphasis was on *you want*, "--I can drop you off with that rent-a-wreck of yours."

Scotty was looking up wide-eyed in surprise, having startled briefly when Corry spoke up, but then sort of shrugged with a roll of his shoulders and dropped his gaze away, mumbling something Cor didn't catch beyond 'deposit' and 'tools' and 'skimmer'.

Still, he was there when Corry came downstairs dressed; they didn't *actually* need groceries yet, but he grabbed the list off of the refrigerator anyway. "How'd you sleep?"

"Like the dead, for most of it," Scotty said, hands in the pockets of the coat Mom had dried for him the night before. "Yeh dinnae have to buy me breakfast, though. Especially since we didnae get up tae anything tae warrant it."

What, Corry thought, blinking once in surprise even as he reached around Scotty to open the front door and herd him out. "Well, I don't know how they do things in Scotland, but around here, people have breakfast in the morning because that's when you eat breakfast," he teased, filing that away, but pulling the door closed behind them and gesturing to his late model, canary yellow skimmer in the driveway. "Unless you're one of those people who likes to have breakfast for dinner, in which case you have excellent taste."

"That," Scotty answered, eying Cor up and down in a very unambiguous manner, a little smirk on his mouth, "has yet tae be seen. The *excellent taste* part, nae the *breakfast for dinner* part."

Whatever else was going on there, it still made Corry laugh, having someone quick enough to flirt (or verbally joust) with, and he didn't even think before going and opening the passenger door for Scotty, whose brief and baffled look at the gallantry didn't go unnoticed. "Well," Corry just handed back, with a grin, "we can always start with breakfast and see where it goes from there. And hell, maybe sometime you'll be able to tell me which tastes better."

He couldn't pretend he wasn't pleased by the way Scotty's eyebrows shot up at that comment.

Despite being a guy who could slam an absolutely *insane* number of lobster rolls in one sitting, Scotty still only asked for coffee for breakfast and worked on that slowly. And since Corry didn't like being the only one eating at a table, he just grabbed his own coffee and a muffin to shut his growling stomach up.

The sun, still high and clear and cold yet, came down on Damariscotta's brick downtown and seemed almost too bright after the last week of sleet or rain. But mostly it was quiet both in and out despite the sunshine; it wasn't tourist season yet, so they had the coffeehouse pretty much to themselves, and while skimmer traffic was steady outside, foot traffic was almost nonexistent.

The talk on the drive up was all light; the chatterbox of the night before no longer in evidence, leaving behind a guy who could still flirt, but who otherwise acted pretty pensive.

"You okay?" Corry asked, after finishing that muffin in three bites and chasing it with coffee that was a hair too hot to swallow that fast.

"Aye, sorry," Scotty answered, looking half-distracted. Maybe guilty. Corry wasn't sure what all was going on behind those pretty eyes, but he had a feeling it was a hell of a lot. "None of this is going the way I thought it would. Nae that that's a bad thing, it's nae, it's just--" he trailed off there, then shook his head.

Corry took a sip of his coffee, then offered, "--not quite sure what you should be doing now?"

"Doing. Saying. *Being*." Scotty closed his eyes and collapsed back against the booth's cushioned backrest, head tipping back. "I dinnae ken. I didnae expect tae be here, tell yeh the truth, so--"

"Well, I'm enjoying the company," Corry just said, reaching out with a foot and hooking it behind Scotty's ankle, giving a gentle tug there and trying to get his breakfast companion to smile. "And I'm loathe to give it up so fast, too. Not only does my Mom like you, but you're also an excellent distraction from working on those papers I have due. Which, by the way, is only fair since you're part of the reason they exist."

Scotty picked his head up and eyed Corry back, an arch look. "Yeh dinnae get tae blame me if yeh fail, then."

"Nope, I'll only have myself to blame." Corry flashed a grin, tongue-in-cheek, and it broadened when Scotty gave him a smile. Then he dialed it down to something softer. "Anyway, you don't have to worry about what you *should* be doing, saying or being if you don't want to. You can just do, say or be. And we can just play it by ear, see where it goes?"

Something both sweet and maybe a little sad crossed Scotty's face, but then he shrugged and said, "We'll see if you're still saying that later."

It sounded like a challenge to Cor -- and one with an unfathomable number of layers and not a little self-deprecation in it -- but he still had no issue whatsoever saying, "Ayuh," perfectly confident that he would feel the same way later.

(And, he was right.)

So, he got to remeet the chatterbox as the day wore on, bouncy and lively and adorable (if ever there was a time Corry thought of Scotty as a kid -- all joking about appearance aside -- it was in those moments) as the day wore on. He got to flirt and be flirted with. He got to buy his new friend(?) an absurdly touristy t-shirt, and found his heart tugging for the way Scotty laughed at the ridiculousness of it, bright and tickled.

He got to see more brilliance, a quick, sharp tangent about physics that came up thanks to an overheard newscast. He got to see quieter moments and sidelong glances, half-questioning, and sometimes something a little more blustery that screamed 'trying too hard to look unaffected', and he got to see more hints of that vulnerability, too.

They did not get to the groceries, obviously. In fact, they were still roaming Route 1 when Scotty smacked back into that wall of exhaustion that almost knocked him off his feet the night before, but earlier in the day by a fair bit, not even halfway through the afternoon yet.

"It's the meds," he said, tucked up around himself in the passenger seat despite the heater on, hiding in that lousy coat of his. (*Freeport time*, Corry thought, *or-- maybe later.*) "Never can predict this, so damn much going intae it. Whether I eat. Or dinnae. Or sleep. Or dinnae. Or fuckin' breathe, it seems." His mouth thinned into a line; even with his eyes closed, he looked-- maybe angry, maybe frustrated. Certainly tired, and maybe not physically. Whatever it was, it made Corry want to reach out again. "Better, aye, maybe, but this cannae be what they meant."

Corry couldn't pretend to understand that in full, but he was smart enough to put together the broad strokes, anyway.

"So, Popham Beach is pretty close," he said, after a moment. "It's a great place to sit, very pretty, bound to be quiet. Wanna go sit there and maybe use me as a backrest while you have a nap?"

There was nothing flirtatious in the offer; still, despite looking leveled, Scotty pried his eyes open and looked at him, and seemed for several long moments to balance on a knife's edge between heartache and hope before whispering, "All right."

"Good. We'll go to Freeport later, when you wake up," Cor said, smiling lopsidedly back before turning the skimmer in the direction of Popham Beach.

So, that was how he ended up in the backseat of his own skimmer for hours, occasionally reading from his PADD, occasionally watching the waves, occasionally just lost in the rise and fall of the breathing of the guy using him as a bed and pillow, once in awhile dozing off himself, and that was also how Corry ended up giving away some piece of himself to a guy he just met the day before, a piece that he would never get back again.

And would never ask for back, either.

"Oh, shit," Scotty said, muzzily, picking his head up; in the scant light of the moon, he looked around, even as his fist curled into Cor's sweatshirt. "It's late."

"Little bit. Too late to go to LLBean, but there's always tomorrow. And I got a lot of reading done, though I gotta admit it's a wild thing holding the guy who helped write it." Aside from badly needing to stretch his legs, Corry was comfortable enough that he probably could have slept there the night through. He didn't open his eyes again after that initial check, just slid a hand up Scotty's forearm, thumb finding the hollow spots between bones and tendons to rub gently, soothing. "Wanna stay here, go home or something else?"

He half expected that to turn into flirtation -- from a guy who seemed to think sex might just be a prerequisite for *breakfast* -- but then both of their stomachs picked that moment to give a shockingly loud complaint.

"--I could eat another six lobster rolls, nae gonna lie tae yeh," Scotty said, on the tail of it, sounding wryly amused.

"How's breakfast for dinner sound?" Corry asked back, finally opening his eyes and looking sort of down, sort of sideways at the guy using his shoulder and chest as a bed. "Because I could murder some eggs, bacon and homefries."

Scotty smirked up at him, cheeky and cute. "That mean I'll get tae finally answer the question of what tastes better?"

Corry ended up laughing hard enough there to stall his answer, but once he got it wound down to giggles, he just pressed a kiss to Scotty's forehead and murmured there, lips still brushing skin, "Let's start with food. We can see about the rest later."

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