

Fire and Shore

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by [SLWalker](#)

Summary

(2283) - Corry brings his brother and his brother's nephew lunch on a fine summer day and does a little reflecting.

"I just don't know. I keep going back and forth."

"It's no rush, lad; ye're lookin' at the rest o' yer life. Take all the time it needs."

The words were a quiet exchange; the voices, familiar and loved, blended in with the murmur of a busy summer day in South Bristol. For a given definition of busy, anyway; even the town's busiest days tended towards a timelessness, a slow-motioned gentleness.

The older Corry got, the more he realized how much of that gentleness was woven into his bones. It wasn't that he was incapable of incendiary rage -- some things never entirely disappeared, no matter one's age -- it was that he no longer felt any desire to entertain what it would take for him to feel it. Sometimes he came back around to wonder at that: He no longer had to turn burning scenarios over in his mind, to try to divine the ways the future could split into tragedies, because the main reason for it was home safe.

All his years as a husband and father, but it was always Scotty who was the weakest spot in Cor's armor and the quickest, fiercest way to provoke his ire. Not Scotty himself, but in protection of. Even his wife and kids fell behind that, but then, they had never walked as close to the edge of death as his brother did.

But now, Scotty and his nephew were down in the dry-dock that Scotty was renting at the Gamage shipyard; Peter was over visiting for the next couple weeks, something he'd been doing since he was little, and trailed his uncle not unlike a pup even now, still young enough to be awkwardly proportioned and unsure of where to put his feet.

Cor had ambled down to bring them lunch and paused up on the edge of the dry-dock to listen to them talk and to reflect himself.

Sometimes -- not often, not regularly, just sometimes -- he realized that they had somehow dodged a disaster. Realized that what lives they had now were a gift.

"I know, it's just-- I love engineering, Uncle. And I know Mum doesn't want me to go into Starfleet, and I know that-- that it didn't always treat you well, but--"

"Wait there, now. My service isn't somethin' ye can really compare; it was a different time, Peter. A different kind o' galaxy. I can't sum it up simple, I wouldn't even try, but ye can't look at me and base yer choices on that. If ye love it, there's a hell of a lot o' good ye can find in the Engineering Division. *That* has to be what ye base it on, not what happened or didn't to me."

Corry rested his forearms on the railing and closed his eyes; he'd had his own opinions on that, but he'd also put them to bed over the years after he'd called his brother home, so it was only empathy for the kid struggling to make a choice that would define so many choices after. Scotty's advice was sound; Peter's family loved him and didn't hurt him, the last generation of wounded children represented in his mother and uncle taken no further, so his young future wasn't driven by escape or pain and was his alone.

They talked as Cor shuffled through his thoughts; the dodging of disaster, the long time it took for Scotty to really heal, the final straw being a cracked skull and forced possession and then outright *death*, until Corry finally broke himself and for the very first and last time used the power Scotty gave him over fifteen years before to call his brother home.

Calling the wolf back to the light of the fire.

Who was now looking up at Cor amused; gray-muzzled, maybe, limping when the autumn descended wet and misty, but sharp and bright-eyed and home and happy.

Loved, and knowing it.

"We'll starve if ye stay out at sea, brother," Scotty pointed out, half-grinning. "Besides, we could use a hand on this sloop anyway, so get down here."

"Guess I better be glad I've got you to call me back to shore," Cor answered, smiling, and then did.

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