

Again

Posted originally on the [Ad Astra :: Star Trek Fanfiction Archive](http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/670) at <http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/670>.

Rating:	General Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	Gen
Fandom:	Star Trek: The Original Series , Star Trek: Alternate Original Series
Character:	Montgomery "Scotty" Scott , Montgomery "Scotty" Scott (AOS)
Additional Tags:	Weekly Challenge: One Reality Over , Alternate Universe
Language:	English
Series:	Part 8 of Higher Powers , Part 11 of Stations on the Dial
Collections:	Weekly Writing Challenges
Stats:	Published: 2023-07-12 Words: 699 Chapters: 1/1

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by [daraoakwise](#)

Summary

They keep meeting. They don't always remember.

Notes

Ok, this is slightly complicated. In my story *A Higher Power When You Look*, TOS and AOS Scotty meet, shortly before the events described here. But SLWalker and I have decided that that wasn't the first time, and we are in the middle of writing a Round Robin over on the Ad Astra message board detailing their (mis)adventures in trying to recover from other multiversal incursions. And they become tremendously important to each other, but aren't allowed to remember.

But what if they did?

The nearly-empty ISS *Enterprise* went to warp, and resolved the reality bomb that had smeared their consciousnesses across infinite possibilities.

There were two men in Engineering, although it could be argued there was just one. Montgomery Scott, doubled; one the Chief of USS *Enterprise* and the other of the USS *Enterprise-A*. They helped each other up, and then glanced into each other's eyes. And in the trembling aftermath, that was enough. The memory block which had been set by the Department of Temporal Investigations cracked open.

It was the Chief of the *Enterprise* who realized it first, because the face looking back at him wasn't much older than the one he'd loved almost immediately. Perhaps a handful of years more written on it. His, on the other hand, was decades older. He was far removed from the broken young lieutenant who had raged at the help offered him. Mandatory mental health treatment imposed by temporal authorities who feared that if two versions of Montgomery Scott collapsed from the trauma of multiversal incursions, they would take history down with them.

He hadn't taken any of it well, until he walked in on an alternate version of himself, stuck in the same place.

"Montgomery Christopher?" he whispered, and the other engineer's eyes snapped up to his, first confused and then—he watched the memory block fall even as his own disintegrated entirely.

The memories fell into place like they had always been there. Like they happened *yesterday*, preserved from forgetting. And the man beside him—who had been a near stranger—was suddenly a brother, as dear to him as *Corry*, he hadn't even realized was missing. Although he couldn't help but wonder, in retrospect—had he been unconsciously looking for him all these years? One day he'd been abruptly more steady than he'd ever been, and yet less settled. It had been bizarre; now he knew why.

He recognized his voice, now. A voice which had called to him out of the fog; a voice which had taught him to breath through trouble and plant himself firmly in reality. *Whatever has your heart broken, I'm standin' there in it with yeh ... just breathe, laddie ... tell me what yeh see? ... yeh did nothing wrong, but I forgive yeh, so see? You've been forgiven by Montgomery Scott.*

A voice that, toward the end, had trembled as they weaned him off of twenty-fifth century psychiatric medication and back onto twenty-third. Long days, spent watching him sweat in a hospital bed. "*Ye won't remember,*" Scotty had murmured, clinging to his hand. "*Ye won't remember.*"

"*How is that better?*" the other man had begged. "*How is forgettin' you better?*"

Somewhere, the temporal prognosticators had frowned at their falling numbers, and fearing that they would lose them both, made a choice. They'd come for his brother in the night, wiped the man's memory, and put him back in his time before they should have, without letting them say goodbye.

(Brian Fischer had raged at it.)

"Oh, my god," the man breathed, looking into his eyes as his mirrored memories fell into place. "Montgomery Edward." They were in each other's arms before either of them could be sure who moved first. "Yeh grew up," the other Scott murmured into his ear.

"Ye forgot how to be well," Scotty lectured reprovingly. "You've come apart again."

"I'm nae sure how the hell they expected me tae be okay without sayin' goodbye tae you."

From the bridge, a Kirk called down, needing answers and miracles. As usual, as always. There was a planet and a universe and, apparently, *all reality* to save, and no *time*. Ships to carry on their shoulders and battles to fight.

"Goodbye, Montgomery Edward," the other Scott whispered as they headed for the door, the words denied them before.

Scotty shook his head, and stopped him with a hand on his arm. "Just before they took me to wipe my memory—" he started.

"—how did that go?" the other man interrupted ruefully.

"Poorly," he admitted. "But I was told this day might come: meetin' ye again. And again. And *again*." He reached out, a hand on each of his counterpart's shoulders. "Until *next time*, Scotty."

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