

Breathless

Posted originally on the [Ad Astra :: Star Trek Fanfiction Archive](http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/922) at <http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/922>.

Rating:	General Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	Gen
Fandom:	Star Trek: The Original Series
Character:	Montgomery "Scotty" Scott
Language:	English
Series:	Part 15 of Arc of the Wolf
Stats:	Published: 2023-09-12 Words: 537 Chapters: 1/1

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by [SLWalker](#)

Summary

(2245) - *She looked limitless. Infinite.*

It wasn't so much that he actually minded zero-g, it was that first step off the platform that he really didn't like. That first truly weightless moment, and the stab of vertigo that went with it. After that, he didn't really have a problem and acclimated quickly. But it still took a force of will to take that first step into nothingness.

Scotty had his eyes closed. That was not proper procedure in EV exercises, but he just couldn't make himself to push off the platform and keep his eyes open at the same time. It had to be one or the other.

He took a deep breath, then shoved off. His boots automatically demagnetized when he left the platform, and in an instant, he was free-floating in space with only a tether to keep him somewhat secure. Not surprisingly, he had to quell the urge to turn around and scramble back to what was perceived safety.

He did it, though, and stayed still for a very long moment, trying to breathe steadily and just let his body adjust. Honestly, he was glad to be out here. This sure beat the work he'd been doing -- while he was still a glorified grunt, now he was a glorified grunt who had the honor (even if it only felt like that to him) of UV painting the markings on the hull of a *Constitution*-class starship.

The vertigo finally passed and he opened his eyes.

His breath out was rushed and loud inside of the helmet, and he didn't even hear it.

The USS *Enterprise* towered over him, her white saucer section high above, her engineering hull directly adjacent. There was nothing to obstruct the view of her in the dry dock. Her hull was illuminated somewhat from the lights of the Yard, but also some from Earthshine.

And *starlight*.

He just stared. He couldn't move; didn't want to move. He wasn't really sure he was breathing, either. He stayed perfectly still, in case moving would cause her to wink away like some dream he'd once had.

Not for the first time, he wondered how feeling this small could-- could--

"*My god,*" he thought, or said, he didn't know which.

It took the lieutenant that was in charge of this assignment three tries before Scotty even heard the worried voice in his helmet. "*Ensign?!"*

It took another two prompts before he could even try to reply, "Aye, sorry sir."

"*Are you all right? You sound like you're out of breath.*"

Scotty nodded, though it never really occurred to him that no one could see it. "Aye, sir." He didn't take his gaze away from the *Enterprise*. "She's beautiful," he said, not even to anyone, just into the void, and it didn't touch the depth of how it felt to look at her.

"*Yeah, she sure is something,*" the other officer said, showing that he didn't get it. "*We better get to work. She can't be official without her marks.*"

Scotty only nodded again, taking one more moment to just look up at the ship, suspended in space. She looked limitless. Infinite.

A dream. *His* dream.

He never had to close his eyes to jump off of the platform again.

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