

Home

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Home

by [SLWalker](#)

Summary

(2246) - It's strange how something could be wonderful and heartbreaking all at once. Like what it is to have a home. And what it is to be homesick.

Echoes and silence, patience and grace;
All of these moments I'll never replace;
No fear of my heart, absence of faith,
All I want
Is to be home.

-Foo Fighters; **Home**

"The Lobster Festival in Rockland was good this year. We stuffed ourselves stupid."

"...bastard."

Corry chuckled, looking out over the bay; the horizon was starting to cool off in the east behind him, while the sun got low in the west and set the sky on fire in front of him. He was just sitting on the steps, in a pair of shorts and a t-shirt, soaking up the warm air and the smell of the ocean that never seemed to get old to him. "Sorry. I'd send you some if I could."

"Aye, I know." There was a half-muffled yawn on the other end of the line, but even through the little speaker of the communicator Corry had patched through the comm in the house, it could have been right beside him and not so many lightyears away. Then Scotty added, "*Still a bastard, though. Know what was on the menu today?*"

"Lemme guess: Cubes?"

"Exactly."

Wartime rationing was brutal at best for Starfleet, though it didn't touch the personnel stationed on Earth, or even inside of Sol. Worse was wartime staffing -- the more military vessels and squadrons took the lion's share of everyone, leaving the non-military cargo carriers to be badly undermanned by overworked, generally lower-ranking people. Corry shook his head to himself. "Long day." It wasn't a question.

"Very."

"If you want me to let you go get some sleep, we can catch up later."

"No, I don't." There was a certain 'through the teeth' quality to Scotty's words, and Cor knew it wasn't because he was angry, but because he had his chin resting on his forearms and didn't have the energy left to hold his head up. "*Don't know when I'll have the time t'get on subspace again.*"

Between the marathon schedule, then the strict rules governing subspace communications usage during wartime, that was a legitimate enough reason. So, Corry nodded; knew Scotty couldn't see it literally, but would sense it anyway. "It's beautiful here. Sun'll go down in a half-hour or so. Mom's down in Boston with Rach, but I don't think that's probably going so hot. Abby went home a few hours ago."

"Aye?"

"Yeah." Corry looked off, taking a deep breath, letting it out and leaning back on his elbows. Geez, it was gorgeous out; very warm, and a little humid, but just kind of a perfect summer day. So, knowing that he was being listened to, if not the words then his voice, he kept talking, "I'm still not sure where I am with her, y'know? I mean, she asked me out, but she's just-- it seems like we make some headway, and I start thinking that we're a couple, but then she backs off and I don't hear from her for days, or even sometimes a week or more. Trying to figure out what I'm doing wrong." He didn't get a reply, and wasn't really looking for one, just continued, "I mean, she's... I see something in her, like just under the surface, and I'm willing to wait for that. I just don't know how long I'll have to or anything."

There was a chuckle, then Scotty said, *"If there's anyone persistent enough to win someone over, Cor, it's you."*

Corry shook his head with a wry grin. He supposed it must be true; making a friend of Scotty had taken him months, which he doubted he would have spent if not for the fact that he knew there was something there worth winning over. Now, over four years later, and through life, near-death, chaos and even silliness, he'd kill or die for that relationship. "I'm... I dunno. Just kinda letting her do the leading."

"Whatever works."

"I love it when she smiles. She doesn't really do it often, but when she does, she just-- lights up, and man, I swear, my heart just about jumps out of my chest. It's like Christmas or something every time." Even just recalling it was making Cor smile, and he shook his head. "Yeah. I think I can wait for that."

"Gettin' all domesticated?" Another quiet yawn; a likewise quiet grin that Corry could hear. *"Better be careful, though. Looks like a bruiser -- wake her up with a lobster, she might take yer head off."*

"I'll save that for you. Still owe you for that stunt you pulled with the canners."

"Ye did ask for it."

"There's a big difference between sticking one lobster in someone's face and dropping ten of them -- *ten* -- onto someone in the shower."

Scotty laughed, that kind of 'I really did do that, didn't I?' laugh, and before he could stop himself, Corry was laughing too. Really, he had gotten over it; still, at the time he had nearly lost his mind. Plus, his mother had been an accomplice in that, and that was even worse.

"Aye, well, least I left the bands on 'em."

"Small mercy. My shins were bruised for a week from where I dove out of the shower. Tore down the curtain, got water everywhere." Corry shook his head with a smile. "And then my own mother was laughing at me."

"So was I. All the way back to Augusta. And all the next day."

Cor rolled his eyes, but he wasn't mad. "Well, I'm glad I provide such a source of amusement."

"Me too."

Silence fell like the sun did; it was funny, most people tended towards trying to stuff as much conversation as they could into what subspace time they were allotted, but Corry had found that silence had become a reasonable, comfortable part of this long-distance communication. Maybe because it made it feel less long-distance. If they sometimes sat in silence when they were together, then sitting in silence apart was an acknowledgment that connections don't always require words.

The first time they'd managed to catch each other on subspace was a fairly brief conversation, and a little raw. Corry had a far better understanding than most people of what it was to be connected to people; after all that had happened in the Academy, he never let himself forget just what it is to be a part of someone else's life, either in blood or by choice.

So, Scotty shipping off had left him in a state like grief; looking out of the corner of his eye for someone who was supposed to be there, and then finding him not there, and it was renewed at every echo. Adding in the worry, and Cor had been a mess. Hard time concentrating, hard time training himself not to look for his best friend, who should *be there*, be *home* where he was missed.

That first conversation, absent some letters, had been a little raw. And Scotty had said, in a way that managed to cover all of it, even maybe some wonder, *"I'm homesick."*

It had hit Cor like a brick, and he was pretty sure they both were hit at the same time by it, because for someone to be homesick, then they had to have a home. Corry always knew he did. Always knew that he could come back to South Bristol, and he would be safe; surrounded by the things he'd grown up with, surrounded by people who liked him or loved him, and would protect him.

He knew, though he had never figured out why, that Scotty really hadn't had a home before. At least not in the way that people do when they know, on some level deeper than words, that they belong somewhere.

If there was ever a living, breathing reminder to Corry to appreciate what he had grown up with, knew into his soul, it was Scotty. Because you never quite understand what it is to have a home until you see someone else discover it, little by little. And just like he would kill or die for this relationship, he would kill or die so that his best friend never had to wonder again if he would have some sheltered harbor to retreat to.

Few things in the universe could encompass what those two words had summed up.

Just like no words could explain how Cor knew Scotty had fallen asleep with the comm line open; that he had drifted off to the sounds of the tree-frogs in the trees starting up, and given how new the communicator was, maybe even the water across the road rolling in.

But it made him smile anyway.

"Hey, Wolf. Wake up." A quiet tug on the line.

"*Mm*," was the protesting, drowsy reply.

Corry chuckled, shaking his head. "No sleeping at the desk."

Scotty sighed, a long-suffering sigh, and it was a little amused and a little like a kid who had just gotten roused by his older brother, and just as much an indicator of how far they'd managed to get. "*Such a bastard.*"

Cor looked off at the sunset, and listened to the summer air, and took a breath. It had been a beautiful day. "I know."

There was a pause on both parts; an acknowledgment of silence, and connection, and what it is to be at home and homesick. And for all the ways that families had come up with to say goodbye to each other across distances, none of them ever quite worked. Just a pause in the silence, and one more moment that spanned lightyears, and then the click of the call breaking.

Because in the end, all the things that really mattered were never broken.

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