

Come Back Home

A missing scene from "Sweet Revenge"

by Madison

Hey, Starsk. It's me. I'm back. Sorry I've been gone so long, but I'm here now and I won't be going anywhere else anytime soon.

How're you doing? I saw the doctor on my way in. He says things are looking much better—your heart has finally stabilized, and your vitals are steady and strong. That's good to hear, huh? You're making progress, buddy. It won't be long 'til you and the Striped Tomato are back out on the streets, tearing up the pavement and running down the bad guys. I need all the help I can get out there, partner. So you just rest and concentrate on getting well. I don't think I can do this without you, you know. And I don't think I want to try.

Yeah, yeah, I know. I think too much. Or so you're always telling me. I can't help it, though. The stuff we see every day, on the job, on the streets—sometimes it just gets to me. All the suffering, all the violence. It makes a person wonder what the world is coming to. I mean, really, what kind of society are we living in? It's every man for himself, and God help anyone who gets in the way. If you're not strong enough to keep up, you get trampled. Or fall through the cracks. Whatever happened to having compassion for your fellow man? Caring about others? Common decency and mutual respect? People just don't see what's going on around them. Or they pretend not to and turn a blind eye. They don't listen; they don't hear. They just don't care. Crime and unemployment are up, drugs are taking over our schools, more and more people are living on the streets, babies are having babies, and kids are going hungry right here in the good ol' US of A. The world is going to hell around us and no one seems to give a damn! You know, it just makes me so—

Oh, man. Sorry, Starsk. I didn't mean to go off on you like that. You know this sermon chapter and verse, don't you? Lord knows you've heard it enough over the years. But you know what? It doesn't matter how many times you've heard it before, you're always there, willing to listen and trying to understand. No matter how turned or twisted around I get, you're always there to set me straight again. No matter how lost inside my own head I get, you're always there to pull me out.

Hey, what I said earlier? About not being able to do this without you? About not wanting to? Well, I was wrong. I don't just *think* so, I *know* so. I can't imagine what my life would be like without you in it. Or the kind of man I would be. So, you've got to fight, babe. Fight hard. Don't give up—on yourself, on me, on us. I know you're hurting and you're scared. I am, too. But you can do it. *We* can do it. I'll be right beside you every step of the way. Can you feel that, huh? I'm here, buddy. I'm right here, and whenever you're ready to come back, I'll be waiting.

Waiting for you to come back to me. Waiting for you to come back home.



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