



Graphic by [Steph](#)

Rating: PG

Classification: Vignette, Romance (Mac/Harm)

Spoilers: "Goodbyes", "The Return"

Author's Notes: This is set a couple of years after "No Higher Price," but it could conceivably stand alone. It's just a little fluff piece of Harm worship (can't get enough of THAT) that was rolling around in my head during a TDY to Nowhere, Tennessee. My apologies to any Tennessee natives out there, but face it - there's not much excitement in Tullahoma.

P.S. Okay, okay, so when I wrote this, Jordan was still alive. But after seeing the previews for next week's episode, I can see that her days are numbered. Anyone wondering about the possible "Death Watch" parallels? Harm's girlfriends apparently don't fare any better than Mac's boyfriends ... maybe that's how we'll get rid of Renee and Brumby ...

"Was it me, or was it you? What's the difference if I knew?"
- Billie Myers, 'A Few Words Too Many'

I'm not sure what I expected when I came to work this morning. A few sessions, some unpredictable patients, probably nothing more than the usual routine. I certainly didn't expect to be reexamining the course of my life.

I'd been back in the States for a few months, after my two-year rotation in Spain ended, and I had mixed feelings about returning to Bethesda. I was still counting the weeks until I'd completed my obligation to the Navy, and Bethesda is as Navy as it gets. Still, it was a homecoming of sorts; a chance to pick up where I'd left off.

Once in a while during those first few weeks, I entertained idle thoughts about calling Harm. Each time, common sense invariably kicked in. We hadn't parted on the best of terms, and despite the look in his eyes that night, there was little doubt in my mind that he'd moved on. Three years was a long time to still be wondering about what might have been, even if ... oh, hell, I can admit it. I was head over heels for that man, obsessions and all. But life went on. And when I wandered through the hospital courtyard one warm evening in June, Harmon

Rabb was the furthest thing from my mind.

Fate's funny that way sometimes.

I was on my way home for the day, a dozen thoughts battling in my brain, when I caught sight of him. Even if it hadn't been for his height, I know I would have recognized him anywhere. The initial shock of seeing him faded quickly, only to be replaced by a greater one: cradled in his arms was a newborn baby, wrapped in a pale pink blanket. As I approached, I could see pure love radiating from his handsome features - the love I'd always known he was capable of. For a brief, irrational moment, I envied that child.

I debated whether or not to disturb them, but something propelled me forward.

"Harm?"

He turned slightly, surprised. "Jordie!" There was no bitterness in his voice; only contentment. "How've you been?"

"Forget about me! Is this little angel yours?" I hurried over to them as he nodded, beaming.

"Jordan, meet Kathryn Nicole Rabb."

"Wow, a girl goes to Spain for a while and the whole world changes ..." I tentatively reached out to stroke Kathryn's tiny hand. "Hi, Kathryn," I whispered, and the baby opened her big blue eyes. I laughed, transfixed. "Oh, God, she's got your eyes! We're all doomed."

"Yeah, she's already turned me into a stammering idiot, and she's barely twelve hours old." Harm gazed down at his daughter in awe, and I noted the gold band on his left hand. Amazing. "Sarah's sleeping upstairs, so I thought I'd show Katie her first sunset."

Sarah. Of course. Somehow, that news hit me harder than seeing the baby girl in the first place. "She's beautiful, Harm," I said softly. "Congratulations."

"Thanks, Jordan."

There was a slightly awkward silence, as I watched them together. After a few seconds, he glanced up with a hint of that irresistible grin. "Go ahead. I know you're dying to ask."

Damn. Am I that transparent? "When did 'Mac' become 'Sarah'?" I inquired as neutrally as I could.

"It'll be two years in August. She works out of the Pentagon now."

"You two finally figured it out, huh?"

He offered an embarrassed smile. "Guess we did."

"If you don't mind me asking, what made you see the light? A near-death

experience?”

“Pretty much.” I closed my mouth, surprised, but he was serious. “I helped steal back a plane of ours from the Chinese, and they took it personally. They shot up the cockpit, and me with it. After that, we both took a good look at our lives, and ...” He tilted his head toward Katie, sleeping serenely in his arms. “We changed our priorities,” he said simply.

“I’ll say. You’re probably not planning on spending much time in your Tomcat in the near future, are you?”

I didn’t mean for it to be a dig at him, even though I had a history of expressing my opinions on the subject. His reply, however, stopped me cold.

“I, ah, don’t fly anymore.”

The simple sentence, uttered with such ease, left me staring at him in shock. “Not for the Navy, anyway,” he clarified. “After the incident with the Raven, the doctors told me that my lungs wouldn’t be able to take the high Gs. The closest I’ve been to Mach 1 in the past two years was the Delta flight home.”

“Harm, I’m sorry,” I managed to say. “I know how much flying meant to you.”

“It’s all right. Really. As much as I hate to admit it, I’m almost forty, so my days in the cockpit were numbered already. Hell, the Tomcats are being retired from active squadrons even as we speak. It was tough for a while, knowing I couldn’t be up there, but now ... it doesn’t seem as important somehow, because I know what really is important. To be honest, I’m not sure I’ll even try to pass the flight physical again.” He gave a self-deprecating shrug. “Maybe this was a kind of growing up.”

I shook my head, at a loss for words. Harm raised an eyebrow. “I know. Hard to imagine, isn’t it?”

“It’s not that,” I said hastily, but stopped. “Okay, maybe it is. Harmon Rabb finding domestic bliss wasn’t something I would have bet money on. But ... I’m happy for you. You deserve it.”

I think the sincerity in that statement caught us both somewhat off-guard. It was true, though: as strange as it was to see him in the role of husband and father, I had to admit that it suited him. “So do you, Jordie,” he said quietly. “I’m sure you’ll find it the same way I did - when you least expect it.”

I wanted to believe him. Another voice, though, clawed at the back of my mind, reminding me that I’d had a chance to be part of that perfect existence. With him, no less. But because I’d been unwilling to let him finish one chapter of his life before beginning another, because I’d been afraid of giving my all and coming up short, I’d chosen to walk away. So even now, after seeing that his life was complete, I would still be left to wonder what might have been ... and to wonder whether Sarah Mackenzie knew what she had.

“It was good to see you, Harm.” I leaned in to kiss the little baby’s forehead. “Welcome to the world, Katie,” I told her gently. “You have a wonderful daddy.”

Then I reached up to kiss his cheek softly ... and I walked away again.

*** THE END ***