

Anamchara

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Anamchara

by [cathyearnshaw](#)

Summary

It's been twenty-five years.

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O no! it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come:
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

William Shakespeare

Boston, Massachusetts
Monday, March 6th, 2017

Mulder woke up to the annoying sound of his alarm clock to find he was alone in bed.

Her warmth still clung to the bed sheets and he could smell her shampoo on the pillow. Sitting up, Mulder rubbed his eyes and ran a hand through his short hair.

"Well, Mulder, my man, this is the day," he thought.

He opened the bedside drawer and retrieved the black velvet box for the hundredth time in the last couple of days. He'd wanted to do things by the book for once, and get her a diamond solitaire. Looking at the pricey selection displayed for him at the jewelry store, he'd changed his mind. None of the flawless stones he saw seemed to do Scully any justice. He'd sighed in frustration. Even buying her a ring had to be difficult, he'd thought. But then again, when had things been easy for them?

It must have been fate that took Mulder to the small Irish shop in New York City two months earlier. He had been there giving a lecture at NYU, and while wandering around Fifth Avenue, killing time before going back to his hotel room, his eyes were drawn to the familiar red-green-white pattern of the Irish flag.

The atmosphere inside the shop was warm and inviting. An elderly man with a cropped beard sat on a chair by the window, reading a newspaper. The music coming from the small stereo

on the top shelf
of a bookcase was enticing, and Mulder noticed it was sung in Gaelic. He smiled. Scully's heritage was strong, in her alluring looks and religious faith, in her fierce temper and spiritual strength. He decided he had to buy her a gift and started browsing around.

"Can I help you, sir?"

Mulder turned his head to find the shopkeeper regarding him with a smile. The man's eyes were as blue as Scully's, and he spoke with a faint accent.

"Well... maybe you can. I'm looking for a gift. Something an Irish girl would like," Mulder said, returning the smile.

"Ah. Those are the very best, my lad, I see you are lucky," the other man quipped, winking at Mulder and patting his back. "What's the occasion?"

"No special occasion. I just want to get something for her."

The man nodded, and Mulder looked around, shaking his head. He hadn't given her much through the years. Superstars of the Superbowls, an Apollo XI keyring -- those he could have given to a best buddy, not the woman who had fast become the center of his life.

"Does she like poetry?"

"To be honest, I couldn't tell you," Mulder answered truthfully. His eidetic memory searched for a clue and he could remember the occasional Margaret Atwood novel she carried in her briefcase, the first edition of *Breakfast at Tiffany's* she kept in her bedside table drawer, the Patricia Cornwell bestsellers she read on airplanes. But poetry? He wasn't sure.

"Well, my lad, you can't go wrong with my friend William there." The old man pointed at a small hardcover volume on the bookcase, and Mulder picked it up. William Butler Yeats, *Selected Poems*.

William. How perfect.

He opened the book at random, and was rendered breathless.

"O love is the crooked thing,
There is nobody wise enough
To find out all that is in it,
For he would be thinking of love
Till the stars had run away
And the shadows eaten the moon."

It was strong, powerful. It had none of the sappiness people so often associated with poetry. Mulder loved it.

"Yeah, I think this is it," he told the shopkeeper, giving him the book. The other man smiled and disappeared through a green door behind the counter.

As Mulder approached the counter, a sparkle of blue caught his eye. He turned his head and saw a small assortment of rings, all bearing the same design.

"Those are Claddagh rings," the old man informed him. He had returned with the Yeats book wrapped in green paper with a red bow, and handed the package to Mulder.

"I think I recognize the design," Mulder commented. "I went to Dublin a couple of times while I was living in England, and I remember a few girls wearing this."

"Oh, I bet you do remember," the shopkeeper retorted, chuckling.

Mulder put the book on top of the counter and picked up the one ring that had practically called for his attention. It was beautiful. There was a heart-shaped blue sapphire settled in what seemed to

Mulder like white gold. The gem was kept in place by two hands crafted into the metal, and on top of the sapphire heart there were a couple of tiny diamonds mounted in the shape of a crown.

"This is exquisite," Mulder whispered.

"Look at the engraving inside," the old man pointed out.

Mulder put on his glasses and examined the inscription. Gaelic, of course.

Graim thu, anamchara, it read.

"What does it mean?" Mulder asked.

"It's Irish Gaelic for 'I love you, soul friend'."

Mulder gasped, shocked. It must be fate, he thought.

"I'll take it."

"I bet your Irish lady will love it."

"I hope she does."

"Mind if I ask you her name?"

"Scully," Mulder answered automatically. Realizing what he had done, he laughed. "I mean, Dana. Dana Katherine."

"Irish through and through."

"Indeed," said Mulder. "Indeed."

A light chuckle coming from the bedroom door broke Mulder's reverie.

"Are you talking to yourself again, Mulder?" Scully asked, a hint of amusement in her voice. She was standing by the door, holding a mug of steaming coffee in one hand and the newspaper in the other.

He closed the velvet box quickly and shoved it under the pillow. "Uh... morning, Scully. I guess I got a little bit lost in memory here," he stammered.

"Good memories?" She took a sip of his coffee and walked toward their bed, sitting beside him. "You looked so serious."

"Great memories, actually. Have you checked the calendar today?"

"It's Monday, Mulder. Monday means I get graveyard shift. Which, I must say, is a drag." She smiled at him. "Come on. You're acting weird. You were talking to yourself, I saw you hiding something under the pillow, and it's not like you to worry about what day it is. What gives?"

"It's March 6th, Scully."

"Yeah, I know, it's March 6th. Wha--"

Realization seemed to dawn as her baby blues went wide. She looked so beautiful, he thought, even after twenty-five years. The flaming red hair was now a golden blonde, courtesy of Clairol. She needed her reading glasses more often, and tiny crow's-feet framed her stunning eyes. The years had been generous to her.

"My God, Mulder. I totally forgot."

"I won't take it personally, since you forgot your own birthday last month."

"You didn't, though. Have I told you how much I love that poetry book? I can't even leave it at home anymore. I'm carrying it with me to work." She took his hand and gave his fingers a squeeze. "Thank you again."

"Well, since you are feeling so grateful, I have a little something for you today. Let's see how you thank me." He fished the velvet box from under the pillow and presented it to her with a flourish.

"Mulder." She picked the box from his hand as if it was going to bite her.

"Wait, let me do this properly." Mulder got off the bed and knelt in front of her. He was having such a good time it was ridiculous.

"Mulder! Get off the floor."

"Aw, Scully, you're no fun. Humor me. Now open your present."

Scully looked at him with what he recognized as a mix of tenderness and exasperation. When she opened the box, her hand flew to her mouth and her eyes filled with tears.

"Oh, my God."

"Happy twenty-fifth, Scully." Mulder pressed a kiss to her forehead. She was speechless, apparently, because her only reaction was to throw her arms around his neck and fasten her mouth to his.

When they broke the kiss for the sake of breathing, she murmured a strangled "Thank you" and took the ring out of the box. "It's... exquisite, Mulder. Thank you."

"There's something written inside," he told her.

Scully squinted her eyes to see the engraving in the dimly-lit bedroom. "It's Gaelic... I can recognize 'I love you'... oh, Mulder. What does 'anamchara' mean?"

"Soul friend."

She shook her head, wiping the moisture from her eyes with a trembling hand, and held out her hand so he could put the ring on her finger. "Marry me, Scully?" he said, half-seriously, half-joking.

"Thought we were married already."

"Twenty-five years today." He nodded.

"Mulder, I didn't get you anything..."

His eyes left hers and stopped at the framed picture of the red-haired boy on their mantelpiece. "You have given me everything and more, Scully."

"Do you think he's happy?"

"You've done right by him, Scully. He loves you. He understands."

"Maybe we could call him for dinner?"

"If you can drag him out of the college library, maybe. I don't know how I'll cope with two Scully doctors in my family."

"Even if he'll be Dr. Van de Kamp?"

"He's a Mulder-Scully, no matter what his ID says."

"And we're married, no matter what ours say?"

"Exactly."

Scully pulled Mulder off the floor and back into bed, laughing. "So, G-man -- what is the very plausible theory we are investigating today?"

Mulder pulled her into a tight embrace and murmured, "I can think of a few."

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