

## One Good Turn

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# One Good Turn

by [rainier\\_day](#)

## Summary

Joanna just wanted her father back, Jim just needed a little push in the right direction, and Leonard just wished his life would stop *sucking* so much.

Cue the special, lucky, maybe-magical umbrella.

## Notes

This summary was *such* a pain to write. After mulling over it for a day, this was the best I could come up with.

- Translation into Русский available: [Один хороший поступок](#) by [dyster](#), [norot](#), [Werner](#)

Joanna was in tears.

Of all weekends, it just had to rain on *this one*. Crying angry tears at the weather, she stayed in bed, buried underneath her covers, refusing to look out the window. Over the rain, she could hear footsteps approaching her room and her door opening with a soft creak.

“Jo?” It was her father’s voice. “Darlin’?”

She buried her face into her pillow and didn’t answer. It was one of the rare weekends where her father was actually home and they’d made plans to spend the entire day together. She’d been looking so forward to spending time with her father (without her mother because that always led to arguments), and now everything was *ruined*.

The edge of her bed dipped as he sat down with a sigh. He placed a hand on her head and said in a gentle voice, “Joanna, I know you’re awake. What’s the matter, darlin’? I thought we were going to spend our day together. Are you feeling sick?”

Throwing the covers back, she sniffled loudly, hot tears running down her cheeks. “It’s raining, daddy!” she cried, wondering how he could’ve missed something so obvious. “We were gonna go to the park and now we’re going to have to wait ‘til next time ‘cause you’re always busy at work!”

Her father’s eyes softened. “Ah, is that why you’re upset, darlin’? I know I’m busy at work all the time, but a lot of people need help. You know that.” She did, but that didn’t make it any easier to accept. “And to make matters worse, not everyone wants to be helped. Sometimes, there are people—mostly boys—who’re too stubborn to ask for help even when they really need it. You know what I have to do with those fellas?”

Blinking back the tears, she asked, “What?”

“I have to tell them off and help them anyway.”

“Because you’re a doctor.”

He nodded. “Because I’m a doctor and because it’s the right thing to do. And speaking of telling boys off, when you’re a little older, I’m gonna have to make sure I teach you how to tell a boy off, good and proper,” he told her with a teasing grin. “Of course, if any of them come ‘round tryin’ to give you kisses or hold your hand, I’ll have to tell them off myself.”

She giggled in spite of herself. “That’s silly, daddy. Boys are gross. You’re the only boy I’ll kiss and hold hands with.”

He chuckled and gave her a kiss on the head. “Is that right? You’ve set my heart at ease, darlin’. Now come on, we’ve got a full day ahead of us.”

Glancing out the window, she frowned. “But the rain....”

“Did you really think I’d let a few rain clouds get in the way of our plans? I told you we’d go to the park, right? So let’s get you out of bed and ready for the park.”

“We’re going to the park in the rain?” She wiped her cheeks dry with her sleeve and looked at her father questioningly, reminding him, “But I lost my umbrella last week, remember? You and mama never let me play in the rain without an umbrella.”

“Now who said anything about you playing outside without one? Maybe you’ll find a new umbrella waiting for you downstairs,” her father told her with a knowing smile, making his way to back out into the hallway.

Earlier angst forgotten, she bolted out of bed and got changed. Then, running down the stairs with her jacket and socks still in her hands, she dashed into the kitchen where her father was seated at the table and enjoying a cup of coffee. To no surprise, her mother was nowhere in sight.

He arched a brow in amusement. “Well, that sure was fast. You better eat your breakfast before you even think about grabbing your boots, young lady.”

Joanna huffed and plopped herself down into her chair and began devouring the food in front of her.

Her father looked up from his mug and laughed. “You’re gonna make yourself sick if you eat that fast, darlin’. Slow down. The park’s not going anywhere.”

It wasn’t the park she was worried about disappearing, she wanted to tell him. Slowing down, she took a bite of her cereal and glanced over at her father. He’d been looking more and more haggard as of recently. Overwhelmed with patients at work only to go home to arguments and fights, he must’ve been exhausted. But her mother was suffering just as much as he was. Lonely and angry, she cried a lot whenever she thought she was alone.

Even at the age of five, Joanna could see that her family was falling apart.

“You all done with your breakfast, darlin’?” her father asked, snapping her out of her thoughts.

Chugging down the rest of her orange juice, she nodded. “All done.”

After clearing the table, the two of them made their way to the door where she immediately began putting on her raingear. Her father shrugged on his old brown jacket, the one her mother said made him look like a vagrant, and took two umbrellas out of the entry closet. He passed the small, silvery white one to her and kept the large black one for himself.

She took it and immediately ran out the door to open it, revealing all the characters from her favourite TV show. Beaming, she turned around and gave her father a hug as he tried to lock the front door. “Thank you, daddy! This is the best umbrella ever!”

He smiled, eyes crinkling in a way that made him look a little closer to his actual age. “You’re very welcome, darlin’. Now get that umbrella over your head before you get yourself soaked.”

“Is it a special umbrella, daddy? Does it have magical powers?”

“Magic? Just because there are unicorns and talking horses on it...” He trailed off and seemed to change his mind. Extending his hand, he shrugged. “You know what? Maybe it does. I’m not gonna rule out the possibility just yet. I bet it’s lucky—and maybe it’ll grant your wish or something. That’s what the ponies do in that show, right?”

Taking his hand, she laughed and didn’t bother correcting him. If her father said it was lucky and might grant her wishes, then it was lucky and might grant her wishes. She liked the idea of having a special, lucky, maybe-magical umbrella. “Can you still name all of the ponies, daddy?”

Not minding how the rain rolled off her new umbrella and onto his sleeve, he squeezed her hand and pursed his lips in thought. The names of diseases and chemical compounds he had no trouble remembering, but pony names were a completely different story.

She spent the rest of their walk to the park drilling the names into his memory.

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Less than a year later, her mother finally had enough and threw her father out for good. Joanna was in her room when she heard her father’s desperate pleading and her mother’s angry sobbing downstairs.

*“At least let me say goodbye to her.”*

*“Get out! Just...get out of our lives, Leonard!”*

*“Joce—”*

The door slammed shut.

After a moment of silence, Joanna’s thoughts turned to the maybe-magical umbrella in the entry closet and wished for it to bring her father back. She squeezed her eyes shut and waited for the sound of the front door opening and her father’s heavy footsteps returning and his muttered apologies.

But the door remained closed and her father never came back.

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Jim felt absolutely miserable.

It was pouring rain and he was sitting against some brick wall, sporting several injuries and a

debilitating hangover. Every movement he made just seemed to make things worse. The world was spinning and everything hurt. He had no idea where he was or how he got there. And unable to find the will to move, he just remained slouched there and let himself be drenched by the rain. He must've looked like an absolute wreck.

Closing his eyes, he tried to recall the previous night's events. His memories returned to him in brief flashes. There was a bar, there was a girl, there was a brawny guy, and then there was a fist or two (or three or four). He had no recollection of anything after that, but it wasn't exactly hard to fit the pieces together.

Sighing, he kept his eyes closed, wondering why he ever thought it was a good idea to go to Georgia. He had no idea what he'd been expecting. The bars weren't any different from the ones in Iowa and the bar fights certainly didn't feel any different. But after that run in with his father's old acquaintance, he desperately needed to escape somewhere.

It was just too bad he escaped and ran face first into some guy's knuckles.

He opened his mouth to chuckle at himself, but it felt like he had a piece of cotton shoved down his throat. Tilting his head back to catch a few raindrops in his mouth, he wondered how long it would take to get a mouthful of rain. Wetting his mouth a little, he told himself that it was still better than nothing—especially since he couldn't be bothered to get up. Cracking his eyes open, Jim stared aimlessly at the grey skies above him, thinking about how the weather seemed to reflect his mood perfectly. His cell phone had been thoroughly destroyed, his eye was swollen shut, his nose felt broken—*again*, and he could only hope that that was his wallet jabbing painfully into his back

All in all, it wasn't anything new, but somehow, it felt so much worse than usual.

If anything, it was all Christopher Pike's fault. Jim had been perfectly happy living an aimless and idle life in Iowa, living off of the money he'd inherited from his father, until Pike marched in and made a remark on what a waste of talent he was. The man even had the nerve to extend an offer to get him into some college in San Francisco. What right did Pike have to saunter into his life and fuck everything up like that?

The self-righteous bastard.

The memory made him want to crawl into the nearest pub to drink himself into a stupor again.

A part of him knew that Pike's offer was one of those chances that only came once in a life time—a ticket out of the directionless life he'd been leading. It was probably the world's way of telling him to make himself useful and pursue something meaningful. Despite knowing that he should grab the opportunity while he could, his pride stopped him from crawling to a phone and calling the man. He was fine on his own, his pride told him, and he didn't need anyone's help. To ignore the little voice of reason in the back of his head, he concentrated on the rain and how his wet clothes were clinging to him.

At this rate, he'd never even get a chance to call Pike because he was probably going to die

from hypothermia before anything else.

Suddenly, his view of the sky was blocked by something. He blinked and waited for his eyes to refocus. Furrowing his brows, he realized that it was a silvery white umbrella with pictures of colourful ponies on it. He blinked again and let out an intelligent “Huh?”

There was a little girl standing next to him, her brown locks tucked away under the hood of her raincoat and her boots covered in mud. She was holding the umbrella over his head and looking at him with worried eyes. “Are you alright, mister?”

Jim nodded, unsure of what else to say.

“Why are you sittin’ in the rain? Those bruises look mighty painful,” she said. “Do you need help?”

At the mention of help, he immediately thought of Pike and his pride kicked in, causing him to shake his head. “Don’t worry, I’ll be fine, kid. I don’t need help. I’m just a little down on my luck right now. And I’m pretty sure your parents wouldn’t approve of you talking to strangers like this.” His voice sounded rough and raspy even to his own ears.

She didn’t look convinced in the least. Ignoring his last sentence, she told him, “My daddy says sometimes boys are too stubborn to ask for help so you have to tell them off and help them anyway.”

He offered her a crooked grin. “Yeah? And do I look like one of those dumb boys to you?”

The girl nodded, her words straightforward and guileless as children’s tended to be. “Yeah, you sure do, mister. If my daddy were here, he’d definitely be giving you a good scolding and patch you right up. He’s a doctor,” she told him with mixture of pride and longing in her voice, “but he’s somewhere far away right now.”

Jim swallowed hard, feeling bad for the kid. She clearly missed the man and talk of fathers always stirred up unwanted emotions in him. “Sorry to hear that, kid. So are you going to tell me off now?”

She thought about it for a moment and shook her head. “I can’t. Mama says it’s not proper for a girl to cuss.”

He couldn’t help but chuckle. “She’s right, you know? I like your umbrella, by the way. My Little Pony? Very cool.”

“Yeah, my daddy bought it for me,” she replied absentmindedly.

There was a pause between them.

“I like the blue one,” he told her conversationally because he didn’t know what else he was supposed to say or why she was still standing around.

“I like the yellow one,” she mumbled, looking conflicted and indecisive about something. But after some consideration, she seemed to have made up her mind and held the umbrella out with conviction. “Here, you can have it, mister.”

Blinking, he wondered if he heard her right. He shook his head and pushed the handle back towards her. “What? Why? I’m not gonna take your umbrella, kid. It was a gift from your dad, wasn’t it? You can’t just give it away—you don’t even know me. And what about you? You’re going to get soaked.”

She shot him an impressive scowl. “I’ve got a raincoat and I’m going home anyway. You’re going to catch your death like this, mister, so go on and take the umbrella. Don’t be stubborn. My daddy will understand. It’s a lucky umbrella and you need the luck,” she thrust the umbrella out once more, “so take it.”

Stupefied, Jim reached out and did as he was told. “...thanks.”

The girl huffed and nodded to herself, seemingly satisfied with her work. “You’re welcome. And you should probably get those bruises looked at—and your nose. It looks broken. It’s okay to ask for help sometimes. Helping people’s why daddy’s a doctor.” Then she straightened herself up and told him, “Anyway, I have to get home before mama gets worried. Take good care of it, okay? It’s a special, lucky, maybe-magical umbrella!”

Still too stunned to reply, Jim watched as she disappeared down the street. Once she was out of sight, he looked up at all the ponies smiling back at him and wondered what just happened. On one of the edges, the name ‘Joanna McCoy’ was written in permanent marker. Twirling the umbrella around, he thought of her fierce hazel eyes and the words she’d said to him.

Maybe he could use a little help after all.

With a pained grunt, he pushed himself off the ground and fished the card Pike had given him out of his pocket. It was pretty much all he had left on him. Glancing up at the umbrella once more, he smiled in spite of himself. “Too stubborn to ask for help, hmm? Guess she got me there... Jim Kirk told off by a little girl, who would’ve thought?”

Limping his way down the street with a child’s umbrella over his head, he stepped into the first clinic he found. After the doctor finished patching him up, he walked over to the receptionist and shot her the most winning smile he could manage with a split lip and asked, “Could I borrow the phone for a minute? There’s a call I really need to make.”

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Days later, after stuffing the last of his ‘essentials’ into his backpack, Jim looked around his room to make sure he didn’t forget anything. A gleam of white caught his eye. Strutting over to his bedroom door to find the umbrella hanging off the doorknob, he unhooked it and twirled it around his finger a few times with a grin. “Almost forgot you, didn’t I? You’re coming with me, special, lucky, maybe-magical umbrella.”

Sticking it into his bag and pulling the drawstrings tight, he slung the pack over his shoulder



and walked out the door.

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Leonard hated his life.

Standing at the bus stop in the middle of the night while being *pissed on* by *clouds* was only one of the many things he hated about his life. Earlier that day, he'd hung up on his ex-wife's lawyer when the man called to finalize property rights and mentioned that she wanted full custody of their daughter. With their messy divorce, he didn't have the money or connections to get himself a lawyer—not yet anyway—so he hung up on the man to buy himself more time.

After getting kicked out of his own home, he'd hopped onto the next flight out of Georgia which just so happened to be San Francisco. It was cold, things were expensive, and he didn't know what on earth possessed him and made him think that it was a good idea to *fly* to a random city. But there he was, in San Fran-goddamn-cisco of all places.

He'd tried to make the best of everything—tried to pick up his pieces of his shattered life and stick them back together, praying that they won't fall apart again. So far, he managed to secure himself an apartment, a second-hand car, and a job at the local hospital. But he wasn't sure any of that actually counted for anything because his apartment was absolute crap. Located in the shoddiest neighbourhood possible, it was infested with insects and rodents and possibly ghosts of homicide victims, and it smelt like the dying hopes and dreams of small children. Then there was his car, the useless piece of scrap metal finally keeled over and died, leaving him no choice but to take the bus home. And seeing as his ex wanted to keep their daughter all to herself, all he really had left was his work.

Rock bottom *sucked* and Leonard wanted to know what he did to deserve so much *shit* from the world.

Crossing his arms to fend off the cold, he glared down the road, willing the bus to arrive so he could get back, pour himself a nice strong drink and pass out. After a few minutes, he frowned and brushed his dripping wet bangs out of his eyes. He couldn't have missed the last bus. Looking down at his watch, he had to take a deep breath to stop himself from screaming in frustration when he realized that it'd stopped working at five to two.

At that point, he was pretty much ready to throw himself into oncoming traffic except he couldn't even do that because there weren't any goddamn cars on the road because it was *god knows what o'clock in the morning*. Sure, there was the occasional cab, but that meant nothing to him because he didn't have cash on him or enough credit to his name to get himself a cab just yet. There probably wasn't any point in heading back to his place at this hour anyway. By the time he got back to his pathetic excuse of an apartment, he'd just have to leave again.

Leonard was about to turn around and head back to the hospital in defeat when the rain suddenly stopped. Blinking, he tilted his head up only to see a familiar looking umbrella. Startled, he looked back down at the owner and furrowed his brows. It was a man—holding a

child's umbrella over his head. "Hey, buddy, are you alright?"

"I'm fine." He turned his attention back to the umbrella. It had the same design as the one he'd given to Joanna a few years back. In fact, it even had her name written on the edge in his handwriting—he bristled and scowled at the stranger. "Why do you have my daughter's umbrella?"

Under the flickering street light, he could see that the man had dirty blond hair and baby blue eyes—widened and confused at his words. "Your daughter's umbrella?"

His instincts told him to attack the man—to take all his anger out on him—but he was a doctor, not a ruffian. "Yeah. That's my daughter's umbrella you're holding. Joanna McCoy? Her name's written right there. Hell, I'm the one who wrote it. How the fuck did you get your hands on her umbrella, kid?"

The man's lips curled into a smile, looking pleasantly surprised at something. "You're her doctor father then? Actually, now that you mention it, I can kinda see the resemblance. Has anyone ever told you that she has the same glare as you?"

His scowl deepened. "So what if I am? You still haven't answered my question, kid. Wait, how'd you know I'm a doctor?"

"Your kid told me. And before you attack me, she gave me this umbrella when I was in Georgia and down on my luck."

Leonard blinked, eyebrows furrowing in disbelief. "My daughter gave you her umbrella when you were in Georgia and down on your luck," he repeated, still not comprehending the words. "Do you have any idea how ridiculous that sounds?"

"Yeah," the man said with a chuckle, "but that's what happened. I was an absolute wreck when she found me. I told her I didn't need it, but she more or less forced it onto me—said it was lucky and that I needed the luck, apparently. Your kid's really something else. You should be proud of her. She told me off and set me straight without ever cussing or raising her voice."

He opened and closed his mouth before shaking his head. Joanna was definitely too mature for her age, but that was just something she inherited from him and he loved her all the more for it. Smiling wryly, he scoffed. "She told you off? Good on her. I bet her mother's going to blame that on me too."

"Oh? Divorced, right? Was it really *that* bad?"

"Ex-wife took all of Georgia and now she won't even let me see my own daughter anymore. All I've got left are my bones," he muttered. He wasn't sure why he was unloading his problems onto the man in the first place. It was unnerving how much the stranger knew about his life.

The man winced sympathetically. "Shit, you've got it really hard."

Leonard let out a bitter laugh at the understatement, unable to stop the words from tumbling out of his mouth. “Hard? I haven’t slept in over 72 hours, my apartment’s infested with god knows what, my car’s a piece of shit, my ex is a bitch, her lawyer’s an assiduous bastard, I’ll never get to see my daughter again, and I missed the last goddamn fucking bus. I think it’s safe to say my life’s not exactly peachy keen right now, kid.”

For all he knew, there could’ve been tears falling from his eyes as he muttered those words, but with the rain running down his face, it was impossible to tell. He was hurting and it felt like there was no end to it. The stranger didn’t reply, probably too stunned or scared by his outburst—not that Leonard could blame him. He was about to apologize when the stranger suddenly blurted out, “I can help you.”

He arched a brow in surprise. “What?”

“I can help you,” the man repeated. “I’m not a lawyer myself, but a couple friends of mine just passed their bar exam. I could probably hook you guys up—not in that way—to help you sort things out and whatnot. You should get to spend at least a *little* time with your kid. Anyone can see that she fucking adores you, man.”

Tempted as he was to accept the offer, he shook his head and decided against it. It was a family matter and he wasn’t willing to drag strangers into the mess. “Thanks for the offer, but no thanks, kid. I’ll deal with this on my own.” The man studied him for a moment before chuckling causing him to frown. “What’re you laughing at?”

“You,” the man told him with an infuriating grin on his lips. Leonard shot him a baffled look. “You know what’s funny? Your kid told me that her daddy said that sometimes boys are too stubborn to ask for help so you have to tell them off and help them anyway.”

His lips curled just ever so slightly upwards despite himself, touched that Joanna remembered his words. “Well, fuck. I did tell her that, didn’t I? Don’t tell me you’re gonna tell me off now?”

“Only if you insist on being stubborn. Your kid helped me and one good turn deserves another, so c’mon, you missed the bus like, *eons* ago and my place isn’t too far from here. Why don’t you swing by and dry yourself off? We can talk there over a drink or something.”

Leonard was about to protest but then thought better of it. “Fine,” he grumbled and shoved the umbrella back over to the man. “Get that umbrella over your head, kid. I’m already soaked. There’s no point in both of us catching our deaths out here.”

“How about we share it?” the stranger offered, leading them down the street.

Arching a brow at the idea, he snorted. “We’re both going to get drenched then. And really, two grown men sharing a child’s umbrella?”

“No.” The man laughed and corrected him, “Two grown men sharing a special, lucky, maybe-magical umbrella because we both could use the luck and whatever magic it has to

offer. I'm Jim Kirk, by the way."

"McCoy. Leonard McCoy," he muttered. "So do you just carry my daughter's umbrella with you everywhere you go? I'm pretty sure that that'd do some damage to your credibility as a," he made an offhanded gesture, "whatever you are."

"A delightful charmer? An all-around amazing person? The single most gorgeous human being you've ever laid eyes on? All of the above?" Jim suggested with an eyebrow-waggle. "And as for your question, no, I don't. My other umbrella broke the other day and I didn't have time to replace it so I figured I'd use this one. It's a perfectly good umbrella, and I'll have you know that I'm one of the few adults in the world who can pull off using a kiddy's special, lucky, maybe-magical umbrella. And right now, I'm convinced that it's actually magical since it led me to you. Her dad of all people, who would've thought?"

He rolled his eyes. "Please don't tell me you're going to start going on about fate and destiny and other nonsense now. That's the last thing I need right now."

"Actually, I was gonna ask you which pony was your favourite," Jim told him with a wide, teasing grin on his face. "Mine's the blue one. What about you?"

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A little over a year later, after a lot of ongoing debate and negotiation, with the help of Jim and his friends, they finally managed to settle the matter of custody over Joanna. He'd gotten to speak to her over the phone every once in awhile, but she'd never been allowed to fly over to visit him—until now. In an hour, her plane was going to land and he'd finally get to spend Christmas with her.

Leonard paced around the decorated room nervously, glancing over at the clock every other step. His heart was beating so loudly he was pretty sure he'd give himself a heart attack before ever getting to see his daughter again. From behind him, he could hear Jim laughing. "Relax a little, Bones. If your goal is to wear a trench into the floor, you're well on your way."

Too busy concentrating on his pacing, he didn't bother replying.

Suddenly, arms wrapped around him, holding him in place. "Stop pacing already. You're making me nervous just watching you. You're gonna go pick her up from the airport in a little bit, I promise I won't burn the house down, and we're going to have an excellent Christmas together. Everything's gonna be fine."

He turned around and glared at the man. "I know that."

Unfazed by the scowl, Jim grinned and gave him a kiss on the cheek. "Do you really? Everything's going to be *fine*, Bones," he repeated.

Relaxing just the slightest bit, he took a deep breath and nodded. "Yeah, you're right. It's just been such a long time since I've seen her."

“I wonder if she’ll recognize you. You look a lot better than when we first met—I swear, you were engulfed in this thick miasma of hopelessness and despair back then,” Jim told him, brushing loose strands of hair out of his eyes.

“Thick miasma of hopelessness and despair?” Leonard repeated with an arched brow. “I wouldn’t be surprised if I was.”

“Hey, do you think she’ll recognize me?” Jim asked. “I mean, that one time she saw me, I was pretty battered myself.”

“I guess we’ll find out soon enough,” he muttered, mentally going over how to get to the airport. “If she does, she’ll be wondering why I invited some vagrant over for Christmas.” He glanced over at the clock again, not wanting to be late for the pick-up.

“Stop staring at the clock, Bones,” Jim whined. “I can’t believe you’re paying more attention to the clock than me when I’m standing *right here*. Do you need me to distract you? It’s one of the many services I offer—ow! My perfect nose! People pay good money to have noses this perfect, you know? I should charge you for flicking it like that.”

Leonard grinned, feeling very satisfied with his petty form of retaliation. “If it’s so perfect, maybe you should stop breaking it all the time, you infant.”

“I can’t help it if people get jealous of how amazing I look,” Jim mumbled, hand still shielding his nose. “Are you gonna kiss it better? I think you owe it to me to kiss it better. I’ve also got mistletoe hanging off my pants if you’d prefer that.”

He chuckled and gave Jim a soft kiss on the lips. “There. Better?”

Blue eyes fluttered opened and stared earnestly at him. “No. Maybe if you do it again I’ll feel better.”

Rolling his eyes, he stepped back and made his way to the door. “Nice try, kid, but I better get going.”

Jim pouted but didn’t press the issue. “Fine.” Then he glanced outside. “Oh, it’s raining. Don’t forget to bring her special, lucky, maybe-magical umbrella. I think she’ll be happy to see it again.”

“Right. Can’t forget the special, lucky, maybe-magical umbrella,” he muttered with a nod.

Shrugging on his coat, Leonard hooked the plastic handle of the white umbrella onto the pocket of his coat and turned back to Jim who caught him off guard with a kiss. “Drive safely, Bones.”

Leonard smiled. “I’ll be back in a little bit. Try to keep the house standing until then.”

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Joanna could hardly contain her excitement.

Her ears popped as the plane descended and the wheels touched the ground. Once the seatbelt sign turned off and everyone began grabbing their luggage from the overhead compartments, the stewardess, her temporary caretaker, led her off the plane. Weaving and winding through the halls of the arrival section of the airport, she followed the woman and answered the questions as politely as she could while only half listening. The lady was nice and all, but she wanted to see her father.

Together, they collected her suitcase off the conveyor belt, and she only *barely* managed to wheel it over to the arrival hall without running. Her heart was pounding and she couldn't keep the smile off her face when the doors slid open revealing a crowd of people standing behind the railing, all waiting for their loved ones to walk through. As she tugged her suitcase along, her eyes scanning the crowd for her father, she furrowed her brows anxiously when she couldn't find him.

“Joanna McCoy! Where on earth are you looking, darlin’?”

With a start, she turned towards the end of the walkway and lit up.

“Daddy!”

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