You’ve Got Mail

by withdrawnred

Summary

Seamus returns home from assignment to a tempest.

Notes

Obviously, the title is stolen from the wonderful film directed by Nora Ephron. And the characters belong to the wondrous JK Rowling and not me. Originally written for the 2010harry_holidays exchange. A huge thank you to my beta, dormiensa, without whom this would never have been completed.

Fourteen steps: the distance from the main door to the elevator.

Ground floor. 1, 2, 3, - fourth floor. Click.

The man cursed the existence of the mirror, just as soon as he recovered from the shock of seeing his reflection. Whoever had thought it was a good idea to place mirrors on all sides of a bloody elevator was sorely mistaken.

Merlin, but he hated Portkey travel. He almost considered it worse than Muggle air travel, although he had to admit nothing was worse than taking off and landing in those ridiculous machines.

Needless to say, he looked downright haggard: sunken eyes, pale skin, hair that needed a good washing. He raked his hands through his hair, not even caring at this point how much she hated his
hair untidy. She’d hate it no matter how it looked when he walked through the door - he just wasn’t sure whether she preferred messy or oily hair. She probably didn’t even know. She wasn’t exactly a lesser-of-two-evils kind of bird. To be honest, all he really cared about was having a nice tumbler of Firewhisky to take the edge off and then tucking in to bed. Not that he necessarily played into the stereotype of the drunken Irishman, but damn it if he didn’t like his whiskey. He was a Finnegan, after all.

And twenty more steps to the apartment’s threshold - these even more weary than the previous had been. The travel was certainly catching up to him. Seamus shook his head in an almost pathetic attempt to jolt himself awake. It wasn’t entirely effective. That Firewhisky would surely put him to straight to sleep in his armchair if he wasn’t careful.

What was effective in jolting him to his senses was the blur of silver that swam before his eyes the moment he opened the door enough to push his body inside the apartment, immediately followed by a loud crash as it careened to the floor below. Yes, nothing was quite as effective at waking him up as some object -- well, in this case a pewter candlestick -- hitting the wall mere centimetres from his head.

*Fantastic.*

He sighed, stepping over the discarded object and attempting to gather whatever energies he could to prepare for the approaching tempest -- because Pansy Parkinson was nothing if not as frightening as a super-typhoon in her rage.

“Not now, Pans. I’m totally knackered.”

He watched as she sputtered in (expected) indignation. Couldn’t she see he really was knackered? The bloodshot eyes were sure to give him away, right? But the look in her eyes -- which he was very tempted to describe as crazed. Not to mention, she’d certainly castrate him if she found he’d even thought the word -- was unmistakable. Whatever it was he’d done -- and Merlin, was he ever clueless on that one -- had been enough to warrant the full-out Storm. Sure to be complete with lightning and thunder and perhaps even some hailstones. *Bloody fabulous.*

“Two weeks, Seamus,” she gritted out, her explosive anger barely in check. Suddenly he was regretting that specific commonality that had helped bring them together. “Two weeks, and not so much as an Oh-hey-I-arrived-safely!”

He blinked, attempting to shake off both his fatigue and new-found confusion.

“What are you going on abou--”

“You didn’t owl me. You didn’t FireCall me. Not even a bloody note from the Aurors’ Office!”

Seamus was slack-jawed in shock as he watched his girlfriend pace back and forth in front of their fireplace. She began to mumble to herself, an arm occasionally reaching above her head in her fervor; it seemed that every thirty seconds her voice would hit a yet shriller note.

In his opinion, she should have known that a fatigued Seamus -- especially one so obviously fatigued as he fancied himself -- was not a Seamus who easily processed or read between the lines. His confusion merely surmounted. The single thing he had been able to deduce, besides the fact that she was clearly angry--Neville would’ve been able to see that, and that was certainly saying something--was that he’d supposedly cut all ties while on assignment. Which was all bloody ridiculous. He’d taken enough shit from his partner for insisting on sending a postcard to his woman every day or so. It had been nearly a daily occasion: Seamus would grab some asinine piece of cardboard from a
tourist shop, scribble whatever came to his mind, and manipulate their route so he could both purchase Muggle postage and throw the postcard down the chute.

No communication, my arse!

“--Merlin! I should have listened to my mum after all.”

Oh God. His hands shot up to massage his temples, treating the migraine that was surely en route. If there was one thing that could pull Seamus Finnegan out of his thoughts, out of whatever shallow introspection he’d been involved in, it was that word.

“I thought we agreed not to bring our mothers into this house,” he grumbled. Yes, she had promised. Even the word was taboo in their home. “Mum”, for both Seamus and Pansy, was the great elephant in the room who wouldn’t ever leave.

Ever.

Pansy huffed, her bangs flying up momentarily with the breath of air. And then glared, rebellion imminent. “Mum. Mum mum mum. Does it hurt to hear the word, Seamus? Hmm?”

Seamus sneered. “Oh, shut it.”

“No, you know I don’t think I shall. Merlin, I hate when she’s right, but look at how this has turned out. Sad, really. I guess it’s true though: you can take the man out of the --”

“What the fuck does your mother have to do with anything?” he interjected, not liking the direction she was taking their discussion, if it could be called that.

“Oh, I don’t know. Perhaps being right entitles her to some facetime in this conversation.”

“Is that what you call this? A bleeding conversation? As far as I can tell, it’s just another bitch-and-moan session for Princess Pansy.”

“At least I’m talking, keeping the communication open. But perhaps you don’t even know what that means, poor boy. You’re the one who can’t even write a single missive in two weeks.”

“This has got to be a joke. I wrote every bloody day!”

“You’re such a liar! I didn’t receive a single owl!”

“That would be because I didn’t send a single owl!”

And there it was: the confusion. Seamus was secretly glad to see that on her face and not his own for the first time throughout this entire little ... exchange. The look of confusion faded vaguely as she narrowed her eyes in suspicion.

“Well, I didn’t receive any FireCalls from you either.”

“Surely even you know there are other ways to communicate, Pansy.” And there, his condescension finally made its appearance, such a common thing in their fights--from both parties.

He could see the calculation in her eyes. They were narrowed in concentration, and her forehead creased as it always did when she was thinking particularly hard.

Not feeling particularly charitable or sympathetic after all that, Seamus cut in almost callously, “Surely you recall our Muggle mailbox. I’d wager it’s chock-full of postcards after the past two
weeks and obviously nobody removing them.”

“Why would you use Muggle mail when you’re a full-fledged wizard?! Did you even remember that you have this little thing called magic? Did you even think that maybe--just maybe!--I’d have wanted to see your face through the Floo? Cor, that’s so typical of your kind--”

“What the fuck does that mean? ‘My kind’?”

“You know exactly what I mean. You’re a bloody wizard, in case you’ve forgotten, and you don’t think to use a measly owl or the Floo. Oh no, let’s not worry about how Pansy’s worrying about you and use a stupid card that takes ages to arrive. How was I even supposed to know to check the thing?”

Ah, he should have known she’d turn on his blood next. As much as it pained him to think, his mother’s words were coming back to him now. Or at least the gist of it was penetrating the fatigued cloud that was his mind: something to the effect that she’d never respect him as wholly as she would a pureblood.

It’s just her nature, Seamus. It’ll never last between the two of you.

“If I remember correctly,” Seamus retorted, “you were impressed with the postcards I’d received from home, and I thought I was being oh-so-thoughtful in sending you some from the Continent. Oh, but don’t worry. I won’t try being creative ever again, since it’s been so well-received.”

Pansy sputtered, again, but he cut in before she could say her piece, not about to allow her the last word, “You can fuck off, Pans.” And with that, Seamus walked swiftly into their guest bedroom, slammed the door, and cast a couple strong Locking and Silencing charms. He just wanted to sleep.

And as he dozed off, he thought about how he’d not had that tumbler of Firewhisky. And how much quid he might’ve saved if he hadn’t thought Pansy would appreciate his effort in sending her all those postcards.

The following morning, Seamus padded out of the guest bedroom, only to see Dean walking out the front door. As he was still wiping the remnants of sleep from his eyes, he nearly missed the wave and “Later, mate” that his friend called back as he left the apartment. His confusion about the purpose of Dean’s visit abated quickly - as soon as he saw Pansy bent over the kitchen counter, a stack of postcards spread around her, her facial expression the epitome of awe (much like the one that had inspired his actions, when she’d seen the postcard his mother had sent him from Galway the previous month). Specifically, the postcards he’d sent while he’d been on the Continent, the ones that had been collecting dust in their Muggle mailbox.

When she glanced up, Seamus felt a little gleeful. He could honestly say he’d never seen Pansy Parkinson look ashamed, but there it was. An expression to remember, definitely. There was no telling when (or even if) he would ever be graced by its presence again.

“I see you’ve found them,” he quipped, unable to resist.

“Aye. I managed to get Dean to ... help me out a bit,” she smirked, walking towards him.

“You Slytherins always were resourceful, weren’t you?”

He thought he saw her grin mischievously, but his attention was quickly diverted by his girlfriend’s lips capturing his own. Pansy tended to communicate certain things physically, things that she seemed to be unable to verbalize. This particular time, it could have been I’m sorry. It could have been Thank you.
But, as usually happened when she communicated through kisses, Seamus couldn’t bring himself to care what exactly she was saying. He just wanted her to continue.

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