



As Time Goes By

Story by PattRose

Art by Nicci

As Time Goes By

Art by Nicci

Story by PattRose

Blair woke up at 8:30 in the morning, shocked that he had slept that long, but it had been a very late night. He lay in their bed, alone because Jim was already at the station. Blair had the day off and decided he had some things to think about. He couldn't believe that fifteen years ago, he had decided to become a police officer. He had to go through a lot to get to the rank of detective. It wasn't like it just fell into place. Although it really helped taking the profiling classes and anything else that came up having to do with the justice system. Now, at 45 years old, he was not only a detective, but he was a great detective. And he no longer worked with Jim as a partner. No, Jim had gone up in the ranks through the last 15 years and he was now the captain of Major Crimes. Simon had moved up to Police Chief, so Blair still got to see both of them daily. Not that Blair wouldn't see Jim. Jim was his lover, his best friend and his reason for life. Or at least most of the time. They had finally moved from the loft about 10 years before that and Blair loved their home. Blair had a study, with walls of books surrounding him. Blair never lost the love of reading and learning. But now, most of them had to deal with the justice system. Yes, there were a few books of poetry in there that Jim liked to hear from time to time, but mostly Blair had settled into a life on the rollercoaster. So much so, that he took the Sergeant's exam the week before. He hadn't even told Jim the news about that. Blair hadn't heard anything, so figured he had failed. It was just as well that he hadn't mentioned anything to Jim. Blair loved being a cop, which sometimes surprised even himself.

As he lay there, he ran his hand through his thinning, short hair. What a change he had gone through. Every now and then Blair noticed Jim looking at him, almost like he wished Blair's curly long hair was back where it should be. Jim used to be wild about Blair's hair, especially when they had sex. Jim still held on to Blair's hair while getting blowjobs, but it wasn't the same. And besides, Blair was afraid he would be bald if Jim kept that up. Jim on the other hand had grown his hair out a little to help make up for the receding hairline. But one nice thing was the fact that they still enjoyed sex with each other. You would never know that Jim was 55 years old. He had stamina, Blair would give him that. He was still horny all the time and drove Blair nuts sometimes. But, mostly, Blair was grateful that they were still in love after all these years.

Blair doubled the pillow under his head, sat up a little bit and thought some more. Simon was now 63 years old and he was a great Chief of Police. No one could do a better job than Simon did. He was a fantastic husband to his wife of five years, Calissa. Calissa had asked Simon for a child because she was much younger than Simon, so they had a little girl, four years ago. Her name was as beautiful as she was. Simone was as gorgeous as anyone could hope to be and she had personality to spare. Jim and Blair had her every other Sunday to give Simon and Cali some time off. And Jim and Blair got to play uncle, a role they cherished. Daryl had gotten married after he finished college and they had a baby boy named Tyler. Ashley, his wife, and Daryl couldn't have been happier with their life. Daryl was a police officer, also working at the same station and Ashley worked for the city. She was a case worker, taking care of child welfare cases. Simon wasn't pleased with the news of being a grandfather, until he saw Tyler. Then his heart melted and he adored being a grandfather. Cali was thrilled with Tyler, also. But Simone loved being a big auntie at the age of four. She was crazy about Tyler and kept saying she wanted him to hurry and grow up so she could play with him.

Blair still loved working with Brian Rafe and Henri Brown. Both men were still there and as ornery as ever. Some things never changed. Megan Connor had moved back to Australia

and everyone missed her. Or maybe they missed having someone to tease and pick on every day. At any rate, she was missed. Joel Taggart retired from the force and was running a bar that they all frequented. He named it Kaboom and everyone got a charge out of that. What else would a Captain of the Bomb Squad name his bar? He still came to poker night at Jim and Blair's once a week. Again, some things just never change.

Blair glanced over at the clock on the night stand and saw that it was already 10:00. He started to get up because he was taking Jim out for lunch that day and he didn't want to be late. Blair chose what he was going to wear and walked into their bathroom off the bedroom. They loved having a bathroom off of their room. It was so nice and private.

Blair cleaned up the bathroom before he left it; Jim was still a stickler for the rules of the home. It didn't matter where they lived, they were going to have rules. And it was going to be clean. Next, Blair changed the sheets and made up the bed. When he was done, it looked great. Blair smiled and walked to the front door to leave.

His cell phone rang as he went to open the door. He pulled it out and flipped it open and said, "Sandburg."

"Hey, Chief. I wanted to catch you and let you know that Simon is going to join us for lunch today. He said he has something to talk to you about."

"I wonder what," Blair answered.

"I didn't ask, we'll have to wait and see. See you soon, Blair."

"Bye, Jim." Blair closed his cell and frowned. What in the world was Simon going to make him do now? Three months ago, he had insisted that he work in Vice for three weeks. Blair had hated it and told Jim that every single night. But being the good cop that he was, he did his job and got the case closed. Just as Simon had predicted he would. Blair was dreading this meeting and lunch. Sighing, he walked out to his new car and got in. He now drove a new Mustang and loved it. Jim wasn't too wild about it with his long legs, but Blair loved everything about it.

Jim finished making the schedule for the next week and put it up on the bulletin board. As soon as he sat down in his office once again, he saw everyone go up and check the schedule. Jim never played favorites. Rarely did Blair and Jim have the same day off, except for Sunday. Not that Jim didn't get called in almost every Sunday anyhow. But Jim noticed that no one seemed too stressed about the schedule and this made Jim happy.

Rafe walked into Jim's office and asked, "Are you going out for lunch today?"

"Yeah, why?"

"I was hoping I could get a doggy bag. I'm never going to get away from my desk until tonight and I'm starving. Usually on Sandburg's day off, he takes you to lunch, so I was hoping."

"What would you like? We're going to Golden House for Chinese," Jim said.

"I love Chinese. Here's a twenty, just get me and Henri twenty worth of something. We'll eat anything you choose," Rafe said, wearing a big smile.

The elevator doors opened and Blair walked out. Everyone greeted him and patted him on the back. Blair didn't know what was going on. They acted like they knew something Blair didn't. Rafe walked out of Jim's office and said, "Hey, Sandburg. Good going."

"What the hell is everyone talking about?" Blair wondered.

Rafe blushed and said, "I mean, taking our captain out to lunch. Good going."

Blair just stared at him like he was insane. *Hell, he might be. They might all be insane.*

Jim led Blair towards the elevator and said, "Rafe, hold down the fort. You know my number if you need me."

"Have a good lunch, guys," Rafe said as Jim and Blair got on the elevator. Once it closed, Blair asked, "What the hell was all that?"

"I would say it has something to do with what Simon has to talk to you about. Why Rafe would know before me is sort of strange, but I don't even try to pretend I know everything that goes on at the station."

"You should know, man. With those ears, you should have heard things way before they did."

"Chief, I don't use my senses in the office that much. It doesn't pay to listen to office gossip anyway."

"Whatever..." Blair got off the elevator and tried to get a head start of his lover with the long, long legs.

They walked to Jim's SUV and got into it. Blair never even tried to drive. Jim always had to have control. *Another thing that never changes.*

When they arrived at Golden House, Jim was starving. He didn't care what Simon had to tell Blair. He just wanted to order his food. They sat down and waited for Simon to arrive. Simon got there and shook hands with both men and then sat across from them in the booth.

"I have good news and I have bad news. Which do you want first?" Simon asked.

"The bad news," Blair replied.

"You're paying for lunch. The good news is you passed your Sergeant's test. As of today, you are Sergeant Sandburg, not Detective Sandburg. Congratulations."

Blair looked shell shocked. "Man, I thought since I didn't hear anything that I failed it and was so glad I didn't tell Jim about it. He would have been embarrassed. I can't believe this."

Jim almost looked angry. "I can't believe you didn't share this with me. I could have worried with you. Is that what's been wrong for the last week?"

“Jim, we’ll discuss this later. Now is celebration time and lunch. It’s on me. I take it I get a pay raise, right?” Blair asked, grinning like crazy.

“Yes, when you go into Jim’s office, he’ll have it all in front of you. I sent it over right before I left for lunch. Rafe and Brown already know about it and have spread the news. Even though I told them it was a secret. I didn’t realize Jim didn’t know. I almost said something this morning,” Simon stated.

“I was so afraid of failing. It was a lot harder than the Detective test. So, I just wanted to be sure I passed before I told anyone. How did Rafe and Brown find out?”

“Sandburg, they posted the results this morning. I knew you were off, but I thought you would have checked.” Simon just looked over at Blair and smiled.

“I forgot that they told me they would post. Do they post if you fail?” Blair asked, suddenly horrified for some reason.

Simon laughed. “No, they contact you with that information. Rafe and Brown took the test and passed, also. Jim, your department is a force to be reckoned with.”

Blair looked at Jim and asked, “Did you know about Rafe and Brown?”

“No, they didn’t tell me either,” Jim answered.

“I’m telling ya, it’s because we’re all afraid of failing.”

“I’m really proud of all of you,” Jim said, finally smiling.

The waitress came over and Blair ordered off the menu, then Jim, and Jim gave his order to go for Rafe and Brown, then last but not least, Simon ordered. When the food and drinks came they ate like they hadn’t seen food in a long, long while. They brought Rafe and Brown’s in a bag and they could heat it up in the micro in the break room.

“So, how are things going in Major Crimes, Jim?”

“Simon, you know as much about my department as I do. Why are you asking that?”

“Just making small talk. I have to talk to you because Blair is in la-la land.”

“I am not. I’m just happy to be alive. This is probably one of the most exciting days of my life. Other than meeting Jim for the first time and then falling in love.”

Jim smiled. At least he was mentioned in Blair’s exciting times. “Thanks, Chief.”

Blair beamed. “You’re welcome, man. I’m so fucking happy. This is a good day for both of us, Jim.”

“Hey, how about me, I’m the bearer of good news,” Simon teased.

“Thank you, Simon. How is Simone doing? We didn’t see her last weekend, so we’re dying to take her this weekend. We were even thinking of taking her camping. Would you and Cali mind?” Blair asked.

Simon looked a little shocked. “Over night?”

“No, Simon, Blair meant for the day, on Sunday. Hopefully, I won’t get called in to work. Otherwise they’ll leave my ass home.”

“This is a fantastic idea. You can get her ready for camping a day at a time. I love this idea. By all means, take her. Have fun.”

Jim frowned and said, “Simon, you might want to ask Cali, first.”

“Cali trusts you guys with our daughter, anytime, anywhere. But I’ll ask her. Bet you money she thinks it’s great. We were just talking about having a camping weekend not too long ago, but we wondered if she was just too young.”

Blair was bouncing in place. “Simon, you’re never too young for camping. We’ll take her somewhere great. And the weather is so gorgeous that she’ll love it.”

“I’ll call you later and tell you what Cali says. In fact, she’s home today, let me call her now.”

Simon dialed his phone and smiled when she answered, “Hello?”

“Hi there. Jim and Blair wanted to take Simone for a day of camping on Sunday and wondered if that’s all right with you. Just the day, not all night or anything.”

“Oh, that would be wonderful. They can teach her how to pee outdoors. I can see their faces now,” Cali joked.

Jim heard her and frowned. This had never occurred to them. Peeing outdoors for a guy was easy, but for a little girl was a whole different story.

“I’m sure they’ll figure it out honey. Should we send the video recorder?” Simon kidded, back.

Jim glared at him and made a huffing noise. Blair laughed and said, “No fair, I can’t hear what they’re saying.”

Simon got off the phone and said, “You guys get to teach Simone how to pee outdoors. Won’t that be fun?”

Blair said, “I’m sure it’s no different than when we took Daryl.”

Jim looked at Blair like he was insane and asked, “Are you nuts? Daryl was nine and he has a penis. He doesn’t have to squat to pee. This I didn’t think about.”

Simon laughed and said, “I’m sure Blair will work it out, Jim. You know how good he is at teaching kids how to do things.”

“I agree, Simon. Blair can be in charge of teaching her how to squat and pee.”

“Gee, thanks, guys. Oh, it’s not going to be that bad. She’s going to love it. And yes, we do want to take the video camera with us. This is a first you should record,” Blair said.

“You want to video tape her peeing?” Jim asked, sounding shocked and appalled at the same time.

“No, I meant the hiking and stuff like that. It’s going to be great. Stop worrying,” Blair assured him.

They finished their lunch and Blair paid the bill. He even treated Simon. Even though Simon had said that was the bad news at the beginning of lunch.

Simon hugged Blair, quickly as they left and told him congratulations again. Then he was off.

Jim and Blair walked to the SUV and Jim opened the door for Blair. Blair loved these little moments where Jim showed how much he loved him. Then Jim hugged him really hard and said, “I’m so proud of you, Chief. But next time, please tell me.”

“Okay, I will. I promise. Thanks for all your support. I love you, man.”

“I love you, too, Blair.”

When they arrived in the bullpen, Jim and Blair gave hugs to Brown and Rafe and told them congratulations. Jim handed Rafe the doggy bag and Rafe was a happy camper. Jim also handed him his twenty bucks back.

“Consider it my treat,” Jim said at the shocked look on Rafe’s face.

“Thank you, man,” Rafe answered.

Blair asked, “Would you like to celebrate at dinner tonight with us? We could all meet at Kaboom for drinks and then go to dinner next door. They have killer sandwiches.”

“That would be great. Then we can see Joel too and tell him the terrific news. He’ll be so proud of all of us,” Henri said.

Jim asked, “How does 6:30 sound to you? We’ll meet you there.”

Rafe smiled and said, “We’ll see you at 6:30. Thanks. Is Jim paying?” Then everyone laughed when Jim made a sour face.

Jim let them off easily and said, “Yeah, I’m paying, again.”

“Cool. We’ll see you then,” Henri said as he walked over to his desk to start work again.

<interior1>

Jim and Blair stood in front of Jim’s office door and talked for a little while before Blair had to get back home. Jim found himself feeling something odd. He felt like Blair didn’t need him that much anymore. Before long, Blair would be the captain of Major Crimes at the rate he was going.

Blair saw the sad look on Jim’s face and knew what was going on. He walked over and went into Jim’s office and whispered, “I need you all the time. Don’t think because I passed a test I don’t. So, stop worrying and instead be happy. This is a good day, Jim.”

“Go home and relax, Sandburg,” Jim barked, but Blair knew Jim was happier now.

At 6:30, they walked into Kaboom and found an empty table. Joel came over and hugged both men and said, "Sit down, I'll get you both something to drink."

They both did just that. "Just Blair, I'm the designated driver tonight. We have to be safe."

"Blair, what would you like?" Joel asked.

"A beer with a tequila chaser." Blair loved when he got to do the drinking.

"Guess who passed their Sergeant's test today?" Jim asked.

"Blair, you did? This is wonderful news. Your drinks are on the house tonight." Joel pulled Blair out of his chair and hugged him once again.

"Rafe and Brown passed, too. Isn't this an outstanding day for news?" Blair asked.

"Are they coming in?" Joel asked hopefully.

"They're parking as we speak," Jim said, seeing them in the parking lot.

"I'll get their usual drinks. Jim, maybe you could drive them all tonight. That way they can all celebrate," Joel suggested.

"Sure, no problem. They don't call me Captain for nothing."

Blair and Joel laughed and then when Rafe and Brown got to the table, Joel was hugging them and congratulating them over and over again. "Drinks are on the house tonight and Jim is driving."

"Hey, thanks, Joel and Jim," Henri said.

"No problem, I want my men in the bullpen tomorrow with no bruises, scrapes or cuts. This is a night for celebration." Jim was smiling so much his face was starting to hurt.

As they sat there, Jim kept looking at Blair seeing how different he looked than when he met him so many years ago. Blair was still gorgeous, but now he was gorgeous for other reasons. He had lost the kid look and now had a very handsome look of a grown man, which Jim found most attractive. Blair was sexy as hell and he knew it. He was giving Jim the sexy eye batting treatment right then and Jim was about to burst in his pants. Blair could bring Jim close to coming just from looks, even after all these years. Jim knew he was a fucking lucky man.

On Sunday, Jim and Blair picked up Simone. Jim was nervous about the whole teach her to pee outdoors thing, but Blair was down with it. Cali hugged both men and said, "I taught Simone how to squat and pee for the camping trip. So, don't worry about that Jim, because I know you would have."

Jim hugged Cali and whispered in her ear, "Thank God."

Cali laughed and so did Simon and Blair. Simone jumped into Jim's arms saying, "Come on Uncle Jim and Uncle Blair. Let's go."

"We'll see you tonight," Blair said as they walked out the door.

Simon and Cali both kissed Simone and said their goodbyes. Simone was so excited about camping that she didn't care about anything else.

Camping with a four year old was a trip. She stopped to see everything while they hiked. She also loved squatting and peeing. That was all Blair's job because it embarrassed big Jim Ellison. Simone picked flowers to take home for her mommy and her daddy. Then she picked some for her nephew, Tyler. She asked Uncle Jim if she could save the tree twigs and of course Jim told her yes. If it seemed important to a four year old, who was Jim to question it?

They started a fire and cooked hot dogs and she enjoyed the heck out of that. She ate as much as a big kid. Jim and Blair wondered where it went, because she was this tiny little thing. After lunch, she helped put the fire out and put dirt all over the campfire. She didn't want to start a forest fire. Her mommy and daddy had told her all about them. When they were done, they walked the rest of the way to the top of the hill and took pictures of her in a tree that was split in the middle. She stood in it and posed like a pro. Blair was having a blast taking pictures of her doing everything. Simone was great fun and was having great fun. Jim and Blair were so grateful that they got to spend so much time with her.

As they walked back down the hill, Simone asked, "Uncle Jim? Do you love any girls or just Uncle Blair?"

Jim had dreaded this question. He still had a hold of her hand and answered, "No, I don't love any girls other than you. Blair is the man I love."

"That's nice, because he loves you, too."

Blair smiled over at Jim and just beamed with pride. She sounded so grown up.

"Do you know anyone else that has two men that are in love, Simone?" Blair asked.

"No, but my daddy said a lot of people do. So don't worry, other people like boys, too."

Both Jim and Blair laughed. She was just too cute for words.

"Uncle Blair, do you love my daddy?"

"Simone, I love your daddy, but in a different way. He's my good friend. Do you understand that you can love someone without living with them?"

"Course you can love other people without living with them. You love me, right?"

"We both do, Simone," Blair assured her.

"Is it because I'm cute?"

Again, Jim and Blair laughed as they continued to make it down the hill with Simone.

“We love you for so many reasons, it would take all day to tell you why,” Jim admitted.

“You don’t think I’m cute?”

Blair snickered. “We think you’re darling. Of course we think you’re cute.”

“Oh good, because I think you and Uncle Jim are cute, too. My daddy is cute and my mommy is beautiful. Do you think she is?”

Jim smiled and said, “Your mommy is beautiful, for sure.”

When they got to the bottom of the hill Simone started crying. Jim and Blair weren’t sure what was up. Blair picked her up and hugged her and asked, “Simone, what’s wrong, sweetheart?”

“I don’t ever want to leave this forest. I had too much fun. Can we stay here?”

“Honey, we can’t stay here. Mommy and daddy would miss you too much,” Blair reminded her.

“I do miss my mommy and daddy. Can I go home now?” She had big tears rolling down her cheeks.

Jim grabbed her from Blair and hugged her this time. “Yes, we’ll go see mommy and daddy right now. Next time we come, we’ll bring them, okay?”

“Okay, Uncle Jim. I think they would like it here, too.”

Blair smiled at Jim as they walked over to the SUV to get in and head for home. It was times like this that were so precious and wonderful. Jim and Blair felt blessed to be part of Simon and Cali’s life.

Sunday night, after they took little Simone back to her house, Jim and Blair went home to have a nice quiet dinner and make-out session on the sofa. It amazed both men that they still got into making out as often as they did. Especially after running after a four year old all damn day long. Simone was a handful. But they all had a blast.

“Did you have fun today?” Blair finally got his breath to ask.

“I did, but I’m having much more fun here,” Jim replied.

Jim started stripping clothing off and Blair didn’t want to be the only one dressed so he was naked right after Jim. They no sooner got into it and the phone rang. They let the answer machine get it and when it beeped, they heard, “Jimmy, I was hoping to catch you. You had asked me to come to dinner next weekend, but I can’t. I think I have a date.”

Jim jumped up and grabbed the phone and answered it. “Hi Dad, what do you mean a date?”

"I asked someone out. I met her at the Senior Meal site and we have a lot of things in common. You weren't busy were you?"

Jim glanced down at his now limp cock and said, "Nope, not busy at all." Jim heard Blair snicker in the living room.

"You're going to love her. I was wondering if you and Blair would like to double date for Sunday. We could go to the place of your choice. I can't wait for you both to meet her."

"Dad, I'll have to see if Blair wants to double date and let you know." Now, all Jim could hear from the living room was laughter muffled into the pillow on the sofa. He was going to have to kill Blair for making fun of him.

"Okay, when can you talk to Blair?" William wondered.

"I'll talk to Blair and call you back, okay?"

"Okay, Jimmy. Talk to you soon," William hung up and left Jim with a laughing lover on the sofa. Now he wasn't muffling the noise into the pillow. He was just laughing outright.

"He wants us to double date with him?" Blair asked, as he continued to laugh.

"I think he's nervous, plus he wants us to meet her and her to meet us. He hasn't dated in thirty years, I bet. I wonder what brought this on."

Blair snickered and said, "Maybe he's just lonely and wants someone his own age to hang out with. I mean, we have him over once a month for dinner and to watch the football games, but that's about it. Other than us, I don't think he does that much, do you?"

Jim went back to the sofa and began to get dressed. Blair smacked his hands and asked, "What are you doing, man?"

"I'm sort of out of the mood now. Plus, I have to call him back with our answer."

"Tonight? Geeze, Jim, I doubt that he meant this very minute."

"He seemed nervous. So, shoot me if I'm worried about my dad."

"Call, tell him anywhere is fine with me and if you don't want to I'll meet the two of them alone," Blair teased.

Jim smacked Blair's naked ass and Blair growled at him, making Jim laugh his head off.

Jim got up and got the phone and dialed his dad's house. "Ellison."

"Funny, that's the same thing I always say," Jim kidded.

"Did you decide already?" William asked.

"Yeah, Blair said we'll go wherever you want to go. He's good with your choice. Where are we going and what time?"

"What about 4:00 on Sunday? We'll meet at Saccony's Italian Dining. She loves it there and so do I. Do you and Blair like it there?"

“Yes, Dad, we do. That’ll be fine unless something comes up with work.”

“Okay, Jimmy. We’ll see you on Sunday at 4:00. I’m so anxious for you to meet Izabelle. She’s so sweet.”

“We can’t wait to meet her, Dad. See you on Sunday. Bye,” Jim said as he hung up the phone.

Jim walked out of the kitchen and over to the dining room and started to pace. “Don’t you find it odd that he’s going on a date when he’s 77 years old?”

“Jim, if you feel young, your heart is young and if you feel old, your heart will be old, too.”

Jim looked at Blair and smiled. “Yeah, I guess so. I can’t wait to meet her.”

The phone rang again and this time it was Naomi. “Blair, honey. Pick up if you’re there.”

Blair walked over and picked it up glancing at **his** deflated cock and sighed into the phone, “Hi Mom. What’s up?”

“I thought I might come for a visit to see you in three weeks. Would that be all right with you and Jim?”

“Jim, is it all right if my mom comes for a visit in a few weeks?”

“Of course, it’s all right. You don’t have to ask, Blair.”

“I heard him, honey. He’s so sweet. He’s the best son-in-law I ever could have asked for.”

Blair smiled. “I’ll be sure and tell him.”

“We both know he already heard me, sweetie.”

“There is that, Mom. Is there any special reason for the visit, or just a visit?”

“I just want to see my two favorite men in the world. No reason. Plus, I love your cooking and Jim’s cooking. It works out perfectly. We’ll see you in three weeks. I’ll let you know when my plane comes in, Blair.”

“Bye, Mom. Be well and have a safe trip.”

He hung up the phone and saw Jim cleaning up the living room. So much for fooling around. Blair sighed again as he started into the living room. “Let’s go to bed early and just hold on to each other, how does that sound?”

“It sounds good, babe. Could you take your things and put them away, please?” Jim asked.

“You know, Jim, you really know how to ruin a mood.”

“I don’t like leaving the living room messy. Pick up and we’ll take this into our room.”

And they did just that.

The following week flew by. Jim had to put extra people on for the search for a serial rapist. Blair, Henri and Rafe were working day and night trying to find this sick bastard. With a lot of hard work and a lot of team effort, they were able to find the man and arrest him in six days. Saturday, Blair was exhausted. Jim was too, but not as much as the guys were. Jim had to keep running interference with Simon, keeping him off the guys' asses while they tried to do their jobs. Saturday was a glorious day. Once the paperwork was done, they all decided to meet at Kaboom and have a drink to celebrate. When they got there, Simon, Henri, Rafe and Joel were all sitting at a table. Blair smiled instantly seeing their friends relaxed and happy for the first time in six days.

"Hey, did you guys get lost?" Simon asked.

"Jim followed me home, I left my car and drove over with him. We like to save energy whenever we can. And besides, he told me I get to drink something tonight."

"Sandburg, he's always the designated driver, why is that?" Henri asked.

Blair snickered. "Because he's too much of a control freak to let me do the driving. And he hates my car, anyhow. He'd rather drink Dr. Pepper all night than not drive the SUV."

They all laughed and Jim just glared at all of them.

"You do remember who is making up the schedule this Monday, right?" Jim teased.

Rafe laughed. "Yeah, yeah, yeah. We remember. You're a great boss. First we had Simon and now we have you. It's been a lucky 20 years for us."

Joel patted Rafe on the back and said, "I couldn't agree with you more. Major Crimes is still a force to be reckoned with. It's still a great place to work for all of you. And I thank you all for coming here every week and letting me hear what's going on. I miss it. I never thought I would, but I do."

Jim smiled at Joel. "Joel, I still miss being a Detective. Sometimes it's a little overwhelming to be a Captain of Major Crimes. And I'm sure you all feel this way now and then."

"Tell me about it," Simon agreed. "I miss being the Captain."

"Who would like tonight's special?" Joel asked.

Blair bounced in his chair and raised his hand. It was contagious, Rafe and Brown raised theirs too.

Simon asked, "What is the special?"

"If you don't like it, I'll pay for it," Joel offered.

"In that case, I'll take the special, too," Simon joked.

Joel walked off to put their order in and came back and sat with his friends. He had enough people working for him that he could take time off now and then.

Jim was curious. "So, what is the drink, anyhow?"

“I’ll tell them after they drink them,” Joel answered.

The waitress brought her tray with five drinks on it and a Dr. Pepper for Jim. She set everyone’s down and walked off.

“Hey, she didn’t collect like she usually does,” Rafe pointed out.

Brown laughed. “Only you would complain about that.”

Joel smiled and said, “They’re on the house this time. If you like them, you have to pay for the second one.”

They all sat back and started sipping their drinks. Not one of them made a face, so Joel knew his drink of the night was a good one.

“I loved this, what was it called?” Rafe wondered.

“It’s called Butt Naked. It’s one ounce of Amaretto almond liqueur, one ounce of southern comfort peach liqueur and four ounces of cranberry juice. You pour all of them together over ice and serve with a maraschino cherry. We get a lot of calls for this one. I think they just like to say the name and watch the waitress blush.”

Jim licked his lips just hearing about the drink. “You know, maybe we could take a cab home tonight, Chief.”

“Sure we can, Jim. Order one. Order two and catch up because we’re all going to order another one right now. We just need to remember about our plans tomorrow,” Blair said, happily.

Jim frowned. “I’ll just get another Dr. Pepper.”

After they all ordered their drinks, Rafe said, “I don’t even like cranberry juice. Why do I like this?”

Joel laughed. “Because the other ingredients drown it out.”

Rafe shook his head and said, “That makes sense, I guess.”

They sat, drank and talked about work and each other’s lives until about midnight and then Jim said, “We need to go. We have plans tomorrow. I guess that would be today.”

Jim and Blair got up and everyone hugged each other goodnight and the guys walked out to the SUV. Jim opened the door for Blair and waited for him to get in. Jim reached in and buckled Blair’s seatbelt and started to move out of his space when Blair kissed him. It was times like this that Blair remembered why he was still so in love with Jim Ellison. “Thanks, man.”

“My pleasure, Chief. I love you more than life itself.”

“I’m so glad,” Blair said as Jim walked over to his side of the SUV. The drive home was fairly quiet. Blair was exhausted and just wanted to take a shower and go to bed. Jim could sense that something was on Blair’s mind.

“Chief, is anything wrong?”

“No, everything is right. I just want to be home and in a long, hot shower and then sleep for a week. Can we do that?”

Jim threw back his head and laughed. “Not a week, but I’ll help you relax and sleep until tomorrow afternoon. Will that work?”

“That’s perfect, Jim. I can’t wait to meet Izabelle tomorrow, or I guess, today. I’m dying to see what type of a woman your dad dates.”

“That makes two of us. Here we are, Chief, safe and sound.” Jim pulled into the garage and parked. Blair smiled at Jim with such love in his eyes that it made Jim melt. Jim couldn’t believe that Blair still loved him after all these years. They were still best friends, lovers and soulmates. Jim was going to help Blair relax and remember why he still loved him.

The end

