

## Still Waters

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# Still Waters

by [not\\_whelmed\\_yet](#)

## Summary

Ratchet has a nice day in some distant dreamlike future.

## Notes

I was struggling with writer's block and asked around for prompts - Squire came through for me with the prompt "Ratchet has a nice day". I kinda overdid it - this could be more accurately described as "Ratchet has the best day".

It's got a soft, dreamlike feeling to it that I didn't quite intend but really like. This story is unstuck in time, sometime after canon when everything is good, everyone is home and nothing hurts.

Enjoy!

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

The space between patients was a good one. Sunlight came into the corridor through the skylights above and soaked into his plating, doors of the examination rooms built thick and insulated so the air hung still. Ratchet let himself sit on the bench while he read through the notes on his next patient, warmth from the solar radiation loosening up his aching joints.

When he got to the examination room, his assistant was still there, bouncing on his heels as music warbled out of the speakers they'd rigged up in the corners of the room. The patient was hooked up to as many readouts as was feasible, but was still swinging his legs in time with the beat.

“Oh, hey Ratch,” Beacon said with a lazy salute. “Got you a Cybercrosis case. Skywave, this is Doctor Ratchet, he'll be handling your case while I assist.”

Skywave smiled a little pinched smile at Ratchet. A couple years wasn't near long enough for anyone to get used to the idea of Cybercrosis being easily curable. Ratchet could understand, still had to catch himself on the diagnosis every time. But Skywave wasn't far along and the cure they'd been improving ever since Luna I was a perfect fit for him. Ratchet got him settled and set up in the energon filtration system, and made sure Beacon had scheduled up the follow-up appointment while he walked him through the theory of the cure. Beacon was a promising medic. Ratchet hoped he'd stick around after his apprenticeship was over. His students kept leaving to found hospitals all over the galaxy and it'd be good to have a helping hand around the clinic.

After Skywave's appointment, Ratchet excused himself to take his mid-shift break. He was partway through a book Nautica had recommended him and he was hoping to finish it before they saw each other next. The book had a nice audio narrator, so he took a walk around the neighborhood while he listened, grabbed a few things from one of the corner stores where they didn't mind if you kept your audio feed running and limited your interactions to the business essentials. The air was swirling with sweet scents from the snack stands Drift could never resist. Ratchet didn't feel hungry yet, so he just let all of that soak into his chemoreceptors and imagined how they'd taste.

After break, he observed Beacon on some simple cases, fixing broken limbs, replacing parts, cleaning and upgrading. It was a quiet day at the clinic, the way Ratchet liked them. He took a call from the local hospital, looking to see when he could act as lead for a fairly complicated surgery, spark chamber embrittlement. Ratchet put them on his calendar for the day after next after checking to make sure the patient wasn't reaching the terminal stages yet. Then he had to call up First Aid and see if he still had those old case files on the embrittlement surgeries they'd attended over together. Ratchet had them somewhere, but he was still at the “dump all the files in a pile” stage of his ongoing file organization project. He'd get to it eventually.

The night nurse, Latency, came in a few minutes early and they caught up on a few administrative things they'd been meaning to talk about. Beacon headed out while their heads were still together, going over their supply ordering calendar. Ratchet was reminded of the time with a jolt and stood up out of his seat midsentence. “I forgot—”

Latency grinned and waved him off. "Go! We can talk this over tomorrow."

Ratchet nodded and made his way out through the waiting room, where a few patients were filling out forms with the help of Latency's apprentice, whose name Ratchet still hadn't memorized. They all paused to wave him goodnight as he hustled through. He stepped out into the cool blue night air, brushing invisible specks off his plating as he went. He checked his chrono and realized it wasn't nearly as late as he'd imagined, barely two minutes over his habitual departure time. He chuckled, shaking his head at himself. Getting all flustered about being two minutes late, some things never changed.

"Hey there, handsome. You waiting for someone?" A mech strode down the walkway, hands resting loosely on his hips and a sharp-toothed smile playing on his face.

Ratchet groaned and reached out to grab Drift by the wrist and pull him close. "You're ridiculous," he said, smiling into the crook of Drift's neck where Drift wouldn't be able to see it. Drift threw his arms around Ratchet's back, fingers tracing gentle circles on his plating.

Drift hummed agreeably. "Sure am," he said. "You ready to go? Need anything from home?"

"I'm good," Ratchet said.

They stood there for a long moment, nobody willing to step back first. Eventually, Drift pulled away, trailing a hand over Ratchet's arm to catch his hand and he did. Ratchet squeezed back and smiled at Drift. Under the white streetlights, Drift's plating practically glowed, whole and perfect. Drift caught him staring and ducked his head, biting at his lower lip in that old habit of his.

"How was your day?" Ratchet asked, starting them down the street. The storefronts on this block were bright at night, panels of light across the walkway guiding them towards the rail hub.

"It was good," Drift said. "I like teaching, you know. It's good."

Ratchet liked Drift teaching too, better than the days he worked the perimeter of the city scouring the wilderness for dangerous creatures or orbital security. Drift was untethered, you couldn't expect him to be content doing the same thing every day like Ratchet did. It was enough to ask him to stay planetside with Ratchet.

"I'd love to see you teach sometime," Ratchet said.

"You could take a day off any time," Drift said. "Beacon could fill in, or call up one of your old students. Or even just close the clinic for the day; it's not like there aren't other hospitals."

"I'll have to think about it," Ratchet said. The train pulled up and slid to a silent halt, doors opening into the brightly lit space. Drift and Ratchet crowded together in the back, nearly in each other's laps, Drift's head tilted back against Ratchet's chest as they talked over the day and the little things that had filled it. The space filled up as they went along, packed to bursting when they hit the shore and Drift and Ratchet squeezed their way out onto the beach. There was already a crowd and music going, lights spotted along the shoreline and the moon

bright above. Drift pinged out for them and immediately set out through the crowd to meet up with their friends.

Ratchet spotted Thunderclash first, a head and shoulders above the crowd even if Rung hadn't been riding on his shoulders, laughing away. Thunders spotted Ratchet and Drift and beamed at them. The rest of the crew parted like the sea and folded them in, surrounding them with a mass of patting hands and careening conversations. Someone pushed a drink in Ratchet's hand and Thunderclash offered up a toast.

They hung close by Thunderclash, Ratchet and Drift each with one arm slung around the other's waist as they chatted and sipped new mixes Swerve had dreamed up. Thunderclash drew out a few stories, forming worlds with his hands as he went. Eventually Rodimus rolled up, fashionably late as always. The music had picked up a driving rhythm and Rodimus came over already half dancing.

"Ratch, can I steal your conjunx for a song?" Rodimus said with a laugh, overcharged slur to his words. Ratchet rolled his optics and waved Drift on, watching as the two speedsters scooted out into the crowd of dancers. The two friends grinned at each other and twirled until they were lost in the crowd. They came back a few songs later, Rodimus clinging to Drift's back like a sucker as Drift lurched, half collapsing under Rodimus's weight and his uncontrollable giggles. Drift dumped him out on the sand and flopped on the ground, watching Ratchet from across the crowd.

Ratchet made his apologies to Thunders and went to his conjunx, still lying on the ground in a pose he probably thought was alluring, covered in sand. "Having fun down there?" He asked, crossing his arms across his chest.

"Tons of fun," Drift agreed. "You should pick me up, I'm tired."

"Nah," Ratchet said. "That's just you trying to trick me into getting dragged into a sand wrestle with you and Rod. I know your tricks."

"See?" Rodimus said. "I told you, he's onto us!"

Drift pouted. "You're no fun, Ratch."

"I just don't want sand in my hip joints again. Once was plenty. Twice was excessive."

Drift shrugged, not contrite at all. With a quick roll back onto his shoulders, he threw himself back onto his feet and offered Rodimus a hand up before pressing himself up against Ratchet's side again, sand gritty between their plating. Rodimus hooked his thumb over his shoulder, mouthing something that looked like "Finding Magnus," as he backed into the crowd. "It's a beautiful night," Drift said.

"Yeah, it is," Ratchet agreed.

"Thanks for coming out with me."

"Of course," Ratchet said. "How's our favorite terror?"

“Roddy's great,” Drift said. “He wants to take me asteroid surfing again.”

“Of course he does,” Ratchet said. “You going?”

“Said I had to check with you, I wasn't sure if it'd conflict with our plan for the anniversary trip.”

Ratchet tipped his helm against Drift's and rested a moment. “We'll check when we get home. You want to find a spot to watch the show?”

They ended up sitting out on the pier, waves lapping up against their ankles. The shore was packed, mechs shoulder to shoulder as they watched the night sky. Ratchet had completely lost sight of the rest of the crew in the thick of it.

The first firework split the sky with a explosion that sent waves slapping against the pier. Drift startled, but he was smiling when Ratchet looked over. The next explosion wasn't any quieter, and Ratchet lowered his audial sensitivity with a wince. Fireworks were a lot louder up close, when you shot them off in atmosphere. Drift jumped again at the third blast and someone banged their knee against the back of Ratchet's head.

He turned to Drift to ask but Drift was already speaking. “Do you want—”

“—to go home?”

He snorted and crouched on the pier, scooping Drift up into his arms as he stood. Drift wriggled and started laughing, throwing his arms around Ratchet's neck like he thought a medic frame wasn't capable of lifting a lightweight speedster like him. Ratchet didn't complain, about that or the sand. The other spectators on the pier gave them dirty looks as Ratchet picked his way back to the shore. Frag them. The lightshow happened every year and went for hours, they weren't missing anything. Ratchet didn't set Drift down til they were back at the rail station for fear of losing him in the crowd. From up there the crowd was a shifting chaos of biolights in the dark but the explosions were still strut-shakingly loud.

On the train home they sat in seats across from one another, alone in the railcar. “I can't believe we bailed on our first date in months,” Drift said.

“It was my fault. I just don't like being surrounded by that many people,” Ratchet said. “Sorry if I ruined your evening.”

“Don't lie, I know you left because I wasn't enjoying it.” Drift smiled, a little sad. “I thought it'd be easier.”

“We'll catch the second half at home,” Ratchet said. “We'll get up on the roof and watch, you can bring those ridiculous snacks you like.”

“Best of both worlds,” Drift said. He swapped over to the seat next to Ratchet and cozied up against his side. They'd be home in a few minutes, and Ratchet would manage to forget the keycode again. They'd wander through their hab with the lights off and bump into everything and each other gathering up snacks and blankets and whatever else Drift suddenly needed

desperately. They'd curl up under the stars together and they'd be home and everything would be good.

Primus, what a life he lived.

## End Notes

Thanks for reading! I love comments so...you know, feel free to tell me anything. You can also find me on tumblr at [notwhelmedyet](#), talking 'bout robots & being behind on lost light.

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!