

PASTOR TOM
~~We are mighty glad to have you~~
~~home, Hutch. And the ladies of the~~
~~congregation didn't want you to~~
~~come home empty-handed.~~

Pastor Tom gestures to a few CHURCH LADIES who beam nearby,
 whispering with delight. One nudges another.

CHURCH LADY 1
 Just look at him in that uniform.
 That's a Bedford boy right there.

CHURCH LADY 2
 If he's single, we better start
 crocheting a wedding quilt because
 he's going to get snatched up
 quick.

The church ladies giggle. Pastor Tom reaches into a bag one
 of the church ladies is holding and pulls out a handmade
 prayer blanket, stitched in deep blues and golds, adorned
 with little crosses, doves and a tiny American flag in the
 corner. He hands it to Hutch.

PASTOR TOM
 We prayed over every stitch. It's
 tradition for those returning from
 service to receive a prayer
 blanket. But this one's extra
 special.

~~Pastor Tom waves Belle from across the sanctuary. She and Jen~~
~~are halfway through gathering hymnals and Belle looks up,~~
~~startled.~~

BELLE
 Oh -- me?

JEN
 {quietly}
 Go on.

PASTOR TOM
 Come on now. Don't be shy.

~~Belle approaches, blushing slightly, tucking her hair behind~~
~~one ear and adjusting her cardigan. She walks with purpose,~~
~~but there's a flutter in her.~~

PASTOR TOM (CONT'D)
~~Belle led the ladies in making sure~~
~~this was made long ago. We've been~~
~~holding on to it for you.~~

BELLE
 A lot of hands helped.

Hutch turns to her, eyes soft.

HUTCH
~~I can tell. Its beautiful. Thank~~
~~you.~~

~~A beat. Pastor Tom watches the electricity between them, then~~
~~claps his hands.~~

PASTOR TOM
 Well! I just remembered that I
 have...somewhere very specific to
 be. Right now. Immediately.

~~He retreats with a grin at Belle.~~

~~An awkward pause. Belle and Hutch face each other, the~~
~~blanket now in Hutch's hands between them.~~

HUTCH
 Subtlety was never his strong suit.

BELLE
 {grinning}
 Your memory holds up well.

HUTCH
 You look...well. Like Bedford House
 in December. Familiar. Kind of
 glowing.

BELLE
 {chuckling softly}
 That's either the nicest compliment
 I've ever received or the
 strangest.

HUTCH
 I was looking forward to seeing you
 again.

BELLE
 Glad you're home safe.

~~They step into a hug. It's long, gentle -- his hand lingering~~
~~at her back, hers at his shoulder. Neither seems eager to let~~
~~go.~~

~~Suddenly--~~

Start

End