

From Afar
By A.C. Hall

Dexter Manning walked sleepily into the office, a large cup of coffee in his hand. The office was filled with millions of dollars of computer equipment, but most of it was shut off at this early hour. Already sitting in front of his monitor was Phil Masterson, Dexter's co-worker on the morning shift.

"Mornin' Dex."

"Mornin' Phil."

Dexter sat down his coffee and then began flipping on the power to the computers in the room.

Many Miles Away

H peered through his camera lens at the object of his desire. He felt bad for watching her this way, but the way she moved told him that somewhere deep down she kind of liked it. H was trying to find any sign of the other man he had seen near her a few weeks ago. He was hopeful the interloper had crashed and burned but he couldn't be sure. After all, he had never actually talked to this woman. Maybe she didn't feel the same way that he did. Maybe she actually liked the interloper.

H put the thoughts out of his mind and instead zoomed in a bit more, admiring the curves. An outsider may think of it as a totally visual love but H knew that it was much more than that. He had been looking around with his lens aimlessly one night when he had first seen her. Just sitting there, waiting to be seen. That was months ago.

Ever since H did whatever he could to spend time watching and admiring her every day. He wanted so badly to go talk to her, to formally introduce himself. However, until his parents granted him with some way to get around he was stuck watching her from afar. It seemed funny to him that the very people you wanted to break away from are the ones you have to rely on

to obtain the means to make it happen. H sighed to himself, frustrated with the situation.

He heard a beeping and silently cursed modern electronics. They were trying to reach him. He zoomed in as far as he could, taking in all of her details one last time for the day. The beeping occurred again, and then a third time. H activated the shutter on his camera lens, imitating a wink.

“Yes I’m sure, Dex and I checked it three times. For some reason it’s not responding,” Phil said into the phone receiver.

Dexter’s monitors beeped and he hit Phil on the arm.

“Tell them never mind Phil, it’s working now,” Dex told him.

Phil slammed the receiver down, not bothering to explain the situation to the NASA operator on the other end. Phil shook his head as he began inputting commands into his console.

“Every morning for the past few months we come in here and this damn thing’s pointed at that weird star. It’s really starting to creep me out.”

Dex chuckled as he inputted new viewing coordinates into the Hubble Telescope.

“It’s probably just a programming glitch. I’ll put it in this week’s report though, just to cover our butts.”

Dexter pulled out an error report and began filling it in. He spoke as he was writing.

“Still, there is something about that star it’s always pointing at. It’s kind of beautiful.”

Phil didn’t look up.

“I noticed that.”