

HOW

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Set after the final episode. Alphonse packs his bag preparing to leave with his sensei, Izumi Curtis to relearn alchemy in order to find his brother, Edward. Winry ask him how he can still hold onto the hope.

Provided by Fanart Central.

http://www.fanart-central.net/stories/user/Physco_Squirrel/35347/HOW

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1 - HOW

Just a little something. Takes place at the end of the anime. If you haven't seen it, it's a bit of a spoiler. Its set between the time Alphonse asked his sensei to retrain him in alchemy and the train ride to Dubblith. And Winry ask him how he could hold onto the hope.

DISCLAIMER: FULLMETAL ALCHEMIST IS NOT MINE!

HOW

Winry stood in doorway watching as Alphonse carefully packed his clothes in the worn-out luggage that he and his brother, Edward had lugged every where with them. He had a small smile on his face as he sorted through the clothes. It had only been a few months since Alphonse had returned to flesh and blood.

It still seemed unreal to Winry that the boy she grew up with, laughed with, played with, fought with had finally returned to normal. In her mind, she couldn't help but convince herself that the hell he and his brother had put themselves to would always last. She hated to admit to herself, but there were times she just wanted to scream at the two and tell them to give up and live out the rest of their lives as they were. But she knew she was being selfish. She also knew that neither Alphonse nor his older brother, Edward would ever stop searching for a way to correct the mistakes they had made.

Lost in her trail of thoughts, Winry failed to take notice the hand waving in front of her face. Startled, she jumped, involuntary smacking Alphonse in the face.

"I'm sorry Alphonse!"

She quickly apologized, her eyes large. Alphonse only smiled and shook his head.

"Is every thing alright Winry?"

He asked touching her hand. Winry looked down at his hand. It had been a long time since she had felt his skin upon hers. She had become accustomed to the cold, hard steel of his other body.

"Just thinking. Are you just about finished packing?"

Alphonse nodded his head, taking a quick glance back at the over stuffed suitcase behind him, making sure it had remained shut.

"I just need to get brother's jacket from the living room then I'll be off."

Winry bit her lip watching Alphonse as he looked off with a daze. She wasn't an alchemist, didn't understand the concept of the science but she knew a few things, basically what the Elric brothers had taught her. And the one thing she knew above all else was equivalent exchange. When Alphonse returned, he had lost his memories of the last four years. Edward was not with him. Rosé had told Winry on what she had remembered on what had happened that day in the lost city. She cried for hours knowing that one of her best friends was gone.

Yet, here Alphonse was, still trying to hold on to that small fragment of hope. He believed that Edward was still alive. His eyes were determined when he asked his sensei Izumi to re-train him in alchemy. And she, as in last time, gave in. Now Alphonse was packing clothes for himself for once to set out on the train this afternoon to Dubblith. Now matter how much Winry wanted to believe in that small fragment of hope that Alphonse held onto, she still could not turn away from the reality. Edward was gone. Her eyes beginning to sting, Winry quickly wiped away the tears. Hoping Alphonse had not seen them.

“Winry?”

Alphonse asked looking her with concern. He had seen her. He couldn't understand why she was upset. And it was upsetting him.

“It's nothing Al.”

She replied with a forced smile. Alphonse shook his head and stood his ground. He had been around stubborn people long enough to know if you don't keep nagging, they'll never tell you and the problem will never be solved.

“Al...”

Winry began after a long pause.

“Yeah?”

“How do you know Ed is still alive?”

“I just do.”

“But equivalent exchange. You and Edward have always told me that. You can't get something without giving something in return. How can you hold onto the hope that he's alive when the two of you have always believed in that law?”

Al smiled, placing a hand over his heart.

“Because it doesn't hurt.”

Noticing the confused look on her face, Al continued on.

“When our mom died I felt this emptiness in my chest. My heart ached because I knew she was gone. I just didn't want to believe it. With my brother, I don't feel that emptiness. I know that he is alive. And I will find him. I'll know if my brother is no longer alive.”

“How?”

“Because I would have died too.”

“Alphonse! It's time to leave!”

A voice from down the hallway called out.

“Alright teacher.”

Alphonse replied, grabbing his suitcase, rushing out of the door. Winry watched him leave before following behind, a small smile on her face. She now understood the hope he was holding onto. Grabbing his jacket from the couch, the group, including herself, Alphonse, Granny Pinako, Scieszka, Sig and Izumi set out for the train station.

TRAIN STATION

Boarding the train, Winry handed Alphonse his jacket. His smile widened as he looked at the jacket his brother once wore. He couldn't remember how he obtained it. He just knew it was once his. And he would cherish and take care of it until he found him.

“Thanks Winry.”

“Yeah. And hey Al?”

“Hmmm?”

“Just take care of yourself alright?”

“Yeah. And don't worry; I'll have brother with me next time too.”

Alphonse waved to the group standing on the platform as the train slowly began to leave the depot. Winry waved until she could no longer see the train.

“For your sake Edward, you better be alright.”

She replied, shaking her wrench menacing in the air.

OTHER SIDE OF THE GATE

Edward Elric let out an involuntary shudder.

END

(fouPhyosquirrel: well, that's it. Please review

Edward: Whoa...wait a second...that's all the time I get?

Phyosquirrel: #evil grin> Well for someone as small as you are, I figured one line would be big enough.

Edward: #red face> WHO'S SO SMALL YOU CAN'T SEE HIM BETWEEN THE LINES?

Alphonse: Brother please!

Edward: You be quiet! You got more time than me! It's not fair!

Alphonse: #rolls his eyes and sighs>

Phyosquirrel: It's so cute when you pout. Well anyways, faithful readers, you know what to do.

REVIEW!