

In the morning Jimmi told the computer alarm that she was awake then went back to sleep. She would have missed her breakfast date all together if Dr. McCoy had not roused her. She put on her gold harem pants and her black vest with the gold embroidery on the front. She pushed her hair back with a plain black head band and headed out to dining hall three.

Lt Commander Sulu sat at a small square table with Lt. Chekov. The dining hall was quite crowded this morning. Jimmi got some coffee and joined them. She wasn't ready for a full breakfast yet. "Good morning, gentlemen."

"You made it through the night." Sulu smiled at her. Sulu and Chekov sat across from each other so she took the seat between them

"Good morning, Princess." Chekov said. "Are you going home today?"

"Yes." Jimmi sighed. "I don't seem to have any choice. There is a transport leaving at 10:30."

"So, did you and the Doctor have a long talk after I left?" Sulu asked.

"Yeah." Jimmi admitted testily. "Thank you so much for telling him there were other plans he didn't know about. I had to tell him everything."

"Everything?" Sulu asked. Did that include level sixty two?

"Everything about the SFU deal and about Lenny's and my plans for a bar on the base." Jimmi elaborated. She sampled her coffee.

"What did he say?" Sulu asked.

"He wants me to go to grad school and take the teaching job." Jimmi said. "He thinks I will fall in love with teaching."

"So what are you going to do?" Chekov asked.

"I don't know." Jimmi shrugged. "I have to think about it some more."

"I have to go." Chekov said gathering his empty breakfast dishes. "It's been good to see you, Princess, no matter how briefly."

Jimmi stood up and hugged him before he left. When she sat back down, Jimmi asked. "How long before you have to go to work?"

"About ten minutes." Sulu said.

"I guess there's no way you can be late." she said sadly. He just shook his head. She knew the answer to that. "I don't like saying goodbye."

"Let's get out of here." Sulu suggested. They left the crowded dining hall and walked slowly towards the turbo lift. "This is the hard part, isn't it?"

"Yeah." Jimmi said softly. "I wish we could spend the morning together."

"That would just postpone the inevitable." Sulu said holding her hand. "We still have to say goodbye."

"I know." She said stopping not far from the turbo lift. She sighed and looked up at him. He was only a few inches taller than Jimmi. "You will be careful?"

"Always." He smiled at her. He reached up to gently push a strand of her curly hair off her face. He broke his own rules of privacy and kissed her. "I've got to go."

"You better go." she breathed.

"Yeah." He said but neither of them moved. Finally Sulu backed away from her. "I'm going to be late. I'll call you soon. Bye Jeanie."

He stepped onto the turbo lift. After the door closed, Jimmi leaned against the bulk head and said to herself. "Bye Harry." She started back in the general direction of her father's cabin. She had to get her things together and then say goodbye to her fathers. She walked along slowly, not paying any attention to anything around her.

"Ms. McCoy." Spock said. She had evidently walked right by him. She stopped and looked up at him. Her mood was obvious. There was no need for Spock to comment on it.. "Are you preparing to return to Earth?"

Jimmi nodded and sighed. "I'm ready to go. It's been a tiring couple of days."

"Have you had a chance to discuss your future plans with your father?" Spock asked.

"Yeah." Jimmi suddenly remembered she was angry at Spock. "Why did you tell Dad about my teaching job possibility?"

"I merely suggested he ask you about other options." Spock said walking down the hall.

"But I asked you not to tell." Jimmi said following him back towards the turbo lift. "You never told before."

"I did not agree with your decision."

"But it was my decision." Jimmi insisted.

"However by telling me you were trusting my judgement of the situation." Spock said. He stopped and turned to her. "Jimmi, I do not think you understand the effect our recent visit to Earth has had on your father."

"I thought he got over it." Jimmi grumbled.

"Which it do you mean?" Spock asked.

"The bar. My love life." Jimmi said. "The fact that I have a love life."

"The lies? Did you expect him to 'get over' that?" Spock asked. She did not answer. She just looked away, avoiding his eyes. "It was the fact that you did not tell him about the bar that upset him the most."

"He told you that?" Jimmi asked.

"He did not have to." Spock said. "I have known the Doctor a long time."

"Well..." Jimmi sighed. They were approaching a turbo lift. "We've talked over all my options. So everybody should be happy."

"You do not seem happy." Spock observed.

Jimmi shrugged. Leaving her family had never been easy. With Sulu as her lover it was only worse. How was she suppose to be happy? "I've got to pack."

"Jimmi." Spock said as she started to walk away. She stopped and looked back at him. "Be good."

"I'll try, Spock." She smiled at him.

On the bridge, Sulu reported for duty with less than a minute to spare. Kirk considered commenting on his cutting it so close, but decided against it. Sulu's attitude was all business. He did not even answer Chekov's teasing "About time."

Dr. McCoy walked into his cabin just as Jimmi was looking around to make sure she hadn't forgotten anything. He stopped and looked at her. He couldn't help but grin. If her hair

had been a bit lighter and cut short so that it curled around her face he could have mistaken her for Maggie O'Brien. "Do you know how much you look like your mother?"

"You always say that Dad." Jimmi said as she closed her bag. "I don't see it."

"Not the way you remember her." McCoy said. "The way I remember her"

"Dad, you know..." Jimmi only remember her mother as an invalid who steadily weakened during Jimmi's childhood.

"I know." McCoy put his arms around his daughter. She laid her head against his chest and closed her eyes. "But when I knew Maggie... Well, you remind me of her now. Beautiful. Strong willed. Full of life."

"Did you love her, Dad?" Jimmi asked the question she had asked him a thousand times before. "I mean really love her?"

"Yes, Dear, I did." He answered as he always had. "Come on now. I'll walk you to the transport."

"I'm ready." She said as McCoy grabbed her bag. They left the cabin together.

"You've said your goodbyes?" McCoy asked as they walked through the halls of Enterprise.

"All except James T." Jimmi nodded.

"He'll meet us at the transporter room." McCoy said. "So was your mission successful?"

"My mission, Dad?" Jimmi laughed at his use of the military term. "Yes, it's been successful. Hikaru and I are finding our way."

"Good."

"Do you mean that?" Jimmi eyed her father suspiciously. "You aren't actually approving of this relationship, are you?"

Before her father could respond, they walked into the transporter room. Captain Kirk was waiting there. "Well, Jean Marie. Ready to go back to Earth?"

"Would it make any difference if I said no?" Jimmi smiled sadly.

"No." Kirk smiled. He hugged her and kissed her on the forehead. "Let me know what else you learn on your internship. And try to be a good girl."

"I'll try James T." Jimmi nodded. Kirk returned to the bridge.

"I just want you to be happy, Jimmi." McCoy picked up their conversation as if Kirk had not interrupted. They stepped up to the transporter pad. As Chief Landon worked the controls, Jimmi closed her eyes at the last minute. On the base, McCoy asked. "Are you?"

"How can I not be happy?" Jimmi said as they walked arm in arm towards the shuttle bay. "Hikaru is everything I ever wanted."

"Would you like to elaborate?"

"He's strong and very sure of himself. He knows what he wants and where he's going. At the same time he is kind and considerate. I can trust him, Dad." Jimmi said with a sigh. She left out how sexy she thought he was. There was no point in telling her father that she felt like she would melt inside when Hikaru looked her in the eye. With a smile, she added. "He is very much like all of my fathers."

"Unfortunately, all three of your fathers have had trouble when it comes to relationships." McCoy said. "Be careful Dear. Your mother also thought she could manage a relationship with

an officer on active duty. I would hate to see you get hurt."

"I'm not Mama." Jimmi said "And I am going into this with my eyes wide open. So stop worrying about me."

"Asking a parent not to worry." McCoy said as they stopped in front of the transport. "Is like asking a Vulcan to laugh out loud. It's not impossible but it goes against nature. You'll find that out eventually."

"Me? A parent? Bite your tongue, Doctor." Jimmi laughed. She took her bag from her father. "It's time for me to go."

"Promise me one thing." He said hugging her. "Just because you have this new man in your life, don't forget the old man still loves you."

"How could I ever forget that." Jimmi smiled and boarded her flight. At the door to the small ship, she turned and said as cheerfully as possible. "Bye Dad."

After Jimmi's transport had left the base, Commander Spock and Dr. McCoy came onto the bridge together. They joined Captain Kirk at the command station. Kirk glanced up from a report he was studying. He handed the pad back to Yeoman Franz.

"Did Jean Marie get off all right?" Kirk asked after the Yeoman had left.

"With only a minimal emotional display." McCoy nodded.

"Good." Kirk smiled. "Spock?"

"I have finished the analysis of the sensor contact data of the Della Mir scout ships." Spock said. "All the ships have the same basic sensor readings regarding composition. However the ships energy readings have subtle differences. The three ships under Captain Hold-drah's command all have a reading signature that corresponds to the readings we have on the energy probe that was fired on Starbase 68. Of the eighteen ships we encountered on patrol, four had the same energy signature."

"Did you have any information on the ship that ignored the distress call from the Pythagoras?" Kirk asked.

"It did not have the energy signature." Spock said.

"Well that at least gives us something to work with." Kirk said. "All new personnel have reported so we are just waiting for Mr. Scott."

"Mr. Scott will have the new crystals installed and the interface repaired by nineteen hundred hours." Spock reported.

"Why so long?" Kirk asked.

"Mr. Scott has taken advantage of Starbase Twelve's extensive stockpile of spare parts and expanded his repairs from the warp drive to the transporter systems." Spock said. "I suspect he would replace every component if he had the time."

"And he'd keep all the old parts for emergencies if he had the room." Kirk agreed. "Nineteen hundred hours? You don't suppose he timed that out so he would have enough time go to the officer's club tonight?"

"I am sure Mr. Scott would never admit to that." Spock said.

The Enterprise would leave Starbase Twelve at midnight. All the new personnel had reported. All the supplies had been loaded. The engineering crew had finished the replacement of the scarred dylithium crystals, which was what had brought them into the Starbase early in the first place. They could leave now, but Captain Kirk would give the engineering crew one short evening at the officer's club first.

Sulu and Uhura beamed over to the starbase and made their way to the officers club. When they walked in, Chekov was standing at the bar talking to Dr. Bobby Lopez. Several other Enterprise officers were in the bar. Sulu was laughing at something Uhura had said when they reached the bar.

"Two beers." Sulu said to the bartender.

"These are on you." Uhura said pointedly taking the drink placed in front of her.

"Yes, yes. Do I look like the kind of man who welshes on a bet?" Sulu asked acting like his feelings were hurt. He paid for the drinks with his thumb print on a computer pad.

"I just want to be sure we are clear on this." She laughed.

"What was the bet?" Chekov asked.

"Never mind." Sulu said drinking his beer.

"Excuse me gentlemen, I've got to say hello to Lt. Hellman. Right back." Uhura took her beer and joined two women sitting at one of the tables.

"Hmm, that's one gorgeous woman." Bobby said leaning on the bar. Chekov and Sulu couldn't disagree, but neither appreciated the leer that went with the comment. They had known and worked with Uhura too long for that. They just sipped their beers and ignored Dr. Lopez. "I've got to say, Sulu, I am impressed!"

"What do you mean, Doctor?" Sulu asked.

"The ensign on 68, McCoy's daughter here, and now Uhura!" Bobby slapped Sulu on the back. "How do you do it?"

"Let it go, Bobby." Chekov warned good-naturedly. "Have another beer."

"I am truly in awe of it, Pavel. What is your secret, Commander?" Bobby said. He finished the beer he had and motioned to the bartender for another. "Talk about a girl in every port!"

"I'm not going to stay around for this." Sulu downed what was left of his beer and put the glass on the bar.

"Especially that Jimmi!" Bobby continued seemingly unaware that Chekov and Sulu didn't want to hear it. "Now that's a ride I wouldn't mind taking myself!"

Sulu had started to walk away but that was too much. Without warning he grabbed Lopez by the shoulder and swung him around. Lopez didn't understand what Sulu was doing until Sulu's fist connected with the young doctor's chin. The combination of several beers and Sulu's punch sent Lopez to the floor.

"Are you crazy?" Chekov asked stepping over Lopez to Sulu. Everyone in the bar had turned to watch the commotion. Lt. Commander Uhura rushed over, but she wasn't the ranking officer present. Commander Scott was.

"Was I suppose to just let him go on like that?" Sulu asked Chekov quietly as Uhura

joined them. She knew Sulu's opinion of Lopez, but was surprised Sulu let the young doctor goad him into a fight.

"What's the problem here, lads?" Mr. Scott asked in his heavy Scottish accent as he came up behind Sulu.

"It's nothing, Scotty." Uhura said.

"It doesn't look like nothing." Scotty observed nodding to Lopez who was just sitting up.

"What do you have to say, Doctor?"

"Just a misunderstanding, Mr. Scott." Lt. Chekov said. He helped Lopez to his feet.

"I have no idea why he hit me." Lopez whined rubbing his chin.

"Mr. Sulu?" Scotty asked.

"It is personal, Sir." Sulu said.

"Chekov?" Scotty said. "What was this misunderstanding?"

"I don't know, Sir." Chekov said backing up Sulu as usual.

"Well then lads, you leave me no choice." Scotty sighed. "The lot of you get back to the ship. Mr. Sulu, you are restricted to quarters. I will report this to the Captain. Dismissed."

"Aye Sir." Sulu answered. He and Chekov both turned and left the bar. Dr. Lopez followed at a considerably slower pace. He didn't want to be in the same room with Sulu. He still had no idea what had set Sulu off.

"You couldn't let it go?" Chekov asked as they walked down the hall of deck eleven.

"You're right." Sulu admitted. "I shouldn't let Lopez get to me like that. But his whole attitude annoys me. And to hear him talk about Jimmi....."

"He annoys you just standing there." Chekov observed. They were standing outside of Sulu's quarters. "What are you going to say to the Captain?"

"As little as possible." Sulu said. "What about you?"

"I guess that depends on what questions he asks." Chekov said. He wasn't looking forward to it. Dr. McCoy would no doubt be there when both Sulu and Chekov talked to the Captain since it was his doctor involved. Chekov did not want to be the one to explain the misunderstanding was over his daughter. But it would probably fall on him. Sulu wasn't going to defend himself. Chekov didn't know Lopez well enough to know what he'd do, but he didn't have much confidence in the young doctor.

Sulu nodded. He trusted Chekov. He would do what he felt was right. Sulu couldn't ask anything else of him. Sulu went into his quarters to wait. Waiting was not something that came naturally to Sulu, but over the years he had a lot of practice. It was one of the reasons he held onto his baseball and glove. He was sitting in his chair idly tossing the ball up and catching it when the call to report to the Captain came.

Sulu walked into the conference room and stood at attention. Kirk did not direct him to sit down. Kirk and McCoy sat at the conference table. "Reporting as ordered, Sir."

"Mr. Sulu. I am not accustomed to my officers brawling with each other in bars." Kirk said. Sulu especially was not one to indulge in behavior unbecoming an officer. This incident would not reflect well on his record and he was always aware of that. "So what went on down there?"

"There was only one punch thrown, Sir. And I threw it." Sulu explained. "Dr. Lopez went down and that was the end of it."

"That was the end of it, huh?" Kirk asked. "What made you throw that punch?"

"I believe that is between Dr. Lopez and myself." Sulu said. "Sir."

"And that is all you have to say, Mister?" Kirk asked. Sulu did not respond and Kirk did not expect him to. "I should throw you in the brig, Mr. Sulu."

"Yes Sir."

"Do you have question, Doctor?" Kirk asked McCoy. He shook his head. "Mr. Sulu, you remain restricted to quarters until further notice. Dismissed."

Lt. Commander Sulu turned on his heel and left the room. Kirk turned to McCoy and said, "It is not like Sulu to lose his temper without good reason."

"I've recently seen Mr. Sulu lose his temper." McCoy said. "Not to the point of violence, of course."

"His argument with Jean Marie." Kirk said. McCoy nodded.

"I have also recently walked in on Dr. Lopez asking my daughter for a date." McCoy added. "Coincidence?"

"Sulu is never going to admit it." Kirk said. "But Chekov..."

A few minutes later Chekov reported to the conference room. Kirk took a different approach with Chekov, inviting him to sit down and talk more informally. "Chekov, we have a feeling we know what happened, but if no one steps up and explains we can't make this go away."

"Yes Sir." Chekov said.

"What can you tell us, Chekov?" McCoy asked.

"Dr. Lopez had a few beers." Chekov said carefully "I don't think he realized that every word he said wasinappropriate. His remarks were aimed at Mr. Sulu. He was leaving when Lopez crossed the line. If Sulu hadn't hit him, I would have."

"Would you like to be more specific, Mr. Chekov?" Kirk asked.

"No Sir." Chekov replied.

"Chekov, Dr. Lopez isn't talking." McCoy said. "If I am going to correct this problem, someone has to tell me what happened."

"Yes Sir." Chekov conceded with a sigh. Chekov tried to think how he could say it. "Dr. Lopez wanted to know how Mr. Sulu did so well with women. He sighted Ensign Gonzoles, Ms. McCoy, and Commander Uhura. Sulu did not bother to tell him he was wrong. Sulu was leaving when Lopez expressed his... well he said... he was a bit graphic about Ms. McCoy, Sir. That is when Sulu hit him."

"Thank you, Chekov." McCoy said. He knew it wasn't easy for Pavel to tell him about the discussion.

"Dismissed, Mr. Chekov." Kirk said.

"Thank you Sir." Chekov said and retreated as quickly as possible.

"You know, Jim, Lopez has been on this ship for over a year and I didn't realize there was a problem" McCoy said thoughtfully.

"This is the first problem we've had, isn't it?"

"Dr. Booyse knew him for two weeks and said he had a problem working with women." McCoy informed the Captain. "I thought she was being overly sensitive."

"This crew is forty three percent women." Kirk reminded McCoy. "He better get over this problem if he's going to stay on my ship. What is your suggestion, Bones?"

"First, I'll have a talk with him." McCoy said. "But to make any real difference, he's going to have to experience women in command, a lot."

"He was on Starbase 68 with Dr. Booyse for a month." Kirk said, "That made no difference?"

"Evidently it wasn't enough." McCoy said. "It would seem that Dr. Lopez's education is going to have to be an on going project. I think we should consider sending him on some landing party duty. Especially with a woman command officer."

"I'm not going to put anybody in danger to educate an arrogant young man." Kirk said. "Besides you usually save that duty for yourself."

"There is nothing lacking in his medical knowledge." McCoy said. "He's not going to let anyone get hurt."

"All right." Kirk said thoughtfully. "Next routine surveying mission. Lopez is on it."