

Captain Sulu and Captain Uhura walked into Captain Habib's office. A small green leafy plant had been added to the corner of his desk. Habib smiled, "Sit down, Captains. I have good news for you."

"I'm all for good news." Sulu said as he and Uhura sat down across the desk from Habib.

"I have looked at this incident from all sides." Habib said. "My report will reflect that both captains and crews of the Excelsior and Artful Dodger acted in accordance with regulations and standing orders. There was no violation of the agreement of sanctuary and no cause for any further investigation. This case is closed. Official notification is going out as we speak."

Sulu and Uhura looked at each other and smiled. Uhura said, "I could use a drink, let's go down to the Fly by Night."

Sulu nodded. "Come on, Jacob. The drinks are on me."

"Wait a minute." Habib said as the three of them stood up. "Isn't that your wife's bar? And isn't the manager your nephew?"

"Yes." Sulu said with a laugh.

"And they make you pay?"

"Not exactly."

"At least not in credits." Uhura winked at Sulu. To Habib she added. "He pays in other ways. Come on."

"All right." Habib grinned.

Commander Chekov waited while the transporter beam solidified into Captain Kirk. He smiled. "Captain, welcome aboard."

"Thank you, Pavel." Kirk came down the two steps off the transporter pad with his hand out. They shook hands. "It is good to see you again."

"And you, Sir." Chekov nodded. "Let's go to my office."

"Good idea." Kirk said and followed him to the turbo lift. "I understand Cathy is here on the base."

"Yes. It is nice that she could adjust her schedule to be here." Chekov smiled. "I like that she shows up unannounced, at least most of the time."

"I am sure Jean Marie had something to do with it this time." Kirk said as they walked into Chekov's office. Kirk stopped and looked at the family pictures that filled one wall. "Good God, Pavel. Have you got enough family pictures?"

"I have a couple of new ones I have not put up yet." Chekov laughed. He sat down at his desk. Kirk sat in the chair across from him. "The boys are all taller than me now. Last time I was home they insisted on taking a picture of the four of us just to make the point."

"I'd like to see that one." Kirk laughed, then changed to a more serious subject. "Well Pavel, what do you think of the present situation?"

"I think there is more going on than we know." Chekov said. "And that once these charges are taken care of, we need to find out the rest of it."

"Agreed." Kirk nodded. "What about this Brady character?"

"As far as we can tell, Brady has never lied to us. He will refuse to answer a question, but not lie." Chekov said. "I would trust any information he gave us."

“Good.” Kirk said. Before he could continue, Lt. Commander Kim’s voice came over the senior officer com line.

“Kim to Mr. Chekov.”

Chekov touched a pad on his desktop to open the channel. “Chekov here.”

“We’ve just received official word, Sir.” Kim said. “All charges against Excelsior, Dodger and both captains have been dismissed.”

“That is good news, Kim.” Chekov smiled. “Thank you.”

After Chekov had closed the com line, Kirk said. “Now we can get down to the business at hand.”

“I believe our next step would be to seek out this Dr. Kendar..” Chekov said.

“Since we can’t go charging into New Freedom,” Kirk nodded. “I would have to agree with you. Has Mirek come up with anything else?”

“Whatever research he is doing, he has no official backing or sanction that we can find.” Chekov said. “I have Mirek looking into his financial dealings now. Perhaps by knowing what supplies he ordered, we will be able to find out what he is up to.”

“Good idea.”

The atmosphere at the Fly by Night was considerably more relaxed now that both captains had been cleared of all charges. The news had traveled at warp speed among the crews of the ships and the base. Many of the off duty personnel of both ships had opted to go to the bar. A few Dodger officers commandeered the pool table. Lt. Dixon played lively music on the old piano on bar’s small stage and group had gathered around to sing along.

C.J. Chekov walked in and directly up to the bar. She was dressed casually in black slacks and black camisole topped by a short soft jacket of gold and green.

“The usual?” Mike asked. He was busy and did not have time for their normal small talk.

“On the rocks.” Cathy nodded. Mike gave her the drink but did not bother with the payment padd. She sipped her drink and watched Matthew Brady walk up to her.

“Mrs. Chekov.” He smiled and leaned on the bar next to her. Putting his empty glass on the bar, he said. “Nice to see you again. Can I get another, Mike?”

“Call me C.J., please.” Cathy said as Mike grabbed the empty glass.

“C.J.” He nodded. When Mike put the full glass in front of Brady, he added, “Thanks Mike. So, where is Commander Chekov tonight?”

“He’ll be down soon.” C.J. said. “He is having some kind of meeting with Captain Kirk.”

Brady nodded and sipped his beer before asking, “So what do you think of the legendary Captain Kirk?”

“I’ve known the Captain for years. I like him.” C.J. said. With a bit of a grin, she added, “He’s a bit of a flirt.”

“Really?” Brady laughed. “That was not my impression.”

“I am not surprised.” Cathy laughed as well. “I am sure you met the official Star fleet captain. But after he has had a few drinks, he tells the filthiest jokes you have ever heard. And

they are hilarious.”

“And you like that?”

“I like it when people turn out to be more than you expect.” Cathy shrugged and sipped her drink.

“Hi C.J.” Rosita Gonzoles walked up to them.

“Hi Rosita.”

Gonzoles turned to Brady. “I’m sorry. That took a little longer than expected.”

“No problem.” Brady smiled. “C.J. entertained me while you were gone. Ready for dinner now?”

“Yes. If we are quick, we can grab that table for two in the corner.” Gonzoles smiled.

“See you later, C.J.”

“Sure.” Cathy said and turned back to the bar after they had walked away. “Hey Mike.”

Mike finished serving another customer and walked down the bar to Cathy, “Another?”

“Not yet.” Cathy said. With a nod of her head towards the bar’s tables, she asked, “Just a question. How long has that been going on?”

“What?”

“Rosita and this Brady guy.”

“This is the first time I have seen them together.” Mike said with a shrug of his shoulders. “Except of course when they were both up in the Boss’s apartment with the captain.”

“When was this?” Cathy asked.

“When Excelsior first arrived.” Mike said. “Hikaru and Rosita go up together. Then he comes down, gets Brady, and they go up.”

“Wonder what J.M. would have to say about that?” Cathy asked. Others down the bar were calling Mike’s name or trying to catch his eye. He just shrugged and went back to work.

After they had ordered dinner, Gonzoles asked. “What’s a Bak?”

“That’s Barchin. It’s a familiar name for father like Dad or Pop.” Brady explained.

“What do you call your father?”

“Poppa.” She said. “You?”

“Da.” Brady shrugged. “Or Himself.”

“Himself?” Gonzoles smiled at the old fashioned use of the word.

“It was a bit of a joke, a sarcastic one.” Brady explained. “Never said to his face. At least by me.”

“I see.” Gonzoles said.

“It always strikes me as odd when my sister-in-law calls my brother that.” Brady grinned.

“Of course, she says it to his face and always with a smile. It was never nice when about my father.”

“Does your brother object?”

“No, Danny is not like that.” Brady said. ‘He’s a good guy.’

‘Any more brothers or sisters?’

‘Nope, just the two of us.’ Brady shrugged. ‘What about you?’

“A brother and four sisters.”
“Wow. Big family. Let me guess. You are the oldest. Right?”
“Right.” She laughed. “How did you know?”
“Lucky guess.”

Later in the evening, Captain Sulu saw Matthew Brady sitting at a small table by himself. Sulu sat down without waiting for an invitation and said, "Tell me something Brady. Why me?"

"What do you mean?" Brady asked.

"Whenever you have a problem, you call me." Captain Sulu said. "If you have something to say to Starfleet, you call me. Why me?"

"Captain, in my business you've got to know who to trust." Brady explained. He took a drink of his draft beer before continuing. "In our first encounter you were in a bad situation, but you continued according to regulations. Bravely, perhaps foolishly, but definitely by the book."

"Nothing unusual about that." Sulu said. "Any Starfleet officer would have done the same."

"Not in my experience." Brady said. Sulu was about to ask what his experience was, but Brady continued. "But because of that, I was confident that I could trust you to act that way when things were in your favor."

"Interesting." Sulu nodded and drank his beer.

Sulu did not expect Brady to say any thing else, but he added, "Then a couple of years after our second encounter, I met your wife."

"What could Jimmi possibly have to do with it?" The Captain asked.

"File it under unsuspected depth." Brady said with a grin "How could such a straight arrow be married to a hedonistic rebel like Jimmi McCoy?"

"Hedonistic rebel?" Sulu laughed. "I think Jeanie would like that description of her."

"Jeanie?"

"Her actual name." Sulu shrugged.