

Jimmi McCoy stood at the front of the small class of college students. All eyes were on her as she used the large wall mounted computer screen to connect the political theories of the college history class she was teaching. She heard the back door to the classroom open and close, but ignored the latecomer.

"Now," She said as she turned to face the class. "Who can tell me why the Vietnam conflict was so important to U.S. foreign policy in the last three decades of the 20th century?" But the class was no longer watching her. They had turned to see the Star Fleet officer standing in the back of the room. Jimmi stopped. She forgot entirely what she had been talking about. The commander and the teacher stood at opposite ends of the room. Slowly Jimmi's shock faded and she returned his smile. Without taking her eyes off him, she said. "Class Dismissed!"

"What about the test?" One student asked.

"Just get out of here." Jimmi said, her voice full of irritation. She took two steps towards Sulu. But the class was just watching. Jimmi stopped, looked around at her students and said, "Anyone who isn't out of here in five seconds flat will fail this course. One... Two..."

They immediately got up and started filing out. Jimmi McCoy and Hikaru Sulu couldn't wait. They were in each others arms before the last of the students had left. Jimmi held on tight. It had been over a year since she had held him. As soon as they were alone they kissed.

"Why didn't you tell me you were coming?" Jimmi asked as soon as their lips parted. She felt like she could not catch her breath.

"I thought you liked surprises." Hikaru said with that irresistible smile that she loved. "Surprise!"

"How long?" She asked. She couldn't believe he was standing here in her classroom. It had been a long year. His last leave had been cancelled on short notice. No reason given. But that was typical for Starfleet. Jimmi kept busy. Teaching during the days and singing at the Jade Palace on weekends. Here it was Friday and Harry was home.

"Eight days." Hikaru couldn't stop smiling at her. He went on to explain, "The Admiral signed me up for a command seminar at the Academy. It's designed for command track officers who have been in the field awhile to come together and share their experiences and insights, maybe learn something"

Jimmi couldn't have cared less about his seminar. But eight days together...along with eight nights. It was more than she ever hoped for. There were so many things she had to say that she couldn't decide where to start. Then she remembered what she looked like. She was wearing an oversized black Georgetown University sweat shirt with plain black slacks and her hair was pulled back in a ponytail. Harry hated ponytails.

"You could have given me some warning." She scolded as she finally stepped back from him. "I look awful"

"You look great." Sulu laughed as she went back to the desk at the front of the room. "I knew you were working. I would have waited for you at your place, but..."

"I moved." Jimmi said as she happily started to gather her teaching supplies and put them back in her bag.

"Yes, you moved. I wasn't sure..." he shrugged. Why were they still standing there? He wanted to take her home. He wanted to be alone with her. He wanted to take her hair out of that damn ponytail. Sulu picked up his duffel that he had dropped when he came in and they left

the building together. Most of Jimmi's students were still in the hallway. Sulu rested his hand on her shoulder while they walked down the hill. His fingers gently twisted a strand of hair that had escaped the barrette. They talked about everything and nothing. Soon they were at her door.

Jimmi lived in an old roomy townhouse that had been divided into three apartments. Hers took up the entire third floor. The furniture was comfortable and functional. Since she spent most of her time at the bar or school, she never bothered much with the apartment.

"Open" Jimmi ordered her computer.

"Welcome home Jimmi." Her computer said.

"Thank you, Hal. I brought Harry with me."

"Welcome Harry"

Sulu walked in to the messy apartment. No surprise there. She had several dresses draped over the sofa, her guitar was occupying one of the chairs, and her coffee table was covered with data storage units and dirty coffee cups. He ignored the clutter. "You named your computer Hal? Interesting choice."

"It's a joke." She explained but he obviously didn't get it. "Ok, so you have to be a history major to understand. Believe me the professors in my department think it's hilarious."

"I'll take your word for it." he dropped his duffel in the living room, just missing the sleek silver tabby cat. It hissed and scampered away. "A cat? That's new."

"Pirate. I need someone to keep the other half of the bed warm." She took his hand and led him into the bedroom. He pulled her close and unclasped the barrette that held her ponytail. She laughed, shaking her auburn curls loose. "I have missed you so much."

They spent the afternoon together laughing, talking, making love. They had a lot of time to make up for. The cat kept jumping up on the bed. He wasn't happy. Hikaru was in his spot.

After awhile, Sulu sat up in bed and smiled at her. "I brought you something from your father."

"A present?" Jimmi asked with delight.

"It's in my bag." He got out of bed and went to the living room to retrieve the box from Dr. McCoy. When he came back, Jimmi was sitting up in bed with the blankets pulled up around her. Her silver tabby cat had jumped in her lap.

"What is it?" Jimmi asked. She shooed Pirate to the bottom of the bed.

"I don't know." Sulu smiled. He handed her the box and got back under the blankets with her. "Your father said it was about time you had this. He said you had left it in his cabin since you were a little girl."

"Oh, it's the rabbit." Jimmi smiled. She opened the box and pulled out a small well loved white stuffed rabbit. "I guess this means he finally thinks of me as grown up."

Sulu took it from her and looked at the stuffed animal. It was wearing a plaid vest and an old fashioned bow tie. "From Alice in Wonderland?"

She nodded. "When I first went to live with Dad, he used to read a bit of Alice in Wonderland every night at bed time."

"I thought you were ten when you moved in with your father." Sulu said. Jimmi nodded, taking the rabbit back from him. "Isn't that a little old for bedtime stories?"

"I suppose." Jimmi admitted. "But that first year after Momma had died, I didn't sleep too well. So Dad would read to me until I fell asleep. Alice was our favorite."

"Seems to be a reoccurring theme in your father's life." Sulu smiled.

"What do you mean?"

"The shore leave at the Omicron Delta amusement planet." Sulu explained. She looked at him questioningly. "Didn't your father ever tell you about his encounter with the white rabbit?"

"No." She turned to him. "Tell me."

"I think I said too much already. You'll have to ask him." He laughed and changed the subject. "Why did you leave the stuffed animal on the Enterprise?"

"I didn't want him to take the job." Jimmi explained rather self consciously. "When he did, I worried he would forget about me."

Sulu wrapped his arms around her. Jimmi rarely talked to him about her childhood. Her experience had been so different than his very stable and boring family that had been in the same area for centuries. She laid her head on his shoulder. "How could anyone forget about you?"

"It was childish. I know." Jimmi admitted. "But he seemed to fly in and out of my life so easily."

"I'm sure it wasn't as easy as you thought." he said kissing her temple. Jimmi lifted her head and kissed him. As they lay back down together the shipping box fell to the floor with a thud. Jimmi giggled and tossed the white rabbit on the floor too.

Jimmi pushed herself away from Sulu's chest. "I wonder why he didn't give it to me himself when he quit Starfleet in a huff? He obviously took it off Enterprise then."

"During the refit? I guess he must have." Sulu agreed. "Didn't you like having him home?"

"He drove me crazy." Jimmi laughed. "He'd work at the hospital for weeks at a time without a break, then he'd hang out at the Palace questioning everything I did, then he'd disappear for months with his lady friend in Switzerland. Who I heard about endlessly but never met."

"Lady friend?" Sulu asked with surprise. These things were extremely hard to keep quiet on a starship.

"Her name is Dorian Maher. But that's all I know." Jimmi shrugged. "Except for his relationship with her, Dad was as miserable not to be in Starfleet as James T. was not to be a ship's captain."

"If the rumors are right, that could be changing again." Sulu said.

"What rumors?" Jimmi asked.

"It's not really classified." Sulu said. "There's talk about bringing the Enterprise home and using her as a training vessel. Give the cadets more space hours before graduation."

"Then what happens to the crew?"

"Other assignments." Sulu smiled. "There are other ships you know."

"Is this set?"

"Not yet." Sulu said. "But the rumors are pretty consistent. It will probably happen. It's just a matter of time."

"And then you get to be captain of your own ship, right?" Jimmi smiled at him. "And Pavel will be your first officer, right?"

"No guarantees, Jeanie." he said. Sulu pulled her close again and kissed her. "And no point in worrying about it until it happens."

"How do you do that?" She asked. "How can you just not worry about it?"

Sulu just shrugged. He got up and went to the kitchen.. "Are you hungry? I'm starving."

"Well don't look in my kitchen." Jimmi laughed from the bed. "You know what kind of a cook I am."

"You haven't gotten a replicator yet?" He yelled from the kitchen.

"Ship life has spoiled you." Jimmi yelled back. When he came back into the bedroom, she explained, "I just eat at the Palace. You know George is an excellent cook."

"Then let's get dressed." Hikaru said. He had kept a few things at her place for the last few years. Every time he came home, he found that she had added to his wardrobe. Today he put on a pair of gray slacks and a light blue shirt. He added a black sweater jacket. Jimmi wore a red cocktail dress with her hair down, no ponytail. She grabbed her black knit shawl for her shoulders and they were ready. They walked over to Jade Street. Jimmi had picked her new apartment because she could walk to both her jobs.

They arrived at the Jade Palace, a bar owned by Jimmi and her partner Lenny Vasco. He had put most of the money up, but she generally ran the place. Of course Lenny was usually there on weekends. It was an arrangement that worked fine. The Palace catered mostly to college students. There were three colleges within walking distance. This meant high energy music and a slight crowd control problem. They had all the latest hologram video games, but the bar's main purpose was to further the patrons' romantic encounters.

Lenny saw them come in and went over to greet them. He could not resist teasing her. "Now I see why you're late."

"I knew you were here. And I'm not that late." Jimmi stuck her tongue out at her partner before hurrying off to the kitchen calling over her shoulder. "What's George cooking? We're hungry."

"Sulu." Lenny offered his hand. He was quite a bit taller than Sulu with light brown hair and pale blue eyes.

"Vasco" Sulu shook it.

"One favor, Commander." Lenny baited Sulu good-naturedly. "Try not to get into a fight tonight. The furniture can't take it."

"You break one table..." Sulu just shook his head and sat down at the bar. Jimmi came out of the kitchen. She got him a beer and leaned across the bar to ask, "What do you feel like? Healthy food or junk food?"

"Junk food, definitely. I don't have to report until Monday, so this is vacation time." Sulu drank some of his beer.

"Cheeseburger? Fries?" She asked. He nodded. Jimmi disappeared back into the kitchen for a minute. She came out from behind the bar and sat on the barstool next to Sulu. Randy, the bartender, came down the bar and put a glass of sparkling water in front of Jimmi. She smiled at Hikaru as she picked up her drink. "You may be on vacation, but I'm working."

"Good to see you, Commander." Randy leaned on the bar and winked at Jimmi before he continued. "But please, no fights tonight. I'd hate to have to throw the Boss's boyfriend out."

"You think you could?" Sulu smiled at the bartender.

Randy had clear bright blue eyes and the kind of smile that made people instantly trust him. He casually picked up a baseball bat from under the bar and said. "I don't want to have to

find out."

Sulu laughed as he said. "I used to be pretty good with one of those in high school. Of course I used it to play a game, not make threats" Randy laughed as well and tossed the bat back under the bar. He liked when Commander Sulu came to town. It always put his boss in a great mood.

"Are you two finished?" Jimmi asked. They both nodded.

They had their dinner. Although Jimmi worked behind the bar and got up to sing with the band, they managed to spend a lot of time talking and dancing. They had been at the Palace for a couple of hours when Cathy showed up. She was Lenny's twin sister. Same pale blue eyes. Same teasing smile. But her hair was ashen blond where Lenny's varied from dark blond to light brown depending on how much time he spent in the sun.

Cathy recognized Sulu instantly. They had never met in person. But Jimmi and Cathy had roomed together in boarding school. She had talked to Sulu by subspace when he was tutoring Jimmi in Astrophysics that last year. And she had listened to her best friend's endless praise of the Starfleet officer. In Cathy's opinion, nobody could be that wonderful.

"Hey, C.J." Jimmi called to her friend as Cathy walked down the bar towards them. "I didn't know you were coming over tonight. Look who surprised me. You remember Hikaru, don't you?"

"Yes." Cathy smiled. "Well, Commander we finally meet in person."

"It's about time." Sulu nodded and smiled politely.

"Well, better to wait for the right time than to spill coffee on someone." Cathy teased Jimmi. She was hardly able to contain herself.

"Excuse me." Sulu said. He didn't understand the reference.

"Cathy!" Jimmi squealed. "He doesn't know about that!"

"Secrets?" Sulu asked looking at Jimmi. She was blushing. "What's this about?"

"The first time I saw you." She laughed. "Remember?"

"Sure. I was a lieutenant." Sulu shrugged. Jimmi liked to test his memory of their common past. But no matter how much detail he gave her, she always had something to add. "You were seventeen and had caught up with Enterprise at Starbase 23. Uhura asked me to teach you to dance."

"It was the day before that." Jimmi explained. "I was running down the corridor of the Enterprise. I ran right into you. Spilling your coffee all over you."

Sulu laughed out loud. He remembered the incident from seven years earlier. "That was you? I pulled my shirt off so fast, by the time I looked around no one was there."

"That was the day I learned what they mean by cursing like a sailor." Jimmi laughed. He reached out and took her hand. She smiled at him lovingly.

"Randy." Cathy called out suddenly. She turned away from Hikaru and Jimmi. "Hit me!"

"Hi C.J." Randy poured Cathy a generous portion of vodka. She drank about half of it in one gulp. "We weren't expecting you tonight."

"Well, I'm here. So where's my brother?"

"He's around." Randy said and refilled her empty glass. "I think he's in the store room. I'll let him know you're here."

"Thanks." Cathy said. Sulu got up and headed towards the mens room. Cathy took his bar stool. "So when did the sainted Sulu show up?"

"He walked into a class I was teaching this morning." Jimmi laughed. "He's going to be here for a week."

"Then I guess you have to be a good girl." Cathy teased. "I was hoping you would be in the mood to cut loose tonight. I know I am."

"This is the first I've seen him in a year." Jimmi informed Cathy good-naturedly. "If you think I'm going to ditch him to party with you, you are crazy!"

"Luckily, she's got me." Lenny said leaning across the bar. He had come out from the store room and heard their conversation. "I'm ready to go, C.J."

"As long as you're back there playing bartender, hit me again." Cathy smiled at her twin.

Lenny refilled her glass. He poured himself one while he was there. Sulu returned to find his seat at the bar occupied. Lenny was leaning across the bar talking to Cathy and Jimmi. Hikaru ran his fingers lightly across Jimmi's bare shoulders. She looked up at him and smiled. She turned away from the twins and handed him his beer.

"I thought your girlfriend was working for her family in Moscow." Sulu said after he took a drink.

"She is." Jimmi said. "Cathy usually comes to see us when she has had a bad week at work. When she really needs to cut loose."

"And you oblige her?" Sulu asked.

"Sure." Jimmi shrugged. He knew that she and Cathy were still close after the years they had roomed together at boarding school. Jimmi never did understand why he disapproved of Cathy. "Why not?"

"No reason." Hikaru said. He glanced at his chronometer. "It's getting late."

"Only a half hour until last call." Jimmi nodded. "I'll have to be behind the bar for that. Then we can go."

"Good." He smiled and lightly ran his hand up her arm to her neck. She leaned forward to kiss him. "I'm ready whenever you are."

The next day they spent at the beach. It was early March and a brisk breeze blew off the water. But Hikaru loved the beach, so they just pulled their hoods up and walked with their backs to the wind. When they were too cold to stay any longer, they stopped and bought some pastries and went back to her place. She made a pot of strong tea. It was great to have him all to herself. No commanding officers and no fathers to make anyone feel uncomfortable. They went out to a nice restaurant for dinner before Jimmi had to go to the bar. They spent the evening at the Palace together and slept in on Sunday morning.

Sunday night was jazz night at the Jade Palace. The crowd tended to be a little older. And they were more relaxed and subdued than the college crowd. Hikaru only stayed a little while. Before ten he went back to her place and went to bed. Jimmi stayed until closing time.

"Open" Jimmi whispered to her door at three a.m.

"Welcome home, Jimmi" the door opened and the lights came on.

"Dim the lights, Hal, half intensity." Jimmi spoke softly. "I don't want to wake Harry." Jimmi quietly got ready for bed. It was weird. She had never spent the night with Hikaru when he had to get up and go to work the next day except for the last night of any vacation they had

spent together. He was sound asleep on his stomach when she slipped into bed. She slid her hand along his warm back. He didn't even stir. She curled up on her side with her back up against him and went to sleep.

"Harry, it is time to get up." Hal said. Jimmi stirred, she felt like she had just gone to sleep. The next time the computer spoke it was a little more insistent. "Commander Sulu, it is O-five hundred hours."

"Ok, ok! I'm up." Sulu reached over and slid his hand over Jimmi's warm body. She stretched and turned towards him. She opened her eyes just a crack. "I missed you last night."

"I thought about waking you up when I got home, but..."

"Thank you for letting me sleep. I needed it." He kissed her shoulder. "Of course, if you were so inclined now...." He kissed her again, gently caressing her.

She giggled. "I'm still asleep here."

"You don't even have to open your eyes. Just lay back and enjoy." She never could say no to him. Not even when she was half asleep. A little later when Hikaru got out of the shower and came back into the bedroom to get dressed, Jimmi was sound asleep. It was Monday and her first class wasn't until eleven a.m., she had at least four more hours before she had to get up.

The rest of the week followed the same basic pattern. Except that the bar was slow during the week so that she did not have to stay until closing every night. Jimmi was in heaven. They had spent a lot of vacation time together, but this was the first time they were together when both had responsibilities. Jimmi thought of it as a test. And she felt they were passing. Jimmi started to hope that one day they would actually live together, maybe even get married. It was something that she had not dared hope before.

All that week she saw Sulu for dinner. They went to Hikaru's sister house for a family barbeque. Misaka was the sister who had married her high school sweetheart, Mike Woo, and now had a bunch of kids running around their beach house. The oldest son, Mikey, was quite taken with Jimmi. One night, Hikaru had even taken her out to dinner with his mother.

They had actually gone to the store together and now there was real food in her kitchen. All Jimmi kept on a regular basis was coffee, tea, and ice cream. It was a good thing Hikaru could cook, at least a little. Between the two of them they managed.

Friday was the last day of his command seminar. On Saturday he would catch a ride on a freighter on his way back to the Enterprise. Friday morning at o-five thirty hours, Jimmi sat up in bed watching him get dressed. To her, he always seemed to stand straighter in his uniform.

"When will you be done today?" she asked.

"I'm not sure. It's the last day. We could finish up early or we could be late." he shrugged.

"I usually go right to the Palace in the afternoon on Fridays." Jimmi said.

"Well then why don't I just meet you there." Hikaru said as he leaned down to kiss her again. "That way I don't have to worry about keeping you waiting."

"I don't want you to go tomorrow."

"I know."

"Have you ever considered....well...you know....a ground assignment?" Jimmi asked quietly. She knew the answer but she had to let him know how much she wanted this kind of life, together.

Sulu fell dramatically onto the bed. "Where's the knife?"

"Knife?"

"So you can plunge it into my heart." He hit himself in the chest with his fist. She curled up in a ball and pulled the covers up over her head. He rolled over and laid his head on her hip. "Come on, Baby. You don't make captain by sitting behind a desk at headquarters."

Still under the blanket, she took a deep breath and asked. "So what happens when you make captain?"

"You've visited your father aboard ship when we are in port before." Hikaru said.

"Maybe when I'm captain, you could come visit me when I bring my ship into a starbase."

"My father is family."

Sulu pulled the blanket off her. "What are you asking me, Little Girl?"

She closed her eyes when she said it. "To marry me. Someday."

"Damn it, Jeanie." Hikaru sat bolt upright. She had never mentioned marriage before. What was he suppose to say to that? She sat up and turned to him. "Why do you always bring important things up when I'm late for work?"

"Always?" Jimmi asked.

"We'll talk about this later." He gave her a quick kiss and got up. "I've got to go."

Strategic retreat, Jimmi thought. She laid back down in bed but did not go back to sleep. She looked around her room. His clothes were hanging in her closet. His things were in her bathroom. She didn't want him to go. Eventually Jimmi got out of bed and got ready for work at the University.

After her classes, she went home and changed then went straight to the Jade Palace. It was only four p.m. but Lenny was waiting for her. He was smiling. Something was up. Without a word he turned and went into the office. She followed him.

"What?" She asked. Lenny took a bottle of champagne out and popped the cork. He poured two glasses and handed her one. "Tell me." Jimmi demanded.

"That last deal, I told you it was a gold mine. It came in and we doubled our money." he could barely contain himself.

Jimmi smiled at him but was not as enthusiastic. His deals did not mean much to her right now when all she could think about was Hikaru leaving. "Great, congratulations." she started to drink her wine.

"Wait." Lenny was still grinning, he held his hand out to stop her from drinking. He explained further, "Because we doubled our money, I've closed the deal... The Deal! The grand plan can now move on to stage two."

"Lenny!" She jumped into his arms and kissed him. She spilled champagne on him as she hugged him. Jimmi was speaking quickly when she said, "I can't believe it. We have so much to plan. What about the space? Is there enough area for our needs? Have Randy and George agreed to the terms? What's our time table?"

"Hey slow down. First the celebration. We'll get down to business later." Lenny filled her glass again. She had spilled most of it. Lenny sipped the wine then put it down and poured himself some vodka. They stayed holed up in Lenny's office discussing the details of the grand plan. They had worked out the original plan that last year in high school. While the got their

college degrees they were constantly working towards the one goal. When they first bought the Palace, they were too young to even hold the liquor license. Until last year Lenny's uncle, Ivan, had done that. Ivan had believed they had a good idea and that the two of them were willing to work hard, so he had acted as their business advisor. But they knew what they were doing now. And Jimmi's idea of a bar that catered to starfleet personnel on Starbase 12 would soon be a reality.

Jimmi and Lenny came out to find the bar crowded. Jimmi went behind the bar to see if Randy needed any help. "They're starting early tonight." Jimmi commented as she mixed a drink for a regular customer.

"So it would seem." Randy smiled. "The commander coming by tonight?"

"Yeah, whenever he get's through at the Academy. But this is his last night in town." Jimmi smiled even though she didn't feel like it.

"When he gets here, I can handle things. Spend your last night together." Randy suggested. She was about to protest, when Randy added. "If I need help George can lend a hand."

"I love you, Randy." Jimmi said smiling at him. She slipped her arm around his waist and gave him a quick hug before she reached for another bottle.

"Yeah, I hear you say that to all the guys..." Randy said and turned to greet another customer.

When Sulu finally did walk into the Jade Palace he was not alone. He was with a man and a woman. Both Starfleet commanders. The bar was very crowded. They had to weave their way through the crush of college students.

"I can't believe you still come to this place, Sulu." The man shouted into his ear. He was about Sulu's height with dark hair and eyes and dark tan skin tones.

The band was playing loud hard driving music. The dance floor was a moving twisting mass of college students. A couple of cadets from starfleet academy saw the uniformed officers and gave up their seats at the bar. Sulu's two companions took the seats without acknowledging the cadets.

Sulu laughed and shouted back, "I have my reasons, Habib."

"What's her name?" the woman asked. She was a strikingly beautiful woman, almost as tall as Sulu and Habib. Her long hair, worn in a regulation braid was white blond. Her eyes were a pale icy blue.

But before he could answer, Jimmi had come up behind him and tapped him on the shoulder. Sulu turned to her, not too sure what his reception was going to be. To his relief she was smiling. She put her arms around his neck and pulled his head down so that she could shout into his ear. "I have such good news, I have to tell you." he looked at her expectantly. But she was looking at the other two officers. "Friends of yours?"

Just then the band took a break and communication became a lot easier. Jimmi repeated her question. Sulu handled the introductions, "Jimmi, this is Commander Jacob Habib and Commander Taziana Piazza. This is Jimmi McCoy."

After Jimmi said hello, she turned back to Sulu. "Did you think I'd behave better in front of your friends than if you came alone? "

"It was the last day of the seminar. We decided to have a drink." Sulu smiled casually. How could she object if he brought her more business? "I suggested we come here."

"Liar." Jimmi declared with a grin. "But I don't care. Nothing Harry, not even this morning, can ruin my mood now."

"Boss." Randy called. When the band had stopped playing a lot of customers had headed for the bar. She just smiled at Hikaru, turned and went to help Randy. When she got behind the bar, Randy said. "Sorry."

Jimmi took an order and started pouring drinks. Over her shoulder she said, "No problem. And whatever Harry and his friends order, it's on me." Randy just nodded. He was too busy to carry on a conversation. Jimmi turned back to the rush of customers. "OK, who's next?"

Randy got Sulu, Habib, and Piazza's drinks. Commander Piazza sampled her drink and asked ever so innocently. "So, what happened this morning?"

"None of your damn business." Sulu answered with a good-natured laugh.

"Ah, but what she right?" Habib asked, grinning at Sulu. "Are we here to insulate you from her wrath?"

"You've never seen that girl angry. Anyway, is it such a bad tactic?" They had been talking tactics all week. Sulu smiled as he watched her tend bar.

"Safety in numbers?" Piazza laughed. "It's not one you've advocated over the last week."

"You've worked for that lone wolf all these years." Habib added. "So I know you didn't get that one from Kirk."

"What room do you have to talk, Jacob? Captain Warren is not known as a by the book officer." Sulu had to think of some justification, "Besides it pays to be adaptable to changing situations."

"Turned the tables on you this morning, did she?" Commander Piazza asked, laughing at him. Commander Sulu had a reputation as being unflappable. After his exemplary performance at the seminar, it was good to see he wasn't perfect.

"One hundred and eighty degrees." Sulu admitted, laughing with her. He watched Jimmi tend bar and passed the time with Habib and Piazza. When the crunch of customers was slowing down and the band was returning to the stage, Sulu leaned over the bar and called "Hey, beautiful."

Randy started down the bar towards Sulu. Jimmi laughed, grabbed his arm, and walked past him. Jimmi leaned over the bar and said. "Harry, you have to be careful. You're going to give Randy the wrong idea. And you know how jealous George can get."

Hikaru ignored the comment. He took her hand, "Are you going to tell me what the great news is?"

She smiled "After this semester is over, I am leaving the college. Leaving the Palace. Leaving the Earth." he waited. He had an idea what was coming, but let her tell him in her own way. "Come July I'll be opening the bar on Starbase 12."

"The grand plan." He said with an approving smile.

"Stage two" Jimmi nodded and returned the smile. "By the end of next month I'll be there supervising the finishing up of construction. Randy and George have signed on. I can't wait. It's a dream come true."

"Congratulations." They were within inches of each other across the bar. He lowered his voice. "Good thing I'm going to be aboard the Enterprise and not on a ground assignment."

"Good thing." Her voice level matched his. She bridged the two inches between them and gave him a quick kiss. "Ok, you win. After all, I only said some day."

"Then come out from behind there and dance with me." Sulu smiled at her. She did not respond but came out from the bar and went to the dance floor to wait for him. He joined her. It was a very slow love song. They held each other closely, barely moving as they danced.

Jimmi sighed and whispered in his ear. "Someday?"

"I don't know what the future will bring." Hikaru Sulu did not like to promise something he wasn't sure he could deliver. "But perhaps, someday."

Jimmi sighed and closed her eyes as they danced. She loved everything about dancing with him. She loved being in his arms, swaying to the music, and the intimate conversation. He whispered in her ear that he loved her. She looked up into his beautiful brown eyes and smiled. After he left in the morning, the next time she saw him would be at Starbase Twelve. She could not wait to start getting the new bar ready. And July was only a few short months away.