

Dr. McCoy sat at his desk at the appointed time and signaled the bridge communications station that he was ready. While he waited for the connection to Earth, he touched his desk drawer. It slid open and McCoy took out the framed picture he kept there. It was a few years old but it was the only picture he had of his two daughters together. It had been a rare family picnic and his girls had their arms around each other laughing. They had presented the framed picture to him for Christmas three years earlier.

"Hi Dad." Jimmi smiled warmly. "How are you?"

"Good." McCoy looked up from the picture to the computer screen and returned his daughter's smile. "Did you enjoy Hikaru's visit?"

"Oh yes, I sure did." Jimmi laughed. "I almost fell over when he walked into my class. I forgot the entire lecture. My students are still buzzing about it. It was absolutely wonderful to have him here for an entire week. Has he talked to you about it?"

"A little." McCoy nodded. "He also seems happy about it. I understand you met his family."

"That was fun." Jimmi smiled and blushed just a bit. "I was so nervous. But they were very nice."

"What did you expect?" McCoy laughed.

"I don't know." Jimmi absentmindedly twisted one of her auburn curls. "His sister Misaka and her family live at a beach house not far outside San Francisco. We had a barbeque on their deck and there were a bunch of kids running around. Mike and Misaka have four and they each had friends there. Crowded, but all in all a very nice evening.

"There is another sister I still haven't met, but evidently Hikaru is not on the best terms with her husband. He declined to explain. I guess I'll have to get the story on that later. And his Mom came to the Palace later in the week. That went ok."

"Just ok?"

"I thought I was nervous meeting Misaka and Mike. When it came to meeting Michiko Sulu, I was down right scared. But she was gracious." Jimmi explained. "And it made Hikaru happy."

"How did it make you feel?"

"Dad!" Jimmi complained loudly. "Do you always have to be a doctor?"

"I can't help it." McCoy grinned.

"So." Jimmi changed the subject. "How are things on Enterprise?"

"Same as always." McCoy said. "We've just left the Romulan Neutral Zone which is always a bit tense for the crew."

"Everyone is ok?" Jimmi asked quickly.

"Yes." McCoy nodded reassuringly. "We are all fine. I did have a sick bay full of Romulans for a while. But they are all back in the brig now."

"Am I going to hear about you on the news again?" Jimmi asked.

"I'm sure you will hear something." Her father smiled. "What it will sound like when the diplomats get through with it, who knows."

"We don't have much time left." Jimmi checked the chronometer on her desk. She shifted her weight in her chair a couple of times and looked all around the room before adding. "And, um. I have something else I need to tell you."

McCoy studied her image carefully. "I'm listening."

Jimmi hesitated. Then she took a deep breath and said it quickly. "I will be moving to Starbase Twelve as soon as the school term is over. Lenny and I are opening a café there."

"What?" McCoy sat up straight. "You are leaving the University? Leaving Earth?"

"Yes." Jimmi nodded. As soon as she had told him all her nervousness had disappeared. "We plan to be open when the new ensigns arrive. George and Randy have agreed to join us. We're going to call it the No Ranks Café. I would think the meaning of that would be obvious to everyone in Starfleet."

"And you waited until our subspace time was almost up before telling me?" McCoy asked. Jimmi shrugged her shoulders slightly. A light on his computer console lit to tell McCoy his time was coming to an end. "When did you decide on this?"

"I know I've told you about this idea before, Dad." Jimmi said. "I just wasn't sure it would really happen until recently. I found out when Hikaru was here."

"He knows?"

"Yes."

"You are sure about this?"

"Yes."

"What about teaching?" McCoy asked. "I thought you really liked teaching and the historical research you were doing."

"I do, Dad." Jimmi said. "But I've been planning on this for a long time. It's what I have always wanted to do. And I'm going to give it a try."

"I see." McCoy sighed. He wanted to say more, but wasn't exactly sure what. After all, she was old enough to make her own mistakes. "Well, I guess I'll see you in July."

Jimmi smiled at her father. "I love you, Dad."

"I love you too, Dear." Dr. McCoy sat at his desk unconsciously staring at the blank screen where her image had been. After a few minutes he got up and left his office. He found Kirk and Spock in the senior officer's lounge with a chess board tower between them. Without an invitation McCoy sat down and stared sullenly at the chess pieces.

"How's Jean Marie?" Kirk asked as he moved one of his pieces to another level.

"She's leaving the University." McCoy grumbled. Neither Kirk or Spock said anything. "She's opening a bar on Starbase Twelve."

Spock moved his queen and said. "It is not an entirely unexpected development."

"No. But I thought she was really settling in at the University." McCoy said. "Whenever she talked about teaching, she sounded like she enjoyed it."

"You can't make her decisions for her, Bones." Kirk said.

"So you keep saying." McCoy nodded. "And I keep giving her the benefit of my many, many years of life experience. And she keeps ignoring me."

Kirk laughed at McCoy's sarcastic tone and said. "So are the joys of fatherhood."

Commander Sulu wasn't going any place in particular. He had finished his dinner and the wrestling matches weren't scheduled for another hour. Now he was walking the halls of Enterprise trying to get his thoughts straight. He wandered into the observation deck and leaned

against the wall staring out at the stars.

It was a long narrow room with many view ports. There was a variety of comfortable furniture. Generally the lights were kept at half intensity giving a better view of the stars and making it a favorite spot for lovers. There were a few other people there, but Sulu was lost in his own thoughts.

"Don't you see enough stars when you are on duty?" Commander Uhura asked from behind him.

Sulu glanced over his shoulder at her and grinned. "How long have you been standing there?"

"I just walked in." She said coming up next to him. "Why? How long have you been here?"

"I don't know." Sulu looked back at the stars. "I just have some thinking to do."

"Must be about Jimmi."

Sulu turned and looked at his good friend. He crossed his arms in front of his chest. "I do think about other things besides Jimmi from time to time."

"I'm sure you do." Uhura smiled. "But not with that wistful 'I wish I could be there now' look on your face."

"Ok, I was thinking about Jimmi." He admitted. "When I was home, she brought up the subject of marriage."

"That couldn't have been much of a shock to you." Uhura said.

"It was."

"Boy." Uhura shook her head in disbelief. "How dense can you be? She has wanted to marry you since the first time she saw you."

"That was a school girl fantasy. We've come a long way since then." Sulu said. "No, this time she meant real marriage. She even suggested I take a ground assignment."

"What did you say?"

"Mostly I avoided the subject." Sulu said.

"You're kidding." Uhura leaned against the bulk head next to him. "That's not like you, my friend."

"She blindsided me." Sulu said. "What was I suppose to do?"

"Maybe talk to her about what you feel and what you want?" Uhura suggested. Sulu just sighed and looked at the stars. "So?"

"So?"

"What do you think?" Uhura prodded.

"I will admit the idea is appealing to me." He shrugged. "I am committed to Jimmi and I'd love a family some day. But a ground assignment?"

"To reconcile a family with a career in Starfleet isn't easy." Uhura agreed.

"Maybe my mother has a point." Sulu said. "It isn't fair to make her wait around for me. After all, I don't plan on ever taking a ground assignment."

"If anybody outside Starfleet understands life in the service, it's Jimmi." Uhura countered. "And the last time I looked nobody could make Jimmi do anything. Just ask her father."

"You know what I mean."

Uhura sighed. "At least you have found someone special enough to make it worthwhile to consider the problem."

Uhura's wistful tone made Sulu ask. "Something happen while I was gone?"

"Yes and no." Uhura sighed again. "I let Doris set me up with the new man in the bio lab. But it didn't work out."

"What happened to your strict rule against ship board romances, Girl?" Sulu asked with a smile.

"I should have listened to it." She shrugged. "Oh, he was very good looking and the first couple of dates went fine."

"So what went wrong?"

"He was much too possessive." Uhura said. "I mean he assumed an awful lot after just three dates. So I just told him to take a walk."

"Out the airlock?" Sulu teased.

"No." Uhura laughed. "The relationship wasn't serious enough for that. So what are you going to do about Jimmi?"

"I don't know." Sulu said. "But she is ready to open that bar on Starbase Twelve she has been talking about. So we'll see her in July."

"Well it seems that another one of her school girl fantasies is coming true." Uhura laughed. "I don't think you'll end up having any choice in the matter."

"Great." Sulu sighed and looked out at the stars. After a minute he turned to Uhura. "Let's get out of here. This place is for lovers and home sick kids."

"And it is almost time for the match." Uhura said as they walked out of the observation lounge together. "I am so glad Silber transferred in. Last year it was hard to find anyone willing to bet against Pavel."

"Not this year." Sulu said. "I've made a couple of bets. What about you?"

"I have a bet with Scotty." Uhura said. "He's backing Silber."

"Does Chekov know this?" Sulu laughed.

"Silber is in Scotty's department." Uhura said. "He has to back him. And I told Scotty I'd come pick him up. You know how he loses track of time."

"I'll meet you there." Sulu said.

"Sulu." Dr. McCoy sat in the empty seat next to Sulu in the rec hall. The spectators were milling around, finding their seats for the first match.

"Hi Doc." Sulu smiled. "Who's your money on?"

"Chekov, of course." McCoy said. "You?"

"He'd kill me if I bet on any one else." Sulu nodded. "But I don't know if he'll make it to the finals if he has to beat Silber to advance. We'll have to see how the preliminary matches go."

"Pavel can be very aggressive." McCoy said. "And as I understand it, Silber has never wrestled according to Daran rules."

"How'd you come up with that piece of information?" Sulu asked.

"I have my sources." McCoy grinned. Their attention was drawn by the first preliminary match getting under way. The officers cheered as one ensign pinned the other in record time.

While they waited for the next two wrestlers to get ready, McCoy said. "I spoke to Jimmi a little while ago."

Sulu turned toward McCoy. "Oh?"

"She told me about her plans." McCoy said.

"About time."

"She tells me you knew she was leaving the University." McCoy added.

"Yes Sir." Sulu nodded. "Her partner had closed the deal for their new place on Starbase Twelve the night before I left Earth."

"I really thought she'd get tired of serving drinks." McCoy sighed. "I thought she liked teaching. Was I reading that wrong?"

"She does like teaching, Doc." Sulu said. "But Jimmi can be very single minded. And she's had this goal in mind for as long as I've known her."

"Yes, I know about her stubborn streak." McCoy nodded and shook his head. "Jim says I have no right to complain since she gets that from me."

Sulu laughed at that, but was saved from having to comment by the start of the next match. Uhura and Scotty joined them, sitting in the seats directly behind McCoy and Sulu.

"Did we miss anything?" Uhura asked.

"Chekov is up next." Sulu said. "His first bout is against Lt. Mandel."

"No contest." Uhura said.

"Would you like to make a little wager on that bout, Lass?" Scotty asked.

"If you are ready to pay up, Scotty." Uhura said. "I am ready to take your money."

"Careful, Scotty." McCoy turned around. "I've never seen her bet on anything she couldn't win."

"I'll take my chances." Scotty smiled.