

On Star Base 12 during the lull between the lunch rush and the dinner hour, Jimmi found some time to catch up on her office work. It was work she normally avoided but Jimmi was becoming tired of the pregnancy and she welcomed the chance to sit. Resting her feet on the small stool under her desk, she organized the haphazardly entered information. She was in the middle of approving the monthly bills from the regular suppliers, when the door to her office opened to a welcome visitor.

"Dad!" Jimmi exclaimed. She stood up and came around the desk to hug him. Although McCoy was still officially in Starfleet and held the rank of admiral, he was semi retired and rarely wore his uniform unless absolutely necessary. Today he was dressed in charcoal grey slacks, a high collar shirt the color of red coral, and grey and black cardigan jacket. "It's so good to see you. Harry's going to be thrilled."

"It's good to see you too, Dear." McCoy smiled. "How are you feeling?"

"Better than the last time I talked to you." Jimmi admitted. "Come sit down. I was just thinking about a cool drink. What can I get you?"

"I already asked Mike to bring us something." With his arm around her shoulders, McCoy led her over to the love seat. Her one piece maternity coveralls were navy blue with a yellow pinstripe. It was the most comfortable thing she could wear as she went into her eighth month. "I want to make sure you and the baby are all right."

"We're fine, Dad." Jimmi insisted. They sat down together. Jimmi moved the throw pillow to support her lower back. "Have you talked to Hikaru since he was held on the Breen ship?"

"No. But I've talked to Dr. Patrick at length. Hikaru is fine." McCoy assured his daughter. Mike brought a tray with fruit juice for Jimmi and iced tea for her father and left them to their conversation.

"Pat also told me not to worry about him." Jimmi said.

"But..."

"But I am going to worry. I can't help that." Jimmi insisted. "I'm glad you aren't out there any longer. Now I can concentrate all my worrying."

"Jimmi." McCoy took her hand in his and looked her directly in her eyes. "I will make sure Hikaru is all right. I want you to take care of yourself and the children."

"I will. There's no need to worry about me." Jimmi reassured him with a smile. She pulled her hands free to pick up her glass and sip her juice. "What about your family project, Dad?"

"Something along these lines had to happen sooner or later." McCoy dismissed the problem with a shrug. "And the project will have to be re-evaluated in that light."

"But will we pass?" Jimmi asked.

"An investigator from the SGO will be here to talk to you tomorrow." he sampled his drink.

"Why can't I just talk to you?" Jimmi asked.

"It has been suggested that I am too emotionally involved." McCoy said. "So an independent investigator has been chosen. And he will not be too emotional. Try not to take his questions the wrong way."

"It's ok, Dad." Jimmi smiled. "Hikaru said I should just take it in stride."

"Yes, that sounds just like your husband." McCoy chuckled to himself. "Now where's my grandson?"

Jimmi was tending bar at the No Ranks when the Vulcan officer walked in. Most of the lunch rush had all ready gone, so she noticed him right away. He was a little taller than the average human, which was average for a Vulcan. But he was fairer than most Vulcan's Jimmi had met, with light brown hair and hazel eyes. And he was young by Vulcan standards. Jimmi thought he couldn't be more than fifty.

"Welcome to the No Ranks Cafe, Lt. Commander." Jimmi smiled. "What can I get you?"

"I am Dr. Traymn." He stood in front of the bar with his hands behind his back. "You are Jean Sulu?"

"I've always hated that name. Jean. It's so abrupt." Jimmi smiled. "I prefer Jimmi or J.M. and on occasion Jean Marie."

"You are Ms. Sulu?" The Vulcan asked again.

"Yes. How can I help you, Dr. Traymn?" Jimmi tried not to laugh and spoke his name carefully. The mn blend was not unusual in Vulcan names but it was difficult for most humans to pronounce correctly.

"I am assigned to the Surgeon General's Office." Traymn explained. "I have a few questions."

"About the family experiment on Excelsior." Jimmi nodded. "I have been expecting you, Doctor. I just put on a pot of spice tea. Would you like to join me?"

"Vulcan spice tea?" Traymn asked.

"It's Ambassador Spock's private blend." Jimmi said putting two tea cups on the bar. "A little heavy on the ruvok, but I like it. Sit down, Doctor. Make yourself comfortable."

"Thank you, Ms. Sulu." Traymn sat down. He placed the data padd he carried on the bar and touched a sequence of controls until the word "recording" appeared in the display.

As she poured the tea, Jimmi asked. "Is the SGO considering cancelling the project?"

"The evaluation of this project is an ongoing process."

"I understand that." Jimmi handed the doctor a cup of tea. "But that does not answer my question. Does it?"

"It is not my decision." Traymn said. He sipped the tea, nodding approvingly. "I am merely the investigator."

"Ok." Jimmi sighed. She reminded herself of Hikaru's advice. Take it in stride. "If you have questions, ask."

"I understand that you were aboard the Excelsior when Captain Sulu was abducted and held captive by the Breen."

"Yes." Jimmi sipped her tea. "I'm sure you've read all the reports. What else can I tell you?"

"When you found out that Captain Sulu was not on the Excelsior, what did you do?" The Vulcan officer asked.

"I went to the bridge and demanded to know what was being done to bring him home." Jimmi said.

"And then?"

"Commander Chekov asked me to wait in the Captain's ready room." Jimmi explained. "When I objected, he had Dr. Patrick escort me there. The doctor filled me in on the details."

"You were emotional."

"Yes."

"Did you interfere with the functioning of the bridge crew?" Traymn asked.

"You'd have to ask them." Jimmi said with a shrug of her shoulders. "I have no idea how they function."

"Do you still believe that the benefits of your family's ship board visits outweighs the risks?"

"Are you married, Doctor?" Jimmi asked as she reached for the cake that had been so popular at lunch. She cut a piece and placed the plate on the bar in front of Traymn.

"I will be on my next visit home." Traymn said as he took the napkin and fork she handed him. "Thank you. My future wife is also a doctor specializing in exobiology."

"The benefits of spending time as a family on Excelsior far outweigh the risks." Jimmi cut herself a piece of cake. "And I'm not sure I can explain it to you. But my son can see his father at work. My husband can be a real father to his son. And just waking up together in the same room is precious to us. These are all benefits. I guess I am not being clear."

"To the contrary." Traymn said. "I understand what you are saying. However it is an emotional argument."

"Of course it is." Jimmi said. "When it comes to my family, what other kind of argument is there?"

"There is the very real problem of putting civilians in danger." Dr. Traymn said. "That is in direct opposition to Starfleet's fundamental principles."

"Danger is a relative thing." Jimmi shrugged. "And I recently realized that if I was going to be in danger, I would want the crew of Excelsior there to get me out."

"Circular reasoning." Traymn said. "If you weren't on the Excelsior, you would not be in danger in the first place."

"Granted." Jimmi sighed. "So there is nothing else I can say except to me the benefits far outweigh the risks."

"Thank you, Ms Sulu." Traymn nodded and stood up. He turned off the recording feature of the data padd. "Can I assume that Dr. McCoy is still on the base?"

"I believe you will find him at the play ground with my son, Harry." Jimmi smiled. Traymn nodded and started for the door. He stopped when she called after him. "Dr. Traymn, come back for dinner. My chef is making mesterean casserole among other things."

"Perhaps I will." Traymn nodded again and left the Cafe. He had no trouble locating Dr. McCoy. He was sitting on the edge of a large sand box. Several children were playing in the sand. "Excuse me, Doctor."

"Traymn." McCoy stood up slowly. He straightened his jacket. "Did you get what you need?"

"Yes Sir." The Vulcan nodded. "Ms. Sulu was very cooperative."

"Good."

"She was very concerned that the project may be canceled." Traymn said.

"Well she's concerned with her family, not the experiment." McCoy said. "I never told her that the experiment could not move on until something of this nature happened. It would have tainted the results."

"Agreed." Traymn said. "Until we can gauge reactions of both officers and civilians to crisis situations while families are on board an argument can not be made for or against civilians living on Starships. It is unfortunate that the boy is so young."

"Why?" McCoy asked.

"Questioning a human child of this age would not be productive." Traymn said.

"There are psychological tests for young children." McCoy reminded Traymn. He couldn't help but proudly add. "And Harry is quite articulate for his age."

"Of course." Traymn said.

McCoy laughed. "I don't think you believe me, Traymn."

"I have heard similar statements from every single human parent I have encountered." Traymn said. "As a grandparent you follow the established pattern."

"Pop!" Harry called as he ran to his grandfather. He pointed to a trail of bird foot prints he had drawn in the sand. "Look a giant Jorian ostrich was here."

"He must have been a very big one." McCoy grinned and rested his hand on Harry's shoulder. "When have you ever seen an Jorian ostrich?"

"Dr. Pat has a picture in his office." Harry said. "He colored it."

"Does he?" McCoy asked. The boy nodded. "Harry this is Dr. Traymn. Doctor, my grandson, Harry Sulu."

"Hello Harry." Traymn said.

"Hi." Harry smiled up at Traymn. He pulled on his grandfather's sleeve. McCoy leaned down so that Harry could whisper in his ear.

"Yes." McCoy nodded. He picked the little boy up. It was easier on McCoy's back than leaning down. "Dr. Traymn is a Vulcan just like Mr. Spock."