

When his first shift on the bridge was over, Smith was hungry. But he needed to release some energy more than he needed food. He decided on the gym first then the mess hall. Tomas Smith was glad to see the punching bag standing idle in the gym. He put on some practice gloves and started taking his frustrations out on the bag.

He had worked up a good sweat when Dr. Patrick wandered into the gym. It was later than normal for the doctor, but he wanted to casually check on Smith. The incident between Smith and Gonzoles was the talk of the ship. He had already spoken to Gonzoles about it when he told her he was swamped in sick bay and had to move their standing running date back a few hours.

"Hi Smith." Patrick started limbering up near the punching bag. "Getting used to the place yet?"

"Slowly." Smith stopped punching to look at Patrick. "I've been the new guy before. It takes a little time for people to warm up."

"This is the first chance I've had to work out in two days." Pat continued stretching. He wasn't looking at Smith when he added. "I heard you had a little run in with Gonzoles."

"Really?" Smith punched the bag harder. After a few more punches, he said. "It wasn't a big deal. Just a difference in style."

"Oh?" The doctor pretended not to notice the intensity of Smith's attack on the heavy bag.

"She came on the bridge and gave orders without even a nod to the fact that I was in command." Smith punched the bag with all his might. "Of course the crew followed those orders, no questions asked."

"Well, she is second officer." Patrick said.

"Right. And she was well within her rights" Smith said. "I just would have handled it differently. I would have explained the situation to the command officer and let him take it from there. As I said, a difference in styles."

"Good." Pat said without looking up from his stretching.

"You know, when I beamed in and saw her standing there, I thought she's not bad. I may like this place." Smith said. "But, I'll tell you, she's way too gunho for me."

"Don't worry." Pat laughed. He straightened up and looked Smith in the eye. "You're not her type anyway."

"Oh?"

"She has a strict rule about not dating anyone serving on the same ship." Pat explained.

"With a career in Starfleet, where else are you going to meet someone?" Smith asked. Pat shrugged. "While we're on the subject, how about that nurse? Lt. Ighn? Is she involved?"

"Not to my knowledge." Pat said.

Two six year old boys came running into the gym, one chasing the other. They were dressed in identical blue play suits and had sandy hair cut in identical styles. They ran around other people in the gym calling loudly to each other in Russian. Dr. Patrick reached out and grabbed one as he tried to run by. "Calm down boys! Remember the safety rules."

"Hi Dr. Pat." The boy switched to standard with ease. His twin brother stopped. "Guess. Go ahead. Guess."

"It's a fifty-fifty shot." Pat sighed. "Jamie?"

"Wrong!" The boy declared triumphantly.

"If I was right, would you tell me?" Pat asked. The boys laughed. "Come here and meet Mr. Smith. This is Jamie and Joey Chekov. But don't ask me which one is which."

"Hi guys." Tomas Smith smiled at the twins.

"You're the guy that wasn't going to let Mom land." Joey said.

"Well, I'm new around here." Smith explained. "And nobody told me you were coming."

"It was a surprise." Jamie said.

"It always is." Commander Chekov said from the doorway. "Come on, boys. It's been a long day. Bed time."

"But Dad!" They said with one whine.

"Home now." Chekov ordered. The young twins bolted towards the door, suddenly engaged in another game of tag. Chekov was about to follow the twins out of the gym when Dr. Patrick stopped him.

"Pavel, can you tell them apart?"

"Usually." Chekov smiled. "But not always."

"I keep looking for a difference." Pat scratched his head and let the thought die there. Chekov just chuckled to himself and turn to go.

"Commander Chekov." Smith stopped him from leaving the gym a second time. "I want to apologize for the mix up during my shift."

"Why?" Chekov asked. "There was no way you could have known my wife was coming or what arrangements we have with her. Actually, Cathy thought it was funny."

"Oh." Smith wasn't sure if the first officer was being truthful or just trying to make him feel better. "Well, I'm glad she wasn't upset."

"Not at all." Chekov said. "I'd better go. The twins can not be counted on to make it all the way back to the cabin without a detour. Good night."

"Good night, Pavel." Patrick said.

A few minutes after Mr. Chekov and his sons had left the gym, Lt. Commander Gonzoles came in from the locker room in shorts, t shirt, and gym shoes. Patrick straightened up from his stretch. "I had almost given up on you tonight. It is getting late."

"I almost skipped it tonight, Pat. I almost gave up and went to bed." Gonzoles sighed and started stretching. "But I knew you'd just give me a hard time after I skipped last night."

"Damn right." Pat laughed. "Of course I skipped last night too. Want to join us Tomas?"

"This is some kind of ritual?" Tomas asked.

"We just both have a hard time getting here." Gonzoles shrugged. "So we have a standing date. It makes it harder to just say forget it at the end of a long day."

"Been running together for four years now." Pat said. "Of course I have to hold back for her. I could finish in half the time she takes, but that wouldn't be nice."

"Your legs are twice as long as mine." Gonzoles complained. "I run twice as far just to keep up with you."

"That doesn't make any sense, Gonzoles." Smith said.

"Don't bring logic into it now, Smith." Gonzoles kept a serious expression on her face, but the laughter in her voice betrayed her true feelings. "This argument has been going on for

four years."

Smith laughed. "Sorry."

Gonzoles smiled at him. "But you are welcome to join us."

"Why not." Smith shrugged and took off his practice boxing gloves.

They started around the track at an easy pace. Both men towered over Gonzoles, but she kept up with them. As they completed the first lap, Gonzoles glanced at Smith and asked. "That punching bag didn't have a mental picture of me on it, did it?"

"What would make you think that?" Smith asked innocently.

"I can't imagine." She smiled. "But if the situation had been reversed, I would have been angry. I'm sorry."

"It's ok." Smith shrugged. "I obviously didn't know what was going on."

"I've already sent you a copy of that log I promised you." Gonzoles said. "You won't find yourself in that position again."

"Thanks."

"If you two are done," Patrick said. "I'd like to get some exercise in."

"Well then let's pick up the pace." Gonzoles said and sprinted ahead.

"Damn her." Patrick swore before sprinting after her.

"God, she's beautiful." Smith said to himself. He broke into a dead run and passed them both.

"Show off." Gonzoles called as he went by. After several more laps, the three officers slowed to walk and headed in the general direction of the showers. Gonzoles stopped short of the locker room and said. "I'm just going to head home, guys. See you tomorrow."

"Good night, Rose." Pat called as she walked out.

"Dr. Patrick report to sick bay." Lt. Ann Ignes called on the ship wide comline. "Medical priority."

"Damn." Pat ran from the gym.