

You Were In Danger

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You Were In Danger

by [Aphelyon](#)

Summary

Paul Stamets is still being ordered, by Captain Lorca, to navigate the U.S.S Discovery via the Network despite it causing major bodily harm to him each time. It's wartime, and they're desperate, but Dr. Hugh Culber can't stand to see Paul in so much pain like this every single time. He gains inspiration on how to navigate this issue during a talk with his colleague and friend, Dr. Pollard, after treating Paul post-jump.

Notes

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Quick fic inspired by discussions on the discord. It's strange revisiting so early on in the first season again, lol.

Nothing graphically described, and injuries sustained within are typical to the show itself.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

In total, this marks Paul's fourth ever jump - including his reckless, albeit successful, first attempt.

After the jump, Hugh rushes into the spore chamber, wasting not a single second. His hands are on Paul before the needles even retract out of his torso. When they do, it's sharp and fast. It's better that way, although that is little comfort. Paul draws a strained, shaky breath. He knows he shouldn't, as it'll only work to collapse his lungs quicker, but he can't help it. Hugh hardly blames him.

He's sweating and trembling from the pain. He doesn't cry out - he won't, not in front of all the people in Engineering, and now that he's navigating from inside the spore chamber they need more people present. So his damn pride keeps all of his screams locked inside of him. But Hugh can see how Paul is screaming from just looking into his eyes. They're bloodshot, wild, and his pupils are completely blown out.

Hugh holds onto him firmly, he knows that it hurts Paul - and his face screws up amidst the immense pain - but it's the only way to keep him stable enough for him to assist him out of the chamber. As soon as they're out, and before the chamber's door can even hiss closed behind them - as Paul's breaths turn into long, shallow wheezes, Hugh calls out to the computer;

"Emergency transport for two to sickbay."

They dematerialise and reappear in a shimmering haze in the bright lights of Medical. The facility has been cleared just for him, and a small team is on standby awaiting them.

"Turn them off! Turn them off!" Paul attempts to cry out, struggling to form the words around his pain as more hands reach out for him and carry him to a bed, laying him down.

The lights are so much brighter than Engineering - so Hugh orders them into red mode. It's darker, but they can still see. Since this is now the third time they've had to do this same procedure on Paul after a jump - they know what to expect, it'll be okay to work like this.

*

As Paul stabilises, Hugh mending the puncture in his diaphragm, he turns off the assisted-breathing apparatus, removing it from Paul's face. He squeezes Paul's hand and lets him know he can finally take a breath on his own now. Paul does, several long, deep breaths. They're a little wheezy at first before returning to being relatively clear, and he eventually eases into breathing a normal pace.

Paul will need to sleep for about an hour or so before he can leave. There is such a conflicting concoction coursing through his veins; the depressants from the medicine to slow

his system down, and to aid in mending his body - and the high octane stimulant remnants of mycelia from the network that Hugh has yet to learn how to curb. When Paul wakes, the medication will have been burnt through - his metabolism working overtime - but alien stimulants will remain. He'll essentially be as high as a kite.

But for now, he sleeps - recuperating as he heals. He's curled up on the bed, without his shirt, just resting under a blanket that Pollard had draped over him. Hugh has placed Paul's jacket hanging over the back of a chair, and a new undershirt folded neatly on the seat ready for him when he wakes up.

Hugh goes to discard Paul's bloodied, torn shirt in the matter recycler. As the matter deconstructs in front of him, being decontaminated and re-purposed into matter supply for the replicators, he leans heavily against the wall, his forehead on his arms, sighing deeply.

"He's doing good. His vitals are stabilising back to normal. He's okay now, Hugh." Tracy's reassuring voice sounds from beside him. She's leaning her back against the wall, head resting against it, but she's looking at Hugh. These candid relaxed moments remind him of his intern days, a long, long time ago when medicine seemed a lot simpler.

"What's normal about this, Tracy?" he snaps sharply. He hears himself, and regrets it immediately, but she's known him long enough to know that this isn't directed at her. "What kind of captain is okay with this?"

"Not sure there's anything in command training about a bio-engineer turned pilot of a once-theoretical super highway that's located on an entirely different plane of existence *via self inflicted eugenics*."

"Ugh. Don't remind me. And don't defend *him* ." Him being their war obsessed Captain. They're all just pawns in his little war game. Hugh sighs, straightening up, then leans his back against the wall and sinks to the ground.

Tracy does the same, but is now looking out to where Paul lies in the bed. "I'm not, Hugh. This isn't right."

"No, it's not. He can't keep this up, it's not viable, it's not sustainable. I can keep patching him up but... It's too much on his system, he'll eventually crash entirely, soon, probably. Or who knows! Maybe he won't! I don't fucking know anymore," he exclaims throwing his hands out in frustration.

"It's okay to be scared, Hugh." She places a hand on his knee. From anyone else he might have found it patronising, but from her - a knowing and kind friend - it's comforting. He takes her hand, squeezing it a little.

"I am scared. I don't know what's going to happen with him... How this is changing him. He's so different once he wakes up and..."

"He's still *your* Paul. We're all multi-layered beings, seeing him like this now sure is... enlightening, - " they both huff out a laugh at this " - but it's still him. He'd do anything to prevent you from being hurt. This is the way he knows how to do that."

‘ *You were in danger* ’. Paul's words from earlier in the week echo in his mind.

Now every time Paul performs a jump, *he's in danger too*.

“I don’t know what this is doing to him...”

“I thought you said his readings have been consistent? Even at home?”

“They have.” He sighs, running his other hand over his face. “He just can’t keep interfacing like this...He insists he’s fine, but...” Hugh sighs a long sigh again, feeling helpless. “ - no one should suffer like this.”

“No, he can’t, and he shouldn’t have to.”

“Interface... *interface*. ” He mulls the words over as he speaks them alive, concepts starting to fall into place within his mind around the idea. “That’s the work around... *The interface* . I can engineer an augment for him! To interface with the drive! It’s not a perfect solution, but it’s better than this.”

He’s beaming at Tracy now, in his revelation and she’s just smiling at him.

“That means you’ll have to work *with* Paul on that.”

“Oh, don’t worry, we’ll soundproof the room.” While they respect each other so highly and because of that they’re able to work together incredibly well, on those occasions that they have had to work together, well.... It can get very loud.

“Well, if *that’s* a necessary part of the process...” Tracy says with a sly smirk and a twinkle in her eye.

“Not like that!” Hugh gawks at her in affront. “I’m a professional, thank you very much.”

“Well, who am I to judge if you’re playing around with new toys with your boyfriend, hm?”

“Oh, get out!” He shoves her lightly, and she rolls over laughing. But, truthfully he’s barely holding back his own laughter, and is thankful for her brightening his mood from the heavy dread he feels when he thinks about Paul's health and future - even if she’s being wildly inappropriate. Although, it’s no secret that Hugh does have a soft spot for people like this.

“C’mon, you’ve got work to do before he wakes up.” she says, getting up and holding out her hand to pull him up as well - and he lets her, grateful for her kindness and support.

“Waking up to the love of his life proposing a joint engineering project with him? He’ll think he’s died and gone to heaven.”

// end

End Notes

Thank you for reading! As always, I really, really love your thoughts and feedback. I appreciate it a lot.

Thank you to [Tincanspaceship](#) for Beta-ing this lil thing.

You can also come find me over at [Aphelyons.tumblr.com](#) - I post drawings of Culmets stuff I do there too.

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