

5 Times Chekov had to Use His Knives (and 1 Time He Didn't)

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5 Times Chekov had to Use His Knives (and 1 Time He Didn't)

by [TunaFishChris](#)

Summary

(This makes a lot more sense if you've read "Dark Blade.")

When the bridge crew got Pavel some new knives, everyone hoped he wouldn't have to use them.

Unfortunately, Pavel has the worst luck.
Fortunately, he also has the best crew.

Notes

This is the sequel to "Dark Blade." I highly recommend reading that one first. (I know it's 20 chapters, but if the comments I've been getting are any indication, it's worth it!)

When Jim Got Stuck in an Alien Trap on an AMGW (Away Mission Gone Wrong)

Alternatively: How Dr. McCoy Came to be Known as Dr. Apocalypse

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In all honesty, the percentage of away missions that went spectacularly wrong was actually very low. Only 7%. But no one ever talked about the boring 93%.

This one, on the other hand, was one of the 2% of away missions that were complete and utter disasters and Jim was pretty sure he was going to die. Positive, in fact.

Enterprise had come to answer a distress signal from some Federation scientists on a new planet the Federation was considering for colonization. The compound where the scientists had been located was in the southern hemisphere, which was in the thick of winter. Jim had brought Spock and a small security team. He'd also brought Pavel Chekov, much to the confusion of everyone who wasn't Alpha bridge crew. The nineteen-year-old was like a mini-Spock: very smart, a good scientist, and fully capable of defending himself. The main difference was that Spock used the phaser and a nerve pinch. Chekov used knives.

When they had beamed down to the base, however, they'd found the scientists dead and a bunch of Romulans setting up an ambush. Jim had gotten separated from the team, and in the confusion had also lost his coat, which had his communicator.

Now, he was hanging from a bunch of rope and twine in a primal but very effective Romulan trap. He wasn't sure whether they'd set it up for Starfleet while they'd been planning their ambush, or if they'd been hoping to catch some dinner. Either way, Jim was well and truly stuck.

And frozen. If the Romulans didn't get here soon to finish him off, he'd die of hypothermia. Considering what Romulans were known to do to their POWs, hypothermia was very much preferred.

Unfortunately, Jim could hear snow crunching beneath someone's footsteps. He sighed and shivered. "H-Hope you br-brought a b-blanket, jerks," he said.

"Captain!"

Never, ever had he been so happy to hear Chekov's voice. Jim sagged in relief as Chekov rushed over, tugging at the ropes. "How long have you been here?"

"Dunno. S-Stopped sh-shivering a while ago."

"That's not good." Chekov pulled out his communicator. "Commander Spock, I found him. East of the compound. He's hypothermic."

"B-Beam up?"

"Nyet. They're jamming the signal. Ve have to get farther from the base."

Jim sighed. He didn't believe in no-win scenarios, but he did believe in the scenario where he died and his crew lived. "P-Pav-vel..."

"Shut up, Captain."

Jim blinked. He couldn't see what Chekov was doing, but he could hear some sort of grinding noise going on. The ropes were getting looser. "What are you..."

One of the last ropes came undone and Jim dropped to the ground, onto the snow. The good news was he was so far gone he barely felt any colder in the snow.

Chekov put away the tiny neck knife Uhura had given him. It was a thick, two-inch blade that went into a sheath that hung from his neck. Jim remembered that he gave Uhura a lot of shit for that. When the hell would the kid ever use something like that? he'd said. That thing was the size of a baby hamster, he'd said. He really should know by now not to question Uhura.

Chekov tucked the sheath under his shirt, grabbed Jim by the underarms, and pulled him up. "Come on, Captain. Let's get you to Doctor McCoy so he can yell at you and make you better, da?"

"He only yells 'cause he cares," Jim slurred. "D-Don't tell him I know that."

"I von't." Chekov dropped him against a tree and pulled off his coat. He shoved Jim's arms through the sleeves and zipped him up, then pulled some spare gloves from the pockets and shoved them on Jim's numb fingers. Jim swore the kid was psychic; he was always prepared.

Jim whined. "'S cold. You wear it."

"Captain, you have hypothermia and I don't. You are from Iowa and I'm from Russia. You will wear the jacket." Chekov stiffened, and tipped his head. He adjusted Jim a little more and pulled a bush around him. "Stay here," he ordered. "Don't make a sound."

Jim blinked in confusion as Chekov hurried away. He huddled in the coat, trying to think of all the reasons to stay awake when sleep was really, really tempting right now. The most primary reason was that if he passed out, Chekov wouldn't have the self-preservation to leave him behind. The petite Russian would try to drag him to safety and they'd both end up dead.

Jim didn't notice the Romulans until they were practically on top of them. There were three, all armed. One of them spotted him. "I found Kir--!"

A throwing knife found its way into his throat. His companions looked up just as the second knife found its way into another Romulan's heart. The last survivor fired blindly into the trees. He started running when the third knife was thrown, missing a kill shot and ending up in his shoulder. He staggered and switched the phaser to his other hand, but a fourth knife went through his eye and brain before he could fire another shot.

Jim watched the snow turn crimson with disinterest. Chekov dropped from one of the lower branches and collected his knives, slipping them in the sheath he kept hidden around his left forearm. His right arm had an impressive phaser burn that he ignored completely.

"On your feet, Captain," Chekov said, hauling him up and supporting him over his left shoulder. "Let's get you home, da?"

--

"How is he?" Pavel asked, as soon as McCoy came out of Kirk's room.

McCoy rolled his eyes as he studied the phaser burn on Pavel's arm. "Severely hypothermic, but he'll live. We're pumping him full of warming fluids and buried him under some blankets."

"He'll want to take a warm shower later. Vater, not sonics. It'll be very helpful."

"I don't doubt it," McCoy said. "Especially coming from the Russian."

"We should get him some hot chocolate, too," Pavel continued as McCoy positioned the dermal regenerator. "Or maybe coffee. He likes coffee."

"He's not getting a drop of that while he's in here," McCoy grumbled. "He's supposed to sleep." He turned on the regenerator, then paused. The way he was looking at Pavel made the young navigator want to squirm.

"What?" he asked.

"...nothing. Just remembering something from your medical file."

"What about it?"

McCoy shook his head. "It's not important."

Pavel thought, recalling all the trips he'd ever taken to the hospital and all the injuries that had ever been recorded. It was difficult: he'd had an awful lot of injuries in his life and most of them had gone untreated, taken care of by himself. Except one time...

Pavel barked a laugh. "Don't worry, Doctor. That time I fell in the lake was truly by accident. Andrei wasn't even there."

The tension in McCoy's shoulders immediately unwound. "Oh, really?"

"Uh-huh. I was with Uncle Wadim, and we went up a little mountain to get a good view of a meteor shower. We went ice-fishing, too, and I wandered onto some thin ice and fell through. Wadim got me out right away and took me to the hospital. I was upset because he'd left the fish we'd caught behind so we didn't get to eat them, but he said that it'd be a good present for the bears," Pavel explained.

His happiness faded into the old sorrow and anger that came whenever he thought of his uncle Vadim. Whatever story he told, even if it was a good one, inevitably led to the memory of when he'd found him dead on the floor with four knives in his chest, courtesy of one Andrei Chekov.

"Your uncle was a good man," McCoy said quietly. "If he could see you now, he'd be proud."

"I know," Pavel said. "That's what makes it sad."

McCoy gave a tight smile. "He'd also probably have some words about all the knives you carry around."

Pavel sputtered. "I only brought the neck knife, the throwing knives, and the Swiss! The Vulcan dagger isn't meant for cold temperatures and the Bowie knife wouldn't be able to get out of its sheath because of the frost. And you're glad I have them because I saved the captain's life, thank you very much."

McCoy shook his head and sighed. "For a scientific genius, you sure like being stuck in the Dark Ages."

"So do you, Doctor Apocalypse."

"Oh, now there's a good name," Chapel said, coming into the room.

McCoy sputtered. "What does that even mean?!"

"Leonard, if I had a credit for every time you went on a tangent on all the horrible ways people can die out in space or on an alien planet, I'd have enough money to buy the Enterprise. It's a lot like how people waited for the End of Days during the Dark Ages. Hence, I now christen you Dr. Apocalypse."

"Don't you dare," McCoy growled. She just smiled at him.

Two days later, everyone was calling McCoy Dr. Apocalypse. McCoy never did forgive Pavel for that.

When Chekov Got Kidnapped by Klingons

Pavel was Not Amused.

Getting kidnapped by Klingons and stuffed onto their ship to be sold or traded or ransomed or whatever it was they planned on doing to him would ruin anyone's day, but the fact that they had caught him completely off guard was just the icing on the cake.

The Enterprise had gone to a starbase that had been attacked and needed protection while they did repairs. Pavel had gone onto the base with Mr. Scott to see if they could help with said repairs, but the base had a strict no-weapons policy. Not even knives. So Pavel had had to leave them all on the Enterprise, with the exception of the Swiss army knife. That one was fine.

And then he'd stupidly, *stupidly* thought that they were safe, that things were okay, because they were on a Federation starbase that was heavily guarded and he'd been surrounded by Starfleet security--most of whom he knew personally--and thought that any problems that came up could easily be answered by his usual Plan B, which was a punch to the nose.

Wrong. The Klingons had returned in full force, beamed onto the base, stolen one of the ancient Klingon artifacts that had been their original target, and left, dragging a semi-conscious Pavel with them, probably to use as a hostage.

So now Pavel was stuck in the brig of a Klingon warship with a headache and probable concussion from when he'd been knocked out. He'd been here for at least two hours and chances were very good that he'd end up dead, because while the Enterprise might hesitate to take out the Klingons while he was aboard, the rest of the Fleet wouldn't.

Luckily, the Klingons hadn't thought to search him when they took him aboard. He still had his pocket knife. Now, he just had to wait.

The ship pulled out of warp. Pavel paused, and felt the floor jerk as the ship was hit. He grinned. He didn't necessarily want to die, but if he ended up going out with this ship, he'd be okay with that.

But there were no more hits, or jerks. The ship stayed stationary.

A Klingon guard came to fetch him, shoving his hands into a pair of cuffs and pulling him through the halls. Pavel made a map in his head, and calculated where the generator, warp drive, and transport pad would be.

To his surprise, the Klingon took him to the bridge. It was small, since this was a smaller ship, with the captain, the pilot and navigator, and what was probably a communications officer of sorts.

On the screen was Captain Kirk.

"You wanted proof of life," the Klingon captain said, motioning to Pavel.

Kirk gave a disinterested shrug. "Great. You now have a bargaining chip. Your warp drive is damaged and your weapon systems are down. You can't go anywhere. So come quietly, release Chekov, and we'll get you a lower sentence."

To anyone else, it might sound cold and heartless, like Kirk didn't care. Pavel knew better. If Kirk showed that he cared, the Klingons would use Pavel against him.

Pavel looked around. Five Klingons in the room, all armed with phasers and a knife. All of them were focused on Kirk, even the guard. Pavel pulled his Swiss out of his pocket and started working on the cuffs.

Kirk's eyes flicked to him before settling back on the captain. "Of course, if you tell me why that artifact you took is so important, then I could help you out with that, too. Assuming it doesn't do anything like destroy Federation planets. We've had enough of that."

The captain snorted. "It's not a weapon, as I attempted to explain to your admiralty. It holds cultural and religious significance..."

The guard realized what Pavel was doing a moment too late. "Hey--!"

The left cuff snapped open. Pavel grabbed the guard's knife from its sheath and stabbed him in the belly, as he was too tall for a fatal neck-shot. He pulled it out and threw it at the captain. He didn't stick around to see if he'd hit his target (he knew he did), and sprinted to the lift.

Usually, transport pads were located near the generator, as they required a lot of power to teleport matter. Generators were almost always in the center of the ship, carefully protected from outside attacks. Klingon warbirds usually had theirs near the belly, so Pavel went two floors down and ducked for cover in the hall as soon as the doors were open, trying to stay hidden.

He nearly got caught by a couple of guards running past, but he managed to find the pad. The problem was the two Klingons working behind the computers.

Pavel looked around, and found an intercom across the hall. He smacked himself for being so stupid. He didn't have to beam himself out, the Enterprise could do it for him! He pried the intercom open with the Swiss and, with a few adjustments, had himself a communicator.

"Chekov to Enterprise," he whispered, mindful of the others.

"Lad!" It was Mr. Scott. "We've got a lock on yer signal. Stay put."

"There he is!"

Pavel jumped at the Klingon's words, but stayed still as white light wrapped around him. One of the Klingons charged, and Pavel felt blinding pain from the right of his stomach before he was on the Enterprise's transport pad.

The Klingon who'd found him was also there, having been standing too close to Pavel. He had a knife in Pavel's gut.

So that's what being stabbed felt like. Pavel felt kind of bad, now, considering how many times he'd done it to others.

"Oy!" Mr. Scott snapped. "Let 'im go!"

The Klingon grabbed Pavel and turned him so he was a human shield. He had let go of the knife and now had a phaser at Pavel's head. Why hadn't he gone with the phaser first? That would've been instantly fatal. Maybe he was just stupid. Or maybe, like Pavel, he preferred edge weapons. "Make any sudden moves and I kill him," the Klingon warned.

Keenser was by the intercom. Ten seconds later, the doors opened and in spilled half a dozen security guards led by Lt. Giotto and a small medical team that included McCoy.

Pavel looked down at the knife in his abdomen, then back up at a stone-faced Giotto and McCoy. "I think I'm going to be late to this week's poker night."

Giotto's lips twitched, but he kept his eyes on the Klingon. "This is over. Let him go."

"Beam me back to my ship," the Klingon ordered, pressing the phaser into Pavel's head.

Pavel was so past Not Amused and well and truly into the realm of Annoyed. He also knew that if the Klingon didn't give up soon, that put the Starfleet personnel at risk. The Klingon could easily get a few shots in before he was taken out, shots that could hit Mr. Scott, or Giotto, or McCoy. Pavel would not risk anyone else's life, not if he could help it.

"Ye're standin' too close to the lad," Mr. Scott said while Pavel wrapped his hand around the knife's handle. "I can't beam one o' ye without beamin' the other."

McCoy eyes widened when he saw what Pavel was doing. "Pavel, don't--!"

Pavel yanked the knife out and stabbed the Klingon behind him. Twice.

The phaser clattered to the floor. Pavel pulled away from the Klingon as the man fell, and if Pavel was recalling his Klingon anatomy correctly, that was a fatal wound. Excellent.

Pavel staggered back until his back hit the wall of the pad, and he slid to the floor, probably leaving an impressive blood streak behind him. McCoy was already on him with a tricorder and med kit. "You goddam idiot, you're already bleeding out."

He started barking orders to the rest of the team, but his words were all blurry and mixed together. Pavel hoped he was telling a nurse to get a blanket, he was so cold...

--

The first time Pavel woke up, the pain hit him like a sledgehammer. The lights were blinding, and he didn't know where he was or what was going on, and there was shouting and alarms

blaring, and there was something on his face that he tried to pry off, but there was too much pain and he threw up, until something pinched his neck and he fell back asleep.

The second time was much better. Everything was hazy. He couldn't feel much of anything, and it was lovely. He was able to recognize the gentle beeping and the blue uniforms as Starfleet medical, hopefully Enterprise. Hikaru was sitting on a chair next to him, slouched over the bed and snoring. Pavel smiled. Definitely on the Enterprise, then. He managed to reach out and wrap his hand around Hikaru's arm before going back to sleep.

The third time Pavel was lucid. There was still some pain, but it was manageable. The nurse checked his vitals before going to get the doctor.

Dr. McCoy was Not Amused.

Pavel had pulled off his oxygen mask and gave a weak smile. "Hi, Dr. Apocalypse."

"It's going to be the apocalypse for *you* if you ever pull that shit again."

Pavel shrank into his bed. McCoy sounded absolutely furious as he looked over Pavel's chart. Pavel couldn't help but think of how completely vulnerable he was: lying in bed, injured, unarmed, and in the doctor's environment. He had to remind himself that McCoy was a friend, he'd healed Pavel before, he wasn't going to hurt him.

"You're going to be stuck here for another three days, minimum," McCoy growled. "And then another forty-eight hours of bedrest. Then very, *very* light duty. No heavy lifting in Engineering or pulling all-nighters or any of that crap. Got it?"

Pavel nodded. "Da."

McCoy looked up. When he saw Pavel hunched in his bed, trying to look small, his shoulders slumped. He sighed and rubbed his eyes, swearing under his breath. "Your heart gave out on us during surgery. Legally speaking, you were dead for two minutes and forty-three seconds."

"...oh." Pavel put a hand over his chest, and the steady thump-thump of his heart.

"Yeah, *oh*," McCoy said. He seemed a lot less angry now. Just tired. Maybe even a little scared. "Don't do that to us again, kid, okay?"

Pavel hesitated. "I'll try," he said. It was the best he could do.

McCoy seemed to understand, because he nodded.

The doors burst open and Hikaru ran into the room. "He's awake?"

"Awake and kicking," McCoy reported. "Don't break him." He turned back to Pavel. "Nurse'll give you lunch in about an hour. No solid foods for another couple of days, and you might not be able to keep this down."

Pavel made a face. "Of course I von't. It's hospital food."

Hikaru grinned. McCoy rolled his eyes. "You're fine. I'm out." He walked out of the room to the other patients.

When Spock was Almost Assassinated

Spock raised an eyebrow as he read the PADD. "Fascinating."

McCoy rolled his eyes. "Really, Spock? You find out a bunch of crazies want to kill you for your pointed ears, and that's your reaction?"

"Considering the fact that there are much more logical reasons to want to kill me, yes. And religious fanaticism is always a compelling topic."

"Right, so, anyway," Jim said, rubbing his eyes. "This 'Pure Red' group has already claimed responsibility for killing eight other Vulcans and they've made a threat against Spock, so I'm increasing security measures."

There was a round of agreement from the table. It was a morbid thought, but Spock appreciated that the worst situations never failed to bring out the best in the Enterprise crew. And the fact that everyone, even McCoy, unquestioningly agreed to take measures to protect Spock in this situation was...comforting.

"Maybe we should do a psych review of the crew," Chekov suggested, twirling a throwing knife around his finger. It was something he did in public only around the bridge crew and only when agitated. Nobody stopped him or commented. They'd stopped giving him odd or uneasy looks over it last month.

The incident with the Klingons had been two months ago, and he'd made a full recovery. The bridge crew was still cautious with him, though. Even Spock found himself illogically watching closely for any signs of pain or discomfort.

"That's over five hundred people," Sulu protested.

The knife stopped twirling as Chekov gripped the handle and crossed his arms. "Read the report: they got the other Vulcans either by disguising themselves as crew or actually being a member of Starfleet."

"It's not a bad idea," Nyota said. "We did just make a pit stop at a starbase and exchanged a couple of crewmembers. Anyone could've slipped through the cracks."

Jim nodded. "Bones, how long would it take for a ship-wide psych eval?"

McCoy shrugged. "Usually it takes almost three weeks. But if I push the panic button--and I will--I can get it down to a week and a half."

"Do it. And if anyone sees something or suspects something's up, tell security." Jim stood. "Meeting adjourned."

--

"Stay at my place tonight?" Nyota asked, quietly, on the lift.

Spock turned to her. "While I appreciate your concern for my well-being, I don't wish to make you a target as well."

Nyota gave him a shrewd smile. "Do you really think I'm not already a target, for 'laying with a pointy-eared devil?'"

Spock paused and considered the logic. There was a high possibility that Nyota was a target just by affiliating with him romantically, a thought that filled him with guilt and rage that he pushed aside. Should one or both of them be attacked, they stood a much higher chance of survival together than apart.

He nodded his consent. "Very well."

--

Two days after the meeting. Two days of staying in Nyota's room rather than his own, finding himself sharing all meals with at least one other member of the bridge crew instead of alone, and giving his reports of ship's business in person with Jim over chess rather than sending it to him in written format on a PADD, and Spock was attacked on one of the most secure parts of the ship.

Fanatics. Never a logical people.

It was Alpha shift on the bridge. Spock was going over the readings of a star on the brink of going supernova when the lift doors opened and two ensigns stepped onto the bridge.

Spock, the closest to the lift, could see them out of the corner of his eye, a man and a woman, both humans. He also saw Chekov look over his shoulder at the newcomers, then pause, and give them a second look. He shifted his body so his right hand was hidden. In hindsight, this should've alerted Spock immediately.

Jim frowned at the ensigns. "Something I can do for you two?"

"Nope," the man said.

Nyota shrieked, "Spock!"

Spock turned and found himself staring down the barrel of a phaser.

Then there was a splash of blood. The man went down without a sound while the woman screamed and drew her own phaser. Spock recognized the dagger he'd given Chekov in the man's neck. Nyota grabbed Spock and pulled him toward the limited cover of the communications station. Jim was on his feet, putting himself right between the woman and Spock. "Lay down your weapon," he ordered.

"Get out of the way, Captain," she snapped. "I have two targets but I don't mind taking on a third."

Spock felt a burst of anger (they *were* after Nyota, bath'paik!) and put an arm in front of Nyota, pushing her behind him.

A phaser was shot, but not from the fanatic. She collapsed in a heap. Sulu had his phaser out, set on stun. Chekov was holding a throwing knife, poised to throw, and looked miffed.

Sulu shrugged at him and lowered the phaser. "Couldn't let you have all the fun."

"Call security," Jim ordered. He looked down at the man's body and winced. "And medical. Sulu, go back to flying the ship. Chekov, help me secure her."

The throwing knife disappeared up Chekov's left sleeve. Jim took the woman's phaser while Chekov checked her for any more weapons, then sat her up against the wall. He pulled the dagger from the man's throat, unconcerned about the blood that washed his hands with the action, pulled a cloth out of his pocket, and started cleaning it.

Nyota's hands were trembling while she called the appropriate parties, though her voice was steady. Spock considered what his reaction would have been if Nyota had been the primary target. He didn't have to consider it for long, given his reaction to Jim's temporary death, and he admired her control. He put a hand on her shoulder and gave it a slight squeeze. She relaxed, marginally.

Lieutenant Giotto swore when he arrived on the bridge. Spock decided against reprimanding him; if any situation called for coarse language, it was this one. "Have medical check her for a cyanide packet," Giotto ordered security. "It's usually by the left thumb. As for this one..." He frowned at the body. "Who took him down?"

"Me," Chekov said, giving the dagger one last wipe before tossing the rag in the trash.

Giotto gave Chekov a strange look before turning to Jim for confirmation. At the captain's nod, he turned back to Chekov. "Okay...We're gonna need a report."

"Of course."

"Preferably now. Captain, do you mind?"

Jim shook his head. "No, the sooner this gets handled, the better. And I want Spock secured until we know these are the only ones."

Giotto huffed. "Well, then, Commander, if you wouldn't mind, I'm going to have to ask you to come with us. We'll put you in your room with guards posted."

Spock wanted to object, but one look from Jim and he knew that the captain would make it an order. And the look Nyota was giving him said if he didn't agree, they would Have Words. So he nodded. They all filed into the lift.

Giotto looked at Chekov as the young man put the dagger back in its sheath. It was attached to his right arm under the sleeve, a concept Spock had not considered when giving the young man the blade. "You know, they've recently invented this thing called a phaser..."

Chekov smirked. "Everyone looks for the phaser. No one looks for the knife."

There was one other fanatic: a lieutenant who'd given the two ensigns access to the bridge. The fact that three relatively high-ranked officials were such xenophobes was unsettling, to say the least. After a thorough investigation and the completion of the ship-wide psych evals, Spock was able to leave his room and not have security guards trailing him for the first time in five days.

He went to the mess hall for lunch. He'd expected the stares and sideways looks in his direction. He hadn't expected the same thing to happen to Chekov, who was sitting alone at a table.

"Ensign," Spock greeted after he'd received his meal. He sat across from him.

Chekov poked at his food. "They keep staring at me."

"I once heard Dr. McCoy say that rumor travels faster than warp speed. While that is factually inaccurate, it does have meaning."

Chekov gave a dry smile. "It was only a matter of time, anyway."

"Indeed." Spock took a bite of his pasta. "I wish to express my gratitude. Your quick reaction saved my life."

Chekov looked up, startled, and gave Spock an odd look. "You would've done the same for me, Commander, except without the bloodshed."

"I would have," Spock agreed. "Regardless, thank you, Pavel."

Chekov beamed.

They were silent for a few minutes, enjoying their food and the quiet company, until Chekov put down his fork. "I have a question about a paper you wrote..."

When the Enterprise Crew Got Drugged on Another AMGW

Jim swung by Medical before his shift because he needed to coax Bones into going to a banquet with him. An Andorian royal family that had been causing trouble had recently sued for peace and wanted to celebrate the signed treaty, so the Enterprise was there to represent the Federation as a whole.

Jim didn't mind going to a fancy dinner and rubbing elbows with distinguished aliens. But it was a lot more fun if Bones was with him. And safer, considering all of Jim's allergies.

When he got to Medical, he was greeted with the sight of Lt. Giotto sitting on a biobed with what looked like a nasty broken nose that was dribbling blood over the grin on his face. Chekov was standing to the side, looking sheepish and guilty. Bones was grumbling over a tricorder.

"What happened here?" Jim asked, looking between the two officers. They were both dressed in workout clothes.

Chekov hunched his shoulders. "Ve vere sparring, Captain," he mumbled.

"And it was *great*," Giotto exclaimed. "I don't know why he's been keeping it a secret for so long."

"Probably to save you trips to Medical," Bones said.

"It vas an accident!" Chekov insisted. "I didn't mean to break his nose, but I slipped and..."

Giotto waved it away. "It's fine. Happens to the best of us."

"I really am sorry."

Giotto shrugged. "If you wanna make it up to me, we've got a refresher course on basic combat next week. Show up as my assistant."

Chekov rubbed the back of his neck. "But then eweryone vill know..."

"They already know," Jim confessed. "After that attack on the bridge, rumor spread. Half the crew thinks you were raised by some warrior race that specializes in knives."

"I heard you got some sort of special training from Starfleet because you joined up so young," Giotto said. "Someone else told me that you were raised in the circus as the knife-thrower. I've got a couple of other stories, but it might be better if you gave us the real facts."

Chekov winced. "Um...vell..."

Bones saved him. He called over one of the nurses. "Clean him up and put him under the regenerator, would you? We need him ready in a few hours to keep this one..." He jabbed a finger at Jim. "...out of trouble tonight."

"But that's your job," Jim pouted.

"And I need all the help I can get. Chekov should come, too."

Chekov looked mildly panicked. "But Mr. Scott and I were going to--"

"I'm going to stop you right there," Jim interrupted. "Technically I need to give you some sort of disciplinary action or a warning for breaking my lieutenant's nose, so you get to come down to the planet with us. Whatever you and Scotty are scheming can wait until tomorrow."

--

The entire bridge crew plus Bones and a couple of security guards (standard procedure) came down to the Andorian villa. There were only about thirty people present, just a small affair. Nothing to cause a fuss over.

So of course it was a trap.

Nobody noticed at first. One of the first dishes that was offered was a meat platter, which annoyed Jim. Mostly it was because Spock was sitting right next to him and was a vegetarian, as was Uhura, who'd adopted a few Vulcan customs. But also because Bones gave him the no-go on it due to his allergies and it smelled sooooo good. Given the way everyone else was scarfing it down, it tasted as good as it smelled.

"Bones, you okay?" Jim asked after the starter course had been taken away. Bones' plate had been barely touched.

"Stomach's being an ass," he grumbled. "Think I caught something from one of my patients. I already zapped myself with a hypo, so it shouldn't evolve into anything serious."

Jim hummed in sympathy as the next course was brought out.

Two courses later, one of the Andorian officials said, "I heard Lieutenant Sulu had an interest in botany. I have a rather expansive garden and green house, if you'd like a tour, Lieutenant? We have some time until dessert."

Sulu had been slouching a little in his seat, but he immediately brightened. "Sounds great!"

"Would you mind if I joined, sir?" Chekov asked. "I could do with a walk before dessert."

The Andorian nodded his consent, and the three got up. As Chekov walked past Jim's seat, he felt something fall in his lap.

Jim looked down and saw Chekov's napkin folded into fourths. Frowning, he opened it to see Chekov's messy handwriting.

They've locked the doors. It's a trap.

"Shit," Jim breathed. He looked up and saw that Chekov was right: sometime during dinner, they'd closed the doors around the room, and now they were dividing the crew.

Jim passed the napkin onto Spock beneath the table before he stood. "If you'll excuse me, Your Excellency, I need to make a call to the ship."

"Is something wrong?" the Andorian noble asked.

Jim shook his head. "No, not at all. Just some ship's business I need to check in on. Is there a private room or a balcony...?"

The Andorian motioned to an open balcony across the dining hall. Jim excused himself and did a head count. In the room there were the five Starfleet officers, including himself and Lieutenant Giotto, and four security guards, against five Andorian nobles and eight security. Shouldn't be too bad...

Until Jim looked down the table and noticed all the security personnel could barely keep their heads off the table. Come to think of it, Sulu had looked pretty drowsy, too, and maybe Chekov...

Shit. They'd been drugged.

But why wasn't Jim affected? He thought about it on the way to the balcony. Bones, Uhura, and Spock looked fine, too. So why...?

Oh. The meat. The meat starter course that Jim couldn't eat because of his allergies, Bones wouldn't eat because of his stomach and Spock and Uhura wouldn't eat because they were vegetarians.

Jim pulled out his communicator as soon as he was on the balcony. "Kirk to Enterprise."

"Enterprise here. Go ahead, captain."

"I need you to send emergency security to our location, now. This is a trap, the Andorians are hostiles," Jim said.

"Yessir. I see Ensign Chekov and Lt. Sulu are separate from your location. What about them?"

Jim cursed. "I don't know their situation, so hold off on them for now."

"Yessir. Sending security now."

"Hey, let me go!" Uhura ordered.

Jim whipped around to see her elbow an Andorian who was grabbing her. Others were trying to subdue Spock and Bones. All of the Enterprise security were unconscious.

Before Jim could go help, three Andorian guards blocked his path. "Captain. Please come with us."

Jim raised his fists.

A mass of white light appeared in the room as backup arrived. Twenty Starfleet security guards appeared with weapons drawn. Outnumbered, the Andorians quickly surrendered.

Jim grabbed the Andorian noble by the shirt. "Where's Chekov and Sulu?"

"Probably detained by now," he said smugly. "There were guards waiting in the gardens. I advise you to be nice, if you don't want anything to happen to them."

Jim dropped him and ordered half of the security to come with him. "Bones?" he asked.

"They're fine," Bones said, looking up from his examination of the unconscious guards. "Beam them up to sickbay. I'll come with you, Jim."

Uhura also joined them, since she was fluent in Andorian and could read the signs to direct them. Spock stayed to take care of the arrested Andorians.

Once they got to the gardens, all they had to do was follow the trail of bodies.

"Jesus Christ," one of the guards swore.

Jim couldn't find it in himself to be surprised, or sympathetic. The three Andorians lying in puddles of blood had tried to hurt his crew, and had been stupid enough to go after Chekov.

One had a throwing knife in his eye, another had one in the neck, and the other had two in the torso.

Jim frowned. Chekov was a crack shot with those things, but that last corpse had a knife in his shoulder, a non-lethal hit.

The kid might be good, and so was Sulu, but if he was drugged...

"Collect the knives," Jim ordered. "Chekov'll want them back."

The guards all looked confused, but one of them obeyed. The rest went deeper into the gardens.

They found three more bodies: one had his neck snapped (probably by Sulu), one had been stabbed repeatedly (probably Chekov) and one had two throwing knives in their chest (definitely Chekov).

"That's all of his kunai knives," Uhura said. She'd gathered all of them in a fist. "Do you know if he brought any others?"

Jim shook his head. "No idea." He shouted: "Chekov! Sulu!"

There was a startled gasp and a shout. They rushed forward, following the noise.

It was a fountain in the center of the garden. Sulu was propped against it, passed out. Chekov was standing next to him, over an Andorian corpse with a slit throat. He had blood up to his elbow and was holding the little two-inch camping knife Uhura had given him.

He blinked blearily at Jim. "I think there was something in the food," he slurred.

"They drugged the appetizer with a slow-acting sedative," Bones explained, walking around the body and gently tugging Chekov away. The guards went to collect Sulu while Jim and Uhura stayed with Bones. "I'm surprised you're still standing. With your body weight, you should be out like a light."

"Didn't like the way it tasted," Chekov said, swaying a little. He locked his legs and shook his head. "I only had a couple of bites, before I started to feel funny. Then they locked the doors..."

"Thanks for the hint," Jim said.

Bones scanned Chekov with a tricorder and nodded. "Yeah, you only got a minor dose. You'll probably pass out in half an hour, but until then you're basically intoxicated."

Chekov's knife clattered to the ground.

"In-intoxicated?" he echoed, his eyes wide and terrified.

Bones frowned. "Yeah. Drunk. It's not like you'll get in trouble for it, since you were drugged."

Chekov was shaking his head, looking at the ground and mumbling. "Nyet nyet nyet, I can't be drunk, I can't, I von't..."

Jim stepped forward. "Hey, Pavel, it's okay--"

"Stay away!" he ordered, jerking back. He staggered, but managed to stay on his feet. He sounded completely panicked, more than Jim had ever heard.

A couple of the security guards came over, hands on their phasers. Jim sent them away with a sharp wave and a stern look.

"Oh..." Uhura said in realization. She set Chekov's knives on the ground before slowly approaching him. "Pavel, are you still armed?"

He nodded and pulled out the Vulcan dagger with fumbling fingers.

"Give it to me."

Chekov surrendered it without a word. Uhura tossed it on top of the others. "Anything else?"

He pulled the Swiss out of his pocket and handed it over. It got the same treatment. "The bowie knife?" Uhura asked.

Chekov shook his head. "Too big. Didn't think I'd need it. That was stupid..."

"No, no it wasn't. You saved Sulu and yourself with what you had. You did that. That would never have even occurred to Andrei."

Oh. Oh, shit. *That's* why Pavel was freaking out.

Pavel was shaking his head again. "Nyet, nyet, I can't. It is staticly--statistically more likely that I'll hurt someone like this and--"

Uhura grabbed his face and forced his head up. "Pavel. You are not Andrei. You are nothing like him. Do you understand me?"

He was about two seconds away from crying, and still trying to shake his head. Jim couldn't deal with this, but he didn't turn away.

"And say you're right," Uhura continued. "Say you did try to take a swing at me, or Jim or McCoy. Do you see the dozen security guards behind us? They all have phasers and training. You are unarmed and drugged. If something like that happened, they'd have you tackled to the ground and thrown in the brig before you could say 'warp theory.' There's no possible way you could do any serious damage to any of us."

Pavel paused. Jim could see him slowly consider that, going over all the various angles and scenarios of a fight. Sober, he could do it in less than a second. As it was, it took almost a full minute before Pavel sagged in relief.

Uhura took his arms and began peeling off the two sheaths for his throwing knives and dagger. "Let's get you to sickbay, make sure there aren't any nasty surprises from that sedative, okay? I'll hang onto your knives until you want them back."

Pavel nodded. "Da...thank you."

--

Nyota had to look up how to properly care for and clean the knives, because she didn't want to find out that regular soap would cause rust, or something ridiculous like that. Spock helped her, and they both sat on her bed as they worked in silence.

She looked at the Vulcan dagger in his hands, polished to a shine. "Why did you give him that?" she asked out of the blue. "It's a Vulcan artifact, almost invaluable these days."

Spock raised an eyebrow at her before looking back at the blade. "When Vulcans were a warrior race, youths had to prove themselves in battle before receiving their own weapons: a spear, a sword, and a dagger. As technology became more advanced, the traditional weapons became symbols of adulthood, often used in ceremonies. To receive it, a youth had to portray courage, strength, and honor. I would say that Ensign Chekov has shown plenty of those capabilities."

Nyota smiled. "Definitely."

Spock hesitated, then added: "I also failed to see why I should spend a fair amount of money on a weapon when I had an extensive collection to draw upon."

She grinned. "So, you're a cheapskate."

"I prefer the term thrifty."

"Penny pincher," Nyota said. "Scrooge. Miser."

Spock ignored her, but she could see him fighting a smile.

--

Pavel woke in Medical with a headache that was half a step down from full-blown migraine.

"Rise and shine, sweetheart," Hikaru said far too cheerfully. He was sitting on the chair next to Chekov, reading a PADD. That was *not fair*. He'd been drugged more heavily than Pavel, he should've been even more miserable than Pavel. "How's your first hangover treating you?"

Pavel swallowed. "Did I hurt anyone?"

Hikaru softened. "Only the bad guys. Uhura dropped these off a few hours ago." He tapped the table next to Pavel's bed. His knives were in their appropriate sheaths and lined up like dancers, polished to a shine. "I'll go get McCoy, so he can get you something for that headache, and then we have the rest of the day off."

Pavel's head was pounding so hard he didn't have it in him to argue.

Hikaru nudged Pavel's shoulder. "Hey. Thanks for looking out for me."

Pavel managed a smile. "Thanks for the knives."

"Oh, yeah, about that. Giotto wants you to do a demonstration or something for the ship, or at least play the bad guy so they can do a refresher on fighting armed combatants..."

Pavel groaned and pulled his pillow over his head.

When Terrorists Tried to Blow Up the Enterprise and Kill Joanna McCoy

Chapter Notes

Not sure how I feel about this chapter. I'm mostly excited about the next chapter (which will be titled "Andrei Chekov.")

Joanna McCoy bounced on the balls of her feet, watching The Enterprise dock at the starbase. Her mother stood a little ways behind her, quiet in that sullen sort of way she always got whenever she had to deal with her ex.

It took forever for the crew to disembark. She scanned every face attached to the blue uniforms until...

"Daddy!" she squealed, rushing forward and grabbing him in a hug.

He laughed and squeezed her back. "Baby girl! Oh, I missed you so much!" He kissed her forehead and pushed her back just enough so he could get a good look at her. He made a face. "What did I say about growing any taller?"

Joanna giggled. "Sorry, not sorry."

"Leonard," Jocelyn said in a chilling voice.

Leonard sighed and gave Joanna an annoyed look. "Excuse me, Miss Joanna, but I've been summoned."

Joanna stepped back, resigned to witnessing another fight between her parents. But instead, Jocelyn just gave Leonard Joanna's overnight bag and said, "I'm taking her back home on Monday. And your check's due on the First, whether it's a weekend or not."

"Yes, ma'am," Leonard said, hoisting the bag over his shoulder.

Jocelyn warmed considerably when she turned to Joanna and kissed her forehead. "Have a great time, sweetie."

"Bye, Mom," Joanna said, giving her a quick hug before Jocelyn left, disappearing into the crowd in the starbase. Joanna grabbed Leonard's hand and pulled him along. "So, did you fight any aliens?"

"I'm a doctor, not a soldier," Leonard said. "I don't do any fighting."

"But did Jim? Or Spock? Or that knife-throwing guy you talked about, Checkers?"

"His name is Chekov, and they did do a little fighting. But, uh, if I told you that story your mother would eat me alive."

"Da-ad," Joanna complained. "I'm almost thirteen. I'm not a little girl anymore!"

"You will be my little girl until you're sixty-eight and every hair on your head is gray and your face is full of wrinkles and not a minute sooner," Leonard declared. He steered her into a different direction. "Let's get something to eat that isn't replicated sludge."

--

Of course the Admirals had to make Leonard go to a stupid meeting.

"I swear, I'm going to string 'em up by their heels and feed 'em to the horses on your granddaddy's barn," Leonard growled, marching down the hall. Joanna giggled. She didn't mind it so much; she'd brought her PADD, which had a bunch of books and video games and her homework, so she wouldn't be too bored. It was in her backpack, which also had a first aid kit. Her dad always made her carry one.

Out in the hall, they ran into a man with curly hair and a red uniform. Leonard blinked. "Chekov! What're you doing here? I thought this was Lieutenant Commanders and up."

"It is, Doctor," Chekov said with a thick Russian accent. "But I had to ask Mr. Scott something. He's asked me to go check on something in Engineering."

"Engineering?" Joanna asked. "I thought you were the navigator."

Chekov blinked at her, then smiled. "You must be Joanna."

"Uh-huh! Joanna McCoy, nice to meet you." She held out her hand, because her parents taught her good manners, thank you very much.

Mr. Chekov shook it. "Pawel Chekov. I am the navigator, but I sometimes work in Engineering, too."

"Cool! I wanna be an engineer when I grow up! That or a linguist, 'cause I really like languages. Or maybe an architect. Or all three, 'cause why not?"

"Vell..." Chekov looked between her and Leonard. "You're both here for that meeting with the Admiral?"

"Yeah, and it'd better be a short one," Leonard grumbled. "Don't want Joanna waiting around too long like a lost puppy."

"Vell, why don't I take her with me to Enterprise?" Chekov suggested. "Give her the tour?"

Joanna brightened at the thought. She looked up at Leonard. "Can I, Daddy? Can I? Can I? Can I?"

Leonard rolled his eyes, but he was doing that twitchy half-smile thing that told her he wasn't actually angry. "All right, all right. Just don't break Mr. Chekov here. We need him in working order so he doesn't fly us into a meteor."

"I won't!" Joanna promised, bouncing over to Chekov. He wasn't that much taller than her, which was weird in this forest of adults.

"I'll com you after we're done," Leonard told Chekov. "It'll probably take a while."

Chekov waved it away. "It's fine. If we finish first, we'll just go to the café."

"How much coffee have you had today?"

"That's irrelevant."

"Uh-huh." Leonard pointed to both of them. "Be good."

"Yessir," Chekov said the same time Joanna promised, "We will!"

--

"I didn't think it'd be so *big*," Joanna said, walking through the halls of the spaceship.

"Da, it has to carry hundreds of people for five years, keeping them fed and busy. That takes a lot of space," Checkers said. Joanna had slipped earlier and called him that by accident, and he said it was fine and that she could call him Checkers. "And if something goes wrong, it has to have all the supplies ready for emergencies."

"How often do things go wrong?" Joanna asked nervously.

Checkers shook his head. "Not wery. We have red alerts maybe 5% of the time, and those are often false alarms."

So of course, something had to go wrong.

Joanna was dazzled by engineering. She recognized a couple of pieces of technology and could figure out a few others, but she had to ask Checkers about everything else. He didn't mind, answering all of her questions and explaining what everything was used for, and what space looked like during warp, and what the food tasted like. Leonard always said it tasted like paste, but Checkers said it was fine. Joanna would have to see for herself.

"This here is the varp core," Checkers said, and his voice got a little quieter.

"This is where Jim almost died, right?" Joanna asked. Her father didn't like to talk about it much, but she'd read the news.

Checkers paused, then nodded. "Almost died, da. Lucky for us, your father's a good doct--"

There was a noise, like someone dropping a screwdriver or kicking a wrench.

Joanna frowned. "I thought we were the only ones here."

Checkers was very still. "Ve're supposed to be." He pulled out his com. "Chekov to Starbase F."

"Frankfurt here. Go ahead."

"Vas anyone scheduled to come to Enterprise other than me and my guest?"

"Uh, no. You're the only souls on that ship."

"Then ve hawe an intruder. In Engineering, by the varp core."

"Roger that. Sending a security team now. Get out."

Checkers closed his com, put a hand on Joanna's shoulder and steered her to the door.

Which was blocked by three men.

Joanna swallowed, instinctively stepping back. They weren't dressed like Starfleet officers, and were only standing maybe four feet away. One of them was holding something that looked a lot like a...

"Is that a bomb?" Checkers asked, as if he was asking about the weather.

"Indeed it is," the man said, holding it up. "It's pretty bad on its own, but expose it to a bunch of radiation, and it's a hell of a fireworks display."

"Huh. Vell, unfortunately I already called security and they vill be doing a sveep and find that. So if you vant to aavoid jail time, you should start running, get a head start."

"They won't be looking in the dead center of the warp core." The bomb-holder tipped his head, then grinned. "You're Ensign Chekov, aren't you?"

Checkers' hand on Joanna's shoulder tightened. Otherwise, he didn't react.

"I've heard a lot about you. Youngest navigator in Starfleet, and one of the best fighters with an edge-weapon." His grin widened. "Except...you're working in Engineering today, so I'll bet you don't have your throwing knives with you."

Checkers didn't say anything.

"Lots of exposed wires and running electricity...not a good idea to strap a bunch of metal to your arms, huh?" The man shook his head. "That's a shame. Would've been great to see you in action."

One of the others stepped forward and pulled out a phaser.

Checkers moved so fast that Joanna blinked and missed it. He snatched the phaser out of the man's hand and elbowed him across the face. He pressed a button on the gun to power it

down and tossed it aside.

The other man pulled a phaser while his friend staggered back, blood gushing from his nose. The bomber laughed. "O-kay! I spoke too soon!" He set the bomb on a nearby table. "This is going to be fun."

Checkers studied the three of them, then looked back at Joanna. "Joanna, would you do me a favor? See that panel?"

He pointed to the control panel behind her, a block of metal and wires and controls that was four feet tall. Joanna nodded.

"I need you to go to the other side of that, sit down, close your eyes, and cower your ears, okay? Don't peek."

Joanna took two steps back, but didn't go any further. There were three of them and one of him. They were going to win and when they did...

"Joanna," Checkers said. He smiled. "It'll be all right. Trust me."

She gave a shaky nod and went to the control panel. Before she sat, she saw Checkers put a foot on a nearby table, pull up the sleeve of his pants, and draw a big bowie knife. The main bad guy grinned.

Joanna sat against the panel and covered her ears.

It didn't last very long. The sounds were muffled by her hands, but she still caught the odd scream and a gurgle. She cringed, pressing her hands tighter so she felt like she was crushing her skull.

The silence was even worse.

Joanna was just about to get the nerve to take a look, to see if Checkers was all right, when someone nudged her knee.

She yelped, opening her eyes.

It was Checkers. Red was splattered over his cheek and shirt, like paint. It was under his nails and in the cracks of his hands, like they'd been covered in it before he toweled them off.

"Let's get you back to your father, da?" Checkers asked, helping her stand.

Joanna turned to the door and saw a flash of more red, but Checkers covered her eyes before she could see more. "Nyet, don't look. Ve'll go around."

She kept her head down while Checkers kept himself between her and...the scene, his palm right by her face to keep her wandering eyes forward. He called security when they got into the hall to tell them what had happened, and to bring a coroner.

That's when Joanna noticed that some of the red was Checkers', from a large cut on his arm. "You're bleeding," she said, dropping her backpack and digging through it.

Checkers looked at the cut as if noticing it for the first time. "Huh. Guess I am."

She pulled out her first aid kit. Checkers was silent as he let her clean it up and wrap a bandage around it. The security guards arrived by the time she finished.

--

It turned out to be some terrorist group who hated aliens and Starfleet and wanted to blow it up, or something. Joanna didn't get the full details. Everything got kinda fuzzy after she'd fixed Checkers' arm.

Now she was sitting in a meeting room at the table, listen to her parents argue, again. Really, this was just an absolutely perfect day. Joanna was loving every minute of this. Oh, God, now she was sounding like her father, that was just *perfect*....

"I never should've trusted her with you!" Jocelyn screamed. "You keep saying how space is so dangerous, so why did you bring your daughter into it!"

"Don't you pin this one on me! I don't control the universe and how the hell was I supposed to know something like this would happen?"

"Well, maybe if your beloved captain made sure security did its damn job--"

"It's my fault."

All three of them jumped at the new voice. Joanna looked up to see Checkers standing in the doorway. He'd cleaned up and changed his shirt to gold, and looked straight at Jocelyn. "Dr. McCoy wanted his daughter with him when he went to the Admiral's meeting, but I insisted on taking Joanna. I thought she would enjoy the ship, so I gave her the tour. I shouldn't have taken her anywhere near the warp core."

Jocelyn rubbed her face, smearing her already wrecked makeup. "We don't blame you, Mr. Chekov. In fact, we're so grateful to you for stepping up the way you did. I just..."

"If it's any consolation, Captain Kirk did push Admiral Barron for increased security measures, and she agreed," Checkers said hesitantly.

"That's good to hear." Jocelyn looked between Joanna and Leonard. "I want to take Joanna home."

"We agreed to the full weekend," Leonard bit out.

"That was before she was attacked--"

"I wanna stay with Dad," Joanna said.

Both parents looked at her in surprise, like it was a shock that she was able to speak. Maybe it was a bit of a surprise; she hadn't said much of anything since the attack.

Jocelyn hesitated, then sighed. "Fine. But I'm staying on the base."

"You're a grown woman, Joc. You go right ahead." Leonard went to Joanna and put a hand on her shoulder, nudging her up. "Come on, let's go to bed. I don't know about you, but I'm pooped."

Joanna followed her father out of the room, but broke away to give Checkers a hug. He stiffened, startled, but quickly returned it. "Stay out of trouble, da?"

"I will," she said, before letting him go. "95% of the time."

Andrei Chekov

The first big clue that something was wrong was when Chekov called in sick.

Leonard scowled at the navigator's chair, which was occupied by someone who was definitely not a petit teenage Russian. "What do you mean he's sick?" he snapped at Jim. "That kid could have both arms missing and a broken leg and he'd still show up to work."

"I don't know," Jim confessed. "Uhura couldn't get anything out of him, either. Would you mind...?"

"Yeah, yeah, I'm on it," Leonard grumbled, walking off the bridge. He grabbed his medkit from Medical, considered prepping a surgery team but decided against it, and went to Chekov's room.

"Kid?" Leonard asked, knocking on the door. "You alive in there?"

"Da," came the small answer.

"Wanna open up?"

There was a pause, then the door slid open.

The Styrofoam dummy was the first thing Leonard saw when he walked in. Half a dozen throwing knives were in its skull. A Vulcan dagger was in its neck. Its chest had been shredded and there was a two-inch camping knife in its lung. A bowie knife stuck out of its sternum. Even the goddamn Swiss army knife was shoved up its nose.

That was big clue #2.

Chekov was sitting at his desk, reading a PADD, looking cool as a cucumber. If it weren't for the throwing knife he was twirling around his fingers, Leonard would think there was absolutely nothing wrong.

"What'd the dummy do to you?" Leonard asked, hoping to take some of the edge off. Chekov just shrugged, not looking up from the PADD.

Leonard sighed and set his med kit on the coffee table in front of the couch. He didn't need it. Even though Chekov hadn't changed out of his sleepwear and his hair was a mess, he obviously wasn't physically ill. No flush in his cheeks, no shivers, no sniffing nose, nothing.

So because Leonard was never one to beat around the bush, he asked, "What's going on, kid?"

Chekov finally looked up. He gave Leonard a blank look before handing him the PADD.

Leonard took it and started reading. It was from the Butyrka Correctional Facility. *We wish to inform you that Andrei Chekov will be released on Stardate 2702.4 on probation...*

Leonard didn't get any further. He dropped the PADD onto the desk and swore. "I thought he had a twelve-year sentence!"

"Good behavior," Chekov said, staring off into space. There was no inflection in his voice. No emotion. They might as well have been talking about the weather.

Leonard rubbed his eyes. He needed a drink. "How does probation in Russia work?"

The knife whipped around and between Chekov's fingers, so fast that it was a wonder he hadn't lost any digits. "He vill not be allowed to leawe the district, carry a phaser or projectile veapon, or make international purchases for six years after his release date, so six years, two weeks, and three days. He vill hawe to go to veekly appointments vith a probation officer. Should he break any of these or commit any other crimes, ewen just a minor offense, he'll be returned to prison."

Leonard nodded. "Okay, then." He pulled up a chair and sat a couple feet away from Chekov. "Are you still afraid of him?"

Chekov paused, the knife suspended between his middle and index fingers. He flipped it so he was gripping the handle and crossed his arms on the table. "I shouldn't be."

"Why not?"

Chekov gave a hollow laugh. "Nero, Khan, Marcus, all of the alien attacks ve've had and the avay missions that go bad...how does Andrei ewen raise a candle to that?"

Leonard gave a grim smile. "Well, when you're facing nasty shit like that out here, you have the support of the crew behind you. You're facing it as an adult who's trained to deal with crisis situations and with eight different knives shoved up your sleeves. But when it was Andrei, you were dealing with him alone, and as a kid. That's going to leave a mark."

Chekov didn't say anything for a long moment. Then, "I thought anyone vho vas under 34 vas a kid."

Leonard snorted. "I was using legal jargon there, kid." When he was (pretty) sure that he wouldn't get stabbed, he reached out and put his hand on Chekov's arm. Chekov leaned into the touch. Leonard squeezed his arm. "You're not alone anymore, and you've got the whole crew behind you. That shit you grew up with is not going to happen again. Got it?"

Chekov nodded.

--

For a while, it was okay. The rest of the bridge crew found out, one by one. Leonard thought it was best that Chekov tell them on his own terms. Uhura learned it after a poker night when she privately asked Chekov what was wrong, and probably Gaila, too, since she and Chekov were thick as thieves. Sulu got it most likely during a sparring session, which half of the crew watched as their form of evening entertainment because Chekov could actually beat the fencing master from time to time. Spock, Leonard assumed, was told in the middle of one of

their science-talks where the doctor only understood every other word. And somewhere in the middle of that, Jim was told and spent that evening in Leonard's room, drinking scotch and trying to find a legal way to shove Andrei back in prison for another twenty years, and was even more pissed when he couldn't.

But nothing actually changed. There was still weekly poker nights where Gaila flirted and Chekov stole all of Leonard's money; genius or not, Leonard swore he had to cheat at least once a game. There were still bad jokes fired by Jim that made Chekov giggle and Uhura roll her eyes. There were still long science tangents explained in an excited Russian voice that only Spock and sometimes Scotty understood completely. There were still away missions that turned to shit storms and Leonard had to patch everyone up, then yell at them when they swore that "no, really, doctor, I'm fine, I can work with a broken leg."

Joanna called him every week for at least an hour, and she called "Checkers" every other week, and Leonard fretted about it because he was pretty sure that his baby girl had a crush on Chekov. Leonard had to be talked out of giving the boy the shovel talk by Jim, Uhura, and Gaila who assured him that, no, Chekov was not interested in Joanna and probably didn't even think she was interested in him, that they were six years apart anyway, and even if they were interested it's not like they could do anything about it for the next three years due to one of them being on Earth and the other in deep space, and if they did end up together after the mission then "Who's going to be better for her than Pavel? He's smart, he's respectful, he saved her damn life...Seriously, Bones, he's fucking *ideal*," at which point Leonard said that his baby girl wasn't dating anyone on Enterprise because everyone on Enterprise was a goddamn idiot with no self-preservation skills, to which Jim said...

Anyway, point being: life went on.

Then Fate, the cruel bitch, dropped the second bombshell.

--

Jim glared at the PADD in his hands. "What the hell do they mean he's AWOL?"

They were in his quarters. Jim was at his desk. Chekov was sitting on the sofa, running his thumb over the blade of his dagger. Sulu was standing near the door like a sentinel. Jim wasn't sure if he'd dragged Chekov here to report this and/or was just here for emotional support, but he appreciated it.

"He hasn't checked in with his probation officer in two weeks," Chekov said levelly. "He hasn't been at work or been seen at his house in the same amount of time. His credit hasn't been used, so he's paying with an unknown account that they can't track."

"He can't get a passport," Jim said. "He had to give it up, didn't he?"

"I managed to illegally get a passport when I was twelve," Chekov pointed out.

"Point." Jim dropped the PADD on his desk and sighed. "Well...shit."

"How public are Enterprise's missions?" Sulu asked.

"Very. The details are usually blurry, especially if it's a sensitive mission. But anyone can figure out where any Federation flagship is with a little bit of digging," Jim said, and he hated to say it because he knew exactly what picture they were painting. There was only one reason why Andrei Chekov would break probation, and it was sitting on Jim's sofa.

"No one can get on the ship without being a member of Starfleet or officially being invited by senior staff," Chekov said. "The possible exception would be during a re-stock, when workers reload the supply decks. But he wouldn't necessarily have to get on the ship, because I'm not on the ship twenty-four/seven. We stop at planets and starbases that don't have nearly the restrictions Starfleet does. He could go to any one of them."

Jim nodded. "Right, okay. Then we'll need to tell whatever security is at hand what to look for when we touch down."

Chekov didn't look happy, but he didn't protest.

Jim hesitated, then added, "We'll need to give this to Lt. Giotto, since he's the head of security."

Chekov sighed. "I know."

"Would you prefer to do it yourself?"

He shook his head. "Nyet. This is ship's business."

"Okay, then." Jim stood. "Thanks for telling me. We'll take care of this."

A ghost of a smile reached Chekov's face. "I know you will."

--

Giotto looked somewhere between sick and furious when Jim briefed him on the situation. It turned into a vicious smile when he read Andrei Chekov's description and his, ah, unique scar tissue. It was a pretty standard reaction.

"Well, I can coordinate with security whenever we touch down, tell them there's a wanted felon running around," Giotto said. "But honestly, sir, there's not much that we can do that Pavel doesn't already do himself."

"I want you to make it as hard as humanely possible for this asshole to get within a hundred meters of Chekov," Jim said.

Giotto thought for a minute. "He's only an ensign. I can probably loan my rank to him, get him access to certain areas that a civilian wouldn't even dream of going into."

"Perfect. Do it."

--

Chekov went to Spock every other night, the nightmares were so bad.

Spock didn't mind. He had actually been surprised that this outcome hadn't happened when Andrei had been released. He supposed that knowing for a fact where the man was and what he was doing made for much easier nights than not knowing at all.

He found that if Chekov knew that Spock would be staying for a while, he slept deeper and longer. Spock himself was more relaxed and at ease when the ensign was in sight, given recent events. So he brought his work with him whenever Chekov asked for help, and stayed in the room until he woke up. It was only logical.

--

Hikaru may or may not have started taking his sword with him everywhere he went.

He knew for a fact that Pavel didn't go anywhere unless he was fully armed these days. That meant all six kunai knives, the dagger, the bowie, the two-incher, and the Swiss, all of them hidden up sleeves and in pockets. So it probably wouldn't come as much of a surprise to anyone if they found out someone else did it, too.

And it's not like it was a big deal. The thing was collapsible and fit in his pocket, so it wasn't as if he was running around the ship swinging a katana around at anyone who looked at him funny. It was just nice knowing that it was there.

So he may or may not have started carrying it. Everywhere. All the time. Maybe. But that's classified.

--

The first time they stopped at a starbase, everyone was tense. Pavel stayed in as many restricted areas that Giotto was able to get him into for as long as possible, and when he wasn't there he was always with somebody, either Gaila or one of the bridge crew, and always out in public.

Nothing happened the first time. Or the second.

But they say the third time's the charm.

--

Leonard yawned into his fist while he finished doing inventory. The starbase they were on was low on doctors, so Leonard had found himself picking up a couple of shifts when he should have been relaxing and enjoying his time off. (See? He knew Jim was contagious.)

He was alone in the guest office, finishing up the paperwork. There were a couple of nurses tending to the overnight patients and another doctor outside. They were mere shadows in the dim light.

Leonard checked the time. Jim would be here in a few minutes to pick him up and take the crew out for dinner. Chekov's twentieth birthday had been a few weeks ago and Uhura's twenty-eighth was next week, so they were going out to celebrate both before Enterprise left tomorrow afternoon. And of course Jim had chosen a place that had an open mic because he

was still trying to get Chekov to sing in public and convince him that he was, in fact, really good at it. Chekov still denied the last part and had turned the first part into something of a game, which was a bad idea because if there was one thing Jim couldn't resist it was a challenge...

A knock on the door pulled Leonard from his thoughts. He stretched his shoulders. "Yeah, come in."

The broad-shouldered, six-foot-tall Russian was definitely not Jim.

Completely awake now, Leonard was immediately on high alert. He'd seen pictures of Andrei Chekov before, and there were the last tendrils of Pavel's memories still in his head as a parting gift from Sagacita, so he knew what the man looked like. And the scar that stretched from the right of his mouth almost to his ear, making him look like he was always half-smiling, was unmistakable. It was almost red against his pale skin.

"Get out before I call security," Leonard ordered.

Andrei held up his hands. "Please, doctor," he said, and boy, Leonard thought Pavel's accent was thick; he could barely understand a word from this man. "I just want to find my son."

"You're not going to. Out."

Andrei sighed, and sat on the chair across from Leonard. "I need to apologize to him. I haven't seen my son in seven years. I just want to see him and tell him I'm sorry."

"Then why didn't you contact him before breaking probation?"

"I don't have his contact information."

"Bullshit."

"I don't," he insisted. "I don't have his email or com number or..."

"So instead of asking Starfleet for any of this information, you decide to break your parole and hunt him down across the galaxy?" Leonard said, unimpressed. "Or did Starfleet refuse to give you that info because of your history?" He wouldn't be surprised if Pike had expressly put this guy on the no-call list. The Admiral had been almost as protective of Pavel as the Enterprise crew was now.

Andrei shrugged. "One does crazy things for family. You understand, Dr. McCoy, you have a child. A lovely daughter, I heard."

Oh, he did *not* just say that...

"I simply wish to make things right between me and my son," Andrei continued. "I need to apologize for what I did to Vadim."

Leonard paused, and leaned forward a little. "For what you did to Vadim?"

Andrei nodded. "It was unforgivable, I know, but I need to at least try to make amends."

"Oh, I agree," Leonard said, standing. "What you did to Vadim is unforgivable. But even more unforgivable is what you did to Pavel."

Andrei shrugged again. "I may not have been the best father, I admit, but it's in the past now. He's a grown man."

"That is a sorry excuse for the twelve times he had to get treated for broken ribs," Leonard growled, coming around the desk. "Or the four times he got treated for a dislocated shoulder. Three times for a broken leg. Twice for a cracked skull. Three times for a broken collarbone. Two broken fingers. Severe third-degree burns on his hand. Fourteen concussions. And those are the only times that got recorded. Sprained wrists and ankles don't need doctors to treat, and neither do bruises or black eyes. And don't try to tell me that he fell out of a tree or ran into a door or whatever garbage they believed in your village, that shit's not gonna fly here." Leonard leaned over so their faces were inches apart. "You are not going anywhere near that boy until you are six feet under. Now get. Out."

Andrei did not get out.

Andrei surged forward, grabbed Leonard by the shirt, and slammed him against the wall. All the breath left Leonard's lungs in a whoosh.

"You do not get to judge me," Andrei spat. "You think you're better than me?! Why? Because you have a piece of paper to hang in your office and fly around in a glorified boat. And I'm the bad guy, because I drink and try to raise my son with a firm hand?"

"Speaking as a father: hell yes," Leonard snapped.

Andrei pulled him forward and slammed him back against the wall. Leonard's brain rattled around in his skull. He was going to get a concussion out of this.

"I won't hesitate to kill you," Andrei threatened. "I owned a butcher shop for decades, I know how to cut meat. You tell me where my son is or I will gut you."

Leonard glared at him, keeping his mouth shut. He wanted to gag, because Andrei was sweating all over him and his breath smelled like piss and...

Wait, what?

Leonard took a second look. He grinned, and started laughing.

Andrei shook him. "What the fuck is so funny?"

"Your kidneys are failing," Leonard chuckled. "Your breath smells like urine, you're pale, your eyes are puffy, and you're tiring easily. Wouldn't be surprised if you had muscle cramps in your legs, no appetite, and regular bouts of nausea. One or both of your kidneys are calling it quits. Considering the alcoholism, it's probably part of a bigger problem. How's your liver doing?"

When Andrei didn't say anything, Leonard continued: "That's what this is about, isn't it? Pavel's allergic to modern kidney transplants, and so are you, so you've gotta do it old-school. You don't have any other next of kin, or if you do they're not a match. You could wait for a random donor, but that's an awful long list. Pavel's your best chance. You don't want to make amends. You want to put off kicking the bucket and going to hell."

Andrei met Leonard's grin with a glare, then punched him.

And shit, that *hurt*. Leonard had been in his fair share of bar fights, but this man packed a punch. He found himself on the floor, blood and drool leaking out of his mouth.

There was a crunch and a burst of pain as his ribs met the wrong end of Andrei's boot. Leonard coughed and curled up, trying to protect his head and chest. Andrei hauled him to his feet and punched him in the gut.

With the blood roaring in Leonard's ears, he didn't hear the door open.

"*BONES!*"

Andrei was yanked off of Leonard and he slumped to the floor. He could hear a fight going on, but his head was fuzzy and it took a minute for his eyes to work right. When they did, he saw Jim and Andrei destroy his guest office in their brawl.

Leonard slid over to the inventory shelves and dug through hypos until he found a sedative. He pulled himself to his feet as Andrei managed to get Jim against the wall and wrap his hands around his throat.

Leonard jabbed the sedative in Andrei neck. He grunted, and then dropped to the floor.

--

Pavel was the last to arrive at the detention center. He'd been on the other side of the starbase with Uhura.

Jim and Bones had stayed in Medical just long enough to tape up the broken bones and wipe the blood off before following Giotto and the starbase security, who were hauling off Andrei just as he'd started coming around. Jim had called Sulu and Spock while he was at it to cancel their dinner plans and wasn't at all surprised to find them already at the detention center when he and Bones arrived.

Andrei had his hands cuffed to the table in an interrogation room. The south wall of the room was entirely two-way glass. Sulu was glaring at Andrei through the window while Jim and Bones gave their statements. Pavel and Uhura showed up soon after.

When Pavel saw the black eye on Bones and the bruises around Jim's neck, he shut down. All emotions were wiped clean from his face.

"Your old man hits like a freight train," Bones grumbled. "How the hell are you not brain-damaged?"

Pavel gave a tight smile. "As you've said many times, doctor, I have a thick skull."

"Yeah, now I know why."

Jim jabbed him in the (unbroken) ribs. Bones gave him an annoyed glare.

Pavel opened his mouth, but Bones beat him to it: "The next words out of your mouth had better not be an apology."

Pavel closed his mouth.

"Told you you didn't need to apologize," Uhura said.

Giotto came into the room and cleared his throat. "Well sirs, ma'am, they'll be shipping him back to Russia tomorrow."

"He's gonna be charged, right?" Jim asked, because if this asshole got away...

"Oh, absolutely. Parole violation and assault of two Starfleet officers, not to mention the fraud and bribery he did to get here. He'll be out for at least ten years, unless you want to offer a deal."

"No deal," Bones growled.

Jim knew that wasn't because of the beating. He'd overheard Bones giving his statement; if you threatened Joanna, no matter how vaguely, all bets were off. Jim nodded his approval. "No deal."

"Yessir." Giotto hesitated, then turned to Pavel. "He's asking to see you."

Everyone looked at Pavel. Pavel looked at Andrei, his face still blank.

Sulu spoke up: "You don't have to--"

Uhura cut him off by raising her hand. Jim breathed a quiet sigh of relief. If she was telling him to shut up, it meant Pavel already knew he had control. He didn't *have* to do anything, and he knew it.

Jim wasn't as surprised as Sulu appeared to be when Pavel walked up to the glass and went into the room.

All of the officers immediately went to the glass. Jim didn't have it in him to feel guilty or stupid for eavesdropping, mostly because Spock was also doing it. Normally, he would gloat or tease him for it, but not today.

Pavel stood just inside the door as it closed behind him. His hands were behind his back, at parade rest.

He and Andrei stared at each other.

Jim liked to think Andrei was shocked, even if his face was as perfectly blank as his son's. Pavel wasn't twelve anymore. He was twenty. He was still short and slim, but held himself tall and proud without an ounce of fear. The command gold Starfleet uniform also helped.

"Your doctor fights like a bitch," Andrei finally said. He was speaking Russian, but the universal translator was on.

Pavel didn't say anything.

"I suppose they'll send me back to prison now," Andrei sighed. "There are some really shitty doctors in there. I guess they've already told you my kidneys are failing."

Jim winced. They hadn't told him, and that was really stupid.

But Pavel still didn't react.

"Doctors say if I don't get a new one in the next couple of months, I'll be dead," Andrei said flatly. "That's why I came here. I came to ask you for help."

Pavel didn't say anything.

Andrei glared at him. "Are you listening to me? I just told you I'm dying!"

Pavel didn't say anything.

"Is that what this is, then? Hm? You want your father to die? Are you that kind of a man?"

Jim held his breath as Pavel finally moved.

He walked around the table until he was directly in front of Andrei. He reached out with two fingers and used them to turn Andrei's face to the side. Clearly confused, Andrei allowed the movement. Pavel ran his fingers along the scar on his face.

"I hope this still hurts."

Andrei's face twisted in rage at Pavel's words. He tried to lunge, but the cuffs that kept his hands to the table held firm. It didn't matter. Pavel was already out of reach. He didn't look back as he walked out.

--

The officers caught up with Pavel outside the building. His hands were behind his head as he breathed.

"Pavel?" Sulu asked hesitantly.

Pavel paused, then he lowered his hands and put them in his pockets. He turned and smiled at them. "Do ve still vant to go to dinner, or call it day?"

The entire group relaxed. Jim grinned as he put his arm around Pavel's shoulders and tugged him away from the detention center. "I know a place that offers twenty percent off if you participate in open mic."

"Then maybe you should sing the Federation theme song," Pavel said.

"Oh, God, don't encourage him," Bones grumbled.

"No, please do," Uhura said. "I day without Kirk humiliating himself is a day without sunshine."

They walked away from the detention center and didn't look back.

END

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