The Road to Delta Vega is Paved with Good Intentions
by Misscar

Summary

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Notes

Title: The Road to Delta Vega is Paved with Good Intentions
Series: You Don't Have To Be My Boyfriend
Sub-series: Trek Pod
This was originally published in November 2010.
This is a slightly revised version.

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K/S and Amanda friendly rewrite of Star Trek (2009)
Overall inspired by: 99 Problems by Jay-Z

I suggest listening to the song (preferably the clean version) because I use the overall theme and the storytelling style but not specific lyrics.

"If you're having girl problems I feel bad for you son
I got 99 problems but a bitch ain't one"

"Foes that wanna make sure my casket's closed"
Other songs will be used later for specific chapters.

Thank you to everybody who read or gave kudos for Ms. Brightside. For this story, I suggest re-watching the film. I'm going to be doing a few scene rewrites but most of it will be insertion scenes. Anything that conflicts with canon, go with my interpretation.

Warning: Character Death but not Amanda. You may want to throw cyber tomatoes at me after this chapter, but that is perfectly OK. This death is important to the plot later on.
I Got 99 Problems, but Spock is Not One

The first thing Jim realized when he woke up was he was not waking up next to his boyfriend in the comfort of their bed. He also couldn't smell the non replicated breakfast that Amanda said she would make Tuesday to celebrate their victory over that ass that was trying to derail Spock and his Starfleet career.

Actually, Jim wasn't waking up in a bed at all. It felt more like a chair from a ship than an actual bed. Maybe, he finally talked Spock into having sex in the simulation lab. He was getting really good at talking Spock into doing stuff. His mind was just clear enough for him to realize he didn't feel his usual soreness after extreme sex. All activities with Spock were extreme. Jim loved it.

His mind felt cloudy, like he was just coming off of something. Jim assumed he had been drugged again. It felt like the same sedative that his so-called friend gave him once they were in the medical bay of the Enterprise earlier after the stunt with the vaccine. He shouldn't be surprise, Jim is convinced that Bones gets off on shooting him up with stuff.

At this point, Jim was expecting to wake up in sickbay again. As he opened his eyes, he became aware that he was in what appeared to be an actual escape pod. If it wasn't for the cold he was feeling, he would assume that he decided to take a quick nap in the most inappropriate place possible due to the sedative. It wouldn't be the first time.

The last thing Jim remembered clearly was getting into a fight with Spock on the bridge. It wasn't really a fight, more like one of their loud disagreements. His boyfriend was going into super Vulcan mode and was completely freaking out about his mom being in danger once they realize the next target for the big ship from the future was most likely earth.

Of course, Spock being Spock, no one else but he and maybe Nyota saw this. Jim knew Spock and was more aware than anybody else that his lover was falling apart. Every time he touched Spock, he felt his pain. Actually sometimes Jim felt the pain without physical contact. As crazy as it sounded, it felt like he was in Spock's mind because he felt everything. Jim didn't really understand what was going on. Jim didn't have time to understand.

89 minutes earlier his Spock watched his entire planet be destroyed by some unbalanced Romulan who most likely came from the future, as crazy as it sounded. Jim held Spock's hand, not caring who saw it during the chaos. Jim actually felt everything going on in those horrible minutes, as if he was experiencing Spock's emotions first hand. Not that Spock really had time to comprehend the actual destruction; he was too busy dealing with his own personal tragedy.

The minutes after they realized that whatever was happening on Vulcan was a deadly trap, were unbelievably chaotic and hard to remember under the fog of whatever drugs were running through Jim's system. Jim remembers space jumping down to the planet, as Pike traveled to the other ship to essentially become a prisoner of war, even though Spock wasn't very happy about it. He also remembered sincerely regretting letting the guy in the red outfit keep all the charges. Apparently, the guy was too stupid to pull his parachute on time. Thanks to his stupidity, they didn't have the charges which meant it took a lot longer to deactivate whatever was preventing them from beaming in and out. Of course, they had to battle blood thirsty Romulans that wanted to kill them before they could do anything.

Maybe if he was faster or did something different his boyfriend's planet would still be there. Instead, his lover no longer had a home and was now a member of an endangered species. Spock was now only one of the 78,320 Vulcans that were saved from the planet before implosion. The only good
thing that Kirk was able to do was convince Spock to start the evacuations as soon as possible before they knew about the singularity.

Okay, maybe saving Sulu from dying was another good thing. That didn't make his boyfriend hurt less, so it didn't count.

Jim wishes he didn't try to talk Spock out of beaming back down to the planet to save the Elders. Maybe if he just let Spock go without intervening, things would have turned out differently. Jim understood why Spock risked his life to save his father. Despite being in pain from his injuries from the fight on the drill, Jim knew that the stuff about saving the council Elders was a complete lie. Even with their problematic relationship, Spock was going down there to save his father despite how illogical it was.

Yet the one thing Spock wanted to do was the one thing he couldn't. Regardless of being absolutely terrified for his boyfriend, Jim remembered the Russian kid with the unique accent muttering something about losing someone. Apparently, that person was Spock's father.

Spock looks so broken on the transporter pad for a split second as he realized that his father was not there. He looks so devastated that Jim went to him in spite of the fact that everyone was watching.

Jim understood what Spock was going through even without actually feeling his supposedly nonexistent emotions. Jim's relationship with his mom was problematic for dozens of reasons. She was not around much when he was a child. During the time she actually was in Iowa, she became Frank's punching bag just like him. She didn't get the courage to leave until after the car incident and Sam running away, never to return. The divorce was not enough to keep Frank away. That's the real reason why his mom dragged him on so many cultural exchanges and off planet jobs. She was running away from Frank.

When Jim was in college, she went back to him. Frank told her he changed. He told her he was clean and still loved her. Jim knew he was lying to her. Like a fool, she went back to him no matter what Jim did to stop it from happening. When Jim went to visit his mom during junior year, he noticed the bruises. He tried to get her into a shelter or off planet. She wouldn't leave this time. 13 months later, she was dead at Frank's hands.

He felt so guilty because he couldn't save her. The guilt was the worst part. Jim lost himself the year after her death in alcohol and bar fights. Jim wondered if Spock was feeling that same guilt now. Was Spock blaming himself for Sarek's death? Jim was blaming himself, anyway.

Jim could feel that same sadness again coming from Spock even if his boyfriend would not talk about it. That shouldn't surprise Jim. Spock was not the type of person to share. He's known Spock long enough to know his boyfriend is not going to cry or show any emotions at all. Maybe that was why it took almost eight months for the two to realize that they were in love with each other.

On the outside, Spock lost himself in the mission. Spock made sure everybody was seen by the medical staff including Jim. Jim personally would have preferred to stay with Spock as he entered this tragedy in his acting captain's log. Unfortunately, Jim was unable to fight both Spock and Bones on the matter. Spock filled out the necessary reports, as if his father didn't die less than an hour earlier in an act of genocide. Jim was so worried about this complete detachment that he actually asked Nyota to talk to Spock.

Any good that conversation did was completely undone once Spock realized that Nero was on course for the planet where his mother currently resided. She was the only parent that Spock still had. Spock was retreating more into himself by the minute. He acted as if he was perfectly OK as they discussed how to deal with the psychopath responsible for the murders of both their fathers and the
majority of the Vulcan population.

Jim remembered trying to talk Spock into going after the guy immediately. Spock didn't want to. As Jim was arguing the merits of not meeting up with the rest of the fleet, his wonderful boyfriend decided it was time to convince Jim to rest in front of the entire bridge crew.

Jim blames Dr. McCoy for that conversation. He must have told Spock about the severe allergic reaction Jim had earlier and how hurt Jim really was after the fight on the drilled. Okay, now Jim remembers why he's currently so groggy. His loving boyfriend gave him a sedative/pain reliever or rather allowed the good doctor to do it. They were definitely talking about that as soon as he got out of here, wherever the hell this was.

The answers to some of his questions came from a recorded voice that sounded a lot like a certain closet case former lover. Jim would recognize Cupcake's voice anywhere. The only reason why Cupcake was on Enterprise was because Spock couldn't come up with a justifiable reason to kick the guy off. Spock had a good reason now.

"If you're hearing this message that means you have regained consciousness after your boyfriend drugged you because you were driving him crazy. Also, if you're hearing this message you didn't die an impact when you crash landed on that ice ball. Instead of following acting Captain Spock's instructions to take you to sickbay, I decided to get a little revenge for not getting laid for the last 2 ½ years. You're an ass hole for your stunt with the STI notification." Jim knew that little stunt was going to come back to bite him on the ass, eventually. He just didn't think it would involve freezing said ass off on the real life version of the ice planet from one of his favorite old films.

"Maybe while you're stuck waiting for someone from the Delta Vega outpost to save you, I'll see if your boyfriend is up for a quickie for old time's sake. I guess you now know that Vulcans have no gag reflex." Cupcake said mockingly before he was replaced with the voice of a nice lady telling Jim to wait for help to arrive.

"I'm so going to kick his ass when I get back to the ship." Jim mumbled to himself as he opened the door to the pod. Jim's next thought was he was happy someone had had the foresight to put a coat in the escape pod. Now in something warmer, Jim started to scale the ice wall, as he fantasized about killing Cupcake and punishing Spock for the sedative thing by having fun with that lack of gag reflex. Maybe handcuffs could be involved.

67 hours earlier

Saturday 8:23 PM Earth Pacific standard time

Jim's breathing was just starting to return to normal after the earth shattering orgasm he just experienced about 10 minutes earlier. True to Spock's words from earlier in the morning, they did give Jim's dorm room a very proper farewell. Jim's desk even got some action. Unfortunately, Spock actually forced them to pack everything up first before they started on more pleasant activities.

He still could not believe that Spock actually reprogrammed the Kobayashi Maru so it was no longer completely unwinnable. Of course, in true Spock fashion it was still nearly unbeatable. Statistically speaking the students of Starfleet academy have a better chance of winning the Federation lottery then beating the Kobayashi Maru. Of course, thanks to his supremely awesome skills Jim was able to beat Spock's test. He is absolutely awesome and was rewarded with lots of orgasms. He actually got to top for the first round.
Yet Jim couldn't really celebrate beating the new version of the test because he was worried sort of, not that he worries. Given Spock's tendency to be extremely jealous, he really shouldn't be surprised that Andrew Johnson ended up on the floor. The guy was a manipulative bastard. He did everything in this power to hurt people and got away with it because his uncle was an admiral. There is nothing like good old nepotism to screw everything up.

"I think we need to leave now." Jim heard Spock's voice from the adjoining bathroom breaking him out of his musings. Maybe it was the feel of a washcloth against his backside a few moments later that brought him back down to earth.

"What?" Jim said in a dazed voice as Spock continued to clean off the signs of their earlier activities. Moments like these made Jim grateful that he had a private bathroom.

"Sorry, I misjudged. I thought you had already regained cognitive function after our last round of sexual activities. I must adjust my calculations in the future." That remark was so adorable that Jim just had to give Spock a tiny little kiss on the lips.

"I'm fine. I'm just thinking. I wonder what Johnson is going to do to you." The thought has been on Jim's mind since a member of Starfleet security told him exactly what his boyfriend did to Professor Johnson.

"Worrying is illogical. According to Starfleet guidelines, my actions would most likely result in me spending time with one of the many psychologists at Starfleet." Of course, Spock said this with a tiny shiver that only Jim could pick up on.

"Why do I have a feeling you find that punishment worse than spending time in the brig?" Just as Jim asked this question, he heard a knock at the door. Jim had no idea who it could be. Most of his friends had the good sense to call now because Jim rarely spends time in this little space. Due to his state of near undress, Jim was perfectly fine with ignoring the door. Spock was not okay with that because of the constant knocking.

"This better be important." Jim mumbled to himself as he quickly threw on a shirt and put his pants back on. "If this is Bones checking up on me, I'm going to kill him."

"Sorry, I'm not your doctor friend." The speaker of the words was Captain Christopher Pike.

"Captain, what are you doing here?" Spock asked as he pulled the sheets off Jim's way too small dorm room bed.

"At least, I now know why you haven't answered your com for the last hour. After what I heard, I should have known you would be here." Pike said dryly. Jim was pretty sure that Pike knew that they were just having sex for the last two hours.

"Not that I don't enjoy the visit Captain Pike, but usually it's me who visits you." Jim said not embarrassed at all.

"Yes, but you usually have the good sense to keep out of this much trouble. I really thought you were doing better. You even stop sleeping around with half the student population, but I guess I now know the real reason for that." Jim really wasn't sure what Captain Pike was referring to.

"Wait, what exactly are you talking about? I have been a good boy this year." Jim said giving Pike a very innocent smile. He seriously doubted the man knew about his unsuccessful attempt to reprogram the Kobayashi Maru.

"The Admiralty doesn't see seducing a professor and manipulating him into letting you cheat on a
"What are you talking about?" That's when Pike told him and Spock everything he heard during the hour-long meeting about today's incident. Essentially several members of the Admiralty who hated Jim decided to use the incident to kick him out of Starfleet. The Admiralty were charging him with engaging in a sexual relationship with an instructor, exchanging sexual favors for improvements in his performance, illegal use of Starfleet computers, malicious programming, breaching the Starfleet Computer System, and academic dishonesty. The charges against Spock were just as ludicrous except he had the additional charge of assault. Jim knew Johnson was behind it.

"You have to be kidding me." Jim said looking directly at Captain Pike. "Anybody can tell that these charges are completely untrue. I did not cheat on that test. I won because Spock reprogrammed it for everyone. I did not ask him to change the parameters of the test, even though I felt the original conditions were completely unfair."

"Jim never asked such a thing. It was my decision to change the exam."

"Not even a casual conversation?" Pike asked Jim.

"A few months ago, we did have a very spirited debate over the merits of having students deal with a simulation that no one could pass." Jim said quietly.

"The purpose of the test was to see how students perform in a situation without a solution. However, no situation in the field is absolutely hopeless. In the real world, absolutes do not exist. Therefore, students should not have to deal with an exam that deals with absolutes. James made me see this point. Therefore, I felt for the sake of making the simulation more real, it was best to modify the test."

"Did you actually tell anybody about your decision to modify the test?" Pike directed his question at Spock this time.

"I asked permission from the Admiralty two weeks ago. I received my reply Thursday. That is why Friday I had my assistant employed the new program that I have been working on for the last few weeks."

Fortunately, Spock left out the other reason why he decided to employ the new program Friday. It probably wouldn't help Jim's case if anyone else found out he was planning to reprogram the test himself without permission. So caught up in his own musings, he barely caught Pike's perplexed expression.

"You asked for permission. Did the Admiralty actually okay the changes?" Pike asked Spock.

"Of course they did. That is why I find it so illogical that they are now saying that I enabled Jim to cheat on the test by doing something they gave me permission to do." As Spock continued to speak, Jim picked up on the fact that he was getting angrier by the second.

"Do you have proof?" Pike asked Spock.

"Yes, of course. Would you like me to send these files to your PADD?" Spock said grabbing his PADD from Jim's soon to be former desk.

"That would be good." Pike said before becoming quiet for a moment.

"Look, you guys, I already realized this was a setup before I spoke to you. Now, I am sure of it. I think even Barnett realized it was a setup from the moment Admiral Johnson and Admiral Komack started pushing for you and Jim to face the entire panel of Admirals in a open hearing in front of the
entire student body."

"Komack wants my head on a platter. What's new?" Jim snorted.

"Essentially, yes. Fortunately, Barnett was able to utilize a clause in the student code of conduct that requires all hearings involving possible sexual misconduct to occur behind closed doors with a panel of three. The only thing he couldn't do was get Admiral Johnson off the panel despite the conflict of interest."

"Why is that?" Spock asked.

"His wife is an aid to a member of the Federation council. Admiral Johnson has friends in very high places."

"Great, they're trying to kick both of us out of Starfleet. Good luck with that. Because there's no way in hell I am going to let them do this to Spock and me without putting up a fight." Jim said in anger.

"I knew you would fight this. The two of you really love each other?" The captain asked him and Spock.

"Yes," they both answered simultaneously.

"That's good to know. If you and Jim manage to survive Monday's hearing, I will send you two the paperwork for shared quarters on Enterprise." Pike said with a genuine smile.

"Wait, I'm on Enterprise?"

"You didn't tell him?" Pike asked Spock.

"That would be improper. It is a direct violation of Starfleet code 6.3.9a to reveal to a cadet their assignment before graduation."

"This is why I know all the charges are fraudulent or exaggerated." Pike said as he walked out the door.

"I don't know what's more insulting that they think I am only sleeping with you so I can beat that stupid test or they think my only skill of value is sucking cock? They think I'm some cheap slut who uses his dick to get whatever he wants." Jim said in irritation, as he put his shoes on.

"I seriously doubt all of the Admiralty believe that. You're anything but easy my love." Spock said as he walked over to give Jim another kiss on the lips.

"You know exactly how to make a guy feel better. Before I met you, I think I would have done it that way. I probably would have used sex to trick Gaila into doing exactly what I wanted her to do. I thought about doing it any way."

"But you did not." Spock said as he wrapped his hand around Jim's hand. Jim now knew Spock was really kissing him with this gesture.

"I couldn't. It felt wrong. See, you are a good influence on me." Jim said as he gave Spock a very long lingering kiss the human way.

The Present
"Star date 2258 point something something something." Jim said into the voice recognition program on his digital device after climbing out of the ice cavern created by the impact of the pod. Now Jim was really happy he took that rock climbing class last summer, just so he could get a date with the instructor. Those lessons came in handy today.

"I am currently making my way to the Delta Vega out post after being illegally marooned on this damn ice planet, thanks to some ass I had the misfortune of sleeping with. Actually, Spock also had the misfortune of sleeping with him." Jim thought better of that last statement and decided to delete it later. He also hoped the program had a profanity filter.

"Due to Captain Spock being an overprotective bastard who can't even express his emotions to his own boyfriend and his decision to drug me so I would cooperate, Cupcake was able to throw me into an escape pod against my will. My only hope is that Cupcake will be incarcerated and my boyfriend, despite being in the middle of a nervous breakdown, will eventually regain his senses and realize that meeting up with the rest of the fleet is a bad idea." Just as Jim said the last word into the dictation program, he heard loud noises coming from behind him. The creature looked grey and fuzzy with really big teeth. The logical course was to run like hell. Contrary to what Spock believes, he can be logical when the situation calls for it.

"Stupid boyfriend," Jim mumbled to himself as he tried to outrun whatever the hell that thing was. 65.92 hours earlier

One of the best advantages of having a Vulcan boyfriend was the super strength. That came in handy when you were trying to move everything into your new shared apartment quickly. The idea of living with Spock made Jim very happy, despite the heavy lifting.

Jim quickly entered in the access code before entering into the apartment with Spock. As soon as the door was open, Jim could tell something was off. First, Jim swore he could smell cookies baking. He also heard the crazy Vulcan music that Spock listens to during meditation. Finally, before Jim could put down his suitcase Jim felt himself being hugged by some strange woman he never met before who had the same eyes as his boyfriend. How did she even get in the apartment?

"James, it's so good to finally meet you. Spock talks about you all the time. I'm so glad that you two are finally together. You are finally together right?" The woman asked excitedly after she finally let go.

"Yes we are as they would say on earth 'together'. Mother, what are you doing here?" Of course, he should have recognized her from Spock's photographs and from the few times that they spoke over the communicator. She looked different in person. Maybe that was because her head was not covered right now and she was actually smiling. She must have really missed her son.

"I have a couple of meetings in San Francisco that I have to attend next week. You know I cannot visit earth without seeing my son." Spock was giving his mom the same look he gave Jim when he knew that he was lying. When he is not on the receiving end, it is kind of funny.

"You said nothing of this yesterday when I called you." Spock said calling his mother's deception as diplomatically as possible.

"It was a last minute thing. I knew nothing about it until I spoke with your father after your call. I thought you would be happy."

"Happiness is an emotion. However, I am pleased to see you mother." Spock said in his usual tone of voice.
"You sure didn't have any trouble expressing happiness last night or about two hours ago." Jim mumbled under his breath. Spock gave him a death glare for that comment. Jim seriously doubted Dr. Grayson was under the delusion that her son was a virgin.

"I assume you'll be staying at the embassy mother."

"Actually, would you mind if I stay here?" Okay, Jim did not like that. First, he was already terrified about meeting Spock's mom, not that James T. Kirk is afraid of anything. However, if he was afraid of anything, Amanda Grayson would be on the list.

"I'm sorry it's on such short notice." Jim seriously doubted if she was sorry but said nothing. "I already changed the sheets in the guest room/study. You know how much I despise staying at the embassy when your father is not with me. You did give me the access code for a reason." At that moment, Jim saw proof that the puppy dog eyes do work on Vulcans. There was no way Spock could say no to his mother.

"That is fine with me mother. However, you should be aware that James also lives here." He was a bit happy that Spock told his mom that. Jim was a little worried that he would be going back to his vacant dorm room alone tonight. It's nice to have a boyfriend that was not ashamed of him. Jim was a little afraid that Spock would try to hide their relationship from his mother or try to downplay the seriousness of it.

It's so unfair that Spock will never have to go through the "meet the parents" scenario with him. Winona probably would have liked Spock.

"I was already aware of that from the case of beer and the half eaten hamburger in the refrigeration unit. You really need to go grocery shopping. Are you okay with me staying here, James? Being here will give me time to welcome you to the family. I just made some homemade cookies." As if Jim was really stupid enough to tell the mother of his boyfriend that she couldn't stay in their apartment. He instantly liked any one that would make him cookies, because Jim never had that as a child.

Okay, how cool was it that this was their apartment? Jim just loves saying that. It was nice to have a place that was Spock and his. Although, they are changing the access code, to avoid future surprise visits from Spock's mom and dad.

Wait, did Spock's mom just say she was there to welcome him to the family? OK, he would have to ask about that later. Even though he loves Spock, he wasn't quite ready for the M word.

"That's fine with me. I've never got an opportunity to do a mom visit thing at the academy so this will be fun."

"That's unfortunate. Was your mother busy with her job? What does she do?" Apparently, Spock did not have time to tell his mother not to ask those types of questions. Jim got used to it as a child when people asked him why he skipped out on all the father/son activities at school.

"My mother is dead." Jim said as he grabbed his suitcase once more to take it to their bedroom.

"I'm sorry. I didn't know." Dr. Grayson said in apology.

"It's okay Dr. Grayson, it was about four years ago." Jim replied politely.

"I'm so sorry and call me Amanda. You are family now." There's that F word again.

"It's OK, Amanda. I'm over it. It was a big deal at the time here. I'm not sure if it made the news on
other Federation planets. The story about how the Kelvin heroes' widow was beaten to death by her second husband generated lots of hits. I think I will go upstairs and put my things up. Baby, I'm sure you have a lot to talk to your mom about." Jim said squeezing Spock's hand. Jim is pretty sure he just made Spock blush in front of his mom.

"That's fine. I ordered dinner before you guys got here. It should be here in 30 minutes." Amanda said as she continued to smile at the sight of their joined hands.

"I despise that infantile nickname." Jim knew Spock really didn't, which is why he kept using it.

"Sure you do, baby." Jim said as he ended the Vulcan style kiss and disappeared upstairs to give his boyfriend a little quality time with his mother. That's when Jim remembered that they left certain 'toys' utilize last night in the bathroom sink. Dinner was not going to be fun.

The Present

It turns out the evil grey fuzzy blob looking thing was the least of Jim's worries. A few moments after he started running like crazy, the evil grey fuzzy thing was completely devoured by this giant red monster that looked like a cross between a giant crab, a humongous lizard, and something from those 20th century science fiction films he likes to watch but Spock hates. As Jim continued to get the hell out of there, he fell down an ice cover cliff during his effort to outrun the thing that looks like a crab from hell. He also fell on an iced over pond. Fortunately, he didn't break it, but the evil crab/lizard monster of Delta Vega did.

Jim thought he found relief in an icy cave but it was larger than he thought it was and the evil crab of death was able to follow him inside. He kept running but the death crab apparently had no trouble whatsoever wrapping its tongue like thing around his ankles. Jim was 98% positive that he was completely screwed at that moment.

Then suddenly there was this old guy wearing a really cool coat scaring the crab of death with a giant torch. Apparently, the crab like monster was afraid of fire and retreated quickly as he/she/it let go Jim's lower body.

When the man turned around, the first thing Jim realized was that the individual was actually a Vulcan. The second thing Jim realized was he looked an awful lot like an older version of his boyfriend. Maybe, they were related. At least, that would explain why the old guy knew his name.

"James T. Kirk, how did you find me?" The older Vulcan said with such a strong look of love and admiration in his eyes that it scared the hell out of Jim. The only person that has ever looked at him like that was Spock.

"How do you know my name? You're not another one of my boyfriend's crazy relatives? Because, I had enough of that from the woman that wants to become my mother in law. Amanda is one scary woman when she is in overprotective mom mode. Spock never mentioned any long lost family that lived on this ice ball. Then again he has been preoccupied today."

As Jim continued speaking, he noticed a smile on the older man's face. It made the older Vulcan look a lot more like his boyfriend. Jim was under the impression that Vulcans didn't smile. The only time Spock smiled was post orgasm. Usually, it was a very smug smile.

"I am a relative of your boyfriend's in a matter of speaking. Also, I have been and will always be your friend."
"Do you mean that by the human definition of the term or by the Vulcan definition of the term? Did you know that friend can be used as a code word for lover? Either way, I think you have been here too long. I don't know you even if you look like my boyfriend's long lost grandfather." At that the older Vulcan gave him a very puzzling look, as if he was trying to figure Jim out.

"I am Spock."

At first, Jim did not want to believe him. Then he really looked at him. They have the same eyes, the same smile, and even their voices sounded similar. The older man even looked at him the same way his Spock did. Jim could see the love and admiration in his eyes so clearly.

The only difference was this version of Spock was obviously a century older. He shouldn't be surprised since they were dealing with a futuristic Romulan out to kill them all. If Nero could come from the future, then wouldn't it be possible for Spock to do the same? There is only one thing that can be said in a situation like this.

"Fuck!"

To be continued
I will Not Panic, Even if I Really Should

Chapter Notes

Unlike the others sections of this series so far, the POVs and the songs will change throughout the story.

Section Inspired by the song: "Panic" by the Backstreet Boys

Lyric excerpt:

I used to read you
Loud and clear
Not like this
It's so erratic

And I'm not rational
When I see you around
Your inconsistency
And you know it's dragging me down
You're so conflicted baby

Part Two: I will Not Panic, Even if I Really Should

The true chaos associated with war is something that the Starfleet faculty can never prepare you for at the academy, no matter how many simulations they force you to sit through. One may forget that the casualties are someone's family, friend, or lover; not just some statistic on a screen. Nyota is personally trying not to think about the fact that almost all her friends from the academy were most likely dead now, except Spock and Gaila. She doesn't have time to.

If it wasn't for her earlier decision to help sneak Jim on this ship and the Enterprise taking off slightly later than all the other ships, they would all be dead right now. She intercepted the transmission herself, but she didn't understand the significance. Only Jim did. Yet, billions were dead anyway, including Spock's father.

It seemed so surreal that hours ago, her biggest problem was getting over Spock and accepting the fact that he was in love with Jim. She would give anything to go back to the simplicity of this morning or was it yesterday by this point. Time was confusing in space, when you are in the middle of a catastrophe.

Once she dropped a still sick Jim Kirk off in sickbay, after successfully making it to the ship, she took her place among the other communications officers in the bowels of Enterprise. It was easy to forget about everything that happened that morning, as she got lost in her work. Then Jim Kirk came crashing into her sanctuary, and literally pulled her out of her chair as his crazy doctor friend stood behind him with hypo in hand.

He was in worse shape than when she dropped him off a few hours earlier. That was saying
something considering the fact he did actually throw up on her on the shuttle. Jim's hands were blown up like balloons and she could barely understand a word he said as he tried to ask her about the transmission she picked up midday Friday. According to the doctor, it was numb tongue. She was sure Spock would be very angry about that if the doctor didn't take care of it.

It took her 30 seconds to realize Jim was asking her if the ships responsible for the attack on the Klingons were Romulan. At that point, Jim's tongue was starting to look just as swollen as his hands.

"I told you we should have just given him a soy burger." She yelled at Dr. McCoy as they followed a crazy Jim to the bridge. As soon as he walked on the bridge, Jim started screaming about stopping the ship. She still had no idea what he was talking about. He kept muttering something about lightning storms in space.

"Spock, we need to stop the ship right now." Jim said in a rushed and panic voice.

Her earlier prediction about Spock being upset about the physical state of his boyfriend came true. He was so wrapped up in Jim that he didn't hear Captain Pike ask him directly if he was the one responsible for his boyfriend being on the ship. The first thing Spock asked about was Jim's health.

"Are you well? Why are your hands enlarged?" Spock asked his boyfriend as he grabbed one of Jim's swollen appendages. She was probably the only person on the bridge that knew they were essentially making out as the touching became more than what was absolutely necessary. Actually, judging by Captain Pike's expression, he might be aware of what's going on as well.

"What are you doing here? I asked you to stay with my mother." Spock said in a voice higher than normal.

"But your mom asked me to keep you from getting killed. If we don't stop the ship right now you're going to make me break a promise to your mother and I like you not dead. This is not a rescue mission, it's a trap." Jim said pleading with Spock.

"Ignore him. He is delusional from a severe allergic reaction to a vaccine. Your boyfriend will be fine once I get him back to sick bay and he will actually stand still long enough for me to take care of the reaction." Dr. McCoy said as he placed a arm around Jim, that Jim tried to push away. Spock looked ready to rip that arm off for him. Apparently, Spock doesn't like anybody else touching his boyfriend.

"I'm not delusional. You were the one who gave me the vaccine anyway. Vulcan is not suffering a natural disaster. The planet is being attacked by Romulans." Jim said pushing everyone away including Spock who was assessing his boyfriend's condition.

"Enough, Cadet Kirk, I know you have had a very long day but I think it's best if you let McCoy or Spock escort you out. We will have words later." Pike said in a hard voice as he looked directly at Spock.

The captain still assumed that Spock was the one who snuck Jim on the ship. Jim continued to fight the doctor, but finally allowed Spock to take his hand again.

"It is obvious you need medical attention." An overprotective Spock said as he practically tried to drag Jim off the bridge. If it were anyone else, Jim would have been fighting back.

"I'm not delusional, baby. It's a trap." Jim said in a whisper that only she and Spock could pick up. Jim's words caused Spock to stop.

"I thought we agreed to be professional." Jim just rolled his eyes at that. Nyota believes
professionalism went out the window the moment Spock started making out with his boyfriend Vulcan style on the bridge.

"Why do you think Vulcan is being attacked?" Of course, Spock would humor his lover.

"If you remember correctly, today's anomaly of a lightning storm in space was also seen the day I was born." Jim started as he held on to Spock's hand more tightly. Again, she wondered if anybody else on the bridge realized they were making out.

"That particular anomaly occurred before the USS Kelvin was attacked by an unidentified Romulan ship with advanced weapons, that was never seen again. I am familiar with the incident as is the captain, because of his dissertation on the subject." Spock said finishing for Jim.

"Then both of you remember that the incident took place on the edge of Klingon space. Two days ago, a transmission was intercepted where Romulans destroyed 43 Klingon birds of prey. According to reports the ships were all destroyed by one ship, one massive ship." She knew instantly that Jim was talking about the transmission she intercepted Friday that her stupid instructor didn't think was important.

"Cadet Uhura intercepted and translated the message Friday afternoon." She just nodded her head to confirm Spock's statement. "She reported the transmission to me when the faculty member monitoring the long-range sensor lab ignored her concerns." Spock said leaving out the part about Jim overhearing this conversation as he hid under her bed to keep Nyota ignorant of his original plan to cheat on the test. Whoever says, "Vulcans do not lie," never met Spock.

"I can guarantee you that we are warping into a trap and the Romulans will be waiting on us."

"The cadet's argument is sound." Spock said in all seriousness in an attempt not to appear bias. At that moment, part of her believes he only agreed because Jim was holding his hand. At least the swelling was going down after Dr. McCoy was able to give Jim a shot.

"Cadet Uhura's skills are unmatched in xenlinguistics. I trust her conclusion." She wondered if Spock just said that so it wouldn't sound like he was backing Jim just because they were sleeping together.

It was obvious to her that the captain was starting to believe Jim's argument when he asked that Vulcan space be scan for all transmissions in Romulan. Because of her ability to distinguish the Romulan language from Vulcan, she was ordered to relieve the chief communication officer. She could understand the Lieutenant's difficulty because some Romulan Words were very similar to Vulcan curse words.

She believed everything Jim said when she didn't hear anything. Then she remembered her conversation with Jim from this morning. How was it possible for the Vulcan High Command to send out a distress call to the Federation when people haven't been able to communicate with the planet for several hours? What if it wasn't the Vulcan High Command that sent the distress signal? She didn't have time to say anything about her theory as Captain Pike ordered the ship into red alert.

Everyone else knew Jim was right when they landed in a debris field. The wreckage was so severe it was impossible for anyone to survive. No one had time to think about the fact that their colleagues and friends were most likely all dead. Everyone was too busy preparing for impact of the weapons of a ship that was much more technologically advanced.

Everything over the next few moments blurred together. After surviving the initial impact of the first torpedoes, they discover that their communication abilities were blocked and they no longer possess
the ability to beam anywhere.

After establishing communication with the ship responsible for the carnage, Captain Pike boarded a shuttle for the other vessel making Spock acting captain and making Jim first officer.

She was personally shocked when she heard about this because that probably violated about 35 different regulations. However, it was probably a good idea. Let's be honest Spock is probably the only person Jim will actually listen to.

When Spock returned to the bridge, she was given standing orders to contact Vulcan High Command to begin a full-scale evacuation of the planet as soon as possible. Apparently before his space jump Jim convinced Spock how potentially dangerous the situation could be.

Again, whoever said 'Vulcans don't worry' never met Spock. Spock was worried about his lover and maybe his planet of birth. She could have sworn she saw a Spock version of a smile when Jim reported that he landed on the platform safely. Spock was too busy being worried again moments later when Jim started doing battle with Romulans on the drilled. Fortunately, Jim Kirk's luck held out as they were able to deactivate whatever was interfering with Enterprise's equipment.

Yet, they were still too late to prevent a catastrophe. The innocuous drill was essentially a doomsday device with the purpose of creating a black hole at the center of Vulcan. She remembered her earlier wish of having the ground open up and swallowing her whole to avoid embarrassment. This wasn't what she meant.

Nyota didn't really try to stop Spock when he told her he was traveling down to a planet on the brink of destruction to rescue the Elders and his father. She wouldn't stop him from trying to save his father from a hopeless situation. She did the same herself, although in her case she was trying to save her mom from herself, not a planet that was swallowing itself from the inside. At that moment, she remembered hoping he would be more successful then she was.

Nothing travels faster than gossip on a starship, even in a crisis. Actually, she believes gossip travels faster during a crisis because people need a distraction. It was easier to talk about Jim holding onto his boyfriend for dear life in the aftermath of Vulcan's destruction, than the fact that most of their classmates were probably dead and they just witnessed genocide.

If people didn't know about their acting captain's personal life from the hearing that morning, they knew by now that their new captain was dating his first officer. The first thing Sulu did when he returned to his post, after being checked out in sick bay, was repeat Spock's exact words when Pike made Jim his first officer. That's also how she found out about Jim's promotion.

I'm not kidding he actually said, "Are you aware captain, that it is a direct violation of Starfleet regulation 12.6.9 D for an individual to serve directly under their partner? Since you are aware of the true nature of my relationship with Cadet Kirk, then you must know your decision is a violation of that particular statue. This must be what the humans refer to as a joke. I still do not completely understand human humor." She heard Sulu tell their barely legal navigator as everybody listened to him. Did they really think she couldn't hear them because they were whispering? She's trained to hear everything.

"He said that? I thought they were just friends even when I saw him holding Captain Spock when the captain's father did not materialize," she heard the Russian kid say with his thick accent. That's when she found out Spock was not able to save his father. Just hearing that broke her heart. She wanted him to succeed so badly.

"Trust me; they are not friends, even if Kirk did not talk about it on the shuttle." Sulu told the kid.
She wants to say something about Jim actually being professional, unlike the gossiping duo, but she was too busy doing her actual job to say anything. "You should have heard Pike's response to Spock."

"What did he say?"

"His exact words were, 'I'm not joking. You're the only one who has any hope of keeping him from doing stupid things. If worse comes to worse, you can always withhold sex. Now, that was a joke.' Then Pike started giving instructions for what to do if he doesn't come back. I stopped paying attention after that." Even if it was most likely true, she couldn't believe that Captain Pike actually said that out loud in front of other people. He should have known that it would get repeated.

Her death glare didn't keep the two behind her from talking about what they saw in the transporter room. According to idle gossip, Jim actually tried to stop Spock from beaming onto the planet. He actually called his boyfriend crazy and literally tried to pull him off the transporter pad only to fall head first as Spock was transported down to the disintegrating planet.

Sulu and Chekov's conversation was abruptly stopped by Spock walking onto the bridge. His normal expression was enough to scare the two into silence before she could hear about how Spock behaved after he was unable to save his father.

A Spock that completely retreated into himself answered that question for her. Spock's behavior on the bridge absolutely terrified her. She has never seen him so detached ever, not even when he was turning her down for a date for the 100th time.

He reviewed data and read reports, but it was like he really wasn't there. He was just going through the motions, but she was the only one who saw it. Other than Jim, she was probably the only one who really knew him.

The way he entered the incident in his acting captain's log disturbed her. She couldn't help but listen. There was no inflection in his voice. There was no mention of his father's death. The only slight amount of emotion she could pick up on was when he referred to himself as now being a member of an endangered species. His account was so factual, it scared the hell out of her. Even she could tell he was falling apart.

Unfortunately, she was distracted from her observations by a message window popping up in the bottom of her computer screen. It was a certain guy who got on her nerves inquiring about his boyfriend. It doesn't hurt her really at all to refer to Jim as Spock's boyfriend. Witnessing genocide really does help put things in perspective.

KirkJT: Has my boyfriend had a nervous breakdown yet? Please tell me he hasn't punched anybody again?

Okay, apparently Jim was completely aware that his boyfriend was cracking up, for a Vulcan. Which is perfectly acceptable after your father dies and your planet is destroyed by terrorists.

UhuraNX: Ask him yourself. You know what I said earlier about not hating you. I take it back after you threw up on my shoes. Please annoy someone else. I am trying to do my job.

She typed the old-fashioned way instead of utilizing the voice recognition software like she normally does. Even though she was sure Spock was too dazed to hear her, she had a feeling that she did not want him to hear this conversation.

KirkJT: Sorry about that. I would ask Spock, but he's avoiding/ignoring me.
UhuraNX: Because he's doing his job. Now let me do mine.

She wished this were a video chat, so he could see her rolling her eyes as she typed the words in.

KirkJT: That is not an excuse. He always answered my text messages when he was teaching. I know he's pushing me away on purpose. He won't talk about his dad dying. Instead he's forcing me to stay down in sick bay. He's being all overprotective BFBF.

Honestly, how did those two not know they were dating each other for seven months? Men were absolute idiots.

UhuraNX: He's Vulcan. They do not do emotions.

She typed the words as if it explains everything. She knew better. Spock never fully went by Vulcan behavioral norms.

KirkJT: Trust me that is an absolute lie. Spock has emotions; he is just not very good at expressing them. You do remember him punching out that asshole for calling me a whore?

UhuraNX: Good point.

KirkJT: How is he really doing?

UhuraNX: Badly. Anything could set him off. If your boyfriend showed up 2 minutes earlier in time to hear Sulu tell the entire bridge crew what Pike said right before you guys boarded the shuttle, your doctor friend would be treating our helmsman for a captain-induced state of unconsciousness.

KirkJT: Fuck! Can you please talk to him?

UhuraNX: Why me?

KirkJT: Because you're his friend and he won't let me near him right now. He will send me right back down to sick bay the moment I show up. He went into overprotective boyfriend mode after what happened.

UhuraNX: Fine

She typed into the program before she could change her mind

KirkJT: You are the best rival for a guy's affection ever.

She rolled her eyes at that comment before she closed the program.

That's how she found herself following Spock into an elevator. How exactly do you start a conversation like this? She didn't think "I'm sorry your father just died because of an act of genocide," would really work. From a few other more personal conversations the two had over the last year, she knew Spock's dad issues were worse than hers. At least she has spoken to her father recently.

Maybe, if it were his mother and not his father who died today that would be appropriate. From what she saw this morning, she knew how strong the bond was between mother and son. However, Dr. Amanda Grayson was safe on earth probably listening to dating horror stories from Gaila.

Nyota wondered for a moment if Amanda knew that her husband was dead. Did she already know that she no longer had a home to return to? The thought just made her heart break even more. She wanted to cry, but this wasn't the time.
Nyota wanted to hug Spock and make all the pain go away. That was not her place. She knew that. That was Jim's job now. According to the gossip she overheard, Jim did a lot of public hugging in addition to the Vulcan style kisses. Maybe that is the real reason why he's pushing Jim away at the moment. If she was Spock's girlfriend, she would at least have the common sense to not touch Spock in public. Then again, if she were Spock's girlfriend nothing would prevent her from comforting him during his time of need.

She is sure Jim would not be happy right now if she hugged his boyfriend. She was not even sure she could deal with close physical proximity yet. It would probably be best to keep this comfort session to words only.

Her job was to essentially keep their commanding officer from having another emotional outburst on par with punching out the now most likely late Professor Johnson. (Was it wrong to be happy that Lieutenant Commander Andrew Johnson was probably dead?) She was sure no one wanted that. She personally wanted to prevent that from happening solely to keep Jim from becoming captain.

"Your boyfriend contacted me from sick bay. He's worried about you and so am I." That sentence seemed like the best way to begin this conversation. It was honest. At least she had the good sense not to ask, "Are you okay?" She knows from personal experience that is the worst thing to ask someone after the death of a parent.

"Is Jim feeling better?" Spock asked her in reply.

She blinked for a moment at his response not knowing what to say. He is in worse shape than she thought. She wondered if he was incomplete denial about what happened. Maybe he was still in shock. Can Vulcans suffer from shock? If such a thing where possible, the events of the last hour would trigger such a reaction. She didn't have time to skirt around the issue and decided to use the direct approach.

"Your father just died less than 30 minutes ago along with your planet and you're asking how Jim is doing? You're sitting up on the bridge trying to pretend that everything is OK, when it's anything but. I would ask you if you were okay, but I already know the answer to that question." She said moving to face him.

"There's no point in discussing my father. Sarek is no longer with us and Jim still is." He sounded so distant, it frightened her even more than before. His voice almost sounded computerized at that moment.

"You don't have to be like this. If you want to do it for the rest of the crew, that's fine. You don't have to pretend that everything's OK with Jim or me. It's okay to mourn." Nyota told him with all sincerity.

"I do not have time to mourn a man who would not appreciate the sentimentality of the gesture. I have a ship to run." On the outside his words were so cold and bitter. Yet she knew he didn't really mean it that way. It was easier to run a ship in the middle of a catastrophe than confront the pain within.

"Then don't push Jim away. Don't push me away. What do you need from me? What do you need from us?" She said in a final whisper

"I need everyone to continue performing admirably." She can hear sorrow and pain creep into his voice slightly, despite his best efforts.

"Okay." It was all she could say. She didn't know what else to say. She just let him go. It was all she
could do. Maybe, she should have just hugged him anyway. He needed another hug.

Less than an hour later, she found herself alone in another elevator yelling at Spock. This time what she said probably bordered on insubordination, but he deserved it after what he just did on the bridge. She was currently trying to suppress her urge to smack her captain upside the head. Right now, she was really happy she never dated him.

A few moments earlier all the people who have become the ad hoc bridge crew were standing on the bridge talking about what the next course of action should be along with Dr. McCoy. She was not even sure why he was on the bridge at that moment.

She should have known this was going to go badly after Spock ordered Jim out of the captain's chair. Jim's response complete with a wicked smirk was, "But it is so comfortable. Can I sit on your lap then?" She blames the drugs in a system for is complete lack of decorum and his ability to go from dirty sex jokes to a serious conversation about the best course of action once they realize they were dealing with a ship from the future seamlessly. Fortunately, he asked this in some language that no one else on the bridge would know except her and Spock. The entire conversation went downhill from there.

From what she gathered, Spock wanted to fall back with the rest of the primary fleet and Jim wanted to find a way to go after Nero. She wasn't completely sure since half of the conversation was nonverbal even with all the hand gestures. At some point during their weird argument Jim touched Spock and then suddenly doubled over in pain.

This triggered overprotective Spock who was trying to force his boyfriend back to sickbay for some serious rest. When Jim wouldn't listen, Spock gave the order for the doctor to knock Jim out. The crew on the bridge stayed silent as security "escorted" a very unconscious Jim back to sick bay.

Unlike everyone else, she didn't stay quiet instead she followed Spock out.

"You know its moments like these I am really glad you said no every time I asked you to 'coffee'. Because if you did something like that to me, I would smack you the moment I woke up." She said with a touch of anger.

"As acting captain, it is my duty to make sure all members of the crew do not endanger themselves. Mr. Kirk was still under distress from his earlier injuries and from his adverse reaction to the vaccine. He should never have participated in the earlier space jump. That activity exacerbated his condition." Spock's argument seemed logical to anybody but her.

"You didn't knock him out for his own well-being. You knocked him out for your well-being. You have closed yourself off so much, that the only person who can make you feel anything is Jim." He didn't respond at all like she expected.

"I need him to be well."

"Maybe, you just need him. You just lost your father and now you're afraid of losing Jim. That's why you're acting like this. I'm sorry your father is dead but don't push everyone away because of it." He didn't respond at all like she expected.

"I am needed elsewhere. Please return to your station Cadet Uhura." Spock said without any inflection whatsoever. Not even a lifting of the eyebrows.

"With pleasure, captain." She said coldly as she left him behind.

She tried to stay as busy as possible as she completely ignored her captain. Then a message box popped up on her computer screen again. This time it was Dr. McCoy.
McCoyMD: Did Jim sneak back up there for quality time with the hobgoblin?

UhuraNX: No. Shouldn't he be in sickbay sleeping off whatever cocktail of drugs you gave him?

McCoyMD: According to Nurse Chapel, Jim never showed up. I was too busy dealing with the other patients to check up on him for a while.

UhuraNX: Did you check the computer?

McCoyMD: The damn thing must be broken. According to the computer, Jim is not even on the ship.

There was probably a logical explanation for this, but for some reason she was worried.

UhuraNX: What is the last place the computer has listed as Jim's location?

McCoyMD: The hangar deck where the emergency escape pods are.

She started mumbling expletives in various languages as she remembered the too smug look on a certain security staff member's face. She wouldn't be shocked if that particular person used this as a chance to get back for the STI notification incident. Apparently, the Admiralty knew about that because it was in Jim's special file. She just didn't understand the reference until she overheard that one conversation about dysfunctional relationships.

Before typing anything else, she pulled up the security footage from the area from about the time Jim was last seen. She minimized the images on the console to make sure that Spock would not see. She felt this overwhelming sense of dread and panic as she saw exactly what happened over an hour ago. How did no one notice a pod being deployed?

Her only thought as she saw the security footage of the person that Jim affectionately refers to as 'Cupcake' along with his friends throwing Jim into an escape pod was, 'would it be considered mutiny to drug their captain to prevent him from killing a crew member?' As soon as Spock found out that Jim was marooned on Delta Vega by an extremely stupid member of security, they would be cleaning blood off the bridge.

So this was the situation at hand. They were dealing with an enemy with the capability to destroy a planet, that most likely came from the future, that for some reason has Spock issues. Said futuristic ship, was most likely going straight for earth. Instead of going after said ship, they were headed to meet with the rest of the fleet therefore losing valuable time. Their captain was on the verge of a nervous breakdown after witnessing his planet of origin being destroyed along with his father. Because of that Spock was pushing everyone away by being extremely overprotective or overly logical.

Their first officer was marooned on an ice planet by a vengeful ex boyfriend who most likely had a death wish. Their captain would most likely completely go over the edge when he finds out his boyfriend was just sent to Delta Vega. Said captain just called down to sick bay to see how his boyfriend was doing.

She would not panic. She didn't have time to. Earlier Jim told her to make sure Spock did not do anything stupid. That's exactly what she would do.

Nyota had just enough time to send the doctor a message that said 'lied to Spock about Jim'. Hopefully, that will buy her enough time to come up with a plan to keep everything from going to hell more than it already has. She would give anything to go back to this morning when her biggest problem was getting over a guy who didn't love her. Broken hearts are easy to deal with compared to
She would fix this, somehow. Maybe knocking Spock out wouldn't be such a bad idea.
I will love you when your hair turns gray

Chapter Notes

Section Inspired by the song: Don't Change by Musiq Soulchild

Lyric excerpt:

See I'll love you when your hair turns gray, girl
I'll still want you if you gain a little weight, yeah
The way I feel for you will always be the same
Just as long as your love don't change

It has been 95 years, 3 months, 17 hours, and 3.62 minutes since Spock last saw the person that meant everything to him. Yet due to extremely tragic circumstances, his T'hy'la was in front of him again. The moment he saw him he knew the young man in front of him was James.

"James T. Kirk, how did you find me?" After seeing Jim for the first time in so long, he could not help but feel happiness despite watching his planet be destroyed hours earlier because he was not fast enough to save another planet. To see Jim again, was probably the only good thing about this unfortunate situation. He needed his friend more than anything at this moment.

"How do you know my name?" The smile that he should not have had in the first place dissipated slightly. In his old age, he is willing to admit that he felt disappointed at the fact that his T'hy'la did not recognize him.

"You're not another one of my boyfriend's crazy relatives?" This question puzzled Spock. At this point in his time, his James was not acquainted with any Vulcans whatsoever. The fact that he said boyfriend also shocked Spock slightly if he was willing to admit to being shocked at all. In his time, his James preferred women or more accurately he preferred the white picket fence delusion forced upon him as a child. Their relationship was the only time his love deviated from traditional heterosexual norms.

"Because I had enough of that from the woman that wants to become my mother in law." Again, he felt disappointed for a moment that his James in this timeline was involved with some unknown Vulcan. Spock was slightly surprised that James was in a committed relationship with anyone at this point. If the year was in fact 2258, James would not be involved with Carol for a few more years. The fact that this James was with somebody else entirely made him happy.

"Amanda is one scary woman when she is in overprotective mom mode." When James mentioned the name Amanda, his heart began to swell. There was no one else on Vulcan who had a human mother name Amanda in his time. Was it possible that he and James met earlier in this reality? Could something so wonderful happen this time around? One could hope.

"Spock never mentioned any long lost family that lived on this ice ball. Then again he has been preoccupied today." The happiness that he felt earlier increased tenfold when Spock realized that his counterpart was actually already in a serious relationship with James. It was pleasing to his distressed heart to know that at least one good thing was triggered by his inability to save Romulus. The only time he previously experienced happiness like this was when his James came back from the dead.
"I am a relative of your boyfriend's in a matter of speaking." Spock said cryptically at first before he thought better of it. James would not be easily fooled. Jim already noticed the resemblance between him and the Spock of this dimension. Honesty would be better in this instance.

"Also, I have been and will always be your friend." He wondered if this dimensions version of James understood the true significance of his use of the word friend.

"Do you mean that by the human definition of the term or by the Vulcan definition of the term? Did you know that friend can be used as a code word for lover?" Apparently, James did know. If he were entirely human, he would laugh at Jim's remark. He had a feeling that there was a very interesting story behind how Jim and his counterpart became lovers in this dimension.

"Either way I think you have been here too long." James started again. "I don't know you, even if you look like my boyfriend's long lost grandfather." He looked at James quizzically for a moment wondering why this dimensions version of his love did not completely recognize him yet. Maybe it was the gray hair or the fact he was not as thin as he once was. Maybe it was the wrinkles that now covered his no longer youthful face. It seems in this instance that he needed to be direct. Sometimes James did not see the obvious quickly.

"I am Spock." After nearly a century of being out of practice, he could still read Jim's facial expressions perfectly. The first expression was disbelief followed by a grudging acceptance, and then finally came shock. Spock was expecting this.

"Fuck!" He heard James curse. This was a rare occurrence usually reserved for the bedroom or when people were dying.

"You're really my boyfriend from the future?" James asked with a sense of disbelief.

"Yes," Spock answered slowly.

"I think I need to sit down." Jim said right before sitting down on one of the rocks lining the fire that Spock created earlier.

"Are you all right James?" He asked with genuine concern that he could not keep out of his voice. James always made it hard to suppress emotions.

"You sound just like my Spock. I'm fine considering every thing. I suffered an almost deadly allergic reaction to a vaccine given to me by a woman who sometimes hates me and my hypo happy friend. I sort of stole other you from her, so I understand. I survived a space jump onto a humongous drill to help save my boyfriend's planet from complete annihilation and failed miserably." Spock can pick up a hint of sadness and guilt from James as he said this.

"Also, my Spock is completely pushing me away by being an overprotective asshole because he can no longer hide the fact he actually has emotions." Spock is not surprise about his other self's emotional turmoil or the fact that Jim is aware of this. No one else would be able to notice this. He is not even surprise that he is pushing Jim away. "Now I'm having a conversation with a supposed alternate version of my boyfriend who is at least a century older than him." Part of Spock was actually happy that James only thought he was 126.

"I know no one else who could deal with such circumstances as well as you." Spock said in reassurance.

"Apparently, you're good at giving pep talks like my Spock. Did I mention I am on this ice ball because a certain ex lay of mine, decided it was the perfect time to get revenge on me for getting
revenge on him for being a dick that is uncomfortable with the fact he likes dick." Spock was slightly shocked to hear this version of James had male sexual partners before his relationship with this dimensions version of himself.

"You had other boyfriends?" Spock asked for the sake of clarification as he crouched beside James.

"If you really know me, you would know that I was 'slightly' promiscuous before we met. Okay, I was very promiscuous before we met and maybe that got me into a few problems. Okay, maybe it almost led to me getting kicked out of the academy, but that guy is probably dead now and the Admiralty will have bigger things to deal with. Now' that I have you—the other you, I'm really not impressed by anyone else. I think it's different when you actually love the person you're with."

Spock couldn't help but smile at that. It felt good to hear James say that he loved him even though it was this dimensions version of himself that he loved. James was always one of the few people that could trigger happiness in him.

"You—other you 'dated' Cupcake too. That was a bad breakup but still better than the breakup with Carol or so I've been told. As much as it pains me to prevent it from happening, I probably need to get back to the ship before Cupcake's blood is splattered on the bridge." Spock decided not to ask for clarification on that particular piece of information. There are certain things about this reality he does not want to know about. That is one of them.

"I'm very familiar with the mating habits of your counterpart." He said purposely avoiding the earlier statement. "I was referring to your sexual preferences. In the other timeline I was—I mean you were only with one male in that timeline." He said quickly correcting himself.

"That's weird. I guess we're not the same. I've been out since I was 16." This surprise Spock slightly because his Jim was never completely comfortable with his sexual orientation. That was a major point of contention in their relationship even though he loved James completely.

"I don't even know how many 'boyfriends' I've had. I guess Uhura's theory about the big evil ship from the future creating an alternate reality was true. I probably knew my father in that dimension. According to the various therapists that I have been forced to visit over the last 25 years, I am the way I am because my daddy died saving 800 people the day I was born. I personally believe I am screwed up for a lot of different reasons." Spock could detect a slight bit of irritation in Jim's voice.

"Her theory is accurate. You did know your father in the other dimension. He was very proud of you when you became captain of the Enterprise." 'He just wasn't proud of you at other times. If you knew him, you probably would not be in a happy relationship with this dimension's Spock.' Spock felt it was in his best interest not to voice these thoughts aloud.

"So, you and the other me were together even though things were different there?"

"Yes." There was no point in denying it. "However, it is best if you do not know more about that." He said quickly.

"At least tell me if we met at the academy."

"No."

"Was that a 'no, we did not meet at the academy' or a 'no, I cannot tell you'?" Both uses of the term "no" were accurate but James did not need to know that.

"It was the latter," he answered quietly.
"Come on, tell me?"

"We do not have time for such an unnecessary conversation."

"Fine, I can accept that. I have seen the original Back to the Future before. I would hate to accidentally erase my future children with Spock. Although, I still think it's cool that we ended up together in two different dimensions."

Spock thought it was best not to mention that for some reason every dimension he has ever visited involved he and James being together in some way or another. Why should things be any different in this reality? Did James just express a desire to have children with this dimension's Spock someday? Spock was obviously in an alternate dimension.

"So how far in the future are you from?" James asked breaking Spock from his musings.

"About 129 years from now."

"What do you know about Nero?" James asked with a sense of seriousness that was missing previously.

"He is a particularly trouble Romulan." Spock said without allowing the anger that he would need to meditate away to enter his voice.

"Okay, now I am completely sure you're Spock. You are always one for understatements. That guy and his crew captured Pike, blew up most of my senior class, and destroyed your home planet. He also…” Jim went quiet for a moment before continuing as if he was trying to find the words.

"Your father didn't make it off the planet. I'm sorry." Spock felt a touch of sadness for his counterpart but nothing for himself. He buried Sarek long ago.

"Do not be sorry for something you cannot change. My father and I never got along in my time." Spock said softly.

"Not much changed in this time. You wouldn't even talk to your father when Amanda tried to drag you to the com Saturday night. I thought your reaction was funny until she dragged me over to say hi. Sarek scared me without saying hardly anything. Your mom scares me more than your dad did, this dimensions version anyway. She was the one who did the interrogation." James said with a sigh.

"Is Amanda on earth, presently?" He asked hoping that was the case. Spock would feel immensely better if he knew his mother was somewhere else.

"She stopped by for a 'surprise' visit Saturday. Seriously, who gives their mom unrestricted access to their apartment? I'm kind of happy about it now because I don't think other you could deal with losing both of his parents. You are cracking up enough as it is. Rather other you is cracking up. My Spock beamed down to a disintegrating planet to save him. He loved Sarek enough to do that. I can feel his pain, like he's inside my mine. He is not handling it well. He cannot deal with being captain and what happened today. It's too much."

It should not surprise Spock that his counterpart and James are already bonded but it does. If they met each other at the academy that means that he and James would have been together for almost five years at the very least. However, it doesn't seem like that is the case from some of the things James has said. Then he remembered James saying that Nero killed most of his senior class. Jim also stated that his counterpart was Captain.

"You're not captain of the Enterprise?" Spock asked quickly.
"No, Spock is acting captain. I am his first officer even though it violates 18 different regulations. Technically, I am still at the academy, but Pike promoted me anyway. He says that Spock is the only one who can keep me from doing stupid stuff because he can withhold sex. It would probably work too. Don't tell my boyfriend that I told you that."

"I seriously doubt I will have a chance to. It is important that I do not meet my counterpart." Spock said being deliberately vague, hoping that Jim's love for old earth science fiction would do the rest.

"World ending paradox?"

"Something to that effect." He said not correcting Jim's assumption.

"Do you realize you lie the same way my Spock does? But whatever. Not that I don't enjoy this conversation but I need to figure out how to get back to Spock—my Spock. So if we could get back to talking about Nero that would be great." Jim was now standing up again walking around the cave.

"Yes you are right; we need to get you back to your bond mate." It hurt Spock to say that even if Jim was bonded to an alternate version of himself.

"Okay, you are exactly like your mother and do not tell other you I said that when you do meet. I don't believe that world ending paradox thing. We are not bonded or married yet. Maybe someday, we have only been dating for eight months at most, sort of. It's complicated. The other you forgot to tell me that we were making out every time we were holding hands." It took much of his remaining control to suppress a smirk or raised eyebrow. That statement also told Spock he needed to explain exactly what he was planning to do next.

"Have you and my counterpart engaged in what is refer to as a mind meld?" Spock asked getting up from the cold floor of the cave and walking over to where Jim now stood.

"Yes, Saturday night after the meet the parent dinner from hell." Spock noticed a very mysterious smirk appear on James face as Spock prepared to touch his meld points.

"What are you doing? Just because you're another version of my boyfriend doesn't mean I'm comfortable doing that." Jim said pulling away from him. Spock instantly understood where Jim's apprehension could be coming from.

"Not all mind melds are of a sexual nature. Actually, most melds are not. This is just a faster way to exchange information. We are short on time and you need to know everything about Nero if you are to defeat him." He said trying to persuade Jim with logic.

"What I did with my Spock Saturday night wasn't sexual either because the other you is too much of a prude to have sex with your mother in the house. It was still very intimate. There are certain things up there I don't want you to see. I just don't know you well enough to let you in completely." Someone who was entirely human would have been hurt by that statement but Spock saw the logic in it. He was not this Jim's Spock.

"It is the fastest way. I will not look at anything you do not want me to. This is purely an information exchange." Spock said in reassurance.

"I need to get back to my Spock. If this will help, I will do it." Jim Said finally acquiescing.

He quickly placed his fingers on James meld points and was accepted into his mind quickly. Maybe he was accepted in a little too quickly. Being inside James mind was like going home again, except he wasn't returning to the same home. He could not help explore as he told James his story through images of exploding stars and red matter. His mind was so similar to his James it was painful. This
mind was completely different and unique. Yet, Jim's mind still calls to him as his James once did after their bond was established.

As promised, he avoided looking at specific memories even though he was tempted to find out how James met his counterpart in this dimension. However, it was impossible to avoid getting an overall impression from this particular mine. Spock never found a more compatible mind than Jim's. In addition, emotions were difficult to avoid, especially under the circumstances. This Jim's mind was permeated by an overwhelming sadness and darkness that concealed the overall brilliance. Yet in the center, there was a bright light that burns like the brightest star. Spock's mind was instantly drawn to this bright spot and he knew why. That splendid star was a bond that supposedly did not exist. It seems Jim's previous statement was erroneous.

Jim was breathing heavy as Spock pulled out of the meld. He seemed in distressed at that moment. Maybe melding with James had been a mistake? Spock could not unsee what he saw.

"Both of you are too skilled at hiding the fact that you're cracking up on the inside. My boyfriend must be falling apart completely. We have to get back to my Spock now. You can help me. There has to be something in your futuristic bag of tricks that can get me back on the ship, right?"

It was obvious that Jim had no idea that he was bonded to his counterpart in this dimension. It seems it was Spock's duty to enlighten Jim.

"There is a Starfleet outpost not far from here. Let us depart. I will not be able to help you get to your boyfriend. I will be able to help you with your husband." He said as they walked towards the exit.

"Okay, I think Vulcan unfriendly temperatures and the stress of the day are getting to you. I told you, I'm not married to the other you yet. Jim said with a touch of anger as he walked to the front of the cave.

"Yes, but your mind says otherwise." Spock said dryly.

"What?" Jim asked as he stopped moving.

"At my age, I should be able to recognize a bond."

"Bullshit!"

63.2 Hours Earlier

For the first time ever in his life, Jim understood what a migraine was. Amanda reminded Jim of that crazy father from that 21st century movie where the dad essentially terrorized his future son in law with lie detector tests and certain interrogation techniques that are now technically illegal. Personally, Jim is surprised mommy dearest didn't pull out one of those truth slug things to get Jim to confess to all the stupid things he's done over the years.

Jim has never been more thoroughly interrogated in his life and he spent this afternoon dealing with Starfleet Academy security asking questions about how he passed that test. She was even worse than that Therapist his mom made him see after the incident with the car and the cliff.

The worst part was the questions about the sex toys in the upstairs bathroom. Not that she actually asked him anything directly. She just kept asking about the bathroom where those things were. Her questions were enough to make Jim wish he was being interrogated by angry Klingons. Spock was going to pay for this as soon as he got back to the bedroom. Jim was already thinking of something
involving a gag and handcuffs. Who was he kidding? That wasn't happening until Dr. Mommy was safely back, on Vulcan. Spock freaks out when they hold hands in public.

Even though it was nearly 10PM by the time they sat down to dinner, Amanda had no problems whatsoever asking him the most invasive question she could think of even if at first they seemed innocent. The following are a few of the best questions of the evening.

"Where did you grow up?" This question would have been a lot easier to answer if Jim didn't spend most of his teenage years moving from planet to planet. By age 17 when Jim relocated to earth for college, Jim already moved 16 times. Earth and Vulcan were the only two planets he has spent more than three months at a time on.

"What was it like growing up in Iowa? I've never been there." This was also another question without a very pleasant answer. Jim absolutely despised living in Iowa mostly because of Frank beating the hell out of him and his mom disappearing into space for months at a time. In the interest of making a good first impression, Jim kept his answers as generic as possible and stuck to color commentary on corn fields.

"Did you have many friends growing up? Spock did not unfortunately. He was too unique for most of his contemporaries to really appreciate." His lover told him all about his childhood on Vulcan. No wonder Spock was on the first shuttle to earth the moment he hit the age of majority. Jim's school experiences were just as unpleasant. He was teased for having the dead father, the absentee mother, the drunk stepfather, the troublemaker brother, and being the smartest kid in class. Contrary to popular belief, compared to Sam, Jim was the good son. For example, he didn't run away. Again, for the sake of keeping things pleasant Jim answered this question with a simple, "no".

"What was it like traveling throughout the galaxy as an adolescent? Did you have trouble connecting to your peers?" Jim answered Amanda as diplomatically as possible. He decided to focus this particular conversation on his time spent on Vulcan. Amanda spent 5 minutes laughing at him when she found out that although he spent six months living on the planet, he was completely unaware that he was making out with Spock every time they were holding hands. She made some comment about being absolutely stunned over the fact he never was charged with sexual harassment. He decided not to tell her that Spock was the only Vulcan he ever wanted to touch in that way.

"When did you know you were bisexual?" He could not believe she just asked that question, but then again she has asked just about everything else. At least she had a logical reason for asking. "Because I know all about that one guy Spock 'dated' that essentially used my baby for his own needs. He was just as bad as that nasty Carol girl. If I ever met him or her..." Amanda was too angry to actually finish that sentence. "I would hate for a repeat of that incident with you." This would not be intimidating normally, but Amanda was slicing a loaf of bread with a very sharp knife during this part of the interrogation. Jim had a feeling that if Dr. Grayson ever met Cupcake, she would cut off his balls.

"Spock told me you had two Master's degrees before you were 21. That is an amazing feat for anyone. What did you major in during college?" At this point, he was blaming Spock for this interrogation. If his loving boyfriend didn't tell as mom so much about him Amanda would have no idea where to start this conversation. Monday morning after the hearing, Jim would unleash mommy dearest on a certain communications officer who was still crushing on Spock. He owed her for trying to talk Spock out of dating him yesterday.

"You have a Master's degree in engineering, yet you decided to do the command track at the academy. Why did you make that decision?" Now this was actually one of the few questions that Jim felt comfortable talking about in detail. Of course, Spock blushed profusely when he mentioned his
lover's former crush had been the reason why he joined Starfleet.

"Why didn't you start working right out of college?" This question really didn't bother Jim, although the answer usually made everyone else uncomfortable. As soon as he mentioned he took a year off to deal with his mother's death, Amanda became quiet and apologized for bringing up an uncomfortable subject again. Although, can you really call it a year off, when you were originally planning not to come back?

Jim was personally surprised she found so much to interrogate him about considering she avoided the really uncomfortable questions such as: "How did your father die?" "How did you deal with not knowing your father?" "How was it growing up in the shadow of a man you never met?" "What was it like growing up being raised by an absentee mother who ran away from her problems by staying on other planets and an abusive alcoholic/drug addict?" "What happened to your brother? Do you even know if he is still alive?" "Were you and your mother close, despite the fact that she completely ruined your childhood by using avoidance as a coping strategy?" "How do you feel about the fact that your stepfather got a slap on the wrist for killing your mom because his daddy knew the judge?"

Jim is usually asked these questions a lot and was happy for a reprieve. Yet, in spite of avoiding the most uncomfortable questions, Amanda still manages to have him literally squirming in his chair as he munched on some vegetarian cuisine from the Indian Restaurant down the street. The woman was terrifying. She was scarier than her husband who she forced Jim to say hi to before the interrogation truly began. However, she did save the worst questions for last.

"According to a net search you have been arrested 12 times, including five separate instances of indecent exposure. Would you like to explain to me why these incidents occurred?"

First, Jim was slightly shocked that Amanda did such a search. However, supposedly Spock did the same thing. Second, he didn't think explaining that he was stoned at least two of those times he decided to take a stroll down main street sans boxers, would make him the ideal candidate to date her little baby. Jim was expecting to hear Amanda yell 'get the hell away from my baby boy' at any moment with butcher knife in hand. Fortunately, Spock was able to distract his mother by asking her about her upcoming meetings in San Francisco next week.

Unfortunately, Spock could not keep his mom distracted for very long and she was back to interrogating him. She finally got to the most important question of the night as she distracted Jim with homemade chocolate chip cookies. Homemade baked goods have always been his downfall.

"What are your intentions regarding my son?" Jim almost choked on his cookie when she asked that question. She might as well have asked him when he was actually planning on marrying Spock. Jim was just happy no knives were in the vicinity. Fortunately, for him he had the best boyfriend in the world and the most overprotective mom ever was distracted by her son trying to sneak a chocolate chip cookie.

"You're not supposed to eat those. These are for Jim. I made you some sugar cookies with Splenda."

"I am 26 years old by human standards mother. If I choose to embed a chocolate chip cookie in my own home, I will do so. Why do you think I had chocolate on hand in the first place?" Spock said taking a rather large bite of the cookie. Jim could understand because spending time with a certain stepfather of his always made Jim want to consume vast quantities of alcohol.

"Of course, you're right. You're an adult and I have to respect your choices." For a moment, Jim wondered if they were still talking about chocolate chip cookies.
"I am going to go upstairs for the night. Will you boys take care of the kitchen?" Amanda asked as she got up from her seat.

"Of course, mother." Spock responded.

"Also don't forget to get your personal things out of the upstairs bathroom." Jim swears that Spock turned completely green as his mother said that. Jim cursed the fact that the master bedroom bathroom was the only bathroom on the second floor.

"Don't be offended by this, because I really like your mom, but I think Starfleet should get her to do the interrogation simulation for surviving enemy torture 101." Jim said once they were in the privacy of their bedroom.

Okay, how cool was it that this was officially their bedroom. Jim absolutely loves saying that. Thanks to the migrant lifestyle of his youth, Jim really never had a bedroom to call his own.

"There's no such course at the academy." Spock said as he began to pull off his black instructor uniform. Normally Spock would change in the bathroom but there was no point any more.

"You know what I mean. Your mom can be scarier than an angry Klingon when she is in overprotective mode. Now, I know where you get it from." Jim said walking over to give his boyfriend a gentle kiss on the lips.

"I do in fact know what course you are referring to. I do not take offense at your statement. My father mentioned something similar after a particular incident where my mom managed to convince a certain member of a delegation to confess to several counts of fraud and misconduct. Federation authorities have been trying for 6.2 years to accomplish what my mother did in 23.2 minutes." Jim just stared at his boyfriend for a moment in shock before he realized that Spock was telling him the truth.

"Oh god, I didn't stand a chance. Thankfully she pounced on you for eating a cookie; otherwise we would be downstairs discussing china patterns and what we should name our first child." Jim said as he began to pull off his shirt.

"I seriously doubt my mom would choose to discuss those subjects."

"She asked me what my intentions were."

"I do not understand the significance of the question." Spock stated now standing in front of him completely naked as he grabbed a fresh pair of boxers from the dresser. It took Jim a few moments to answer the question as he admired his boyfriend's body.

"Sorry, I got distracted. 'Intentions' is a code word for marriage in human culture. She was essentially asking me when I was going to make an honest Vulcan out of you." Jim said as he followed Spock into the bathroom to brush his teeth. Brushing their teeth together had become their usual routine before they actually started sleeping together.

"I am always honest. Vulcans don't lie." Jim would have laughed hysterically if his mouth wasn't full of toothpaste."

"I meant getting married." The words were muffled because Jim was still brushing his teeth.

"That is not so unusual. On Vulcan, there is no such thing as dating. Most relationships progress immediately to marriage/bonding." Jim actually dropped his toothbrush in the toilet when Spock said this.
"What?" Jim said in momentary shock as the toilet automatically flushed away his toothbrush. Fortunately, his OCD boyfriend kept a few spares in his medicine cabinet in Jim's favorite color.

"No wonder you didn't think living together after being together less than 24 hours was moving too fast." Jim said as he started to take off his pants.

"On Vulcan, we will probably be the equivalent of a couple that took a decade to get to the altar." Jim said as he put his dirty things in the laundry hamper. Considering how skittish Spock was about kissing him in front of his mother, even in the Vulcan style, Jim decided it was probably best to sleep in boxer shorts that night like he has been for the last few weeks when he stayed over. The fact that he was sleeping in a bed with Spock only wearing boxers should have been obvious sign they were more than friends. Jim would have never considered doing that with Bones.

"Not necessarily. Many engaged and married couples on Vulcan do not engage in sexual intercourse for up to seven years after their bond is created and only when absolutely necessary." Considering Spock's eyebrows were raised in a certain way, Jim was pretty sure Spock was not telling him something but he was too distracted by his shirtless boyfriend to ask questions.

"So essentially by Vulcan standards we are living in sin right now and your mom is probably freaked out about what we're really doing?" Jim said as he unceremoniously fell down on their bed. Again, he just loved the fact that this was now their bed. Too bad they won't get to do anything fun in it tonight. That's OK because honestly Jim has discovered that he likes cuddling with Spock. Not that he was going to tell his lover that any time soon.

"From a certain point of view. Although, I really do not care much for the individuals who would see things that way." Spock said joining him on the mattress as he wrapped his arms around James and gave his love a gentle kiss on the forehead. That electric tingling sensation that occurred every time they touch was actually getting stronger.

"You're OK with us not getting married right away?" Jim said turning around to look at his boyfriend.

"I have no desire to take anything from you that you are not ready to give." Spock said as he gave James another gentle kiss, this time on the lips. "We have time to get there. We have not even engaged in a preliminary mind meld yet. Our minds may not even be compatible enough for such a bond." By the way, Spock said that Jim doubted that Spock actually believed their minds could be incompatible.

"From what I remember from when I lived on Vulcan for a few months and the way your mother looked extremely relieved when we told her that we haven't melded yet that melding is an extremely intimate activity." Jim said as he started placing butterfly kisses on Spock's jaw.

"Yes melding can be very intimate, because it is completely impossible to lie in the meld. You are able to see the individuals true self.

"So if you melded with me I would be able to see everything."

"Yes."

"Do you want to see inside my mine?" James asked as he kissed Spock again. It would take all his will power to keep this from escalating into more. He craved Spock like chocolate ice cream on the hottest day of summer.

"As I stated earlier, I will not ask for anything you are not ready to give me." Spock said as he ran a
finger over Jim's cheek.

"Do it." Jim said in a breathy whisper.

"Are you sure?"

"I trust you. You're the only one I trust to see everything. Trust me, there is some pretty fucked up stuff in there. Between Frank and Tarsus IV, I have a lot of issues."

"There is nothing inside your mind that will make me love you less. I also trust you implicitly to see everything inside of me."

"That's perfect then. I want you inside me."

A whispered "I love you, T'hy'la" was the last thing he heard before he felt Spock's fingers on his forehead. Instantly Jim's mind was transported to one of the very rare gardens in the Vulcan desert. He knew he was on Vulcan because he could see the cliffs in the background.

Jim found himself lying naked on a blanket as an equally naked Spock fed him some of his favorite native Vulcan fruits.

As their metaphorical lips joined moments later Jim felt himself becoming more connected to Spock. For the first time in his existence, he felt truly complete. In this metaphorical place, he could feel Spock's love wrap around him. It was the greatest feeling in the world. At that moment, he knew he never wanted to let go. He wanted this forever.

The Present

Obviously, the stress of the day, the drugs, and the cold temperatures were getting to him. There is no way he can actually be married to his Spock. Old Spock must be losing his mind.

"There's no way I can be married to Spock."

"It is impossible to lie in a meld. A connection like the one you and my counterpart share cannot be fabricated. I know what I saw."

"It's impossible. We did not exchange vows or anything like that. Also, I think I remember somewhere that a bond maker is usually involved." He said the words in a rush. There's no way this could be happening.

"A bond maker is only required when the connection as forced. What you and your Spock have is a natural connection that needs no outside assistance. With truly compatible minds it is possible for a bond to occur accidentally, although such instances are rare."

"If that could happen, I'm sure my Spock would have said something."

"My counterpart is unaware of such a possibility. Spontaneous bonding is extremely rare."

"Then how do you know about it?" Jim asked defensively.

"I am aware of the possibility because I experienced this type of spontaneous bond myself."

"You had this bond with my counterpart in the other dimension?"

"Your assumption is correct."
"I shouldn't be surprised. Spock and I started dating accidentally, so why shouldn't we accidentally get married." Jim couldn't help the panic and anger seeping into his voice.

"You seem troubled?"

"Maybe my other self had the example of two people in love that lived happily ever after, but I didn't. After watching my mom's train wreck of a relationship with Frank, it is difficult to believe in the permanence of love. Even mom's happy stories about how she and dad first fell in love didn't help change my perspective. I didn't think love could be real until I met my Spock."

"Yet you are so afraid?" Jim wondered if he should be slightly disturbed by the fact that the alternate version of his boyfriend knows him so well.

"What if he doesn't really love me? What if one day my Spock just doesn't love me anymore? What if he finally sees something in me that would make me unlovable?"

"Your fears are unfounded."

"If you had a childhood like mine, you would understand."

"It has been over 95 years since I last saw my James and I still love him as I always have. I still loved him even when his hair started to turn gray. I still loved him when wrinkles started to show and he no longer had the same youthful physique he did at 30. I loved him despite illogical arguments and mistakes made on both our parts. I loved him even when I tried to push him away. I will love him until my final breath. I am completely positive that your Spock feels the exact same way about you. You have nothing to worry about James, because your Spock will love you as long as you love him."

To Be Continued
It Feels Like I'm Going Insane

Chapter Notes

Special note: Italicized lines denote mental communication

This chapter may seem somewhat schizophrenic, that is completely intentional. This chapter is a bit on the dark side because it is from the perspective of one very emotionally compromised Vulcan.

The first time I heard the song below, I knew it was the perfect song to represent how Spock felt after Vulcan was destroyed and he lost a parent.

Section Inspired by the song: Talkin' 2 Myself

By Eminem

Lyric excerpt:

Is anybody out there?
It feels like I'm talkin to myself
No one seems to know my struggle
And everything I come from
Can anybody hear me?
I guess I keep talkin to myself
It feels like I'm going insane
Am I the one who's crazy?

So why in the world do I feel so alone
Nobody but me, I'm on my own
Is there anyone out there
Who feels the way I feel
If there is, let me hear just so I know I'm not the only one

In just slightly more than 90 hours, Spock's entire life has changed. Four days ago, James was his best friend and he had one of the most outstanding reputations among the faculty at Starfleet academy, if not in the entire service.

Now James was his lover and this morning he went through a show trial where his academy rival tried to destroy his reputation by using his relationship with Jim against him. It remains to be seen if his reputation and career will survive this morning's events. Although the charges were mostly exaggerated and/or outright lies, the damage was already done. After punching a member of the faculty, most no longer believe the 'Vulcans do not have emotions' stereotype. Most likely Spock will be facing sanctions for that incident alone.

Four days ago, he was an outcast among six billion Vulcans but he was becoming more comfortable with that fact. He accepted that he would always have a better relationship with his mother then his father. However, 90 hours ago he still had a home to return to, even if it was never home to him.
Now Spock no longer had a home. There was no longer a Vulcan. A proud population of over six billion was reduced to the thousands that were evacuated before the planet was decimated by a very disturbed individual and others that left the planet long ago. The keepers of the Vulcan culture stood on the platform beside him moments ago but Sarek was not among them.

He remembered leaving the bridge the moment he knew that the planet of his birth only had minutes left to exist. Spock knew his father would be in the Katra arc. He remembered the argument with James. However, he had to try. His mother would never forgive him if he did not try. He arrived to the arc in time to get as many out as possible despite the falling debris. As they were waiting for beam up, the ground beneath Sarek collapsed. He tried to grab his father but he couldn't.

Spock found himself completely lost on the transporter pad as it slowly sank in that his father was dead. Spock's body and mind were overcome with a multitude of emotions. His major thought was, how would he tell his mother that the man she loved for over 30 years was dead? Yet he could not let anybody know this.

His mind began to calm as he felt James wrap his arms around him. He could feel his love and concern consume him as Spock heard him say that he was sorry over and over again. If he was more like himself he would remind his love that this was highly unprofessional, but he needed James touches and kisses. He did not care at all for the disapproving looks coming from the individuals that he just saved moments earlier.

In his mind, he could hear a disjointed voice say, "Even though you and James just risked your lives to save them they still looked down at you with disdain. You think after losing everything they could get off their pedestals." Spock ignored this voice.

After a few more minutes of indulging in Jim's embrace as the planet of his birth became no more, he pushed him away. He was the one in charge. He could not retreat in to James, even if he wished he could. He had a ship to run.

The first thing he did was forced James to return to sickbay. If it was up to Spock James would not have taking part in the space jump in the first place, or at the very least he would have given James all the charges.

"Maybe if you did that you would have a planet to return to." Spock heard that same voice as earlier comment.

As much as he wanted to stay with James he could not. He stayed busy with the business of the ship such as having accommodations prepared for the refugees aboard the Enterprise, ordering necessary repairs, and anxiously waiting for Pike to make contact. As time went by it became less likely that Pike would be contacting Enterprise. It pained Spock to note in his acting captain's log that Pike was most likely a prisoner of Nero.

"He's probably dead." Spock heard that voice say again.

"That's illogical. Pike was taken for a reason. Nero would not just kill him right away." Spock argued back with himself.

"They wanted to hurt you. Good thing they didn't know about Jim otherwise they would have taken him as well." The voice said as nastily as possible.

"That is not logical." Spock said in response to the voice.

"You're right. They wouldn't just kill him, I'm sure torture was involved. Maybe Nero does want
something besides your pain." The voice said once more.

In an effort to get away from his unpleasant thoughts he chose to leave the bridge. However, this was fruitless. How can you get away from something that is inside your head? The unpleasant thoughts/voice continued mocking him as he walked to the elevator.

"Look at their faces. They either all pity you or are laughing about you behind your back. I know you heard what was said on the bridge before you arrived. Just like before on a planet that no longer exists. Maybe there isn't really that much of a difference between humans and Vulcans. Then again, you never fit in well with either group. If you were completely human, you would be crying right now for a man that never really loved you. If you were completely Vulcan, you wouldn't be feeling anything at all. I guess Sarek was right. You really are a child of two worlds and neither world wanted you." The voice sounded much more hateful than before as he said this.

"That's not true. Jim wants me." Spock said in response to the mocking voice inside is mine.

Part of Spock was relieved that Nyota followed him into the elevator. If she was there, then he would no longer have to listen to the other voice that kept discussing things that Spock did not want to address even in meditation. The voice spoke about the things that Spock tried to avoid from the darkest parts of his mind.

"Your boyfriend contacted me from sick bay. He is worried about you and so am I." He heard Nyota say. He could hear the concern in her voice but it did not affect him the same way Jim's concern did. Spock felt numb.

"At least she didn't ask 'Are you okay?' You know she is only here because she wants to fuck you. She's just like Carol—I mean Cadet X. Although wouldn't Cadet M be more appropriate? You think after all this time you would be able to say her name or even read a scientific journal article written by the woman who completely screwed you over. They never cared about you and neither does Jim." The voice whispered with venom and vulgarity.

"If he did not care he would not have contacted Nyota." Spock responded mentally but the voice just laughed at him maliciously.

"Is Jim feeling better?" Spock asked out loud in response to Nyota as he did his best to ignore the voice's continued taunting.

"You could go down and see him yourself but then you may discover that he really doesn't want you there. Maybe you will discover Jim really does not love you, just like everyone else. Your father didn't love you. He did not even grab your hand when you try to stop him from falling." The voice's words were becoming more resentful and angry by the minute.

"Your father just died less than 30 minutes ago along with your planet and you're asking how Jim is doing?" He heard Nyota ask drowning out the other voice in his mind. He wanted to ask her what was the point of such a question but she did not give him time to respond. "You're sitting up on the bridge trying to pretend that everything is OK, when it's anything but."

"Way to state the obvious." Spock heard the mental voice say sarcastically but he ignored it.

"I would ask you if you were okay, but I already know the answer to that question." Nyota said as she faced him.

"If she tries to kiss you again you will know the whole purpose of this show of sympathy was really to get in your pants. No one is truly altruistic." The voice spat out bitterly.
"There is no logic in listening to you. Nothing you say is true." Spock told the voice before responding to Nyota.

"There is no point in discussing my father. Sarek is no longer with us and Jim still is." Spock spoke aloud as the angry voice spoke over him.

"But I do speak the truth, Spock. I say the things you don't want to hear. Like how much longer is Jim going to stay with you? How long can you love someone who's too afraid to cry? You're pushing him away. He should be up here. Maybe you're afraid if he really saw what was going on in your mind he would run away. Go ahead push him away, before he leaves you." He could barely hear Nyota's next words over the voice yelling at him from the dark recesses of his mind.

"You don't have to be like this." She almost screamed at him.

"Of course, you do Spock. It's the Vulcan way to keep everything inside until you explode. Except, you're not Vulcan." Again the voice mocked as he spoke over Nyota.

"If you want to do it for the rest of the crew, that's fine. You don't have to pretend that everything's OK with Jim or me."

"It looks like she knows you better than you think. She already knows you're going through the motions. The moment you stop concentrating on the mission you will completely fall apart." The voice argued.

"That is not true." Spock whispered in his mind.

"It's okay to mourn." Nyota told him with sincerity that he could pick up on. However, the voice did not see this.

"Is it really? Could she and Jim really deal with your grief and pain? The guilt that you feel for not being fast enough is eating away at you. It is consuming you. Maybe if you were completely Vulcan, you would have been fast enough to save Sarek. Maybe he would have grabbed your hand if you were the son you were supposed to be? You were never quite good enough for him, were you?" The voice said asking the questions that Spock did not want to answer.

"If I were completely Vulcan, I would not have cared enough to try in the first place." Spock responded to the voice before he focused on the actual conversation with Nyota once more.

"I do not have time to mourn a man who would not appreciate the sentimentality of the gesture. I have a ship to run." The words were true.

"No they're not, Spock. Even she knows that is a lie. Why are you lying to yourself, Spock? It's easier to do this alone right? You really are alone aren't you? You've always been alone."

"Then don't push Jim away. Don't push me away." Nyota said out loud disrupting the voice in his head.

"It would be easier to push them away, right? It wouldn't be that hard. Everyone else leaves eventually."

"What do you need from me? What do you need from us?" Nyota said in a final whisper that was almost drowned out by the words in his head.

"What do you need from her Spock? Love and affection? How pedestrian."
"I need you to leave me alone." He said in his mind to both her and the voice.

"I need everyone to continue performing admirably." He said verbally completely unable to prevent sorrow from entering his voice.

"Okay," Was the last thing he heard Nyota say as he walked out of the elevator.

Fortunately, for Spock the voice went away as he spoke to Dr. McCoy about the various crew members who were injured. He really should not be surprised that Jim refused to take the pain medication for his damaged hand and the headache that he now had. James also refused to stay in sickbay despite almost falling down one time because of the severity of the headache. His love developed an extreme hatred of sickbay and hospitals in general after his recovery from the injuries he sustained on Tarsus IV.

Dr. McCoy actually suggested sedating Jim to give him time to recover if it turns out he was hiding the true extent of his injuries. Spock found his suggestion logical because Jim is quite stubborn when it comes to his own physical well-being. Earlier this year it took Spock two days to convince James to see Dr. McCoy after he developed a cough and broke out in red dots. To guarantee Jim's well-being, he asked Dr. McCoy to come up to the bridge to monitor Jim's behavior.

The mocking voice from his mind returned when he was getting information on Nero's next possible target. "You know his next target is earth. Why are you wasting time looking for other options? It looks like you're going to be an orphan after all. How are you going to stop the ship that's already murdered the majority of a population that despised you simply for existing?"

The voice also questioned his decision not to go after Nero when he and James were discussing the best course of action with the others on the bridge. James wanted to go after Nero and Spock did not want to risk his entire crew.

"That's not true Spock. You don't want to risk Jim. Who is more important to you, your mom or Jim? Because no matter what you do Spock, one will end up dead. You can't deal with losing someone else you love."

"The needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few." Spock thought he said this mentally but apparently, James heard him.

"That's why we have to go after Nero now." James said in response to something that was not meant for him to hear.

"Your sex god boyfriend is right. However, you do what you want anyway. Go ahead and meet up with the rest of the fleet. Don't even try to keep everyone from ending up dead." Even Spock could detect the voice's sarcasm.

Spock chose to ignore the mocking voice as James grabbed his hand. However, James quickly doubled over in pain at the touch. Spock instantly knew what was happening. James was feeling everything through their physical connection.

"I told you Jim couldn't handle it. Look at how much pain he is in. Maybe it is better to keep everything inside." The voice stated.

"Are you okay James?" Spock asked Jim out loud ignoring what the voice said earlier.

"I'm fine." James said with labored breath.

"Look he is already lying to you."
"The term fine has various degrees of meaning. In this instance, it means you are in a vast amount of pain and need medical attention but you are too stubborn to admit that to anyone. You need to return to sickbay immediately." Spock wanted to touch his love but was afraid he would cause him more pain.

"I'm stubborn?" James said it as more of a question then a statement. "You're the one who's acting like your father didn't just die. I don't need to go to sick bay. We need to figure out how to deal with the guy who killed both of our dads. We don't have time for a confab." James pleaded with him, yet it seem like no one else on the bridge even heard his words.

"It's the logical course. Your heart is accelerated and your breathing is labored. I can feel the amount of physical pain you are in." That last statement was true even when they were not physically connected. If Spock were in a better state of mental well-being he would understand the true implications of such a thing.

"I will let you play Nurse Maid after we deal with Nero. I bet you would make one's sexy nurse." At Jim's wince of pain in the middle of that statement Spock decided that for Jim's sake he needed to rest. Therefore he gave Dr. McCoy permission to administer the pain medication.

"That was brilliant. Now you no longer have to worry about being emotionally compromised by the only person who can really make you feel anything. Hey, look at it this way if he's unconscious in sick bay he can't do something stupid to get himself killed. That was the whole point right?" Spock heard the voice say sarcastically as he instructed a certain member of security that he absolutely despised to take James down to sickbay. Spock personally wished that individual was not on the ship but had no choice. He cannot be unnecessarily biased and allow his personal feelings to cloud his judgment.

Spock left the bridge again because he could not deal with the voice in his head, but like last time the voice and Nyota followed him. He could find no relief.

"You know its moments like these I am really glad you said no every time I asked you to 'coffee'." Her words were, more bitter than before.

"I told you coffee was a synonym for sex." This time Spock could hear a hint of amusement underneath the anger of the voice in his head.

"You did no such thing. You were not even there at the time." Spock answered back mentally.

"Spock, I've always been here. I'm a part of you." The voice said before Nyota continued.

"Because if you did something like that to me, I would smack you the moment I woke up." Spock tried to focus on her words but they were being drowned out by the voice in his mind.

"Jim will probably smack you too. He probably won't understand why you drugged him up."

"As acting captain it is my duty to make sure all members of the crew do not endanger themselves." He told Nyota aloud.

"Apparently drugging your boyfriend was your only option right? That was the only way to save him from himself. He's always had suicidal tendencies." These were not questions Spock wanted to answer, especially after he found out about the 'car incident' when his boyfriend was a child.

"Mr. Kirk was still under distress from his earlier injuries and from his adverse reaction to the vaccine. He should never have participated in the earlier space jump. That activity exacerbated his condition." Spock said in his defense but he wasn't sure who those words were really directed to.
"Who are you trying to convince me, her, or you?" The voice asked with a wicked laugh.

"You didn't knock him out for his own well-being. You knocked him out for your well-being." Nyota said in response.

"It looks like the almost girlfriend actually did know you beyond the superficial." Mocked the voice again.

"You have closed yourself off so much, that the only person who can make you feel anything is Jim."

"Maybe that's the reason why you had Dr. McCoy knock out your boyfriend? You could have used the nerve pinch. That would have been more efficient but then you wouldn't have an excuse for your behavior." The voice said laughing again.

"I need him to be well." At that point, Spock was not sure if he was responding to Nyota or the voice in his head.

"Don't stop there Spock. Tell her everything. Could you survive without Jim? You can barely handle losing your father and you hated him half the time. You're still terrified about telling your mom that her husband is dead because you could not save him. How much worse would losing Jim be? Could you survive the loss of your T'hy'la? Would it destroy you from the inside?" The voice asked.

"Maybe you just need him. You just lost your father and now you're afraid of losing Jim. That's why you're acting like this. I'm sorry your father is dead but don't push everyone away because of it." Her anger was obvious as Nyota pleaded with him. He ignored her. How could she understand what he was going through?

"I like this girl. She knows you better than you know yourself." The voice actually praised Nyota.

"I thought you said earlier that she was only using me for sex?" Spock asked the voice.

"I revised my opinion."

"I am needed elsewhere. Please return to your station Cadet Uhura." Spock said without any inflection whatsoever as he ignore the voice in his head. He did not want to betray himself.

"With pleasure, Captain." Her voice was filled with disdain as she spoke the words. Spock saw her quickly leave the deserted hallway without another word leaving Spock completely alone. That is when he heard clapping. He turned around to see a figure standing there in civilian attire.

"Good job, Spock. You finally succeeded in pushing every one away. You are now completely alone." The body said sardonically as he continued to clap with a malicious smirk on his face.

"Who are you? Identify yourself." Spock said to the figure.

"I'm hurt Spock. You really don't recognize me. You should at least know the voice. I am you." The body said sardonically.

"That's not possible." Spock said to the figure but he could not help but notice the physical similarities. The creature in front of him look like him except his hair was short and messy allowing Spock to see his human ears.

"It's very possible Spock. I am you, the human you. I am the parts of you that you lock underneath Vulcan pretense and sensibilities. I am the part of your personality that you don't completely accept. I
am everything you keep locked inside. I am your pain and fear. I am your grief for your father that you will not allow yourself to feel. I am your feelings for Jim. I am everything you're afraid of." The body said as he walked around the deserted hallway.

"You are not real. You are nothing more than a figment of my mind." Spock said to the being in the hallway.

"I may only be part of your mine, but I am as real as anything else. I think I need a name. I'm tired of being referred to as the voice or the body. How about Marshall?" The body asked him.

"I do not care what name you choose for yourself." Spock responded quickly.

"Yes you do. Marshall is the number one name on your list of possible names for your future children with James. You created the list Sunday morning right before your mom found out about the judicial hearing. I personally prefer Zachary Kirk, but Marshall is just fine for me. It sounds a lot like Martian. I appreciate the irony." The mental figment now referred to as 'Marshall' said to Spock.

"How do you know about that list?" Spock questioned the figment.

"I told you Spock, I'm part of you. Who knew you were such a sentimental fool? Oh wait, that sentimentality comes from me. It doesn't really matter. You will probably never get to use any of the names on that list. Even if you do survive Nero, Jim will never forgive you for pushing him away like you did. You drugged him against his will. I told you before, you should have just used the nerve pinch."

"Quiet. I have more important things to do than listen to you." Spock's screamed, for him anyway.

"Yes, you have to arrange for a fruitless meeting with the rest of the fleet. You and I need to talk." 'Marshall' said.

"Is that not what we have been doing for the last 7.2 minutes?" He asked the figure with one eye brow raised.

"There is that sense of humor I gave you."

"You gave me nothing." Spock said as he walked back to the bridge.

He was originally planning on checking on Jim, but decided not to. Considering the fact that he just had a conversation with a disembodied version of himself, that goes by the name 'Marshall', Dr. McCoy may feel it would be best to admit Spock. It would be detrimental to the ship to not have a leader. Spock did not have time to be emotionally compromised.

As before, the bridge was not a place of peace. The mental personification of his human side that refers to itself as 'Marshall' constantly pestered him. As he was planning for his next course of action, 'Marshall' would question every decision Spock made. Spock began to wonder if functioning this way was detrimental to everyone.

"This wouldn't be a problem if you didn't knock out your boyfriend. He could be in charge and you could go downstairs for a cocktail of anti-depressants and whatever they gave you for when you start having conversations with a personification of your human side. At this rate, you're going to get everybody killed." Spock ignored this comment as best he could even if he was starting to wonder if 'Marshall' was right.

Before he could respond to the personification, Spock felt an immense amount of panic and fear overwhelming his senses. If he were human, he would be doubling over in pain as James did earlier.
However, because of his Vulcan heritage there were no outward signs of distress.

"That fear and panic your feeling is coming from your boyfriend. Maybe he just realized that he is in love with a control freak." 'Marshall' said with his normal bitterness and anger.

"It is impossible that what I'm feeling is from James."

"You really have no idea what you and lover boy did in your secret garden Saturday night? If you don't know, I'm not going to tell you. Your subconscious has all the juiciest stuff."

"If you are implying that I am now bonded to James and therefore that is why I am currently receiving these emotions, you speak falsely. Such a thing is impossible." Spock reassured 'Marshall'. "James and I did not complete the rituals to create such a bond."

"When has Jim Kirk ever gone by the rules? I would suggest doing a search on spontaneous bonds between true T'hy'la in the council archives but they might not exist anymore. Your father's colleagues probably never saw the logic in his suggestion to use off planet servers." Spock decided to ignore the fact that because, this personification was part of him and therefore he would know the truth.

"If you don't want to believe me, call Jim's doctor friend." Although it loathed him to do anything 'Marshall' suggested he did want to see how James was doing.

Instead of responding to his call, Dr. McCoy came up to the bridge. He did not answer Spock's inquiry, instead he asked him about his mental well-being. Spock felt it would be prudent omit the truth in this instance to keep the ship from being leaderless.

Dr. McCoy then went on a tirade regarding his lack of emotion. If only the doctor understood what he was feeling. At least he was no longer experiencing sheer panic anymore but a sense of shock and disbelief was radiating through him.

"If it wasn't for the way you look at James, I would think you were an emotionless computer. Your father just died and you're acting like nothing happened." The doctor said in near outrage.

"If you felt it would benefit the ship for me to be walking around crying for a man who never cared for such displays of emotion, I would do so. My job is to run the ship. Your job is to see to the health and well being of those on board." Spock said to Dr. McCoy as 'Marshall' laughed in the background making snide comments.

"You're right. I'm taking your chief communications officer down with me because I've heard her cough five times in the last 2 minutes."

"You may go, if you arrange for a confident relief who can understand Romulan, Nyota." Spock mostly allowed her to leave because he cannot deal with her angry glares.

"Okay, even I know that was a setup. They're hiding something from you Spock." Marshall said once they left the bridge.

"I refuse to listen to you any longer. Nyota would never keep anything from me."

"Other than the fact she was completely obsessed with you. Did you notice Dr. McCoy never answered your question?"

Spock then proceeded to replay the entire conversation in his mind. The mental personification was correct.
"That does not necessarily mean they are hiding anything." Spock said as he went back to ignoring the obvious figment of his mind, however he could not.

If the doctor would not provide him with the answers the ship's computer would. 30 minutes after leaving the bridge Nyota returned as Spock asked the computer to provide him with an update regarding his boyfriend's condition. He mostly did this because he could not take 'Marshall's' pестering much longer.

For some reason, he chose to type this command instead of verbalizing it. When the computer responded with no information, Spock began to wonder if 'Marshall' was right.

"I suggest accessing the security footage. What was the last known location of your boyfriend?"
Spock cannot believe he was actually accessing the security footage for the shuttle bay for the escape pods at Marshall's command. That's when he saw his unconscious boyfriend being thrown into an escape Pod by the first person Spock ever engaged in coitus with.

"I personally blame myself for our association with that dick. I guess I should apologize."

Spock does not remember much of anything after that. He must have summoned the lieutenant to the bridge, but he does not remember doing it. He does not remember the conversation that preceded his hands wrapping around the neck of a man who abandon his lover to Delta Vega to die. Maybe that was the fear that Spock felt earlier.

He could hear a voice in the back of his mind that was probably Jim's telling him that he was okay but Spock ignored it. He chose to listen instead to the voice of his human side telling him to kill the one who endangered his love. He allowed his grip to tighten. He deserved to pay for what he did to his James.

Inside his haze of rage, he heard Nyota's voice. It was the only outside thing he heard.

"I'm sorry." Her words were followed with the familiar feel of a hypo on his neck. Then Spock felt nothing at all.

To be continued.
She was fully aware that the current situation was extremely bleak. She did not need the doctor to say that to her in a pop-up message once she sent him the video footage of their unconscious First Officer/Captain's significant other being thrown into an escape pod. She also did not need to be repeatedly questioned about Spock's mental stability as she was trying to keep Spock from realizing what she knew.

The good doctor did not completely accept her assessment of the situation. Apparently, because she didn't have an M.D. after her name, her assessment was completely invalid. It didn't matter that she spent half her childhood with a mentally ill mother. There is no substitute for experience. She knows things that never make it into the textbook files.

What they could agree on is that they needed to talk in person. Preferably, without their captain on the verge of a nervous breakdown finding out why. That's why she pretended to be sick when Dr. McCoy came up to assess Spock's condition for himself.

The fact that Spock allowed her to leave the bridge without asking her a long series of somewhat invasive questions cemented in her mind that Spock was completely unwell. After taking classes with him for over a year, she knows that he does not allow students to even go to the bathroom without asking a long series of questions ending with the suggestion that they see their primary care physician if they could not survive a hour and a half class without the need to use the facilities. This is very unusual behavior for him.

"You're right. I've never seen someone that deep in denial about their emotional state, not even during my psyc rotation." Dr. McCoy said the moment they walked into the elevator.

"Thank you. Can you relieve him of command?" She asked the question that was foremost on her mind.

"According to the regulations created by those idiotic bureaucrats, who probably never actually served on a Starship during a combat situation, I do not have that authority until he is a danger to
himself or the crew. You and I both know he is a sandwich short of a picnic basket right now, but he hasn't got anybody killed yet." The doctor grumbled.

"He had his boyfriend drugged for no logical reason except he was being annoying. This led to Jim being thrown into an escape pod and sent to a planet so harsh that the assignment is usually reserved for people who are complete idiots, or do something just short of being court marshaled worthy. Did I also mention that planet is filled with vicious predators that would enjoy having a nice Jim shaped treat. As soon as acting Captain Spock finds out about said incident, he's going to murder a certain lieutenant with his bare hands, no matter the consequences. I'm a communications officer and even I think meeting up with the fleet is the wrong thing to do. We will lose too much time. I personally believe that Spock's actions so far qualify him as being a danger to the crew and himself. I don't see the point in waiting for an actual body count." She said angrily just before walking off the lift.

"Unfortunately, the paper pushers who run Starfleet won't see it that way. I really don't want to face being court marshaled before I began my career unless I have to. If I could I would drag him down here for a psyche console, but I'm not going to go toe to toe against someone who is at least three times stronger than me and minutes from completely falling apart. The green blooded idiot would fight me the entire way. It would do no one any good if I get torn limb from limb by a Vulcan on the verge of a nervous breakdown." The doctor said as they walked into the medical wing.

Judging by the chaos going around her she can understand why it took the doctor over an hour to realize Jim never showed up. She did not want the rest of their conversation over heard so she stayed silent until Dr. McCoy brought her inside of his office.

"So we're going to just sit back and watch everything fall apart. Our captain is going to find out about what happened to Jim, even if we don't tell him. He will do something utterly stupid when he finds out what happened, and that will most likely lead to another person being dead. Spock is my friend and I won't sit back passively as he self destructs." She said with complete resolve.

Nyota already watched her mom come undone when she was completely unable to stop it from happening. She would not allow it to happen to another person she cared about. She had to try for the sake of her own sanity. She was not a scared, 17 year old this time around.

She almost wished Gaila was on the ship so she could hack into the Computer System and delete the footage of what happened in shuttle bay three. If the footage was gone from the system, that would at least buy them more time. Unfortunately, she didn't know anyone else on the ship who was skilled enough to hack into the system without Spock being immediately notified of the breach.

"Personally, I would like nothing better than to give the particular asshole who put us in this situation something a lot stronger than what I gave Jim and send him somewhere else a million times more harsh than Delta Vega, like my ex wife's house at Christmas. Unfortunately, we're at warp." The Doctor said as he walked to the room adjacent to his and came back with a hypo in hand.

"I don't think drugging you know who would help. It would just make it easier for Spock to kill him." She said with a sigh of resignation. "You don't happen to have a hypo that can induce a heart attack? Maybe we can just get to the moron first and make it look like an accident?" At least there would be less blood that way, she thought to herself as she spoke out loud.

"I have something that can actually fake death but not induce a heart attack that is untraceable. I'm sure I have something else here that would be fatal, but again I don't feel like being court marshaled. We're not going to drug the asshole. You're going to drug the hobgoblin." He said handing her the hypo.

"Why me? What am I giving him?" Nyota said giving the doctor a completely incredulous look. Dr.
McCoy must be out of his mind if he thinks she is going to deal with someone who could knock her unconscious with just one hit when he is fully sane.

"What you have in your hand contains a combination of various smart drugs that will help with the mental instability and are strong enough to knock out a Vulcan for at least an hour. It's referred to as sanity in a hypo. It's perfectly safe for him. The reason why you're giving it to him is because he won't let me get close enough to do anything. Unlike with Jim, I seriously doubt I could sneak up on him. If you see him go for you know whose jugular, stab him with that in the neck." The Doctor said pointing to the hypo in her hand.

"You expect me to be able to do something you can't? Can't we just kill Cupcake?" She asked with a whiny voice in all seriousness.

"No. That should fit in your boot. If I thought you could sneak a tranquilizer gun up there, I would give you one." He said quickly.

"Fine." She said placing the hypo in her boot with the safety on. She would absolutely hate to accidentally shoot herself in the foot. Although maybe if she did, she wouldn't wake up until this entire nightmare was over with.

"Now it's time for us to deal with our bigger problem."

"There's a bigger problem than our captain being on the verge of a nervous breakdown and harboring murderous impulses regarding certain idiotic members of the crew?" Nyota asked Dr. McCoy sarcastically.

"Yes, normally when the captain is relieved for 'medical reasons' the first officer becomes acting captain. Unfortunately…"

"Spock's first officer is hopefully alive and well on Delta Vega." Nyota said finishing Dr. McCoy's sentence. She honestly hoped for everyone's well being that Jim was okay. If Jim didn't come back to Spock in one piece, she did not want to see the aftermath.

"Exactly," the Doctor said confirming her statement.

"There has to be a protocol for this type of situation. I'm sure this is not the first time in Starfleet history that a captain and his first officer have been incapacitated simultaneously. Isn't there usually a second officer or something?" Nyota asked keeping the worry out of her voice.

"Unfortunately, we don't have a second officer anymore. She is currently in the morgue." The Doctor responded in his normal grouchy way.

"Fuck!" The expletive escaped her lips without thinking.

"Again, there has to be something." She whispered under her breath."

"I may be able to offer some assistance in this situation." Spoke a tall female Vulcan who resembles Spock slightly. Nyota doesn't even remember hearing the door open.

"Who the hell are you and why are you in my office?"

"I am elder T'Pau, the most senior surviving member of the Vulcan council. If you are trying to save my grandchild from himself, then I will assist you." XXX
The long walk to what Jim was referring to as ice base zero felt like another interrogation but with subfreezing temperatures involved. Spock has a lot of Amanda like qualities, including the ability to ask horribly invasive questions. Unfortunately, Jim is unable to resist any version of Spock. After answering some of Jim's questions about Vulcan marriage bonds the older version of his boyfriend from another dimension started asking questions about the crew.

Oh wait, he means husband. Jim was still trying to wrap his head around the fact that he was actually married to Spock because they were literally made for each other. He is still trying to get used to that particular concept. Maybe by the time he actually gets back to Spock he won't be freaking out on the inside.

Apparently, their minds were just a little too compatible. How exactly was he going to explain this to Amanda and Spock? She is literally going to kill him for marrying her little boy without telling her. Of course, if he doesn't get back to Enterprise, Amanda may not be around to yell at him for stealing her baby boy. Right now Jim wished nothing more than to survive this catastrophe just so Amanda can yell at him about the accidental marriage thing.

Jim is pretty sure he saw the Vulcan equivalent of a smile when he told the old Vulcan about how he met Uhura and the reason for their little rivalry. Jim knew Spock was amused when Jim explained how he and his Spock got together. This Spock had all the same facial gestures and emotion conveying eyebrow movements as his Spock.

"You lived on Vulcan for six months, yet you were completely unaware of the significance of direct hand contact?" The alternate version of his boyfriend asked with one eye brow raised. Old Spock's expression was very similar to his Spock's 'I am amused' expression. It was also very similar to Spock's 'you have got to be kidding me' expression.

"Don't raise your eyebrow at me. It wasn't exactly like I was able to sneak off to secret touch clubs in the middle of the night. I was pretty much confined to the grounds of the University hosting the research program/cultural exchange that mom was participating in. I think they were worried about me being a corrupting influence." When Jim said this Spock's eyebrow went up just a little bit higher.

"They would probably be right. You are a corrupting influence. However, I have come to realize over the years that that is not necessarily a bad thing." There was that almost Spock smile again.

"You just saved yourself because of that last line old man. Also, my time on Vulcan was immediately following what happen on Tarsus IV. I wasn't exactly up for socializing." Jim only mentioned the one thing he absolutely despised talking about to see if it happened in the other dimension. The expression that was the Spock equivalent of sadness that he saw moments later instantly told him that not everything was different in the other timeline.

"I'm sorry that you had to go through such a horrible ordeal." The older version of Spock said in the same comforting tone that his Spock would have used. Although, his Spock probably would've tried to sneak in a kiss or two in the Vulcan tradition even before Jim knew that they were actually making out.

"It's okay. I just had to watch thousands of people be executed because they had the wrong skin tone, some sort of disability or happened to be in love with a person of the same sex. I've accepted it. Today, I watched six billion sentient beings be destroyed because of someone else's idea of revenge for something that has not even happened yet. One of those individuals happened to be my father in law. That I'm still trying to process." Jim said somberly.

After that uncomfortable exchange, Jim answered more questions about his relationship with his Spock as they continued to trudge through the snowy mess. Again, there was more raising of the
eyebrows when Jim recounted his entire strategy or rather non-strategy to get with Spock.

The best reaction of all came when he told old Spock about his Spock’s ex girlfriend the biologist when Jim tried to explain why his Spock was so relationship shy. Old Spock actually tripped over a rock when Jim told him about that bitch Carol. Jim was just glad that older Vulcans don't break hips like older humans when something like that happens. Jim was positive that was the Vulcan equivalent of 'falling down shock'."

"Okay, I am going to take your reaction to mean that did not happen in your time line. Are you okay?" Jim said as he helped the older Spock off the icy ground. He was just glad there weren’t any gray fluffy blobs of death or evil crab monsters of doom around to devour them.

"I'm fine Jim." The other Spock said as he returned to his feet. When Spock uses the term 'fine' along with a contraction, that usually means he is anything but fine. "I never 'dated' her, you did. Actually you almost married her." That's when Jim fell headfirst into a pesky snowdrift. Stupid snowdrifts, they're everywhere and they just sneak up on you without any warning.

He was so distracted by the snowdrift that he forgot to call Spock on the fact that he was lying by omission. Personally, Jim doesn't want to know what this Spock does not want to tell him.

After more wandering in the snow for what seemed like an eternity, they made it to the Starfleet outpost without another major incident. Apparently the other dimension version of his boy-husband, knew the poor sucker inside who got stuck babysitting the outpost in a place that made earth's Siberia seem nice and toasty. Jim heard about the tragic story of Lieutenant Commander Montgomery Scott mostly because Pike was trying to keep him from doing something that would get him kicked out of Starfleet. Jim may have been a 'little' drunk during that particular lecture but he remembered that the brilliant engineer was sentence to five years ice cold labor on Delta Vega for a transporter experiment involving Admiral Archer's prized beagle 'disappearing'. From the current conversation going on that tragic experiment involved the concept of Trans warp beaming.

Apparently, by the time the other version of his boyf—husband crossed into their timeline such a thing was possible and the guy with the pet Tribble was the one responsible for creating the equation. Jim is pretty sure giving them that piece of information probably violates the Prime Directive, but he really did not care if it means getting back to his boyf—Spock.

Now under normal circumstances he would not be willing to try out a completely untested, in this dimension anyway, means of getting back on the ship. However, he needed to get back to Spock before Cupcake was nothing more than bloody internal organs spread out on the floor. He trusted Spock with his life even if it wasn't his Spock.

This was the game plan. First, he was going to let other Spock beam him safely aboard Enterprise. Then he was going to get his boyfriend to admit that he is completely emotionally compromised and therefore unable to be in charge by any means necessary. He personally hopes the threat of withholding sex would work because judging by how easy it was for Jim to become bruised during their normal sexual encounters, Spock was a lot stronger than him.

Step three, was to change the ship's course to earth. Step four, was to get the engineering genius coming with him to figure out a way to make the ship go faster. Step five, was for him and everyone else to figure out a way to rescue Pike and destroy the device that can take out an entire planet. Who knew a simple mining vessel could be so dangerous? After they keep earth and Amanda from getting blown up, he is going to have to have the 'guess what, we are married' conversation with Spock. This was going to be so easy(sarcasm). If it wasn't for the assurance of the other Spock he would believe that they were totally and completely fucked.
"Are you sure you can't come with me?" Jim asked after the other Spock said he was staying behind.

"This is something you must do on your own." Old Spock said in his normal 'I am always right' voice. Apparently, this doesn't get less annoying with time.

"Do you know how stubborn you are? Remember, it took over seven months for other you to admit that we were actually dating. He has to be slapped upside the head for him to acknowledge anything. How in the hell am I going to get him to admit that he is emotionally compromised when he won't even admit it to himself?" Jim said as he stepped into the transporter that would hopefully send him back to his bo-lover.

"My presence may be more of a hindrance than an asset at the present time. You'll be fine Jim. I have complete faith in you." Again, he used that certain tone that always worked on him, stupid Vulcan. Was it his fault he had a weakness for any Spock?

"Fine, you win. When this is all over, my husband, and I are going to do lunch or whatever, because I still don't believe that universe ending paradox bull shit excuse." That's the last thing that Jim said before he was on his way back to his Spock, he hoped.

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She quickly walked back to her work station after receiving a crash course on Vulcan familial/marriage bonds and mental stability. According to Spock's sort of grandmother there is a 93.2% probability that his current mental state is caused by being separated from his new bond mate under circumstances that were already emotionally taxing. She really didn't want to think about the fact that the guy she thought she was in love with until she realized he wasn't as perfect as she thought he was, is most likely married to someone else. She can deal with that once this catastrophe was over.

As Nyota sent her temporary replacement away, she hoped that Spock didn't notice the small hypo concealed in her shoe. She knew it was absolutely crucial that Spock stay unaware of their planned. She tried her best to stay cold and indifferent just as before.

She felt like she was reliving her childhood when she heard Spock talking out loud to the furniture. She was positive he wasn't utilizing voice commands. Things were worse than she thought.

She was cursing a certain most likely dead ass for Gaila not being there when Spock finally accessed the security footage of his boyfriend being expelled from the ship against his will. If her friend was there Spock wouldn't be finding out about his boyfriend's disappearance via the security footage.

She knew the moment Spock knew what happened because he crushed the computer console with his bare hand. The rest of the bridge crew was scared but she stayed eerily calm. She had to be prepared for what she would do next. Even though she was a communications officer, she was still a soldier.

She quickly sent an e-mail to Dr. McCoy to come to the bridge. It was time.

The asshole that she will only refer to by the moniker 'Cupcake' arrived on the bridge too soon wearing a cocky expression that made Jim seem humble. Nyota personally wanted to deck him for being a smug dick. Cupcake greeted their captain in a way that seemed only one step away from insubordination. The self serving smile on his face stayed in place as he lied to Spock about what he did to Jim. His accomplices stood behind him looking equally smug.

Those expressions disappeared when Spock played the footage of the three idiots sending Jim on his way to Delta Vega on the main screen. The two lackeys started mumbling various expletives in a variety of languages under their breath when they notice the dark expression in Spock's eyes. Just the
fact that Spock was visibly angry was a very bad sign. She knew of no one who had a better poker face then Spock. She was personally surprised that Cupcake wasn't dead yet.

The trigger moment was Cupcake's explanation for his practically suicidal decision to send the ships first officer to a very dangerous ice planet. It probably didn't help that he referred to Jim by the same W word that got a certain professor knocked out three days earlier.

Everything after that moment probably happened in a mere 60 seconds but it seemed to last forever. Spock had the smug bastard up against the console with his hands wrapped around his neck before Cupcake finished speaking. His so-called friends were too afraid to come to his aid as he continued screaming before his air supply was completely cut off. Everyone else but her was too afraid to do anything.

She quickly grabbed the hypo out of her boot before anybody could stop her. She knew she only had one chance. There was a good chance that he could turn on her but she didn't care. She had to do this. Many lives were counting on her. Everyone else is too distracted by the violent scene in front of them to know what she was doing. She whispered a quick apology to Spock as she jabbed the hypo in his neck.

Instantly, his body went limp and he fell back on her causing her to almost fall to the ground with his weight on top of her. They were both quickly steadied by Sulu and Chekhov. The unconscious supposed victim in all this was crumbled on the floor beside the panel.

"What did you just do to the captain?" She heard the baby face navigator ask her as he held onto her arm. Sulu who was unable to continue supporting Spock by himself gently lowered their captain to the ground.

"She probably just saved the hobgoblin from getting court marshaled for killing one of his subordinates." Dr. McCoy said as he walked onto the bridge with a medical team, a small security detail of individuals who our probably ashamed of their colleagues, and Elder T'Pau.

"Take that idiot there and put him in exam room three. You know the one reserved for criminals who need medical treatment. Use the old fashion restraints. I want two guards outside his door at all times." Dr. McCoy ordered the team to do as soon as he was sure Cupcake still had a pulse.

"I want the idiot's accomplices locked up right now." He said with anger.

"What are we charging them with?" Ask the only female security team member.

"I would say stupidity but unfortunately that's not a punishable offense. I'm sure you can think of something in light of the fact that they threw the unconscious ships First Officer in an escape pod heading to the land of the frozen."

"There are several charges possible, including reckless endangerment of a superior officer, not following orders, unauthorized use of an emergency escape pod, and attempted murder depending on what planet they sent Mr. Kirk to. We'll think of something." The security officer said as she and her colleagues restrained the two individuals before they left.

"What about her?" Sulu asked now holding onto her as well. They probably still thought what she did moments earlier was an act of mutiny.

"I wasn't trying to take over the ship. I was trying to keep my friend from killing someone. I just gave him something that would keep him from spilling the lieutenant's blood." She said fighting his grip.

"Good point." Sulu said finally letting go of her.
"The hobgoblin is fine." The Doctor said with reassurance as he ran a scan. "Take Captain Spock to his quarters. Nurse Chapel, please stay with him until he wakes up."

"Shouldn't we take him to sick bay?" The nurse questioned.

"Like I'm going to make it easier for the green blooded idiot to kill the other idiot after all the trouble we went through to keep that from happening." Dr. McCoy said as Spock was removed from the bridge.

"Am I the only one who is confused?" Sulu asked to everybody else on the bridge that had the same confused expression. This led to her and the doctor explaining the events of the last few hours leaving out a few important details like the fact that Spock was pissed off because his ex attacked his most likely now husband. That piece of information she was keeping to herself.

"Just one question," Sulu said after her crazy explanation. "If Acting Captain Spock is now incapacitated and Jim is stuck on an ice planet, who's in charge?" Just as she was about to answer that question the bridge went crazy with sirens and blinking lights notifying her that the ship has been breached. That alone told her that Cupcake must have deactivated various sensors on the ship to get away with what he did earlier. Too bad, he was too stupid to get rid of the security footage.

She quickly walked over to a screen to see a security feed of someone running around the ship cooling system like an idiot. Within seconds she realized who that particular idiot was. She let out a breath of air that she has been holding in for way too long.

"He is," she said pointing to the screen with a smile. She wasn't surprised at all. She should have known that Jim would let nothing keep him away from Spock.

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He should have known something was going to go wrong. He should just be happy that he wasn't the one who materialized in a water pipe. He is also very happy that his mother was the one who suggested that cooling systems on the new constitution class ships should have an emergency release. There may or may not have been an incident in Jim's childhood when his mom was forced to take him to work where he got stuck inside a ship's cooling system during assembly. Was it his fault the daycare was boring as hell and had a locking system that he was able to deactivate by the time he was four?

Then after he saved Scotty, the security team was already there. Considering their relieved expressions and the fact that he wasn't being handcuffed, Jim was pretty sure they were actually happy to see him. He was just about to ask if Cupcake was still breathing, but didn't have time as he was brought to the bridge.

He was expecting to be hugged by a grateful boy-husband not a happy Uhura. He was half convinced they accidentally ended up in a different dimension simply because she was hugging him and smiling. She never smiles at him.

"Okay, why are you hugging me?" Jim asked hesitantly.

"Let's just say I'm happy you're not dead." Uhura responded.

"Shouldn't that make you happy? If I'm dead then Spock's available."

"Don't even joke about that. Do you have any idea how much it would destroy him if you were gone?" She said in a whisper as she let go of him.

"I know." He responded just as quietly. Jim knew she was right.
"Where's my boyfriend?" Jim asked quickly when he realized that Spock was not there.

He did not want to reveal the husband thing yet. He wasn't telling anyone else until he told Spock and he wasn't telling Spock until he completely accepted it himself. That may be some time next year.

As soon as he asked the question everyone looked away including Sulu.

"Okay, something bad happened. What are you not telling me? Is Cupcake dead?" Jim asked everyone.

"Who's Cupcake?" The very young navigator asked.

"I'm going to go with the guy they took away on a stretcher 15 minutes ago." Sulu responded.

"He's in the brig, correct?" Jim asked with dread.

"He is in sick bay." Uhura responded.

"Spock?" Jim asked with worry.

"Cupcake." She shot back using his nickname for that particular idiot.

"So you're calling him by that now?" He asked mimicking his boyfri-husband's trademark of raising the eyebrow. As much time as he has spent with Spock over the last eight months, he was really good at it.

"He is an asshole who tried to be my friend just so he could…" She didn't even have to finish the sentence because he knew.

"I know. He does that a lot with both genders. I was asking about Spock. Although, it's nice to know that my significant other will not be facing murder charges." Jim said snidely as he sat in the empty captain's chair.

"Only attempted charges." Jim heard Sulu mumbled under his breath. "Superwoman managed to knock him out before he actually killed the idiot."

"You did what? Are you suicidal?" He turned on her quickly. What the hell was she thinking going against someone who was so much stronger than her? He had this weird flashback to seeing Winona's body after Frank killed her with his bare hands.

"I'm not suicidal. I was armed with a hypo filled with things that would make him go unconscious. I knew what I was doing. I'm not your mom." She said that last part in a language that was so obscure nobody else on the bridge would probably know it without the aid of the universal translator. If they were not surrounded by the entire bridge he would ask her why she knew that but it was probably on whatever file she hacked into this weekend. It was also common knowledge.

"I did what I had to do to keep the ship from falling apart. He is safely unconscious in his room with the matriarch of his Clan. I will go down in a few minutes to check on him so you will stop worrying. No, you can't go see him yet." She responded before he even asked the question.

"That's going to have to wait until we're out of crisis mode. You are captain now. You have to come up with some brilliant scheme to save us all." He wasn't sure if Uhura was being sarcastic or not but he let her continued. "The fact that you managed to get back on this ship proves that you can do such a thing. What are your orders, captain?"
The first thing that Spock became aware of was the darkness, followed by the voice of an unfamiliar woman. She was angry because the other woman in the room was forcing her to leave and she was unable to do otherwise. The voice of the other female in that room was familiar. However, he could not place a name to the voice. He did not say that she was a woman, because he remembered at the very least that she was not human. After he heard the familiar swish of the door closing, he felt fingers on his forehead and the female was in his mind.

The fog lifted instantly, replaced with flashing lights and memories of a man who no longer existed. Normally, his mind focused on his father's disappointment at the fact that he could never live up to certain Vulcan presets, no matter how hard he tried. This time the memories are happy and they were things that Spock never saw before from a perspective that was not his. He saw the moment his father first met his mother more than three decades ago. Spock felt his nervousness and the beginning of his infatuation with Amanda. He saw memories of accidental touches and Vulcan kisses that Amanda was completely unaware of. There may have been a chess game or two involved in their early acquaintance.

Spock saw the day his parents became one through his father's eyes. The decision was not based on logic as he was told in the past but pure love. The love his father felt for Amanda was as strong as the love Spock feels for James now. It was consuming and shocking to know that this is what his father really felt for Amanda when Spock was always led to believe otherwise.

Next, he saw his birth from the perspective of his father. He felt his worry for Amanda and their unborn child. Yet, nothing compared to the love he felt coming from a man that he thought had no emotions whatsoever when a newborn Spock was first placed in his father's arms. For the first time in his entire life, Spock knew that his father loved him completely.

The light show in his mind ended abruptly and he found himself in the first officer's quarters of Enterprise. The room was stark with no personal effects except for a few uniforms due to the hasty departure today or was it yesterday by this point. His internal clock was not functioning due to the stress of recent events, including the loss of his father even if he tried to pretend otherwise.

"Do not mourn your father." He heard the voice of T'Pau, the matriarch of his clan say as
"Such a display of emotions is unbecoming from a Vulcan." Spock said slowly as he became more aware of everything. He was still trying to recall how he ended up in this room.

"We all feel pain and anger at this moment. We all feel lost. Most of us, feel the phantom ache of various bonds that are no longer there. We all feel but we do not allow it to control us. Feel the anger, but do not let it control you. Feel the sadness of his loss, but do not let it overwhelm you. Do not mourn him because he is not truly gone. He lives on in you. He has always said that you are the greatest thing he has accomplished."

Her words seemed peculiar and at odds with everything he thought he knew. Maybe he was still hallucinating, because the probability of any member of his Clan encouraging emotions was 1 in 2,040,423. The probability of anyone in his Clan seeing him as something other than an impurity in their proud bloodline was 1 in 32,189,096. This hallucination was preferable over his earlier encounter with 'Marshall'. This must be an effect of whatever Nyota shot him with earlier.

"I am unsure if this conversation is real." He spoke softly. "My entire existence, I have been made to feel abnormal because I am not fully Vulcan or human, but both. I have been made to believe that I am less simply because of my genetic makeup. Up until this very moment, I have been convinced that I exist only because it was logical no matter what my mother has argued otherwise. I felt that my parents' marriage was only based on logic not love and that my father only saw me as a disappointment. Up until this strange conversation, the only person other than my mother who accepted me for who I truly am is James."

As he said the name, he remembered exactly how he ended up unconscious in his quarters. He tried to kill the person who sent James away. He felt guilt for putting Jim in a position that made him vulnerable and he feared for his T'hy'la. If something happened to Jim, it would be his fault.

"Your bond mate is truly remarkable because of that and you have nothing to worry about. The memories I gave you are real. These memories are a gift from one who is no longer with us." For a moment he almost detected sorrow, but such a thing is statistically impossible.

Instead of discussing the nature of the memories that he was presented with, he chose to question T'Pau's earlier statement.

"James and I are not bonded." He said quickly as his mine became clearer.

"That statement is inaccurate. I have been in your mind. I saw a brilliant connection between you and your T'hy'la. It is a connection greater than anything that can be created by a bond maker." If Spock were human, he would be surprised by her words. It seems that his subconscious actually was aware of the possibility.

"I apologize for my erroneous assumption." Spock said quickly sitting up.

"I did not need to go into your mind to see the connection. I knew the moment I saw the two of you together on the transporter pad. The way he went to you told me everything I needed to know." Maybe that was the real reason why everyone seems so shocked during those moments. Spock was at such a loss for words that he was happy for the disruption of the door chime.

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Nyota was currently walking down the hall to Spock's room. She was mentally preparing herself to explain why she did what she did. She was unsure if Spock would be pacified by the same non-explanation as Jim. She wasn't sure if she was ready to tell him about being nearly 18 and arriving home just in time not to save her mom after she…
Almost 8 years later and Nyota doesn't want to talk about that day even in her mind.

Considering the looks that people were giving her, the Enterprise Grapevine must be working overtime. Everyone probably all knew about what happened earlier on the bridge. She was surprised anyone had time to give her a questioning look or murmur stupid things since they were supposed to be preparing for battle.

The first thing Jim did when he took over command was changed the course of the ship to earth in hopes that they would catch up to Nero before that planet became like Vulcan. The second thing he did was announce that they were pursuing the enemy ship and told everyone to prepare for battle.

Essentially, they were going to defeat Nero or die trying. Personally, she is hoping for an actual defeat. Considering the fact that Jim actually made it back to a ship traveling at warp, she had faith in him to do the nearly impossible. That in itself was a scary concept.

Being the ever loving boyfriend/significant other/husband or whatever Jim was to Spock, their new captain decided to help cover up the fact that their old captain had to be relieved of command because he tried to kill the idiot who messed with his Jim. The official story is Jim was 'advanced' to acting captain after Captain Spock became incapacitated due to an undisclosed medical condition. That was somewhat true, considering mental instability is a medical condition. It was better than everybody finding out that Spock went off the deep end when he found out his 'husband' was marooned on Delta Vega otherwise known as the ice planet of the dam by his ass of an ex.

Considering the dubious looks she was currently receiving, she had a feeling that some of the crew knew anyway.

The debriefing for this mission was going to suck, if they survive to be debriefed. That was still iffy and will probably require a miracle.

After the announcement the bridge crew brain trust, including her, manage to get into an argument over the best way to approach the big ship of death without ending up like their classmates. Things were not going very well when Jim pulled her aside to find out what really happened to Spock.

"What the fuck did you give my boyfriend?" Of course, he asked her this in Street Vulcan. She was just happy none of the refugees were around to hear this conversation. Unfortunately, she would remember once she was in the elevator that the baby face navigator was in one of her Vulcan classes two years ago. Nyota hoped that he was too busy working on his calculations to pay attention to this very private conversation.

"Your doctor friend referred to it as 'sanity in a hypo'. It contains smart drugs that are designed to adjust to his body chemistry." She said in a soft voice without malice. "We felt it was necessary after he started having conversations with the furniture. This was before Spock found out Cupcake sent you on a one way vacation to the coldest planet in that particular solar system. We didn't have a choice." She said quietly. Nyota couldn't help but notice his concern and worried expression as she continued telling him what happen.

"Fuck." She heard Jim muttered under his breath when she was done with recapping most of what happen. She felt the same way. If she didn't stop him he was probably going to run off the bridge to Spock. They didn't have time for that.

"He's okay, just unconscious right now." She said as she grabbed Jim's hand. "His sort of grandmother can help him with the Vulcan part of becoming stable again and the medication will help the human half. Therapy and a long conversation with you may be helpful later on. His behavior was likely triggered by the fact you were not here in addition to dealing with watching most of his race be murdered by a nut job. Apparently, new marriage bonds are very sensitive during the
first week and usually you are supposed to stay in close proximity." Nyota said waiting for his response.

"You know?" He asked looking directly at her with shock.

"T'Pau gave your friend and me a crash course on Vulcan bonds and their effect on mental stability after she somehow managed to eavesdrop on a very private conversation. She was 98.3 percent sure that you and Spock are bonded. You just confirmed it. The broken familial bond with his father was also a major contributing factor to whatever was going on and you being so far away did not make things any better. I'm not even sure how she managed to hear that particular conversation considering the door was shut but she seemed really concern for Spock. He's probably the only family she has left." It was probably more complicated than that but now was not the time for a complex explanation.

"Great, more crazy family members," Jim mumbled under his breath as she continued.

"Then again, I'm not sure how you managed to go from not even realizing that you two were in love with each other Friday to now being married. If I may speak freely, how in the hell did that happen?" Because honestly she would love to know how things progress to marriage so quickly.

"It was an accident and I did not figure it out until I was on the ice ball." He said sheepishly not looking at her. Nyota had a feeling he was hiding something from her.

"How do you accidentally get married?" She asked with hands on her hips.

"I'm not sure. It happens in New Las Vegas all the time." He joked trying to break the tension.

"This is a Vulcan marriage. They don't exactly have divorce or annulments. Never mind, I don't want to know any more how this happen. Never ever give me details." She mumbled under her breath.

"Agreed, since I have to be responsible and do captain things, like break up the fight that's happening behind us, can you please go check up on my husband now?" He asked her in a pleading tone.

"Fine, you better get back there they are getting rowdy." She said switching back to standard.

Now a few minutes later she stood outside Spock's quarters waiting to be allowed inside by Nurse Chapel or by Elder T'Pau. Instead, it was Spock that greeted her. He almost looked happy to see her which would be strange under any circumstances considering the fact that she just knocked him unconscious less than 45 minutes ago. Actually, Spock being visibly happy at all would be strange. Those drugs must have been very powerful.

"You're awake?" She asked with a hint of surprise in her voice.

"Since I am responding to you verbally, I must no longer be in a drug induced state of unconsciousness." Spock said in his normal 'I am superior to you' voice. That reassured her instantly.

"I'm sorry." She said looking at the ground not explaining why she was sorry. She was sorry for a lot of things including knocking him out.

"There is no need to apologize. You did what was necessary to ensure the safety of the ship."

"I just couldn't let you kill Cupcake, even though it would be quite pleasurable to see." She said this with a smirk. "I figured it was best to knock you out for a while. Although according to Dr. McCoy, you should still be unconscious." Nyota said sitting on the bed beside Spock.
"Spock regained consciousness the moment his bond mate announced that he was now acting captain." The Elder stated.

"Jim is back on board the ship? How is that possible? We're traveling at warp." Spock said in a "it's so obvious" way.

"I'm not sure. Jim is too busy trying to figure out a plan to sneak up on Nero that won't get us all killed. Your logic is rubbing off on him, so he's not completely suicidal. I'm just glad he's back, because Dr. McCoy and I really did not want to be in ch..." Her sentence was abruptly cut off due to being thrown off the bed because Spock got up so quickly. For the second time that day she found herself chasing behind a lovesick idiot running to the bridge.

She caught up to Spock just in time to see the touching reunion. Once again, Spock had someone up against a console. This time it was a fusion of lips and bodies as the two kissed in a way that in any other circumstances would be a prelude to sneaking off for 'private time'. Let's be honest it was halfway pornographic and even though she was 98% over Spock because he's now married it made her a little nauseous. (Unlike her father, she actually believes in the sanctity of the institution.) The hopeless romantic in her who believed in prince charming, before she found out that guy was an ass hole, thought it was adorable.

She was pretty sure people were less shocked when Spock was up there trying to kill Cupcake earlier. The bridge was filled with open mouth expressions. She is sure a few of the other girls (or guys) who were vying for Spock's attention this semester were cursing under their breath. She would have been joining them if she hadn't come to the conclusion that those two were absolutely made for each other.

When things started moving from PG 13 to just this side of extremely obscene, she started yelling at her captain to stop making out with his husband human style. Not that she actually said the term husband out loud. They didn't even blink.

"So that's the husband who he was trying to get back to?" The new guy mumbled, who came with Jim, that was now drying himself off with a towel on the bridge. This led to a chorus of 'Oh my god their married', 'Why are all the good ones married, gay, or both', and 'I would have tried to killed the idiot to if he did that to my significant other.'

However, the best reaction came from Dr. McCoy who already knew that it was a possibility.

"God damn it Jim, you just had to actually marry the hobgoblin without telling me. What the hell were you thinking marrying that god damn computer? Will you please stop groping that green blooded idiot long enough to answer me? Stop being so obscene, there's a toddler on the bridge." That's when Dr. McCoy actually covered Chekhov's eyes with his hand.

"I'm 17, not a toddler." The navigator said pushing the doctor away.

At that point, she walked over to the oblivious two and literally smacked Jim upside the head.

"Captain, please stop trying to have sex with your husband in public and focus on the fact we're in the middle of a crisis situation." That actually got them to stop making out. That also got her several angry looks, but at least she didn't have to watch them practically have sex on the bridge anymore.

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Jim really really wished he was with Spock right now instead of keeping his best friend from hitting Sulu upside the head. The bridge has had enough physical altercations for the day from what he has heard.
"Can we please just stop arguing? This is getting us nowhere. Whatever the case is we need to get on Nero's ship without being detected." Jim said trying to keep things from getting out of hand again. Bones just gave him his 'are you absolutely out of your god damn mind" look again. Jim gets that look a lot from his friend and he doesn't know anything about the 'accidental' marriage. Bones was going to kill him, if Amanda left anything behind. He wasn't really that happy when he thought that Jim was just dating the "green blooded computer". If they survive this, they were going to have to have a serious best friend talk over copious amounts of drinks.

"Jim, we can't just go in there with guns blazing. None of us want to deal with your boyfriend if you end up dead." They are definitely going to have to schedule that best friend time. Jim had a feeling he is missing one hell of a story about what happened when he was with other Spock in the land of freezing his ass off. Given his brand new husband's tendency to utilize the concept of half-truths and the obviously edited short version he heard earlier from his husband's friend, he was going to have to ask someone else for the real story. That person was obviously going to be Bones.

Just as Sulu was about to tell him for the 100th time that the math did not support his theory, Chekhov ran over with a viable plan involving Saturn's moons, magnetic distortion, and Mr. Scott getting the ship up to warp 4. Just as Bones question the validity of the plan due to Chekhov's age, Jim felt that all over tingling feeling that usually accompanies Spock's presence.

"God damn it. Does anybody follow doctor's orders anymore? You were supposed to be safely unconscious in your quarters." Jim was too happy to pay attention to Bones being Bones. If he wasn't trying to be the constant professional, he would be pouncing on Spock the moment he walked on the bridge. Instead, he was debating on whether to ask Spock how he was doing or get his opinion on the baby navigator's theory. Then Jim felt hot lips on top of his and he completely forgot about mentally imbalanced Romulans or attack strategies involving magnetic distortion. He also forgot that he was on the bridge in front of his new crew. Spock's body and mind were the only things he was aware of, as well as, the whispers of I love you that were being mentally projected to him. If he was aware of anything besides the way Spock's tongue caressed his he probably would have heard several variations of 'at least we know how he got advanced to acting captain'. He didn't hear Uhura telling him to stop or Bones obvious complaining. He was completely unaware of everything else until she actually hit him upside the head.

"Captain, please stop trying to have sex with your husband in public and focus on the fact we're in the middle of a crisis situation." That just earned her two very angry looks. He wasn't sure if he was angry because she just hit him in public, stopped a really good kissing session, or just revealed that he was married to Spock. He is going to go with the latter because he was not planning on breaking that news until they dealt with the big ship of death. If he was being completely honest with himself, if she didn't hit him, public sex on the bridge was highly probable because they were so lost in each other. He did order her to keep them from doing stupid things. Right now he needed to focus on the mission. The promise of sexy time with his husband will just have to be the reward for kicking Nero's ass. If they were actually married, shouldn't they do some sort of honeymoon when this was all done with?

"Did you have to tell everybody about the husband thing? I would have liked to tell my husband about it first." He asked her in irritation as a sort of reprimand.

"Don't blame me. That would be your new friend with the towel that let the cat out of the bag." She said in her defense. That's when he noticed Spock was not surprise she refer to him as his husband. Even Mr. Scott looked bewildered.

"You know?" Did Spock know the entire time?
"I was informed when Elder T'Pau performed a meld to repair the damage created by the sudden loss of my parental bond with Sarek." Spock said precisely without emotion.

"Good to know." Jim said completely pulling away from Spock and trying not to look like he just tried to jump his husband on the bridge. He really hoped nobody looked down right now and noticed his 'personal' problem.

"When I walked on the bridge, I believe Ensign Chekhov just came up with a possible strategy for beaming on to the enemy ship undetected."

Chekhov then proceeded to give his explanation again as Bones scoffed in the background, mumbling 17 over and over again. Really, you would think he could get over the age thing by now.

"The Ensign's calculations are correct. I request permission to beam aboard the enemy ship." Now Jim wanted to say no immediately just due to the fact that they had to pump Spock full of various psychiatric drugs less than an hour ago. However, he was pretty sure that the drill thing would be brought up if he said no with out listening.

"Is there a private conference room near here?" Jim asked because this was not a public conversation. He wanted to know more about what happened earlier.

"There's you're ready room captain." Someone said from behind.

"Sulu, you have the Comm." Jim said just as he followed Spock to the planning room just off the bridge.

Jim ignored the one person who said something about sneaking off to have sex during the middle of a battle situation. He found that comment insulting. Jim was 100% professional. There may have been one tiny kiss before the discussion started again but he really missed his Spock after almost dying at the hands of the crab monster of doom.

"Before I say there's no way in hell I'm letting you beam aboard the enemy ship alone, I would like to know first why you want to do it. Then, I want to know why the hell Bones thought it was necessary to relieve you of command by having Uhura give you something commonly referred to as 'sanity in a hypo'." He than listened to Spock's concise and logical argument involving the many reasons why he was the right one for the job and his plan to get Pike out of there.

Even though he was being overprotective, he knew that Spock had a better chance of understanding the ship due to the similar ancestry between Vulcans and Romulans. Also for some reason, Jim remembered that Ambassador Spock ship AKA the red matter device was voice activated from the earlier meld. That meant that his Spock maybe the only one who could fly it out of there. Therefore, it was only logical to let Spock go.

"Fine, you can go but only because you're going to bring up the drill thing if I say no." Jim said in acquiescence.

"I would never be that petty, captain." Jim laughed at the formality.

"We are married and you just had your tongue down my throat a few minutes ago. You can still call me Jim or James." He said with a tiny smile.

"It would not be professional."

"Professionalism went out the window when you kissed me on the bridge. I cannot believe you did that in front of everyone. I am going to blame it on whatever they shot you with. You're right, we
need to be professional in front of the crew. We are alone right now and therefore you can call me by my first name. I'm not exactly going to call my husband Mr. Spock behind closed doors, unless you want me to. God, we have to talk about the marriage thing later once we deal with Nero." They really needed to talk about that including how he found out about it.

"Indeed; however, this is not the time."

"Back to business, I'm coming with you on the ship because there is no way in hell I'm letting you go over there alone."

"I would cite regulations, but you would just ignore them." Spock said initiating a Vulcan kiss.

"Baby, you know me so well." Jim said as he kissed him human style. "Now, I want to know why my best friend and my former rival for your affections decided it was absolutely necessary to drug you to keep you from murdering Cupcake. Uhura mentioned something about talking to furniture before you put Cupcake in the hospital." Jim said as he stayed in Spock's embrace.

"It is impossible for me to put anybody in the hospital due to the fact we are still traveling at warp and have made no stops that I am aware of. However, somehow you were able to get on the ship." Spock said it as a statement not a question.

"It's a long story. I will tell you about it later. You're such a smart ass sometimes. You know what I mean."

"Yes, unfortunately. I was not talking to the furniture; I was talking to a personification of my human side that referred to himself as 'Marshall'." Okay, he wasn't exactly sure how to respond to that. No wonder they gave him 'sanity in a hypo'. Hallucinations were not a sign of good mental health. Then again, he just spent the afternoon getting to know an alternate version of his husband from another dimension. For all he knows that could all be in his head too.

"Is Marshall still here?" He asked tentatively.

"No. He was essentially a personification of my own worry for you and grief for my father. My time with Elder T'Pau has mitigated my need for such a device." He really wasn't that surprised by that explanation.

"You know it's okay to be angry or sad. Nero killed your father, your people, and even a lot of your students. It's not OK to try to kill Cupcake, even though we all really want to." Jim said the last part with a small smile.

"Then can I have him court marshaled for sending you to Delta Vega?" Spock asked quickly as he let go of Jim.

"Of course, after we deal with Nero." He said with a smile as they walked out of the room together still holding hands. Not that he was aware of it.
If they were not in the middle of a crisis situation, Jim would have loved to stay in that tiny conference room and tell Spock everything that happened on Delta Vega, including meeting the other Spock. He would love to stay with Spock and take away all of his pain. Even though it wasn't as crippling as before, due to being numbed by the happy drugs, Jim could still feel how his husband was really doing with every touch. It definitely wasn't a good time for another make out session, even if he really wanted one.

The boy genius' calculations were right and they were able to sneak up on the ship of doom by utilizing one of Saturn's moons. Contrary to what everybody was expecting, Jim and Spock did not make out in the transporter room before beaming down to the enemy ship. Okay, yes they did make out a little Vulcan style, but it doesn't count if no one in the room knows that Vulcans kiss with their hands. The only crew member who knew about Vulcan kisses was Uhura and she was safely on the bridge monitoring everyone's frequencies.

Not that anybody could tell by looking at Spock, but Jim knew his husband was a little scared when Jim ordered Sulu to fire on Nero's ship if he had a tactical advantage under any circumstances including the two still being on the ship. Spock knew they were going to defeat Nero or die trying. Jim is personally hoping for defeat, because he is seriously looking forward to a nice honeymoon now that he's not freaking out about being married. Maybe they could go somewhere warm with lots of tropical drinks and comfy beds. Maybe they could find some place where they won't freak out if he and Spock actually have sex on the beach. That was motivation in itself to defeat Nero.

His new friend from Delta Vega's hypothesis about empty cargo bays was really wrong and they ended up beaming into a room filled with blood thirsty Romulans that wanted his and his husband's head on a platter. Really, why did Mr. Scott think there would be any logic to that ship whatsoever? Nothing about Nero's behavior has been logical. Why would his ship be organized in a logical way? Why couldn't other Spock download the ships plans into his mind? That would have been helpful right about now.

He really didn't have time to be pissed off at the engineer because he was too busy making sure he and his husband didn't end up dead. He try to focus on still having an earth so he and Spock could take their well deserve tropical sex filled honeymoon. Happy thoughts make shooting easier. It turns out all those firing practice not-a-dates that Spock dragged him on, when he thought they were just friends, were really paying off.

Jim also quickly discovered that the best thing about being married to Spock was they could communicate telepathically. That came in handy a lot during their adventures on the big ship of death and that first particular nasty shootout. Instead of verbalizing that he would cover Spock so that he could extract the data from the currently unconscious Romulan, all Jim had to do was think it and Spock already knew. Telepathic communication with his husband is absolutely great. This meant they could be sneakier.

He was not upset that his husband had to meld with someone else. Okay, maybe Jim was a little upset but it was a mission thing and Spock was able to obtain the location of the black hole device of doom and Captain Pike. Shooting the idiot, who tried to hurt his husband help to alleviate some of his irritation. Individuals who mess with Spock, just piss him off and made him slightly more trigger-happy.

After they made their way to the red matter device Jim realized that maybe he should have told his Spock about other Spock before they arrived on the big ship of doom because Spock figured it out as
soon as the ship carrying the red matter device referred to him as Ambassador Spock. Spock was
giving him his 'why the fuck did you keep this from me' look. Jim really didn't like that look.
Although, in an seriously, considering all the things Spock kept from him recently, he did not
deserve that look. They were so talking about the 'Marshall' thing later.

"I told you I knew you could fly the ship, I just didn't tell you how I knew you could do it. I was
going to tell you eventually about the other Spock thing as soon as I was 100% sure I wasn't
completely crazy and hallucinating due to freezing cold temperatures." He told his husband as
sweetly as possible giving him the puppy dog eyes. Spock was completely vulnerable to the puppy
dog eyes. This is also the moment Jim thought it would be appropriate to have another earth
shattering kiss before he left to find Pike. Okay, maybe he was using the kiss as a diversionary tactic.

"That wasn't goodbye. That was good luck." Jim whispered against his lover's lips.

"Luck is illogical. James, this plan of yours only has a 9.8 percent probability of succeeding. If I
don't make it please tell my mother…"

"Trust me, it will work." Jim said placing another chaste kiss on Spock's lips to keep him from
speaking.

"This will work because I want it to. We will survive this just so your mom can kill me for marrying
her little boy without telling her. We will have a sextastic honeymoon somewhere tropical where we
never leave the bedroom. We will explore the galaxy together and eventually figure out how to rise
quarter Vulcan children in space. By the way I saw your baby name list Sunday morning. I like
Zachary and David on the human side. I prefer something I can pronounce while yelling." Jim
finished up his long speech just as his lips touched Spock's again.

"It is only logical in the face of a worst case scenario…” Spock was cut off by Jim placing a finger
on his lips.

"Spock, it will work." He said letting go of his husband. "I love you. I will see you back on the
ship." He said before reluctantly leaving.

"I love you too, T'hy'la." With that Jim was off to find Pike.

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Spock trusts Jim completely in everything; even though the statistical probability of Jim's crazy plan
working was less than 10%. However, he still wanted to say goodbye. Just in case, he wanted to get
that out of the way. He wanted no regrets.

The entire time they were parted he could hear Jim's stray thoughts coming through the bond. If they
got through this the first thing he was doing was teaching his bond mate how to shield. Jim's
thoughts were distracting sometimes, especially when Jim was almost dying. The second thing he
was doing was recreating the fantasy that Jim was currently using for motivation. Spock found it
very fascinating.

Contrary to his earlier assumption, he was able to fly the ship despite the vessel being extremely
advanced. Obviously, he and James were going to have a very long conversation about what
happened on Delta Vega later on.

He felt a hint of pride when he destroyed that drill. He knew that his mother would be safe and there
would be a location for Jim's honeymoon fantasies. He shielded his mind as best he could so Jim
would not be affected by his thoughts as the enemy ship attacked him. He felt it was the most logical
course to go to warp so that he may lead the ship away from Earth. He felt a sense of relief when Enterprise arrived to provide backup.

Spock knew in his mind that the only logical course was to put the ship on a collision course with the other ship. Maybe if he was not in love with James and knew for a fact that his lover wanted to have a future with him he would follow the same chorus as George Kirk 25 years previously. However, he will not leave his James the same way his father left him. At the last possible moment, he called for beam up and arrived on the transporter pad intact. Even though such a thing was completely illogical, his heart stayed still until seconds later when James and Captain Pike materialized on the transporter pad. He never felt happier when he saw his James again. Maybe they will have Jim's tropical honeymoon after all and eventually a son named Zachary.

He was right. After almost dying a couple of times and getting choked by more than one mentally imbalanced Romulan, he found Pike and successfully beamed back to the ship. It probably helped that despite suffering hours of torture Pike was still a pretty good shot. Also, it probably helped that Jim was able to get that gun away from the guy while he was being choked the second time.

Spock was just stepping off the transporter pad right when they materialized on the ship and the nick of time. He felt a great sense of relief knowing that Spock was there with him.

"I told you it would work." He said just as the medical team took a very weak Captain Pike out of his arms.

"Over the course of our relationship, I have quickly learned to never underestimate you." Spock said as he grabbed Jim's hand again to pull him into a very discreet Vulcan kiss. If they didn't need to go deal with Nero he would be pulling his Spock into the nearest supply closet for a 'thank god you're not dead' quickie despite the exhaustion. Instead, they were both making their way to the bridge with hands still clasped.

"That's because I'm awesome." He said smiling at his lover.

"Indeed," Spock said giving him a tiny smirk that no one else would pick up on. Much too soon they were on the bridge speaking with Nero. There may be a downside of being able to know what Spock is really thinking all the time. Spock was beyond pissed that Jim offered mercy to Nero and his crew. He didn't need the bond to tell him that, because Spock's eyes told him everything. Even though Spock understood the logic behind his offer his husband still wanted Nero's blood probably more than he wanted Cupcake's blood. Jim understood, but the greater good must come before personal vengeance. Fortunately, Nero was a stubborn bastard who would rather be sucked into a black hole then to accept their mercy. This probably saved Jim a lifetime of sleeping on the couch.

On the downside, they almost got sucked into the black hole. Somehow the miracle worker engineer he brought back from the ice planet of the damned pulled off a miracle involving the warp cores. The crazy scheme worked and they were saved.

He let go of a breath of air he didn't realize he was holding as he gazed back at his husband who seemed visibly relieved. He mouthed 'I love you.' to Spock quickly before he noticed everybody looking just as happy and relieved. Jim walked over and gave Spock a 'tiny' kiss that probably wasn't bridge appropriate but nobody really paid attention. Being happy that you're still alive can make people overlook certain things.

To be continued.
Author's note: This chapter was originally longer but I decided to divide the battle sequence into a separate section.

Yes, I breezed through everything that went on during the big battle because I wasn't really rewriting that much. The only things that I really changed were the scene in the transporter room, Jim and Spock's interactions on the jellyfish, and the fact that they communicate telepathically instead of whispering where everybody could overhear their conversations.

The next few chapters will deal with the aftereffects of the disaster. One thing I didn't like about the film was that they glossed over the aftereffects of such a massive event. The next few chapters will be covering what happens now. I am also going to have a few chapters from Amanda's perspective on everything from meeting Jim for the first time to losing her husband and her adopted planet.
Let go: Part one

Chapter Notes

Special thank you to Kumada for being my beta for this chapter.

A/N: I tried not to use another Backstreet Boys song in this story but I just kept listening to this while writing this chapter.

Chapter inspired by: You Can Let Go

Lyric excerpt:

"The light that followed you around
Lately nowhere to be found
Don't you know that I'm your place to run"

"When you're lost, let down, disappointed
And jerked around in this cold, cold world
I will always be by your side"

There are a lot of things that they never teach you in the command track, including how much paperwork was involved after a major crisis. When they get back to earth in a few weeks, Jim is going to suggest a seminar on what the hell you do after you saved the day. Even though theoretically he knew there was more to being a captain then fighting the bad guys, he had no idea writer's cramp would be involved.

Scotty's brilliant plan to save all their lives resulted in a very long trip to the nearest Starbase on impulse power that was going to result in a 2-week impromptu honeymoon on the damage starship. That would be great if he and Spock could actually spend it having copious amounts of sex in their quarters. Instead, he had to do captain things because Pike was still incapacitated and his husband was on 'light duty' due to the Cupcake incident and his conversations with 'Marshall'.

The first thing he did, along with several other members of the crew, was assessed the damage done to the ship and personnel. Between being attacked multiple times and almost being pulled into a black hole, the ship was in pretty rough shape. For example, a section of ceiling collapsed in sickbay on top of a patient. Fortunately, that patient was Cupcake and nobody else got hurt. If anybody deserves a few more broken bones, it was him.

The overall casualty count was higher than Jim was comfortable with but at least they were not all dead. Best of all, they still had an earth to come back to.

The other urgent captain thing Jim had to do, was sit through a very uncomfortable conference with various members of Starfleet explaining exactly what the hell happened. He was thankful that it was audio only otherwise he would be dealing with the angry looks from Admiral Johnson and his partners in crime, Admiral Jackson and Komack, along with irritated voices. Jim was getting a headache again just thinking about that beyond unpleasant conversation.

If Spock wasn't holding his hand during that entire interrogation, he probably would have said
certain things to certain idiots that would have got him kicked out of Starfleet.

The first thing he had to deal with was being yelled at for being on the ship in the first place and being told immediately to relinquish command. Sorry, he means being interrogated about how he became captain of the ship when he wasn't even supposed to be on it, let alone becoming captain.

Considering the obvious disdain he was detecting through their tone, he knew telling the truth would probably not be the best thing because certain individuals on the other side of the line wanted blood anyway they can get it. Leave it to Spock to baffle certain idiots with complete bureaucratic BS and logic.

"According to Starfleet regulation 12.6.2D non active spouses/domestic partners may accompany their active duty partner on missions. Under that provision it is perfectly lawful for now Acting Captain Kirk to be on the ship." Of course, Spock left out part E of that regulation involving the arcane fraternization policy and part F that involves battle situations.

"I had no idea how much the belief 'Vulcans don't lie' was a complete lie until I met you. You are beyond devious; it's absolutely brilliant." Jim told his husband mentally.

"I did not say that was how you actually got on board, just that, according to that regulation, it was perfectly permissible for you to be on the ship despite being put on academic probation for illogical and improper reasons." His husband responded.

"You two are not married, therefore your argument has no merit. Otherwise, you would have mentioned it at the trial." Admiral Lume said in a soft voice.

"Under Vulcan law we have been married since Saturday. Why else would my mother be present on earth? You saw her at the trial." Spock responded. If this conversation wasn't so hostile they would ask about Amanda.

"Bringing your mother into this is very devious and dangerous. I think this is why I love you so much." Jim said to his lover through their link before speaking out loud to a group of obviously irritated Admiralty who all wanted to know what the hell when on today.

"Sorry, we will not be able to send you a copy of the marriage certificate due to the fact the planet was sucked into a black hole." Jim said sarcastically hoping to remind them all the true purpose of this call. "I thought the whole point of this conversation was to discuss what happened to Vulcan, the other ships that were with us, and how the crew of the Enterprise kept earth from being destroyed so that we can now have this uncomfortable conversation. Instead, for the last 10 minutes, despite the fact that we have very limited resources, this conversation has focused on how I became acting captain. Let me make things simple so we can actually move on before we run out of energy to actually run the ship let alone make this call. Before Captain Pike went over to the enemy ship, he promoted me to first officer and made Spock acting captain. I think it was a reward for keeping us from getting ambushed by the same ship that was trying to drill through Earth earlier. Yes, that decision breaks 18 different regulations but whatever. You are going to have to ask Captain Pike about that. Due to medical reasons brought on by the fact his father was murdered by a mad Romulan and his entire planet was destroyed by sociopaths, Spock stepped down from command. I took over. We beamed over to the enemy ship. We did certain things that are too classified to talk about over this particular transmission that kept earth from becoming a black hole. Again, due to very limited resources, I would love to get this conversation over with as quickly as possible and get to the important stuff." Everybody else was ready to let it go and be happy that they were not all dead. However, Admiral Johnson kept harping on the fact that Jim was on the ship in the first place. He was thankful at that moment that this wasn't a video chat. He could feel Spock's anger through there bond. He wasn't the only one upset. Even his former enemy, Uhura seemed angry on his behalf.
"If it was not for Mr. Kirk's presents we would have been completely unaware that we were warping into a trap. Admiral Johnson, Mr. Kirk's quick thinking saved everyone on board from a fate similar to that of your nephew." Jim instantly knew where this conversation was going.

"That was a low blow." Jim said to his husband through the telepathic bond. He was sure due to the level of hostility and the lack of any other type of emotion Johnson probably hasn't received any of the reports regarding the rest of the fleet or maybe he was just too arrogant to actually read them.

"It is necessary." Spock said in reply.

"You only say such things because you're sleeping with him. What are you talking about? What happened to my nephew?" Admiral Johnson asked with anger in his voice telling Jim he didn't know. Jim's assumption about him not reading the other possible reports was accurate. Since Johnson jumped onto the fact the he was Captain, they didn't have an opportunity to talk about everything Nero accomplished before he destroyed Vulcan. They barely had time to discuss that.

That's when he and Spock took turns explaining why none of the other ships have checked in with Starfleet command yet. For the first time ever, Admiral Johnson was completely speechless. The conference from hell ended quickly after that, but not before they were notified that they would be limping to the nearest Starbase on their own. Jim personally believes this is his punishment for messing with the Johnson family.

After that uncomfortable conversation, all reports about what really happened were transmitted via electronic correspondence as is protocol. This resulted in way too many reports that Jim had to sign off on because he was still acting captain.

"Can't you be acting captain again, so you can sign off on this theoretical mountain of paperwork? You think paperwork is fun. This is foreplay for you." Jim asked his husband sardonically when he received the first round of reports to sign off on in the privacy of their quarters when all he wanted to do was crash.

(It's only logical that they share a room since they are married and there weren't that many to spare. Due to all the refugees on the ship and the rooms severely damage from fighting, a lot of people were bunking together for less pleasurable reasons.)

"Due to certain things you told Dr. McCoy when inspecting sickbay, I am unable to be reinstated as acting captain." His husband said just as he gave him a tiny kiss on the lips. Although, through their bond he could detect frustration.

Although he was on light duty for the duration, his ever loving husband decided to take care of some of the more practical things like ordering necessary repairs, documenting the damage, and arranging accommodations for the refugees on board. This allowed Jim to squeeze in a good 3 hours of non-drug induced sleep before he had to sign off on the second round of reports being transmitted to Starfleet. Thankfully, Johnson was too shocked about his nephew’s death to send Jim any nasty emails. He didn't have time to deal with pettiness.

He was half tempted to sign off on all the memos without reading them but he didn't want certain aspects of the truth to get back to Starfleet command. You really don't want to know how long it took him to get rid of any mentions of Spock going crazy from the reports. He is just happy no one else knows about 'Marshall' except for Bones. His best friend only knew because Jim wanted to make sure his boyfriend didn't have any more conversations with his 'human side'. Not that he knew that much about that incident because he and Spock have not had time for that crucial conversation let alone any other fun activities. Being in charge sucks.
Because of the 'Marshall' thing, Spock was on 'restricted duty' until they got back to earth and was required to spend quality time with his grandmother to mend the damage to his mind. This was in addition to taking certain medications to guarantee that Spock didn't go off the deep end and try to strangle cupcake again. Jim's worst hookup decision ever was currently in a medically induced coma to help mend the damage caused by being crushed by debris.

If it wasn't for the fact that he was too tired for anything more than hand holding and light human kisses, Jim would be convinced that Spock was withholding sex because he was pissed off that Jim told Bones about everything. Being in charge meant no sexy time with his husband. That sucked. Honestly, they were too physically and emotionally exhausted to do anything besides a little cuddling before he blacked out from exhaustion that first night.

It wasn't until about a day later Jim actually found time in his busy schedule to visit Pike. He was almost shocked that his over protective best friend let him in to see his pseudo father figure. Pike was in good spirits despite the fact that he would probably be utilizing a wheelchair for a very long time. The drugs helped. Bones gives good drugs.

Apparently, Pike was in good spirits and laughing because Bones told him the unedited version of why his best friend is calling him Captain Spock-Kirk. Then again maybe it's all the good painkillers and probably a few antidepressants for good measure.

"How in the hell do you accidentally get married? Then again this is you we are talking about. You have a knack for pulling off the impossible." Pike asked him as the man continued to laugh hysterically.

"I'm awesome like that and so is Spock. According to Spock's grandmother, or maybe she is his great grandmother, our minds are extremely compatible and we formed a spontaneous link. We were made for each other. How can the Admiralty argue with that?" He said with a sweet smile

"I'm sure Johnson will try because he is a dick." Jim is only surprise that the captain said that out loud.

"It's better that it happen now than accidentally if we had to meld for some work related reason." Jim said in his defense.

"I'm not arguing that point. For somebody who has never had a relationship that has lasted any significant amount of time, you're taking this rather well." Once he got over the initial shock, he was actually looking forward to forever now that he was sure that it was going to last more than a couple of hours.

"I have kind of been in love with him since I first ran into him eight months ago after my first try at the Kobayashi Maru. If it was anyone else, I would be running for the hills. I love him, so it's all good. Unfortunately, Amanda is going to cut off my balls for corrupting her baby boy." Jim suddenly remembered that they still had to contact her as soon as they could. Because of circumstances, they were not able to send any messages out that were not technically mission critical. Though because Amanda was technically a member of the Vulcan Council they could probably get away with it if he wasn't terrified of her reaction or his husband wasn't avoiding his mother.

"I don't think she is really going to care, at least not for a while. She just lost her husband and her entire planet. She will have other things to worry about." Pike did have a point.

"You may be right. However, that could also mean that she could be even more pissed off that I stole her baby boy a.k.a. the only part of her husband that she has left." He pointed out to Pike.
"From the few times I've talked to her she seems like a reasonable person that is very overprotective. It will be fine. In a way, the accidental marriage is probably for the best, at least career wise. That should help keep mommy dearest happy."

"What do you mean by that?" Jim asked him.

"Starfleet extremely strict policies prohibiting married command teams is now in void if the couple in question was married before one or both parties became an active member of Starfleet." Pike said this with a large smile.

"That doesn't help considering I've been a member of this wonderful organization for almost three years." Jim said sardonically.

"Academy time doesn't count. You're not considered a member of Starfleet until you graduate the academy and receive your first commission. Thanks to that rule, the idiots in charge can't say a damn thing about you being Spock's first officer." That explains the laughter.

"Or the other way around like it is right now. So that explains why I was born in space. My parents were married the week before my mom’s graduated from the Academy." Maybe, just this once, the universe did something good for him.

"That explains why you were conceived in space." Pike said smiling. "Let's be honest, this is going to be my last time up here due to Starfleet's esoteric policies regarding individuals with disabilities. Because I will most likely have to utilize a wheelchair for the rest of my life, I can't be a starship captain anymore. Apparently, I lost my leadership skills when I lost my ability to walk. Morons." The sarcasm was easily detected there.

"That's ridiculous." Jim scoffed to himself. Pike had no trouble shooting that Romulan despite being unable to utilize his legs. He made a point of stressing that fact in his report.

"We both know even in 2258 people have some absolutely ridiculous ideas about individuals with disabilities. They're going to give me a desk job and Enterprise will probably go to you and Spock. I'm just not sure who will be captain." He said laughing again.

"Don't worry, we will flip a coin. It's what we do in the bedroom." Jim said joking knowing that Bones was in listening distance. He deserted it after their recent conversations.

"God damn it Jim, don't give me any details about what you and the hobgoblin do in private." Jim heard his best friend grumble a couple of beds away.

"For that, I'm closing the door." Jim said as he activated the door mechanism. Pike was smirking at his joke.

"You two are good together, proving once and for all that the fraternization policy is completely ridiculous. The fact that you two were together did not affect your ability to save Earth and me. It probably made it easier."

"Telepathic communication during a battle situation is very helpful. It would probably be good during diplomatic situations as well." Jim said being honest.

"I would stress that in the reports. I'm happy that you won't be forced to make the same decision I did." Pike said becoming quiet again.

"What are you talking about?" Jim asked before he got it. "Was there a girl or possibly a guy involved in this story of deep regret?"
"A girl. She was my original first officer on my last ship. I think it was love at first site. I called her Number One, because she was the most important person in my life. Because of that ridiculous policy, nothing could develop beyond a really good friendship. We were too professional to let it happen, but I still loved her." The sorrow in his voice was unbelievably noticeable.

"So that explains why you let my husband down so easy." Jim said with a laugh trying to break the tension.

"Spock told you about that?" Pike asked with a half smile

"We tell each other everything. We are like that. One advantage to your new job is that you can probably make a move on your number one." Jim said hopefully before he notices the broken expression on Pike's face.

"That's not possible. When I received my new commission, Number One was assigned to be the captain of the Farragut." Pike didn't need to say anything else. No one on that ship survived.

"Fuck!" What else could Jim say besides that.

The entire time Jim and Spock were on the enemy ship it felt like her heart wasn't beating. She shouldn't have been worried at all. If Jim Kirk wants to do something, he will do it. She realized that during her losing battle for Spock's affections. She actually likes Jim now, which means he has already accomplished the seemingly impossible. However, she was still beyond worried when they lost communications and beaming abilities. She was angry when Sulu mentioned Jim and Spock were on their own on the enemy ship. Nyota was also the one who decided it was in their best interest to chase after the other ship.

She's never been happier to see a hand holding Jim and Spock walk back on the bridge, except a few minutes later when they didn't get pulled into the black hole of death.

Now, a few days later, as the ship slowly made its way back to earth, she was a avoiding her captain and his husband.

(The more she says the H word, the less awkward it is. She still can't believe they went from complete denial about their feelings to husband and husband over a weekend. Then again, if you take the denial factor out of it they have been dating for the last eight months or so. She didn't stand a chance. This was fate. According to a classified document that she 'accidentally' read, this wasn't the first time destiny ran its course with those two.)

Every time she ran into Jim since they survived not being pulled into a black hole, he asked her about what really happened when he was gone. She honestly didn't believe he was asking her for the sake of accurate reports. She read over what was already transmitted to Starfleet herself and it brought new meaning to the phrase 'truth is subjective'. Honestly, she wasn't making up excuses not to talk to him. It was true that some of the communication systems were damaged in the attack.

She really wished she could e-mail one of her few still living friends about this mess. After the adrenaline wore off she now has to deal with the fact that Spock and Gaila are her only friends that are still alive. She was also starting to accept the fact that the first person she ever really loved in a non-high school crush way was among the dead. Also, thanks to the Spock situation she was having flashbacks to everything that happened when her mom died in addition to everything else. Work was a welcome distraction from everything going on in her head. She just wasn't ready to process everything yet.
Unfortunately, the same diversionary tactics do not work on workaholic half Vulcans who she used to have a crush on. Finally, on the second day on the long trek back once things were starting to return to something approximating normal considering they were limping to the nearest starbase, Spock cornered her in one of the vacant communication labs. Of course, he asked her why she did what she did on the bridge.

"Jim made me promise to make sure you didn't do anything stupid. Trying to kill Cupcake for being a moron qualifies as something stupid. I guess we should all be happy that the ship did more damage to him than you did." She said with a smile trying to divert his attention. You have to love karma sometimes and karma kicked Cupcake's ass.

"Yes that was most unfortunate." She was almost surprised Spock use sarcasm.

"I'm so happy Jim is teaching you how to be sarcastic." She said just as sardonically.

"Regardless, I would still like to know why you did what you did on the bridge. Despite the great personal risk to your person and career." Spock asked her.

"Even though you're married to Jim now, you're still my friend. Friends don't let friends do stupid things. Just because you want to be with someone else doesn't mean I don't want to be your friend anymore. I thought I already made that point clear. I'm not Carol. All I want is your friendship and no, that is not a euphemism for sex. I like you exactly the way you are even if you come with a crazy husband that saved all our lives. I'm even starting to like him, but don't tell him that." She answered him honestly.

"So that was an act of friendship?" She wasn't sure if that was a question or a statement.

"It was a lot of things. You're not the first one to try to save a parent and fail miserably." She said in a near whisper as tears began to sting her eyes. "You are not the only one who feels like they lost a chance at true closure. I bet that is the thing you regret most regarding your father."

"It is possible."

"I know exactly how you feel. Yes you do feel, otherwise you would not have tried to kill Cupcake." She said quickly before he could go into denial mode.

She's not even sure how he got her to do it, but she told him everything. She told him about her mom losing touch with reality after the divorce and the self-medicating with alcohol. She told him about dealing with the fallout. She told him about being 17 and finding her mom after her successful suicide attempt minutes before she actually died.

He also got her to talk about Jordan. She blames her residual crush for that. She was so mad at Jordan hurting her that she never really talked to him about how he hurt her and now that he was dead she would never have the chance. She has been carrying around that resentment for so long and now there isn't anyone to resent.

The conversation ended with her tears and her hugging him. He was only slightly uncomfortable with the gesture. She reassured Spock the tears were cathartic in nature.

"So why are you having this heart to heart with me instead of spending time with your husband?" She asked changing the subject to make himself available more comfortable.

"Mr. Scott is currently forcing him to tour engineering to assess the damage more fully and then he was going to visit with Captain Pike." He answered a little too quickly.
"Why are you not with him? This is kind of your impromptu honeymoon because some unknown reason you may not have that on your own." The lack of answer told her that he was avoiding his husband.

"I have a feeling you're avoiding him most likely because you're not a heart to heart person. Have you told him everything that happened yet? Have you talked to him about your father? As someone who kept everything inside for years, I can tell you that it's not healthy." Again she was being honest with him.

"Unfortunately, there has not been time for such things.

"Make time." She said with a smile.

"You're encouraging us to be together?" He asked almost shocked, for him.

"You two made me believe in happily ever after and true love again. It's the least I can do." She said letting go of him.
Interlude: I Am Your Friend Dame It

During their three years of friendship, McCoy has put up with all sorts of crazy shenanigans from his best friend despite his better judgment. He is currently repressing 99% of the idiotic/illegal things that Jim has put him through. Supposedly, that is what friends do. If he wasn't Jim's friend he would have run away a long time ago. There was a reason why he only lived with Jim for a year; he would have killed him otherwise for his reckless behavior.

McCoy was not shocked at all, that his best friend was brought up before the Admiralty, for doing something utterly stupid except that the specific reason was academic dishonesty. McCoy knew of dozens of worse things Jim had done over the last three years deserving of expulsion. The worst involved some sort of illegal substance, public nudity, and getting his best friend out of jail at 3:37 AM. There was also another incident involving nudity, vintage handcuffs, various other 'toys', an antique four post bed and being called at 2:34 AM to save his friend from his hookup of the evening/faculty member that needed 'sanity in a hypo'. That was one of the memories McCoy was repressing.

With all the crazy things that Jim has put him through for the last three years McCoy honestly wasn't expecting his best friend to accidentally get married to a Starfleet Academy professor referred to by his students as 'the evil green hobgoblin/ass/dick', 'professor heartless', or 'the emotionless computer'. A year ago, if you told him Jim Kirk would have married a Vulcan or anyone else for that matter, McCoy would have laughed you out of the room after checking you for mental defect. He honestly didn't see this coming, even though he should have.

He wasn't surprised that Jim accidentally got married but rather who Jim accidentally married. Considering the amount of alcohol Jim consumed during the first two years of their acquaintance and his pension for doing stupid things it seemed highly probable that his friend would end up married to some complete stranger in New Las Vegas with the mother of all hangovers. McCoy would put money on it. Jim was more relationship-a-phobic then McCoy was. He was convinced the only way his friend would ever get married would be a Las Vegas style accident. He was half-right.

During their first two years of acquaintance, Bones was sure Jim believed commitment was a dirty word. His friend preferred mostly one nightstands and random hookups much too Bones dismay. McCoy was still desperately trying to repress every single time he walked in on his friend doing extremely inappropriate things with his hookup of the night when they were forced to share a room together that first year. As a doctor, he was worried that one of these days his friend was going to end up with some deadly alien STI or unplanned child due to being too 'drunk' to remember to use a condom. McCoy remembered trying to set his best friend up with Christie in a misguided attempt to try to break Jim out of his one night stand ways, to no avail. Yet, somehow a certain green blooded computer manage to do what he couldn't. He really should be happy about it, but he wasn't.

A year after that setup and his best friend somehow managed to get himself married Vulcan style. Only Jim could do something like this. After a very long meeting with elder T'Pau does McCoy finally understand the science behind it to some Degree. He does not for one moment believe any of the overly romantic crap involving the Vulcan equivalent of soul mates. Then again, after his disastrous marriage, he doesn't believe in the human concept of soul mates either.

He should have known that Jim's relationship with Spock was going to be different from the beginning. First, Jim never ever spent hours obsessing over a possible hook up before. Jim never spent weeks on end trying to find out everything possible about the object of his affection. Jim was even willing to learn how to play chess with Spock just to spend time with him. That alone should
have told McCoy that this was going to be more than a casual hook up for Jim. Jim usually doesn't put much effort into his conquest of the night beyond a smile and a wink. The only person Leonard ever saw Jim really try to get with was Cadet Uhura and that was more of an intellectual exercise than anything else.

McCoy didn't believe Jim for one moment when he said that he and the hobgoblin were just friends even before Jim started spending every single waking minute with his precious Vulcan. They were just too close and Bones sincerely doubted Jim would skip 'drink to you drop' Thursdays at their favorite bar for someone who was just a friend. McCoy really didn't believe that just friends line Jim was trying to feed him when his friend told him how many times he touched his favorite Vulcan on a regular basis. Maybe he should have told Jim about how Vulcans kiss, but watching his friend in denial was just too much fun to pass up.

In the beginning, he was just happy that he no longer had to worry about Jim picking up strange alien STIs despite the fact that he never saw Jim anymore. He may have made jokes about Spock being Jim's brand new imaginary friend but he knew that Spock was very real despite never meeting him in person. Yet, he didn't think that Jim was falling in love because Jim didn't seem like the type of person to fall in love. Boy, was McCoy wrong.

He was not even surprised when Jim showed up to his third attempt at the Kobayashi Maru covered with bite marks and bruises. McCoy knew the sex was inevitable; again, it is Jim. Considering everything that has happened since then, McCoy can't believe that was only mere days ago. That wasn't the first time that he saw his friend like that after a 'hookup'. However, it was the first time he saw Jim with the person who gave him those bruises the next day, looking all happy couple, complete with handholding and lingering looks. That alone should have told him that Jim's new relationship was different from everything that came before it. McCoy should have definitely got it when the normally passive Vulcan professor knocked out another instructor for saying horrible things about Jim. That right there said 'fool in love' in big flashing letters.

Yet, McCoy was still absolutely shocked Monday morning when Jim told him that he was moving in with the green-blooded computer and spent the weekend meeting the hobgoblin's mother.

"You're moving in with him after dating for less than three days? What the hell are you thinking? Do I need to have you checked out? Obviously, you have brain damage." He asked his friend over a cup of horrible coffee and stale whole wheat toast at a diner just off campus.

"Thanks for your support, best friend of mine." Jim said sarcastically as he placed a slice of bacon in his mouth. "If you really think about it, Spock and I have been dating for the last eight months. Hey, did you know that Vulcans kiss with their hands?" Jim said as he took a bite of his Danish.

"Yes. It's not that I don't like Spock, it's just I don't know him. I worry about you sometimes. You have a tendency to leap without looking."

"Good to know what you really think about me. That explains the laughter every time I told you about the handholding and hugs. You can't blame not knowing Spock on me or Spock. You are the one who never wanted to come over for a movie night or anything else." Jim said as he kept eating.

"Yes and he didn't want to come here. That makes us even. Have you considered eating something a little more nutritious for breakfast like fruit?" Bones said jumping on Jim's eating habits. Now that he no longer had to worry about Jim catching some alien strain of crabs he can focus on Jim's crazy eating habits. Sometimes, he was convinced the boy had an eating disorder.

"It's not that he didn't want to come with me but his mom is in town and we're dealing with being railroaded by Starfleet in an hour. Don't criticize my eating habits. I usually don't eat meat at home
because Spock doesn't like it. Let me indulge."

"You're going to indulge your way right in to a heart attack. You are not even married yet and he has you trained like a good little puppy." Bones mumbled under his breath as he took another drink of coffee as Jim stuck out his tongue.

"You actually care about this guy enough to move in with him?" McCoy asked in all seriousness.

"Bones, I love him. I owe him that much considering he may lose his entire career just for protecting my honor." Jim actually seemed to be worry which was unusual.

"Please, I seriously doubt the most respected faculty member at the academy will get kicked out for protecting his boyfriend's honor." McCoy scoffed.

"It's still possible. You know me. I'm never worried, but I'm worried about him. I have never cared about anyone else that much before. He is the first person that I can trust completely and knows everything about me. Yesterday, I accidentally saw a list of possible baby names that Spock was compiling and I didn't freak out. In my mind, I'm picturing adorable quarter Vulcan children with his ears and my eyes. I'm not terrified by that particular thought anymore." Jim was actually smiling when he talked about this. That should have been another sign that his best friend had it bad.

"You're actually thinking about children. You do remember you're both guys?" He said trying to purposely burst Jim's bubble and bring his best friend back down to earth or some other planet.

"It's 2258, that's what genetic engineering and surrogacy are for. Besides, due to the fact my boyfriend is a hybrid; children created the old fashioned way would've been out of the question anyway even if we were a 'traditional' couple." The conversation ended abruptly when they realized it was time to leave. That was the last real conversation he had with his friend before everything went to hell thanks to one mentally imbalanced Romulan and a prick admiral with a grudge.

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Over the next several hours, due to various events involving McCoy sneaking his friend on the ship, his friend's boyfriend being paranoid about Jim's health, and drugging Spock to keep him from killing the idiot who could have gotten Jim's health, and drugging Spock to keep him from the idiot who could have killed Jim, Bones knew it was really love. The thing that clinched it was his conversation with Jim after the dust had settled and they were sure they would have an earth to come back to. After almost dying on the ice planet and being strangled several times on the enemy ship, the thing Jim was most concerned about was the hobgoblin's mental stability. That definitely screamed 'lovesick fool'.

"What I'm about to tell you needs to stay between us. I don't want Starfleet to know anything about this." He knew Jim was being serious by the way he made sure the door was secure before he even began to speak.

"If the situation endangers anyone on this ship, I'm going to have to put it on the official record. I cannot keep something off the record just because you're my friend." Bones told Jim in all seriousness.

"I'm not asking you as the chief medical officer of the ship. Bones, I'm asking you as my best friend to keep this between us. You're the only person I trust with this information. You already know something was wrong." McCoy gave in once Jim brought out the puppy dog eyes.

"Fine, this is about the computer, otherwise you wouldn't be so desperate?" He asked his friend already knowing the answer from his annoyed expression.
"Please don't talk about my husband like that." Jim said letting out an irritated sigh.

"So you are planning on staying married." He asked Jim in all seriousness. Given that Jim was more relationship shy then he was, McCoy was actually shocked Jim wasn't panicking about his accidental marriage and desperately trying to find a way out of it.

"It's not like Vulcans really have divorce. They take that 'until death do us part' thing a little bit literally." Jim actually laughed a little when he said this.

"I seriously doubt the hobgoblin is going to hold you to something that happened accidentally."

"I don't want to stay married to Spock because there supposedly is no way out. I want to stay married to him because I want to be with him for the rest of my life. If I didn't love him completely, it would be impossible for the bond to be created accidentally or otherwise in our situation. I'm not worried about being married to Spock. I'm worried about Spock. What happened while I was on the planet of freezing my ass off?" Jim asked becoming serious again.

"In nonmedical terms, he went off the deep end." Bones said trying to interject humor.

"That was helpful." Jim said as sardonically as possible. "I already knew that. In your professional medical opinion, should we be worried about my husband having conversations on the bridge with his human side that he refers to as 'Marshall'? Bones honestly wasn't expecting Jim to say that even though he knew the hobgoblin was not all there when Jim was off the ship.

"It looks like we made the right call with the 'sanity in a hypo'. Your boyfriend—sorry husband, already tried to kill somebody and you're questioning his mental stability? I think that right there told us that his mental health was quite fragile. Has he had conversations with 'Marshall' before?" McCoy asked Jim going straight into doctor mode trying to remember everything he learned from his psyc rotation.

"He said that 'Marshall' was a manifestation of his grief for his father and his worry for me. He also said that because he was now okay, there was no need for 'Marshall'. He also said something about his grandmother doing some Vulcan mind-healing thing on him. I don't really know more than that because we had to go take care of the nut job trying to kill us all."

"Time with his grandmother probably helped. We are also going to give him other smart antidepressants to help stabilize him right now. He is not the only survivor that I've had to prescribe that stuff to. In addition, I think you and your husband need to have a nice long conversation about everything. Considering he is as stubborn as you are, you will probably be the only one that he'll tell anything to. Have you two even had time to talk about the fact that you are now married?"

"When exactly would Spock and I have time for a heart to heart?" Jim asked him in an irritated tone. "How exactly could we get that in between taking out the evil guy and unpleasant conversations with the idiotic bureaucrats in charge?" I've barely had time to pee in the last 12 hours. I only got to come down here to talk to you because I knew I had to check up on the damage done down here. Cupcake being the victim is just a bonus." Just then Jim received a message to report to engineering again for an emergency. "This is why we haven't talked yet. I got to go to engineering." With that his friend was gone again.

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The next time McCoy ran into Jim was when he was in sick bay to check up on Captain Pike a few days later.
"Have you had time to talk to your husband yet about you know what? He asked his friend before he went in to see Pike.

"Not really. Every time it seems like we have a moment to talk, I have another report to review or we suddenly discovered more damage to the ship." Jim says with a sleepy sigh as he kept walking.

"Why do I not believe you?" McCoy mumbled under his breath.

"Trust me, this is not an excuse. I think I only got 3 hours of sleep last night because I had to do captain things. Can't you just reinstate Spock as acting captain so he can do all the paperwork and therefore we will both have the energy to do something non-ship related. I miss sex. Instead of sexy time this afternoon, I got to hear Mr. Scott complain about the 5622 things wrong in engineering. Currently my husband is off to get his almost ex-girlfriend to talk about why she runs out of the room every time I try to ask her about why she was willing to go toe to toe with a mentally unstable Vulcan. I'm not avoiding any conversations on purpose Bones, we really just haven't had the time period." Jim said right before walking into Pike's room.

"I really don't want to know about your personal life Captain Spock-Kirk. Keep your sordid stories of green blooded loving to yourself. I don't want to know. I saw enough when I was your roommate." That led to copious amounts of laughter from Captain Pike and later retaliation from Jim in the form of a coin toss joke. The doctor personally felt laughter was good for the man who seems so down after finding out he lost the ability to utilize his legs or at least that is what the doctor thought. He didn't understand the real source of that depression until he overheard the conversation between Pike and Jim.

McCoy has been so pissed off over the last few days that he hasn't stopped to think that maybe this marriage may be a good thing for Jim. He hasn't had to bail Jim out of jail for the last eight months. There also haven't been any irritating calls for early morning hangover treatments or rescues from rough sex gone wrong. That in itself is a reason to accept this marriage and the hobgoblin. Due to the crazy circumstances his friend will not have to hide his relationship with Spock or choose between the person he loves and the job that he loves. Again, that was another reason to rejoice. Also, McCoy now had someone else to help him keep Jim in line. He needed all the help he can get with keeping Jim alive.

Unlike the possible Vega scenario, at least he knew his best friend accidentally married someone that actually loves him. Maybe just maybe he could be a little supportive.

"Just so you know, you're off duty until 6:00 AM tomorrow morning, barring attack by angry Klingons or some other society that shoots first and ask questions later." McCoy said as he kicked his best friend out of Pike's room after an appropriate amount of time. Pike needed rest in so did Jim.

"You're giving me time off?" Jim asked almost shocked.

"You look ready to drop. You need the rest, not that you'll actually take it. I know you too well and there are going to be certain things you will want to do even though your seconds from collapsing. This is for you and the hobgoblin, but for the love of god do not tell me what you do with the contents of this bag. Consider this your wedding present." McCoy said thrusting the bag at his friend.

"You got me condoms and lube. You're like the best friend ever. So this is your way of saying you're OK with us now?"

"Maybe it is, as long as the hobgoblin doesn't try to choke you." McCoy said leaving to check on another patient.
"Even though I am married now, you're still my best friend. You don't have to worry so much. If there's any choking involved, I promise we will have safe words and it will be 100% consensual."
McCoy still heard Jim even though he was on the other side of sickbay. That boy would be the death of him, married or not.
Let Go: part two

After his heart to heart with Pike, Jim felt absolutely mentally exhausted. Even though Pike didn't say a another word about losing his Number One, Jim just knew that he was hurt more by her loss than the thought of never being able to walk again or getting shackled to a desk for the rest of his Starfleet career. At least there was still hope that one day he could walk again, due to some scientific breakthrough or just maybe the idiotic bureaucrats in charge will realize that a person being in a wheelchair is not a liability but possibly an asset. Pike's lost love was gone for good.

The entire conversation made Jim want to go find Spock and tell him exactly how much Jim loves him and wanted to spend the rest of his life with Spock even if his lover kept having conversations with 'Marshall'.

After that, Jim tried to talk about happier things or at least nothing that would remind Pike of the one that got away, until Bones actually kicked him out. He would be upset except for the fact that Bones gave him the world's greatest wedding present ever; private time with Spock and supplies for sexy time.

Even though he was drop dead tired, he almost bounced back to their quarters with excitement. He actually ran into his husband in the hallway. Jim stopped himself from showing any displays of affection until they were safely behind closed doors at his husband's request. Once Spock got used to the medication that Bones was giving him and got over the fact that they were not dead, Spock went back to his normal prudish stance on PDAs. Spock felt it was now absolutely necessary that they remain professional at all times in front of the crew. That meant not flaunting his and Spock's relationship, even though everybody knew. Jim personally didn't see the point anymore. That particular genie was already out of the bottle, considering they already groped each other on the bridge in front of everyone. However, because he loves Spock and Jim didn't want to make him do anything he was uncomfortable with, therefore he kept his hands to himself.

The second the door was closed, he pushed Spock up against the wall and began kissing him in an, 'I want to tear off all your clothing and bend you over a desk' sort of way. Actually, as Spock's tongue continued to dance with his, all sorts of wicked thoughts were running through Jim's head. Due to the fact a certain part of Spock was now poking him in the thigh he knew that his husband was up for it. His previous exhaustion went away the moment Jim's mouth touched his lovers. He felt like if they didn't make love soon, he was going to explode. Did he just actually use the term 'make love'? "As much as I would find extreme pleasure in performing some of the acts that you are currently thinking about, I believe that we need to talk about several things including the fact that we are now married under Vulcan law. After our discussion has concluded, I would not be averse to participating in some of your fantasies. However, I will be the one bending you over the desk." He really shouldn't be surprised Spock would say stuff like that.

"Promises, promises, we will flip a coin. I'm not going to bottom all the time and I don't expect you to either. Before we begin our heart to heart or more pleasurable activities, how did things go with she who despises me?" Jim said as he straightened out his attire.

"I assume you are referring to Nyota. She does not despise you. She says that she is actually starting to like you but I am not to tell you that." Spock said quickly, revealing too much.

"My lips are sealed." Jim said giving his husband another quick peck on the lips before moving to the couch. "So what did you two talk about besides the fact she no longer despises me? Do you now understand why she was willing to put herself in danger just to keep you from killing the big and brainless? You know she saved your ass from getting kicked out of Starfleet and possibly spending 10 to 20 on some Federation prison planet." Jim said wrapping his hand around Spock's. Just because they were having a serious conversation, didn't mean that he couldn't show some affection. "I am fully aware of the possible consequences of my actions if it were not for her intervention. I am appreciative of that fact and told her so during our long conversation." Spock squeezed his hand just a little bit more as he said this.
"Do you now know why?" Jim continued.
"Part of the reason was she felt a kindred spirit with me because she experienced a similar situation when she was unable to prevent her mother's death. She understood that I was feeling guilty because I could not prevent my father's death. She also understood that I was upset because my father and I were not on the best terms at the time of his death, which you are well aware of. I am unable to give specifics regarding her situation because she told me this information in confidence. I will tell you this; although the circumstances were different, the outcome was similar." The fact that Spock was also blocking him from the information mentally told Jim that whatever she said to Spock must have been bad. Maybe even on par with Winona's death.
"I'm not going to ask you to betray her confidence. I don't like talking about the details of either of my parents' deaths. Therefore, I will pay her a courtesy that I normally do not get myself. Trust me, I understand the guilt. For an entire year after her death, I blamed to myself for not trying harder to get my mother out of that situation." Jim said and complete honesty.
"It was not your fault, T'hy'la. You are not responsible for the actions of your stepfather." Spock said just before placing another chaste kiss on Jim's lips. At least it was supposed to be a chaste kiss. Unfortunately, things got out of hand. How exactly did they go the last eight months without doing anything?
"Stop that. We are going to finish this conversation before I rip your close off. Maybe, I should go sit on the bed." Jim said to himself.
"That will not help." He heard Spock mumble under his breath.
"If I can't blame myself for what Frank did to my mother then you can't blame yourself for what Nero did to Sarek. You are not responsible for the stupidity of others." Jim said wrapping an arm around his husband.
"Yet, I am responsible for not being able to rescue my father before the planet of my birth disintegrated." Spock's said pulling away from his embrace.
"No, we're not playing this game. You tried. Your grandmother showed me exactly what happened. You are not responsible for the ground giving way at the wrong time. You tried to catch him but you couldn't. That's not your fault. We are not playing the blame game. This was not your fault. The only person to blame for what happen was Nero and we all watched him and his crew being sucked into a black hole. Let go." Jim said grabbing his lover again.
"I find that difficult." Jim could feel Spock's confusion and anger through their bond. It was better than before but it was still overwhelming.
"So did I, you know all about my lost year. I was so pissed and angry with Frank and myself that I was self-destructing from the inside. There was not enough alcohol in Iowa to deal with myself loathing. I realize now the only person I was hurting was myself. I won't let you do the same thing I did. I love you too much for that. Even though I'm now your husband and lover, I will always be your friend, first and foremost. Friends don't let friends do stupid things. Letting the guilt, regret, and anger eat you up from inside is a very stupid thing." Jim said this as his head was cradled in Spock's neck.
"Nyota said something similar." Jim smiled that that.
"So that was her other reason?" Jim asked his husband.
"She assured me that although I do not wish to engage in sexual intercourse with her, she is still my friend regardless. As my friend, she wants what is best for me and therefore felt the need to keep me from killing the person you and her refer to as 'Cupcake'. I find that concept refreshing. Before, I thought the human concept of friendship always involved sex or physical intimacy." Jim could not believe that comment but it explained so much.
"Okay, no wonder you thought it was perfectly normal to make out with me all the time Vulcan style when I thought we were just friends." Jim muttered under his breath before continuing. "I'm going to assume that your concept of human friendship comes from the bitch and the asshole." Jim said angrily referring to Spock's first two human lovers. The whole thing made him angry enough to go down to sickbay to finish off the job that the ceiling and Spock started a few days ago.
"Your assumption is correct." Spock said quietly.
"Baby, that's not friendship. Real friendship has no ulterior motives and is completely unselfish. Real friendship and platonic love doesn't come with strings attached. Your real friends will stay by your side even when you push them away or they think you're absolutely crazy. Carol and Cupcake were using you for their own selfish desires. Those two only cared about themselves. Most friendships are not like that. Bones is my best friend, not counting you. I would give my life for him because I care about him not just for what I get from the relationship. Bones risked his career to get me on the ship just so I could be with you. I know that he will always be there for me. He even arranged it so you and I have time for this wonderful conversation. The only thing he asked for in return was for me to never give him details regarding what we use the things in the gift bag for. That is real friendship."

Jim finished by placing a gentle kiss on Spock's neck.

"At this moment, I'm feeling quite foolish." Spock said very softly.

"Don't, you are not the only one who fell for a complete line of bullshit. I fucked Cupcake too. That makes me just as foolish. Hey, in another dimension I almost married the bitch. We all have temporary lapses of good judgment and common sense." Spock was giving him the, 'I think you're absolutely nuts' look after that confession. Jim really does not like that look.

"Do not look at me that way. That's what other Spock said."

"We must talk about your experiences with my counterpart on Delta Vega." Jim was almost positive that was a subject change for the sake of avoidance but he will take it.

"Can we please do that tomorrow? It's going to take forever to go over everything we talked about on the walk to the outpost not to mention the stuff he downloaded into my mind during the mind meld."

"You melded with him?" Spock asked him, in an angry voice as he abruptly pulled back from his touch. Seriously, how could he not tell Spock was being jealous before?

"Hey you melded some random Romulan for work related reasons and I wasn't jealous. It was a mission critical mind meld. How do you think I found out that we were married? Then again, other you, was sure we were married after just speaking with me for less than 10 minutes."

"You would have a point, except you were uncomfortable with what you are referring to as a 'mission critical' mind meld with a random Romulan." Spock said pointing out his hypocritical behavior.

"Okay, there are downsides to being able to know what the other is thinking."

"We will need to work on your shielding abilities, once time permits. It would be quite distracting for you, to send thoughts of a sexual nature to me, during duty hours, especially during a crisis situation." Spock said with his version of a smirk.

"I would not do that." Jim said defensively.

"You already did such a thing. This is why I would like to work on your shielding abilities. However, the most expedient way for us to exchange information related to your time on Delta Vega is to perform a mind meld." Spock suggested.

"Are you using this as an excuse to have mind sex?" Jim asked with a wicked smirk.

"I assure you I have the utmost self control."

"I don't care if you have control. Fine, let's get this over with so we can use Bones presents."

Okay, it turned out that neither one of them could control their selves during the mind meld. At first, it was a perfectly normal data down load related to the events of Delta Vega. Spock was even a little amused, for him, at his counterpart's reaction to finding out that this dimensions version of Spock dated Carol. It was better than the absolute anger and hatred Spock was feeling for Cupcake when he showed Spock everything involving the red crab monster of death. He was going to have to get extra security for Cupcake.

Then at some point, the scene shifted from the ice and snow of Delta Vega to Jim's tropical island sex on the beach honeymoon fantasy. Before he knew it, their clothing was ripped off and he was feeling a lubricated finger making contact with his backside as Spock wrapped his other hot hand around Jim's rock hard erection. Jim really doesn't remember much between that moment and actually coming. He does remember mumbling something about topping next time and Spock acquiescing before Jim blacked out due to a combination of exhaustion and good sex.
Spock did not fall asleep after they did what Jim would refer to as 'christening the couch'. Even after cleaning both he and James off and moving his husband to their bed he was still unable to sleep. Since the destruction of Vulcan, not counting his time unconscious, he has slept a grand total of 72.3 minutes. Traditionally Vulcans require significantly less sleep than humans but even that amount was insufficient for him.

Even a satisfying round of sexual intercourse was not enough to trigger sleep. His mind was still too active. So many things have occurred over the last few days and were causing him concern. He kept thinking about his earlier conversations with elder T'Pau, James, and Nyota. Even after all these years both James and Nyota were still affected by the deaths of their mother. Although he is only partially human, he wonders if he will have a similar experience.

His father has been dead for less than 72 hours and he still feels this overwhelming hurt and anger at Sarek and himself for holding on to illogical grudges for so long. Now, there was no chance of reconciliation. He was angry that he only knew that his father loved him after his death. He still feels anger, pain, regret, and guilt even if he shouldn't. No amount of meditation, medication, or conversation had allowed the feeling to go away.

After 2 hours of reviewing various mission reports and a few scientific journals that he needed to read, he was still wide awake with only his disconcerting thoughts for company. He was concerned about his first conversation with his mother. Even though Jim pointed out that it was illogical for Spock to blame himself for Nero's actions he still did. He was worried that his mother would also blame him.

He considered meditating but was sure Jim would wake up the moment he left the bed. Spock was not even certain his mind could reach a meditative state in its current unsettled condition anyway.

"You're thinking too loud. You woke me up. Now, I have to pee." A groggy Jim said beside him, as he got up from the bed completely naked.

"That sentence makes no sense." Spock said as he admired the view of his lover's backside.

"You tried being coherent after a couple of mind numbing orgasms and—how long have I been asleep?" Jim asked as he made a very quick trip to the bathroom.

"You lost consciousness 3 hours and 17 minutes ago." Spock said without even looking at the clock.

"See you didn't include seconds, therefore, you must be exhausted. I know you don't need as much sleep as I do but you do need some rest." Jim yelled from the bathroom.

"That does not seem to be an option at the moment." Spock told his lover so quietly that he was sure James would not be able to hear him.

"So why exactly are you sleepless on Enterprise?"

"I am not sleepless. Vulcans require less sleep than humans. I am fine." Spock said trying to appease his love.

"Whenever you use the term 'fine', I know something is seriously wrong. How long have we been sharing a bed before sex was actually involved? You fall asleep during a movie marathon just as easily as I do. Your half-truths don't work on me. I know you too well. What's wrong, baby?" Jim asked as he fell back into bed, wrapping his body around Spock completely.

"Nothing is wrong, it is just…" Spock was not sure how to verbalize his problem to his love.

"You're mind is too busy to sleep. You can't stop thinking about everything." James said knowing him too well.

"Precisely."

"I would be in the same boat if it wasn't for the sheer exhaustion. Do you want to talk about it? It helps to talk and we were supposed to be doing that anyway before our mental beach honeymoon time. I will not be able to fall back to sleep until your mind is a little calmer. I heard some of your thoughts and most of them were unpleasant." Jim said quietly.

"I apologize for not shielding better. I will make it up to you. I'm sure I can come up with other activities that will exhaust you." Spock said as he began kissing Jim's neck as a distraction.

"Oh god, I can't believe I'm saying this, but I'd rather talk to you about your daddy issues than have more mind blowing sex. See, this is why I know I love you, I care more about your mental well
"How can I have 'daddy issues' if my father is no longer living?" Spock asked as he went back to kissing every single inch of Jim's body.

"Stop distracting me with your mouth. You know I have no will power whatsoever. The fact that your father is dead is the daddy issue." Jim said reluctantly pulling away from his husband.

"I much rather engage in the act of fellatio than discuss the many issues I had with my father." Spock said pulling Jim back to him as he started to suck on Jim's neck again marking his lover.

"I'm all for one of your earth shattering blow jobs. I'm also amenable to giving you an earth shattering blow job, but as much as it pains me we're getting this conversation out of the way. My balls are literally blue right now thanks to the way you're sucking on my collarbone but I will do anything for you including not having sex."

"How can earth or any other planet be shattered due to oral sex? Also, your genitalia is not actually blue, rather some shade of purple." Spock said starting to stroke that part of Jim's anatomy.

"Nice diversionary tactic with stupid questions and the attempted hand job." Jim said stopping Spock's hand mid-stroke. "We're still talking about your daddy issues."

"I refuse to talk about any of my remaining guilt or the dismay over the lack of closure regarding my father when I'm holding your genitalia in my hand."

"You are the one who wanted to play dirty." Just then Spock chose to squeeze the part of Jim's anatomy in hand. "Fine, we will deal with your daddy issues over breakfast in 4.7 hours." Jim said as he started too breath heavily. "I guess we'll also talk about the fact that you haven't called your mother yet later." The mere mention of his mother made Spock let go of Jim.

"What is it about the mere mention of your mother that makes you go from a sex starved nymphomaniac, to a pseudo blushing virginal prude in 1.2 seconds flat?" Jim asked with a hint of irritation.

"You will not make me answer that question, otherwise, I will not be touching your genitalia again anytime soon."

"Got it. No asking anything that involves your mother in bed with no clothing involved in this marriage. What do you want to talk about?" Jim asked him.

"You wished to stay married?" Despite Jim's earlier assertions Spock was worried that James would change his mind.

"Not quite what I wanted to talk about but it will work. I thought I pretty much told you that is what I wanted when we were on other Spock's ship. I want to spend the rest of my life with you." Jim said, pulling Spock's naked body closer to him as he placed a kiss on his lover's mouth as Jim intertwined their fingers together in another kiss. "I want to grow old with you. Because let me tell you, you are still going to be as sexy as hell when you hit the century plus mark and I want to be around to see it again." Jim said as he pulled Spock's hands up to his mouth and began to kiss each finger the human way. "I want little children with your ears and my eyes. I don't know how I'm going to pull it off but we are so having sex in the captain's chair." Jim said that last part with a smirk. "I would point out the improbability of pulling off such a thing, but you would just see that as a challenge." He said as they continued to enjoy the contact.

"You know me too well. What I'm trying to ask is will you marry me?" Spock really did not understand this question.

"I do not see the point of you asking me that question due to the fact we're already married by Vulcan standards." Spock said giving his husband what Jim referred to as an incredulous look.

"Yes, by Vulcan standards we are already married, but by human standards we are not. If we do a human ceremony, your mom will be less likely to cut off my balls for missing our bonding ceremony." For some odd reason Jim was convinced that his mother would be very upset about their unintentional bonding.

"I doubt that occurring." Spock said reassuring his husband as he kissed his neck again.

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being married? We can even be in the same chain of command." Jim actually smiled as he said this. "I'm aware of that particular clause. I see your logic, and therefore, I am willing to marry you in the human tradition once we return to earth." Before he was done speaking, James was kissing him again.

"You're going to look so hot in a tux. Okay, now you can blow me." James said with a lascivious grin.

"I find that agreeable."

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After an hour of various sexual activities Spock fell asleep for 6.2 hours due to a supposedly malfunctioning alarm and allegedly no one on the crew being brave enough to call their quarters. The situation was rectified by Spock's great grandmother coming in their quarters to force him and James to contact Amanda under duress.
Amanda was never supposed to bury her husband. He was to outlive her by decades, if not an entire century. Sarek was supposed to remarry and possibly have more children with someone else. Amanda knew he would eventually replace her in his life, if not his heart. Amanda knew all of this when she said ‘I do’ almost 30 years ago. It was the price Amanda would pay for falling in love with someone who had a life span that was nearly double hers. She accepted this a long time ago.

Yet on this cold day in San Francisco, her husband was dead. She didn’t know how to deal with that. How could the person she loved the most, truly be gone? It was too hard to accept that the love of her life was no more. She couldn’t accept it but she knew she must. Amanda knew the moment her husband of nearly three decades ceased to exist. He was light years away and she could still feel his loss through their bond.

She was eating a very late dinner with Gaila and a few of the more tolerable and open-minded staff members at the embassy after being briefed by Starfleet regarding the situation on Vulcan. The Embassy was depended on Starfleet intelligence because whatever was happening to her adopted home planet was blocking communications with Vulcan.

Amanda was talking to Gaila about how she met her son, when suddenly it felt like she had the world’s worst migraine. The pain was debilitating. It was almost as bad as when she was giving birth to Spock. Maybe it was worse, because at least then she had drugs to numb the pain and her husband to hold her hand. Then he was gone from her mind. No longer feeling Sarek's presence was as if she lost half of her soul. Everything she felt was so agonizing that she lost consciousness.

She regained consciousness seconds, minutes or maybe hours later in the office of the healer at the
embassy. She was completely unsure of the time but that was probably because they gave her a sedative. Upon returning to consciousness, whispering bodies and stone cold faces surrounded her confirming her worst fears. She knew Sarek was dead.

Just because she is human, most Vulcans automatically assumed she was not familiar with the high Vulcan language. She wished that was the case as she heard murmurs of something unfathomable. Her home, her husband, and most likely everyone she ever knew that resided on her adopted home planet were gone because of a lunatic and a device that could create a singularity. The situation truly fit the definition of unimaginable tragedy.

When Amanda initially felt her husband's loss, she thought given the briefing she sat through earlier that her husband most likely died in an earthquake, probably crushed under debris forced to die alone without her by his side. Her original worst-case scenario would be preferable over what really happened. The pained expression on Gaila's face confirmed every word she heard. She had no home or husband to return to.

Later, Amanda sat in the classified briefing room at the embassy between the current ambassador to earth and her DCM listening to every painful detail as related by the Vulcan research outpost located in one of the more temperate parts of Delta Vega. As a member of the Vulcan Council, by marriage if nothing else, she was entitled to sit on this highly classified briefing. In her mind, she knew by Vulcan law she just inherited her husband's seat to the dismay of certain others in the room.

Her assistant and Gaila wanted her to stay with the healer because they had no idea what the sudden loss of a marriage bond would do to a Human. This was the first time that a Vulcan died before his or her human partner. She refused. Her place was with her people, even if they didn't want her half the time. She had work to do. Grief could wait.

She sat there in that room just as unaffected and stoic as the individuals next to her during the viewing of the destruction of the planet. Unlike everyone else in the room, she was too shocked to cry even though she could. The tears would come later in the privacy of her son's guest room hours if not days later when she had time to let go. Not now.

According to Vulcan intelligence or what remained of it, the enemy ship disrupted all communications almost 24 hours before the planet was destroyed. That explains why she was unable to call her husband Sunday after a very interesting call with Captain Pike regarding her son's possible removal from Starfleet. When communications returned, a backlog of transmissions arrived at the embassy and allegedly Starfleet documenting what really happened.

They now believe the initial distress call was most likely manufactured by the ship that destroyed Vulcan. The fact that almost all the ships that arrived in response to the distress call were destroyed supports this line of reasoning. When she saw the images of the destroyed ships she wondered if her only child was lost among the wreckage.

She told herself that he had to be alive, because she would know otherwise. Amanda knew she would feel her child's death just as profoundly as she felt the loss of her husband. Maybe even more because Spock was a part of her. Yet, in the back of her mind, she could not let go of the possibility of being all alone in the world. She couldn't lose her son, because he was the only thing she had left in the universe. Spock was the last living part of Sarek.

Her baby seemed so happy Saturday with James. The moment she saw those two together she knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that they belong together. Even though he tried to hide it behind Vulcan pretense, Amanda knew her son loved James more than anything else in the universe. Even if she disapproved of James, she knew that Spock would choose Jim over her. She liked James despite finding certain sex toys in her son's bathroom sink. No mother needed to know that her child owned
a green vibrator or anything else of that nature.

James was a brilliant young man who thrived, despite dealing with such horrible tragedies such as the violent death of his mother. He handled Amanda's intentionally invasive questions better than anyone else and didn't seem at all afraid of her. James could even handle a conversation with Sarek without blinking which was a rare feat.

She just realized that was the final conversation she would ever have with her husband. If she was alone, she would cry, but now was not the time for tears.

She tried to focus on the briefing until it was disrupted by a red drill landing in San Francisco Bay. Hours later, she will receive a great sense of peace and satisfaction knowing that it was her son that deactivated the drill.

As the people outside the embassy were celebrating not being dead, she was part of a delegation of embassy and Federation officials trying to prepare for the survivors. 32,372 survivors were currently on route to Earth with nothing but the clothes on their backs. The rest of the survivors were on route to other nearby planet's where the local Vulcan embassy along with other government entities are preparing for their arrival. Of those coming to earth, 21,492 of these Vulcans were under the age of 14 in human terms. Many would be arriving without Guardians. 3781 were under the age of two again with no parents. Most of these babies were thrown onto the evacuation pods and ships by desperate parents because it was the most logical thing to do. In any society, the parental instinct to keep your child alive at the sacrifice of yourself is the most logical thing in the universe.

They would have to find temporary shelter for all the refugees. They would also have to coordinate all offers of assistance from foreign governments. She knew exactly what needed to be done because this wasn't the first time she led a relief effort after a disaster. Amanda just never thought her skills would be needed for a tragedy of this nature. Then again, if it wasn't for her prior experience she wondered if certain individuals in that room would cast her aside because she had the wrong DNA.

She was thankful for Gaila's presence as they began to make plans for the survivors that afternoon. It was good to have another person there that could see that things were not necessarily clear-cut. Unlike everyone else in the room, Gaila knew what it was like to be a refugee. She understood the need to treat everybody with dignity. Amanda was also grateful for Gaila's computer skills when the young lady was able to help recover certain databases believed to be lost from the now dead planet. Eventually Gaila along with a few classmates from the academy would begin working on a database design to help reunite survivors with their families and keep track of all the refugees.

The news of the destruction of Vulcan reached the public a little before 3:00 PM local time. She chose not to participate in the official press briefing. She didn't want to start crying on camera. At present, she was functioning in denial mode. Her son must have inherited her ability to deny the obvious, but in this case, it was the only thing that was allowing her to function. If she started to talk about what happened she would have to accept that she was now a widow. She wasn't ready for that yet. It was best to let those who could stick to the logic of the facts to deal with the press.

At first, she read some of the messages that people were leaving regarding the tragedy. Most people offered their condolences on message boards. However, a few idiots felt that the Vulcan race deserved what happened. At that point, she felt it was best not to watch the news and stick to the reports coming from Starfleet intelligence.

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Admiral Barnett arrived at the embassy a little before everything went public. His broken expression worried her as much as the fact that he pulled her into a private classified briefing room without saying a word. She was expecting the worst possible news.
"Is my son dead?" She asked as soon as the door closed. Why else would Admiral Barnett be here at the embassy except to deliver that news?

"No. The Enterprise survived the ordeal with minimal damage. It was the only Starfleet ship that survived the initial encounter with the ship responsible for destroying Vulcan. Your son is safe." Admiral Barnett told her. She quickly exhaled in relief. Spock being alive was the only thing she could hold onto.

"If my son is safe, why are you here? I already know that I don't have a planet to return to." She said quickly.

"Elder T'Pau asked me to see how you were doing and give you a message." Admiral Barnett said in reply.

"She is alive?" Just the thought of someone else from her life being alive made her feel immensely better.

"Yes. According to the message she sent to Starfleet, then Acting Captain Spock, beamed down to the surface of the planet to personally evacuate the high ranking members of the Vulcan council." Even in her state of extreme emotional turmoil, she could read between the lines. Her son risked his life to save his father. Part of her wished that they would tell her that Spock was successful. However, she knows what she felt. She still feels a phantom presence in her mind where her husband of nearly 30 years once resided. "Unfortunately, he was unable to evacuate all the members of the council in time." The uncomfortable pause told her exactly what he was going to say next. She could not help the one tear that rolled down her cheek. She knew her husband was gone but this will make it real. She could not stay in denial any longer.

"According to the report the ground gave way underneath your husband seconds before being beamed off the planet. I'm sorry your husband…" Admiral Barnett started before she cut him off.

"He's dead. I know. I knew the moment it happened. At least now, I know that he did not die alone." She said in a low voice as she tried to prevent more tears from falling.

The room stayed uncomfortably silent before he began to play an audio file that he brought with him. It's one thing to see images of her planet being destroyed; it's another to hear what happened in the words of her son and his boyfriend. Yet, their tragic account was disrupted by an angry man who would not let go of his nephew's grudge. She became incensed over the fact he was more focused on James being captain of the ship when he wasn't supposed to be on the ship and the first place, then the billions of lies lost. His pettiness made her sick. The fact that he was targeting her child in such an unfair way made her angry. In another way, it was good to feel something again other than numbness.

"How can you allow a man who is so obviously allowing his own irrational bias to compromise his judgment to remain in command?" Amanda said in a voice filled with rage as she stopped the audio file.

"We're not. Admiral Johnson is currently on administrative leave pending a full investigation at the request of the head of the Vulcan Council. Attacking the grandson of someone who was actually offered a seat to the Federation Council in front of her is not very advantageous for anyone's career." Admiral Barnett said as he started the recording again just in time for Amanda to hear her son tell the Admiralty that he was married. If it had been any other day, she would have fallen out of her chair in shock. Nothing can really top your husband dying because of an act of genocide.

If her child were anyone else, Amanda would be able to tell herself that Spock was lying to the
Amanda to protect James. There was no way her only child would cheat her out of a formal bonding ceremony to somebody she actually liked. Actually, she was still sure Spock was protecting James but she knew her son's argument was based in truth. Her son doesn't lie, he just manipulates the facts. It was a skill he picked up from his father.

"At first we didn't believe Spock, until the Elder confirmed it. Were you aware that they were already married?" If her husband's grandmother verified the marriage, then it was true. She was going to kill Spock and James. Not literally, of course, but she could not believe that her baby got married without her.

Actually, Spock would never intentionally get bonded without her. He knew better. She would kill him before Sarek would. Except her husband was now gone, she reminded herself for the hundredth time.

Considering the skittish way James responded every time she mentioned the B or M word she was sure marriage was at least a good year away for the two. Then she remembered how much more in tune the two were on Sunday morning during breakfast. This led Amanda to only one logical conclusion, it was an accident. If it was an accident, that could only mean that they were true bond mates. That made her smile for the first time in days.

"I knew that it was a possibility. That's why I scheduled my visit when I did. This last minute trip is probably the only reason why I'm not dead." She said cryptically utilizing the half-truths skill she picked up from her husband. Even though he was gone, he was still her husband. She will not cry.

"It has been a very long few days Admiral and it's not over yet. We have more important things to deal with than discussing my son's marital status. Thousands of Vulcan survivors will be arriving over the next few days and we need to find temporary shelter for all of them. Now, unless you want to assist with this dilemma, I ask you to allow me to return to the matter at hand." Amanda said as she got up from the table.

"Due to tragic circumstances, we may be able to assist." Admiral Barnett said stopping her instantly.

"Then by all means continue." Amanda said taking her seat again.

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She left the embassy compound at 10:41 PM at the hands of an exhausted but forceful Gaila after deciding what to do with the first batch of refugees that would be arriving some time tomorrow morning local time. Apparently, her husband's grandmother decided that she would be in charge of coordinating the relief efforts much to the dismay of certain other members of the embassy staff. At least, that is what she gathered from the conversation that occurred after they stopped talking about her son's marriage and the role Spock played in keeping the planet she was currently on from being sucked into a black hole.

It was decided after much debate that many of the survivors will be housed in unused dorms and military housing until a more permanent solution can be found. Even at this early stage, the term colony was being whispered about. In the interim, others will be force to utilize instant beds set up in whatever space was available. After hours of discussion, a plan was created and she was dragged out of the embassy by Gaila.

When she walked outside the embassy walls she saw a makeshift memorial already being assembled as well as people gathered to mourn the billions of lives lost. Old-fashioned wax candles lay on the ground in front of the embassy along with balloons and stuffed animals. Most were earth teddy bears but a few Sehlats were scattered among the signs of condolence. Even in her exhausted state, she wondered if she was the only one who could appreciate the sentimentality behind the gesture.
In addition to those there to pay their final respects, there were cameras from various media outlets. They probably got excellent footage of her accepting a stuffed animal from a young girl paying her respects with her mother. Amanda could have gotten into her transport immediately but she chose to speak. She was the constant Ambassador's wife and knew the importance of putting a face on an issue. If she wanted to avoid the press, she would have utilized the back entrance.

"By now most of you are aware of what happened to the Vulcan people for reasons that have no logic and defy comprehension. It has been referred to as the greatest single act of genocide in the history of the Federation but that seems like a great understatement. Your words of sympathy and encouragement are appreciated during one of the darkest hours of the Vulcan people." She paused for a moment while composing herself before continuing.

"Yet, many of you are more concerned about the fact that the earth just barely escaped that same fate than anything else. I've seen the messages on the various blogs. As long as it wasn't you, you don't care. However, I'm here to tell you that you must care what happens to everyone in your galaxy. It wasn't just the inhabitants of a planet light years away that was destroyed. Six billion lives were lost. Six billion mothers, fathers, children, doctors, teachers, soldiers, wives, and husbands were lost when Vulcan was destroyed. My husband was one of them. I was only here this week because I became a last-minute addition to a conference with various Federation leaders about slavery, the sex trade, and the refugee crisis in the Federation. Now the refugee issue hits home in a way it did not mere days ago. Now, I'm the one without a home, just like all the others who survived. Just like the hundreds of thousands, if not millions throughout the galaxy they have been displaced by conflict. The survivors must come first. That is the issue we must focus on in the weeks to come, instead of placing blame for this travesty. Again, I wish to thank everybody who has shown their solidarity with Vulcan during the darkest moment of our people. Thank you for your support. We have much to deal with in the coming days but we will accomplish it together. Thank you." She finished as she walked away from the cameras.

She heard questions being shouted behind her but she chose to get into the transport instead of responding. She had nothing left to say. One more word and her tenuous control would be shattered. She could no longer pretend that this was not her new reality when she was surrounded by sad people offering their condolences.

She expected Gaila to return to her own dorm room after Amanda was dropped off at Spock's apartment but she refused.

"I promised Jim and your son I would look after you and I can't do that from my dorm room. Besides, I don't think I can stay there. Almost everybody on my floor was assigned to ships other than Enterprise." Amanda instantly knew what the young woman was really saying. She couldn't sleep surrounded by the rooms of her friends and classmates that were most likely dead. Gaila would rather sleep on Spock's living room couch, then be surrounded by metaphorical ghosts. Amanda could understand because even in her son's house, she felt surrounded by the ghost of her now dead husband.

She was exhausted after being up for more than 24 hours, not including her bout with unconsciousness, but she could not sleep. Every time she closed her eyes she could feel the phantom touch of her husband on her skin. She could smell his favorite tea and the cologne he occasionally wore at certain diplomatic engagements.

She could still feel the fabric of his robe against her skin. She could feel the heat as his fingers grazed against hers in a gentle kiss. She couldn't help but think of the last time he kissed her. She longed for his human kisses. She longed for him. In her mind, she could still taste him beneath her lips. She could feel the touch of him against her even if in her heart she knew this wasn't real.
She remembers the last time they made love. It was the morning right before she left him for the very last time. They almost didn't because she would be late but her husband was easily persuaded by her kisses and touches. She remembers him kissing every single inch of her body with his lips and fingers. He mapped her body with his hands like he always did before they were going to be separated for long periods of time. With her husband's job and her increasing involvement in various movements, this had become a regular occurrence for the two. She hated to be separated from him and now she would be for the rest of her life.

She remembered his hands running through her now graying hair. She remembered running a hand across his cheek. Amanda remembers his fingers coasting up against the soft skin of her inner thigh. She remembered him kissing her belly button with his lips. She remembers him pushing inside her again for what was probably the 10,000 time. If she knew that was the last time he would ever make love to her, she would have savored it. She would have committed every touch to memory. But she didn't know.

The very last thing she said to her husband when she spoke with him just days ago was in anger regarding him not wanting to talk to Spock again. She essentially hung up on her husband because he was stubborn and refused to make amends with his child. Now she wished she tried harder or said something differently. Now she wished her final words to him were 'I love you' not 'I wish you would let go of this stupid grudge'.

She couldn't stay in her present room any longer. She left the guest room and made her way to her son's room. That wasn't right. This was Spock and James' bedroom now. Even though Jim technically moved into this apartment Saturday, it seemed like he has been here longer than that. She really doesn't want to know why Gaila found a tee shirt stuffed in the couch. She also knew that the things thrown about the bathroom obviously belong to James.

The bedroom seemed stuck in time. Clothing and other things were strewn about. The messy bed was quickly rectified by her stripping the sheets and bedspread. She thought that if she did some manual labor she would finally be able to sleep.

An hour later after cleaning the entire bedroom, guest room, and bathroom, she was still wide-awake. She found herself lying down again on her son's bed holding the digital photo album that she found some time during her late night cleaning spree. The first image she saw was of her and Sarek holding their baby boy for the first time.

That is when Amanda finally cried into the pillow until she had no more tears to cry. She fell asleep as her body finally lost the war with her mind. She dreamt about making love to her husband and having a home to come back too. When she woke up again alone in her son's bed on earth, she cried again.

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Over the next few days time seemed to slow down. If her husband was still alive he would tell her that such a concept was illogical. However, he was gone and that was the reason everything seemed to drag on. She kept herself occupied with various things such as coordinating relief efforts for the refugee population and reaching out to the Vulcan Diaspora worried about family members who may have perished in the tragedy. Later, they can deal with vengeance and figuring out what to do next with the Vulcan people as a whole.

She became a spokesperson in a way because she was a member of the Vulcan council and her son and his husband Jim saved Earth. Maybe it was because she was more approachable. She spoke to various dignitaries throughout the Federation who offered their condolences and praises to her son and his husband for keeping earth from becoming another Vulcan.
Apparently, someone in Starfleet decided it was a good idea to make that particular piece of information public. The truly cynical part of Amanda wondered if it was done on purpose to keep everyone focus on Starfleet's ridiculous anti relationship policies instead of the fact that the Federation failed to prevent the deaths of six billion individuals. She was one of the first who wanted to know why Starfleet didn't find Nero's ship after he made her son-in-law fatherless over 25 years ago.

She 'smiled' for the cameras and filled more questions about her son's personal life than she personally cared to. She wished she could talk to her son about this but it would be another day before she could talk to her son under the pretense of a conference call with the council members on the ship. She wondered if he knew that his marriage was being used as a diversionary tactic by somebody in the Starfleet press office.

Though Amanda was getting very good at dealing with the cameras, she much preferred explaining how individuals could give money to the Vulcan equivalent of the Red Cross. She tried to ignore the cameras that followed her as she passed out food and other supplies to the young children being housed temporarily on the Starfleet academy campus.

Working with the displaced children was the best distraction. She couldn't think about her dead husband when she was trying to explain to three and four year old Vulcan children why they wouldn't see their parents again. Surprisingly enough it was a lot easier to deal with young Vulcan children than her adult counterparts. She doesn't even want to talk about how long it took her to convince the other Vulcans of the logic in giving the teddy bears and other toys put outside the embassy to the young children.

By the second day, the command center moved from the embassy to Starfleet headquarters. She now sees the logic in T'Pau putting her in charge of the relief efforts because it was easiest for her to work with the officials from various Federation entities. It never ceases to amaze her how her Vulcan counterparts never realize that their arrogance is not only completely illogical but also highly counterproductive.

She doesn't head back to her son's apartment until at least midnight local time. Gaila is still with her and is now officially assigned to assist her. Amanda first met Gaila over a decade ago on a mercy mission that became a rescue mission. Ever since then, Amanda has been an anti slavery and sex trade Advocate. Amanda could not help but wonder if Gaila stayed with her out of a sense of gratitude.

The other part wonders if everybody around her believe she will fall apart at any moment. She has been on a light sedative since her husband died. It feels like everybody is walking on eggshells around her. She still can't sleep even with the help of the drugs the second night after the death of the love of her life. She decides to unpack all of James things that he never got around to doing over the weekend. She wondered what the point was. Due to the massive losses, Starfleet was already talking about graduating everyone early and deploying them as soon as possible.

The third night she reorganized Spock's kitchen and made a few batches of cookies. She could lie and tell herself that her restlessness was caused by her body adjusting to the time difference but that was a lie. Her restlessness was caused by the fact she was adjusting to being alone. The moment she was no longer busy the tears would start. Both nights, she finally fell asleep once tears were exhausted, only to dream about a Vulcan who was no longer with her. In the morning, she would wake up after only 2 or 3 hours of sleep to began everything again.

At least today, she would get to talk to her baby. That was something to look forward to when
everything else seems so broken and bleak. Everything seems so bleak because Sarek was gone.

Chapter End Notes

We will be getting to the mother/son/son-in-law conversation in the next chapter but I wanted to isolate Amanda's reaction to her husband's death because it is important to the plot.
"Where the hell are they?" Nyota mumbled under her breath as she waited for her captain and his husband to show up for the second half of this very important video conference with Dr. Grayson also known as Spock's mother. The two were supposed to be there at 8:00 AM ship time to sit on this highly uncomfortable meeting with the remaining members of the Vulcan council on the ship and the disaster management team on earth headed up by Dr. Amanda Grayson.

By 7:59 AM ship time when Jim and Spock failed to show up, instead of dragging the two out of their quarters or even checking on the two lovebirds, Elder T'Pau decided she would be the Starfleet representative sitting in on the meeting. Nyota agreed with Elder T'Pau's decision because after her conversation with Spock yesterday, she knew nobody deserved to sleep in more than him. Maybe she was seeing things but she was almost positive she saw Spock yawn yesterday. Nyota didn't even know that was biologically possible for a Vulcan, then again, Spock is half-human.

More importantly, Nyota had no desire whatsoever to walk in on her friend and his brand new husband in the middle of 'private time'. Walking in on their various make out sessions was scarring enough. Her heart and mind was still trying to figure out if the constant groping and kissing sessions were cute or nauseating.

25 minutes into the conference, she was sure she was chosen because of her grasp of the Vulcan language. Even though the conference was conducted in standard, certain members of the Vulcan delegation switched to high Vulcan every time they were upset. Certain idiotic members were irritated that the first human member in the history of the Vulcan council was in charge of the humanitarian effort.

Dr. Grayson was not as revered by some of her Vulcan contemporaries as she was elsewhere in the Federation. Nyota couldn't help but think it was a good thing that Spock was not there when the Vulcan sitting next to her called Dr. Grayson various derogatory terms that loosely translated to 'a prostitute without honor' or 'or she who has spread her legs for power'. Nyota was not sure she and Jim could have stopped Spock from killing those particular idiots in the room. Nyota wasn't sure she wanted to try.

It annoyed her that even in this day and age, every time a woman asserted herself or showed off her vast knowledge she was called a bitch or a whore. When a man behaved that way, it was referred to as showing leadership.

This name calling started when Dr. Grayson brought up the valid argument that it would be more logical to place the many now orphaned Vulcan children with willing non Vulcan Foster parents instead of keeping almost 50,000 orphans in emergency shelters. One of the idiots in question was not even a member of the council but an aide that was rescued by Spock, named Sank. Four of the five remaining council members saw the logic in Amanda's suggestion in the interim until they could locate a planet for possible permanent settlement. After 118 minutes of the craziest game of political tug of war that she has ever seen, T'Pau excused herself to find their wayward captain and her grandchild, after dismissing everyone else from the room but her. Now she sat across from Dr. Grayson trying to figure out what to say to the woman.

During the actual meeting, it was difficult to see how fragile the woman in front of her had become. Now, it was obvious during the silence. She seems much sadder than mere days ago but that was before she lost her husband and her planet.

Nyota wondered exactly how much sleep or food Dr. Grayson has had since Monday morning. If she was anything like her son, she was probably only eating under duress and sleeping the bare minimum.

"I'm sure elder T'Pau will be here momentarily with Jim and Spock." Nyota said quickly not knowing what else to say. The silence was unnerving.

"I thought they were going to be sitting in on the entire conference call?" Nyota was unsure how to respond. If she lied and said that they were called away on urgent ship business that may cause Dr.
Grayson to worry. She didn't want to burden her anymore than necessary. Nyota could make a joke about newlyweds and insatiable sex drives, but that would mean letting Dr. Grayson know that her only child had eloped Vulcan style. She was saving that conversation for Spock and Jim. She deserved a little satisfaction from the fact that the two were going to be raked over the metaphorical coals by the world's most overprotective mother. Keeping that in mind, Nyota thought it was best to tell her a slightly edited version of the truth.

"Honestly, they overslept. Because the ship is no longer in crisis mode, we decided to let Jim and Spock sleep until their presence was absolutely necessary. We've all been dealing with low levels of sleep over the last few days." There was no need to mention that up until last night her son probably slept less than an hour total since the death of his father. Again, there was no need to worry Dr. Grayson more than necessary.

"I assumed Elder T'Pau is the only individual on the ship brave enough to walk in on newlyweds." When Spock's mother mentioned the term 'newlyweds' Nyota's mouth opened wide in shock.

"You know about your brand new son in law?" Nyota asked tentatively, not exactly knowing how to word that question. She really wished Spock and Jim would hurry up and get here so they could deal with this situation. This is so not fair.

"Every planet in the Federation knows about my brand new son in law. Someone in the Starfleet's press office had decided to include the fact that the saviors of earth were married to each other in the official press release." Spock's mother said this in a way that was devoid of emotion. This scared her just a little. She was expecting at least a little bitterness. Jim and Spock were completely screwed.

"You found out via a press release?" Nyota asked hesitantly. That would not be good.

"Fortunately, no. Admiral Barnett had the courtesy to privately play the recording of Jim and Spock's initial report of what happened on Vulcan, when my son so eloquently slipped in that he was now married to James before the rest of the Vulcan officials on earth heard the report." Oh, this is not going to be good. She was coming up with an excuse to leave the room as soon as Jim and Spock got there.

"So how's my friend doing?" Nyota asked in an extremely obvious subject change. She honestly wanted to avoid this particular conversation, considering she was not the one who secretly married Amanda's baby boy.

"I'm not as fragile as everyone thinks I am, even if you're friend Gaila has been sleeping in Spock's guest room waiting for me to have a complete nervous breakdown. If I have not fallen apart yet, I'm not going to. I'm not even that upset that my only child accidentally married his boyfriend of technically only a few days." From that statement alone, she knew that she was going to have to talk to Gaila to get the real story as soon as possible. Mother and son were too much alike. They both kept things inside until there was an explosion.

"So you know that it was an accident?" Nyota asked looking at her watch hoping to god and every other omnipotent being in the galaxy that Jim and Spock would hurry up.

"Yes. Spock knows better than to get married without me. He will not cheat me out of a bonding ceremony to one of the few partners that he has dated that I actually like." Nyota didn't know how to react to that comment.

"If it makes you feel better, they did not actually know that they were married to each other until the attack on Nero's ship." That statement was mostly true. There was no way in hell she was telling Spock's mother about the events that led to Spock almost killing his ex boyfriend. This conversation was already beyond uncomfortable. She was not telling Dr. Grayson that her son lost it when his father died and Jim was marooned on an ice planet against his will by a vengeful ex hook up.

"Marginally," Amanda said with a smile that was obviously forced. Body language was also a language and Nyota was a master at reading it. She could detect obvious discomfort and fatigue.

"Gaila wanted me to let you know that your father called several times. He saw the news and was worried that you were on one of the other ships. Gaila is unsure how to respond to his messages. What do you want her to tell him? He sounded very worried." Nyota let out a bitter laugh.

"I'm shocked that he can take the time out of his busy schedule of sleeping around with girls who are my age to act like he cares. Sure, you can give him a message. Tell my father to go fuck himself and
leave me alone like he has done since the moment he left mom for the new model." Nyota said angrily not caring about her use of profanity.

"I assume that you do not have the best relationship with your father." Dr. Grayson said it as a statement not a question.

"That's an understatement. I think I have only spoken to him maybe five or six times since my mother died and only a handful between their divorce and then. He never cared before, so why should he start now." Nyota said angrily wishing even more than before that her wayward friend and his husband would show up.

Honestly, how long does it take to take a quick sonic shower and throw on a uniform? Nyota rather talk about Spock’s nervous breakdown than her father. She rather talk about her extreme 'schoolgirl with a crush behavior' regarding Spock before she found out he was completely off the market than talk about her father. She rather deal with her Jordan issues, then talk about her father.

"I don't know why you and your father don't get along. What I do know is I watched my son and my husband hold onto some stupid grudge for years because Spock decided to do his own thing and joined Starfleet, instead of attending the Vulcan Science Academy. That stupid fight only ended with my husband's death. Don't do the same thing." Her point was a valid one, however, Nyota was still too mad at her father to consider reconciliation.

"You're right, you don't have all the details." She said quickly just as she heard the door swish open revealing a bickering husband and husband. She was beyond happy that they showed up at that exact moment.

"Your grandmother saw me naked. This is so your fault." Jim said in irritation. Nyota was desperately trying not to laugh.

"I was not the one who decided to sleep on top of the covers without boxer shorts." Spock said nonchalantly as he took the now empty chair next to her.

"You are the one who turned up the thermostat to make your dessert dwelling self happy. To keep from dying of heat stroke, the only logical option was to sleep naked on top of the covers. How was I supposed to know grandma would be supplying this morning's wakeup call? Just for that, I will not be getting naked tonight for you." Jim said giving Spock a very angry glare that came off more humorous than menacing.

"Do not make promises you cannot keep, Thy'la." Nyota was sure Spock was going to kiss Jim until he heard his mother laughing in the background. Instead, he pulled away quickly as he turned a very interesting shade of green. Nyota was currently biting her lip to keep from joining in on the laughter.

"Embarrassment in this particular instance is completely illogical. At my age, James you have nothing that I have not seen before. You did well young one. He is very well endowed for a Human." T'Pau's comment resulted in James becoming pink and Spock turning more emerald if such a thing where possible.

"I feel it is best that we allow the three privacy." The elder said as she motioned for Nyota to leave with her. Once outside the room, Nyota doubled over laughing.

"I needed that." Nyota said quickly before becoming professional again.

"I have been told laughter is cathartic for humans." "Very," She responded quickly before thinking back to T'Pau's earlier comment. "How exactly are you familiar with human anatomy?" She was expecting a very scientific answer but that is not what she got.

"I was young once." The elder said cryptically before getting on the elevator.

"You are my new favorite Vulcan." Nyota said smiling again.

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Maybe deactivating the alarm clock was a really bad idea, Jim thought to himself when Spock's grandmother walked into their quarters and informed them that they had exactly 5.2 minutes to make themselves presentable for a conference call with Amanda. Did he mention he was completely naked, lying on top of the covers when elder T'Pau decided to give them an early morning wakeup call? Although, according to the clock it was barely still mourning. How could they have overslept that much?
They were supposed to be part of an 8:00 AM conference call with the response team handling the Vulcan relief effort. He had no idea why they were supposed to be taking part in that particular call but Jim was sure it had something to do with Spock's mother.

Jim was so not ready to deal with an angry mother in law. 5 minutes was not enough time to make it look like he was not doing very debauched things to Amanda's baby last night. Both he and Spock took an unbelievably fast sonic shower before throwing on the first clean uniform they came across which meant Jim was dressed in all black again. The entire time they were getting dressed Jim continued complaining about the fact that his husband's grandmother saw him naked. Jim did not understand why his husband was not completely mortified by that fact. Maybe, Vulcans really did not have any shame. If so pulling off the sex in the captain's chair thing might be a lot easier then he initially thought. Although, if that was the case why was Spock so against PDAs unless he was completely stoned? Maybe, Spock was not a very pretty green color currently because his grandma did not see him naked with his normal morning erection prominently displayed.

Jim tried to put all that out of his mind as he sat in from of the screen facing his husband's mother who just happened to have the world's best poker face. Due to the fact they were actually in close proximity to earth they were able to have a real time video chat instead of audio only like before. Jim could not help but wonder if that was a good or bad thing. He couldn't read Amanda at all after she stopped laughing at the Elder's earlier joke. Jim wondered if she was handling Sarek's death better than Jim's mother ever handled George's death. Unlike Winona, Amanda didn't seem like the type of person who would run away from her problems. Jim was sure Amanda was a strong person just like her son. After a few more moments of silence, Jim decided it was best to start this conversation.

"We have a limited amount of time to talk, so you guys may want to start talking any moment now." Jim said half jokingly.
"My mother is not a guy. Why did you refer to her as such?" Jim seriously wondered why his husband asked those types of questions.
"I was trying to break the tension. It worked. You started talking and she started laughing again." Jim said smiling.
"How are you James? I heard from Admiral Barnett that you are currently acting captain. I'm sure you're doing a fine job."
Okay this is not good. If Amanda knew about that, than what else did the good admiral tell her? Admiral Barnett was the only member of the Admiralty who knew what really happened, except for Spock's conversations with Marshall. They had to tell somebody the complete truth, if they wanted Cupcake to be court marshaled. Then again, Spock's grandmother could have told Amanda all about the 'Marshall' thing.

Considering this conversation did not start with yelling or screaming, Amanda probably did not know about the marriage thing. That may be the only thing going in Jim's favor. At this moment, he has the strong desire to be expelled from the ship again.
"I'm doing OK, but that is mostly because of Spock helping out with everything and we are no longer in the middle of a crisis. Things would be a lot better if Starfleet would have been willing to send out a ship to rescue us instead of making us crawl to the nearest starbase on impulse power. I think we will arrive on earth next Friday thanks to our new chief engineer doing something that may or may not be completely legal." Jim really did not want to know what the engineer he now refers to as Scotty did to shave a few days off their long trip. As long as nobody ends up dead, he will allow it.

"That's wonderful." Amanda said with something that appeared to be genuine happiness. "I wish that you would arrive sooner; however, I realize Starfleet's resources are somewhat limited at the moment." Everyone avoided mentioning the reason why Starfleet had such a limited resources at the moment.

"I don't buy that. It would take less than half a day to send a ship to drop off enough dilithium so we can head back to earth and they can began fixing this ship up. I personally blame Admiral Johnson. I think this is a punishment for pointing out the fact that his now dead nephew was a complete dick."
"Do you have to curse around my mother?" His husband said out loud.

"Spock, I am an ambassador's wife. I've heard worse." Amanda said quickly, still using the present tense. Jim mentally pointed this out to his husband through their link, but Spock said nothing as his mom continued speaking. "You don't have to worry about that vengeful little man again. Admiral Johnson is currently on administrative leave. After less than a day of investigation, it is highly improbable that he will be returning. Gaila was the first to testify against him." Jim could not help but smile when she told him this.

The rest of the conversation was much more at ease because they focused on Starfleet stuff or refugee stuff. She told Jim and Spock about the rumor going around Starfleet that the students on board the Enterprise would be graduated immediately due to the desperate need for qualified Starfleet personnel and would be deployed as soon as possible. It looked like the tropical island honeymoon will have to be put on hold until their first shore leave. They may not even be able to squeeze in the human wedding.

Both Amanda and Spock avoided talking about Sarek's death. Jim assumes that Spock's tendency to avoid certain things came from his father, now he was sure Amanda was just as responsible. Jim felt in the interest of keeping this conversation civil, it would be best not to bring this fact up. Jim knew that they would have to end the call soon anyway.

"Are you eating?" Amanda asked at the end of their conversation. That was such a mom question Jim could not help but chuckle to himself. Spock would completely forget to eat if it was not for Jim forcing him.

"Yes, but mostly because I make him. Trust me. I'm taking very good care of your baby boy." Jim told her with a reassuring smile.

"I am not a baby." Spock said through their mental bond.

"You could be 129 and you would still be her baby boy. It is a human thing or maybe a parent thing. You'll get it when we have children." Jim said in response.

"You are both getting enough rest?"

"Yes," both he and Spock answered simultaneously.

"I only ask because newlyweds have a tendency to forget about the important things." As Amanda spoke the words, Jim's only thought was 'Oh Fuck, she knows.' Spock had similar thoughts but without the profanity.

Jim wasn't sure how to respond. He was prepared for yelling but not her lack of reaction and the nonchalant way she mentioned it. Sure, they could deny it, but that was just delaying the inevitable. It was better to take the band-aid approach.

"Did you find out from Admiral Barnett or Elder T'Pau?" Jim asked once he regained his voice. There was something about his husband's mother that completely unnerved Jim half the time.

"Admiral Barnett played me Spock's initial report to the Admiralty. I'm thankful for this, since the next day your marital status became public knowledge." Spock turned a very interesting shade of green again at that moment.

"Spock, would you excuse us for a few moments. I would like to speak to your new husband alone. I will discuss certain important matters involving your father when you arrive on earth in one week's time. I feel it is best to have these conversations in person." Amanda said quickly. Jim thought they were delaying the inevitable.

"Of course, mother." Spock got up to leave but not before Jim placed a gentle kiss on his husband's lips.

"Remember, I love you no matter what." Spock was at the door when his mother spoke those words.

"I love you as well mother." Spock said as he walked out the door.

"How is my son really handling his father's death?" Jim really was not expecting that question, but again this was Amanda Grayson. The woman was full of surprises.

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Amanda knew her son as well as any mother could, even though he spent the last few years living on another planet. She could tell something was wrong the moment her son walked into the room. The only person that could read Spock better was probably Jim.
After being allowed to read most of the official reports regarding what happened to her home planet and her son's roll, she knew that certain facts were omitted. The most obvious question in her mind was why her son gave up his status as acting captain or the fact that he was not yet reinstated. She was familiar enough with Starfleet regulations to be worried. Yet, when she asked Admiral Barnett or her husband's grandmother about this, neither would answer her question. At least, Admiral Barnett could hide behind bureaucratic pretense.

Amanda was hoping that when she mentioned Jim's status as acting captain her son would fill in the necessary blanks. It quickly became obvious to her that was not going to happen. Amanda knew that she had to speak to James alone because she knew he would tell her everything. For some irrational reason, James seem to be afraid of her. Maybe, she interrogated him a little too well last weekend.

"How is my son really handling his father's death?" She asked quickly realizing that time was growing short.

"I was expecting you to open with 'why the hell did you marry my son without telling me'?' Jim Joked.

"Do you love my son?" She asked him quickly.

"I love him in a way that there are no words for in standard. He is my best friend and my other half. I love him in a way that makes no sense sometimes. I want to spend the rest of my life with him."

"That was my next question. Although, you are aware that he may out live you by a very long time?"

"Or Spock could die tomorrow due to something completely unexpected. Life is like that. I don't want to waste a moment." That was what almost made her cry. Unlike her, Jim was more aware of the possibility of losing Spock than she ever was a losing Sarek. Apparently, James could pick up on her distress.

"Sorry, I have a tendency to put my foot in my mouth a lot. It's going to make diplomatic missions fun. I didn't mean to remind you of the fact …" Amanda cut him off before he could continue.

"My husband is dead. You do not have to ignore that particular fact. I'm fine."

"As your son would say, 'fine has various degrees of meaning'. I think in this case it means, 'I can get through this conversation without bursting into tears, maybe'." She almost smiled when he said that.

"That is a very accurate assessment. You are very observant."

"I try to be. I did have to deal with a mom who never quite got over my father's death. I know the signs a little too well. Even though she remarried, she never really let go of my father." For a moment, she wondered if she would be like that. Would this brokenhearted feeling stay with her for the rest of her life? She wasn't sure what she wanted at that moment. The pain and loss was still too raw.

"Will you hurt my son?" Amanda asked James returning to the subject at hand.

"I would die first." Jim said it with such conviction that Amanda was 100% positive Jim was telling the truth.

"I actually believe you. James, I do like you and I think you will make a good partner for Spock. I know you really care about him and will do anything for him. I saw how protective you were of him at that farce of a trial before everything fell apart. I am not upset about you and Spock being married. From what I understand of Starfleet regulations, it was probably a good thing. I am just upset that we will not be able to have a formal bonding ceremony. I was looking forward to that." She said that part almost wistfully.

"How would you feel about planning a human wedding instead? It would have to be simple due to the fact that Starfleet is probably going to have us in space as soon as Enterprise is completely functional again." She smiled at that. A wedding would give her something else to do when she couldn't sleep at night. She could probably plan a very nice wedding in the middle of the night via the net.

"If I can figure out how to house thousands of refugees on short notice, I think I can pull off a wedding in just a few weeks. Now, let's get back to my original question, how is my son really doing?"

"I was hoping you would forget about that." James said quickly.
"Not a chance."
"He's okay." Jim said not looking at her.
"Just like the word fine, 'okay' has various degrees of meaning as well. What does okay mean in this instance?" She asked her new son in law.
"He got a full 6 hours of sleep last night and he is responding well to whatever medication Bones has him on." She was not surprise that Jim mentioned medication. Several individuals who were very close to their bond mates, including herself, were on various anti depressants at present.
"That is more sleep then I got last night. The healer at the embassy also put me on a couple pills to help me deal. There's nothing wrong with taking medication if it's needed." Amanda said in reassurance.

"I am glad you see it that way. Not everyone here does. Some of the Vulcans on board refused to take the anti depressants, even though it's obvious that they need something."
"I'm not surprised. There's more going on with Spock?" Amanda prompted for Jim to continue.
"Spock's worried that you would blame him for not saving his dad." How could Spock think that?
"I don't. None of this is Spock's fault." She said in reassurance.
"Try telling him that. He feels guilty because he didn't save Sarek. He feels guilty he didn't patch things up with his dad before he died. I'm trying to get him to talk about it but he's like a brick wall sometimes." Jim sounded very frustrated as he spoke.

"His father was exactly the same way. If it wasn't for mental communication, I would have divorced him the second week." Amanda half mumbled this to herself.
"That's possible?" Jim asked in shock.
"Only in the legal sense and a broken bond is extremely painful." She said in an effort to discourage any such thoughts.
"Trust me, I'm not thinking about it." Jim said reassuring her.
"That's good. I would have to kill you otherwise." She said not entirely joking. "There is no reason why Spock should feel guilty. If you bring him back in here I will tell him that myself."
"There's no need. He has been psychically listening in on this entire conversation." She should not be surprised. That sounds like something his father would do.

"Will you tell your husband that he has nothing to worry about?"
"I'll try. Do you have any idea how stubborn your son is?"
"I'm sure he is about as bad as his father. I will leave you to your husband unless there's anything else?" Amanda asked just before ending the transmission.
"No, we will e-mail you the things for the wedding." With that the conversation was over and Amanda was alone again.

X

The conversation with his mother was not as bad as Spock feared, even though it was slightly uncomfortable due to the things they tried not to talk about. Although, Spock was not as worried as James he was happy that his mother accepted their marriage. As Jim said, he did listen in on Jim's private conversation. It made him feel better to know that his mother did not blame him. Because she told this to James and not him, Spock knew that she was telling the truth and not merely placating him. That eased some of his more disconcerting thoughts.

"See, I told you it wouldn't be so bad." Jim said as he exited the room. Because nobody was in the corridor near the conference room Spock allowed Jim to pull him into a chaste human kiss.

"I was not worried. Vulcans do not worry. You were worried. " Spock said before indulging in another quick press of the lips.
"Tell that to somebody who doesn't know you so well. I was worried about her being upset about the marriage thing. She handled that a lot better than I thought she would."
"I have discovered over the years, that my mother is a remarkable woman."
"Yes, she is." James said tangling his fingers with his. Let's go have breakfast and go do ship things. Your mom would be upset if I don't feed you."
"Considering it is nearly 11:00, I believe it would be more accurate to refer to this meal as lunch." He corrected James as they started to walk to the mess hall.
"Do you always have to correct me?" James asked him in a playful way.
"I find it quite pleasurable." Spock responded just as playfully.
"Why am I staying married to you, again?" Jim asked him in a teasing manner as he snuck in another human kiss.
"I have asked myself that question several times." Spock responded without inflection.
"So what's the answer?" Jim asked him.
"I am unsure if I could live without you at this point." Spock said in complete honesty.
"Good answer." Jim responded with his signature smile that made Spock melt.
Yes, the title of this chapter comes from the Buffy the Vampire Slayer musical episode Once more with Feeling. I keep finding myself humming the lyrics during the writing of this chapter.

Gaila hasn't been this excited about a Friday since she discovered that Friday's were two for one drink night at Boy Town. Enterprise docked above the Earth earlier that morning, which meant Nyota was back. This was great for several reasons including the fact she will not have to dodge the numerous calls and e-mails from her roommate's dad anymore. In the four years that she has shared a room with the communications major, she doesn't remember her roommate's father coming to visit or even calling, only Nyota's much younger half-sister Ivy. Gaila wasn't sure how to respond to his calls because of that and she felt it best not to pass on the message Nyota gave her through Dr. Grayson.

Gaila knew humans sometimes said things that they didn't mean in the heat of the moment, especially her roommate. Gaila doesn't know how many times her partner of the night said 'I love you' and didn't call her the next day. It didn't bother her because she assumed it was a human thing.

The other good thing about Nyota being back, was she wouldn't be the only not dead graduating senior on campus. Everybody around her knew that she possibly could have been among the dead if she wasn't lucky enough to be suspended due to not kissing up to a man who even she found despicable. Every time she was on campus, everyone looked at her with pity.

On the steps of the main academy building, there is one candle for every Starfleet member lost. She finds the sight unnerving because those candles represented her friends, classmates, colleagues, and lovers. There would be a memorial service next week sometime for several of her friends. Just another reminder of all the people she lost. That's why she spent as little time as possible at Starfleet Academy.

Due to the catastrophic losses to the student body and the faculty, classes have been suspended since the distress call 11 days earlier. She has already been informed that she will be graduating in about two weeks without even need to take final exams. She felt that was a good thing.

Many of the other cadets were assigned to help with the relief effort in any way they could in lieu of classes. She was assigned to be Dr. Grayson's personal assistant at the request of Elder T'Pau of the Vulcan council, but she would have volunteered to do it anyway. Officially, she was doing a lot of data recovery work, in addition to helping to create a system to keep track of the refugees. It was crucial to recover as much of the Vulcan Financial System and census data as possible.

Gaila also spent a lot of time with the children in the emergency shelters. She understood what it was like to be a scared child surrounded by crazy humans, light years away from home, because you no longer had a home. She wanted to do anything she could to make it a little easier on the children.

Gaila felt it was a much better assignment than being one of the cadets assigned to clean out the dormitories and box up the personal effects of the dead. That was too morbid for her. Because they needed the space to house refugees, it was done this way.
She ran into Jordan's mother, Claire, Saturday when she came by to clean out her son's dorm room. The woman seemed to cry more than Amanda did during those first few days. At least, Dr. Grayson could hold it together in public, Jordan's mom could not. Claire also gave her a few things that Jordan kept including some image files and a few letters that he addressed to Nyota that he never gave her. Gaila really didn't know what to do with the things other than take them. She will let her friend decide what she wanted to do with it when she gets back tonight.

Unofficially, she was Dr. Grayson's baby sitter, for a lack of a better term. Everyone was worried about how she would handle her husband's death including the healers at the embassy. No Human-Vulcan marriage bond had ended in such a violent way before. There was no preexisting Scientific Data regarding such an occurrence, therefore, no one knew what to expect. Considering Amanda's initial reaction to her husband's death of blacking out, Gaila believe they had cause to be worried. That is the other reason why she has been sleeping in Professor Spock's guest room for the last week and a half.

The first few nights, Gaila would wake up to the sound of Dr. Grayson crying. In the morning, she wondered if the doctor slept more than an hour or two. Yet, Amanda had no difficulties keeping up with everything. She also was not eating unless somebody forced her to.

Things got better once the doctor had the opportunity to speak with her son. Gaila no longer woke up to the sound of Amanda crying in the middle of the night. That first night after her conversation with Spock, Dr. Grayson slept for at least 9 hours. After that, Dr. Grayson seemed less exhausted in the morning. Although, Gaila did see the woman planning her son's wedding online one night at 3:00 AM.

Maybe planning the wedding gave her something else to be distracted by that was not a constant reminder of her dead husband and her now gone planet. Gaila has also been helping a bit with the wedding planning because she was going to be a bridesmaid. Certain colors just did not go well with red hair and green skin.

Jim asked her to be a bridesmaid at the same time he asked her to tell him how Amanda was really doing. She was happy to tell Jim that his mother in law was doing a lot better now. Gaila actually saw Amanda smile for the first time in days at the cake tasting after another uncomfortable post-disaster planning meeting.

Gaila was sure those meetings did little to improve Amanda's state of mind. Gaila didn't understand why certain Vulcan members of the relief committee treated Dr. Grayson so badly even though she was in charge. Gaila also didn't understand why they thought terms like whore and slut were insulting. What is wrong with being sexual?

At least, Dr. Grayson now has an ally in Elder Selek who was now assisting in the relief effort and finding a new planet for possible permanent colonization. He arrived Saturday on a shuttle from Delta Vega caring other survivors. Amanda told Gaila that he was a distant relative, through her husband, that was doing research on the planet at the time of Vulcan's destruction. He had to be a relative, because he looked exactly like Spock except older. They even raised their eyebrows the same way. It probably helped Dr. Grayson's stress level to work with a Vulcan who respected her.

Enterprise being back on earth also meant Spock and Jim were back. That explained why Amanda was up early this morning making cookies again and actually happy. Her cookies are so good.

She was sure Dr. Grayson wanted to spend time with her son. The only downside to this was Gaila was going to have to move back into the dorms. At least, she wouldn't be alone.

Gaila was currently waiting at Starfleet headquarters for her friend to finish her debriefing so they
could head back to their building that is now occupied by preteen Vulcans. She was already at Starfleet headquarters for another planning meeting. She had a headache just thinking about that last meeting. Things were tenser now that the entire Vulcan council was planet side. Certain individuals who did not like Dr. Grayson were hoping that things would change now that the council was on earth. Instead, the other members of the council decided that due to her prior experience, Amanda will continue focusing on the relief efforts while the remaining council will deal with other serious issues, like finding a suitable planet for colonization.

Gaila assumed that they would finish at the same time but her friend's debriefing was taking longer than normal. If she knew it was going to take this long, she would have had lunch. Finally, 93 minutes later, she saw her friend walk to her. Gaila quickly ran up to her and wrapped her in a hug.

"I'm so happy that your back." Gaila said as she continued the hug.

"I've gotten a lot of that since I arrived on earth. Actually, it's mostly 'I'm so happy you're not dead'." Nyota said jokingly.

"I'm trying not to be morbid."

"I don't think that's possible considering everything going on." Nyota said as she pointed to another makeshift memorial on the Starfleet property. "Thank you for trying."

"There are a lot of those around campus, with at least three memorial services planned next week that I have been invited to alone." Gaila said referring to the collection of flowers and candles covering the office of one of the captains that died in the conflict.

"Do you want to head to the apartment first or get lunch?" Gaila asked her friend.

"Lunch, I haven't had anything all day and it's almost three. I'll be happy with anything that's not replicated or that isn't a ration bar." Nyota said as they started walking out of the building.

"Ration bars?" Gaila asked her friend.

"Don't ask. It was the consequence of getting to earth four days earlier than scheduled." Nyota explain as they started walking out of the building.

"Then I'm guessing the cafeteria is out of the question?" Gaila asked.

"What do you think?" Her friend responded with a smile.

"We'll get pizza." Gaila said as she directed her friend to a back door. She didn't want Nyota to be mobbed by the press. Her friend probably didn't know that she was considered a hero. She was well aware of it when several little girls ran up to her at the restaurant asking for Nyota's autograph.

"So what else did Starfleet make public?" Nyota asked as she ate her salad after they were finally left alone.

"Everybody knows about the transmission you intercepted and the person who completely ignored your concerns. Actually, that is why everyone knows. Starfleet has decided to make him one of their scapegoats." She said taking a drink of her juice.

"This is a mess." Nyota said with a sigh.

"It is, but things are getting better. How did your meeting go?" She asked making small talk.
"Good, except they kept asking the same questions over and over again. I am half convinced they didn't even bother to read the reports we sent a week and a half ago. I am getting a promotion and I am going to be the youngest chief communications officer in the history of Starfleet. I don't know what captain I will be serving under yet, except it will not be Pike." Gaila smile to herself already knowing the answer to that question but Amanda made her promise not to tell anyone until tomorrow.

"You deserve it." Gaila said an honest praise of her friend.

"I don't know. Part of me thinks I'm getting this promotion because of the high body count. I don't think I deserve it yet. Also, being willing to risk your live to keep your captain from killing someone else is a very good thing and is awarded appropriately." Gaila heard the sarcasm and something else.

"You're not telling me something."

"Yes, but I can't tell you what."

"If it's in the reports that the Vulcan command team have been reading I probably already know. They get all of the juiciest stuff." Gaila responded to her friend.

"Trust me, it wasn't in there. This is too classified for those reports." Gaila let the subject dropped because they were in public and the conversation was already borderlineing on inappropriate.

"So you're going to be graduating with the rank of lieutenant without the junior attached?" That seemed most likely.

"Lieutenant Commander, apparently Spock's grandmother likes me and pushed for something a little extra." Nyota said taking a drink of her water.

"I met her today at the meeting from hell. She seems pretty cool, for a Vulcan. She is a lot nicer than certain other members of her species. I think you should tell your father about your promotion." It was an extremely blunt subject change but Gaila wasn't sure how to work it in there any other way.

"Don't even try." Her friend spoke instantly realizing what she was doing.

"What?" Gaila said playing innocent.

"I'm not speaking to him. I never want to see him again." Nyota said bitterly.

"I don't understand why you're so mad at your father. What's the point anymore?"

"It's complicated."

"Is it a human thing to say the situation is complicated, when you really just don't want to deal with it?" Gaila asked her friend becoming very tired of the 'it's complicated' excuse.

"Yes. Can we change the subject to something more pleasant?" Nyota asked.

"Fine, speaking of possibly uncomfortable situations, Amanda said we are to meet her at 3:00 PM tomorrow for the dress fitting. She may be a little late because she will be coming from helping out with the little children at one of the emergency shelters. How exactly did you get talked into being the maid of honor/best person for a guy you were completely in love with two weeks ago? I don't understand how that happened." Gaila said before taking another slice of pizza. This was definitely her favorite human food.
"I'm not sure either. Apparently, Spock doesn't have a lot of friends. Actually, I am his only friend besides Jim. I think I said yes because I was sleep deprived at the time. How hideous are the dresses?" Nyota wanted to know, as she finally broke down and grabbed a slice of pizza.

"They are okay. You'll see tomorrow."

"Joy."

XXX

Jim was beyond happy to be back on earth. Anything was better than filling out reports and dealing with various mishaps in between occasional 'private time' with his husband. He was hoping now that they were back on earth for a few weeks, he would actually get to have more fun time with his husband. Between the meetings and schedule PR events, Jim seriously doubted that. The Starfleet press office already arranged several interviews over the next few weeks.

He was still happy to be back even if it meant spending several hours separated from his husband by being interrogated by several high ranking Starfleet officials. You would really think they could get everything they needed from his reports, but for some reason they felt it absolutely necessary to ask the exact same question 200 times. Even though what he sent to Starfleet was highly edited it was still mostly the truth, but apparently that wasn't good enough.

Only Admiral Barnett knew the whole story, including the highly classified stuff involving time traveling Romulans, the existence of an alternate version of Spock from another dimension, and spending quality time on the ice planet of the damned. That was also why Jim had another hour long classified briefing with Admiral Barnett where both he and Spock recounted what happened again. There were much more pleasurable things Jim would rather be doing then repeating the same story over again, like his husband.

The only good thing that came out of that briefing was that he found out the charges against him and Spock involving the Kobayashi Maru fiasco was dropped. That alone kept him from falling asleep. The official reason was because the accuser was deceased, Starfleet no longer had 'sufficient evidence' to continue. The real reason was during the course of investigating Admiral Johnson they discovered that the man purposely 'lost' Spock's request to make the Kobayashi Maru more realistic. Jim had to roll his eyes again at the politics of the entire thing.

The other good news was the Admiralty decided to keep using Spock's modified version of the test. Considering recent events, the Admiralty doesn't feel like having students sitting in the middle of the simulation wondering if this was how their classmates felt before Nero and company blew them up.

If Admiral Johnson only receives a dishonorable discharge for his various misdeeds, he would be getting off lightly. The chargers were so bad that even if Admiral Johnson resigned gracefully he will still be looking at several decades on a nice prison planet. Jim was sure the man would go out kicking and screaming despite the severity of the charges.

In less than a week, Starfleet security and legal discovered several instances of extortion, extreme sexual misconduct, multiple instances of misappropriation of Starfleet funds, gross negligence, and abuse of his position as a Starfleet admiral.

Of course, the worst charge of all was the unsavory discovery that the admiral covered up his nephew's sexual assault of a 15-year-old cadet. Jim was not that shocked about that accusation considering he was essentially blackmailed into having sex with the slimy bastard. Jim was actually happy Professor Johnson was dead.

The media was all over this particular scandal. Then again, the media was hounding the person who ignored Uhura's original report involving a Romulan ship that could destroy a planet. That particular
individual was also looking at a dishonorable discharge at the very least. Jim personally thought they were making the guy the scapegoat so people don't ask too many questions about why Starfleet didn't find Nero 25 years ago. Jim knew for a fact that Spock passed on Uhura's report himself to Starfleet intelligence.

Then again, Jim knew Starfleet was using his marriage to Spock to get everyone's attention off the fact that Starfleet had 25 years to find Nero as well. Jim was already sick and tired of being Starfleet's poster boy, before he was a toddler. Everyone now knows that he was married because of a particular unauthorized press release. Since Enterprise docked this morning, Jim has been congratulated 133 times on his recent nuptials. Also, two ex hookups told him to go fuck himself. Not everybody is going to be happy, but Jim has never really cared about trying to make everyone happy. He was just personally glad his husband's only other friend was not one of these individuals who was extremely angry at him.

After leaving the conference room with a headache and receiving an order to come back tomorrow for more torture by bureaucracy Jim was hoping to sneak a kiss, if nobody was around. Unfortunately, the moment they were both outside the door they were attacked by the world's most overprotective mother complete with kisses and joyful tears.

Spock was completely freaking out in a very Spock way as his mother continues to cover him with hugs and kisses. Jim was laughing until he received the same treatment. Jim's cheeks were covered with lipstick for the first time in months. That almost shocked Jim because he was positive despite assertions otherwise that his mother in law hated. It was the natural order of things for a mother's to dislike their child spouse/significant other.

"I'm so happy you are back and OK." Amanda said in tears as she wrapped her arms around Spock once more. Spock was becoming greener by the second.

"I am fine mother." Jim was sure that was Spock code for 'please stop touching me like this in public you are embarrassing me'. Actually, it was more than that. Being a touch telepath Spock knew exactly what his mom was thinking. According to Spock, he was currently filling a mixture of sadness, relief, and joy from his mother.

"Sorry, I've been emotional lately. I will try to shield better. It's weird being back on earth after being on Vulcan for so long." Amanda said as an excuse, as she wiped away her tears. Jim knew it was more than that. "I just missed you so much."

"As did I, mother." Spock's said trying to pull away but his mom would not let go again.

"Not that I don't enjoyed this very adorable mother and son reunion, I think my husband would be more okay without it occurring in public." As soon as Jim said this Amanda pulled away.

"Sorry." Amanda said apologizing for her behavior.

"That is not necessary; although, I do believe James requires sustenance." That was so an excuse to make his mom not feel bad.

"So do you." Amanda said pointing at her baby boy. "We can pick something up on the way home but I did make your favorite cookies this morning. Then we can go over the wedding plans. Everything is set to take place two weeks from Saturday." Jim was already smiling.

He already loved Amanda's cookies and anything was better than ration bars. Next time Scotty had a brilliant idea Jim is going to make sure it doesn't involve ration bars that gave him Tarsus flashbacks. Fortunately, he had a super sexy husband to keep the nightmares away this time.
"Vulcans are able to go much longer than humans without sustenance. I do not need nourishment at this time." This made Amanda roll her eyes.

Jim personally tried to keep himself from laughing because he knew that statement was a complete lie. When they were not really dating Spock would say that he wasn't hungry but end up eating half of Jim's food. That is the real reason Jim was currently semi-vegetarian.

"Try that line on somebody who didn't change your diapers. Are you still falling for the 'Vulcans don't do this' lines?" Jim's brand new mother in law asked him as they started to walk out of the building.

"Not at all, I realized that when I was still trying to figure out how to get him to talk to me. I don't know how many girls and guys he managed to scare off with his various 'Vulcans don't do this' lines. Good thing I don't scare off easily." Jim said just as they were accosted by dozens of reporters also known as the Starfleet press core.

Jim was seriously going to kill who ever in the Starfleet press office thought it would be a good idea to make their marriage public. This was such a setup. The press cannot even be on Starfleet property without permission. Somebody was going to die.

Instead of having a nice non-replicated lunch with his husband, they had to deal with the press. Thankfully, they were all afraid of Spock's mom by this point and backed off after only 10 minutes of extremely invasive questions. They barely made it out of the experience with minimal psychological damage.

Jim was sure that the press was frustrated with their constant no comments and non-answers. It was not like they had much of a choice. Half the things that happened with Nero and the destruction of Vulcan were classified. The public did not know that Nero was from the future, the specific device used to destroy Vulcan, or that there was another version of Spock running around the universe under the pseudonym Elder Selek. Jim was not going to help spread this particular knowledge around.

Jim was shocked to find out later after surviving the press, signing dozens of autographs for little boys and girls who want to joined Starfleet someday, and getting free food from their favorite restaurant as a thank you for saving earth/congratulations you are now married present, that Amanda already knew about an alternate version of her son. It was a small galaxy after all.

"He didn't fool me for a minute. I would know my baby boy anywhere, even if he is almost a century older. It took me exactly 31 seconds to realize he was my child when he showed up to Starfleet headquarters less than a week ago. The cover story is that he is a distant great uncle of Sarek's that survived because he was working on a research project at the Delta Vega observation center. I have our favorite hacker to adjust the records but she has no idea why I asked her to do so. Due to the vacancies, it was only logical to allow him to sit on the council. I'm just surprised they didn't give him my seat. It doesn't matter because I feel he's an excellent addition to the council." Amanda said as she took a bite of her broccoli and rice.

Chinese Food was one of the few things they could agree on because Spock could have his vegetarian entrees and Jim could actually eat something that was once dead. See they were already getting good at this marriage compromise thing.

"Why would you think they would take you off the council? Elder T'Pau said that you are doing a great job. So did Barnett and about seven other members of the Admiralty. They love you." Jim Asked in puzzlement.
"There are many reasons, but the biggest one is I am human." Amanda said quietly.

"Yes, but you are a Vulcan Citizen. That's the only requirement for membership." Jim said not quite understanding her concern.

"There are certain members of the council that are currently trying to adjust that particular rule. Enough of that, at 11:30 AM tomorrow, I need both of you to show up to the suit shop, to be fitted for your suits." It was an obvious subject change but he will have Spock tell him everything later.

"Why are we being fitted? Most clothes automatically adjust?" Jim asked in puzzlement.

"Not when they are handmade the old fashioned way. I want nothing but the best for my baby boy." Honestly, Jim shouldn't be surprised or expect anything else from this remarkable yet obsessive woman.

"So when exactly is this wedding taking place?" Jim asked his future mother in law.

"Two weeks from Saturday at 5:00 PM on the academy green. Its spring and an outdoor wedding will work perfectly." Jim wasn't sure he wanted an outdoor wedding. Knowing his luck, it was going to rain. He didn't say anything because both he and Spock agreed to let Amanda do whatever she wanted. The main purpose of having Amanda plan the wedding was to help get her mind off of her dead husband. It was working to some degree. Then again, both mother and son were very good at the denial thing.

"Why is the wedding not occurring in the morning? In addition, what are you planning to do if it rains? Spock asked his mother. You just got to love Spock for asking the most important questions.

"I secured use of one of the auditorium's on campus just in case. It was the only time that fit into all the Elders schedules." Jim had a feeling that was just an excuse. He really did not want some of the members of the council to be at his wedding but he doubted he had a choice. This is what happens when you are essentially married into the Vulcan royal family. "Are you okay with elder Selek being there? He wanted me to ask, before he accepted the invitation." Amanda mentioned as she helped herself to more rice.

"It's fine with me." Jim said. "Besides, it would look weird if a supposed family member was not at the wedding."

"Jim's point is logical. However, I have no preference." That was Spock code for 'I prefer not to have him there but I'm not going to say anything to upset you.'

"Then it is settled. You will probably meet him before then at one of the memorial services maybe dinner next week. There are so few Vulcans left that you can't avoid him." Jim forgot about that exercise in political decorum/slash emotional torture. He would be attending several of those over the next few weeks until he was on Enterprise again. Admiral Barnett told him that the ship would be departing for its first mission in three weeks once all the necessary repairs were completed. Of course, Barnett didn't tell him who the captain would be. Jim hoped it was Spock. If he got his wish, he would be serving as Spock's first officer. Jim would love to be captain but Spock had seniority. As long as Jim was with Spock, he didn't care who ended up wearing the yellow shirt. Jim just hoped that Starfleet didn't hold Spock's little discretion against him. Technically they couldn't, but this is the same group of individuals who tried him for academic dishonesty two weeks earlier on the most ridiculous charges ever. Who knows?

"Are you and Spock planning a memorial service for Sarek?" Jim instantly realized he asked a really bad question by the uncomfortable looks he was receiving. Things were bad when you manage to
make Spock visibly uncomfortable.

"Sorry, forget I even asked. I'm still working on not offending people. It's a new thing for me." Jim said quickly trying to defuse the situation.

"It's fine James. The council is planning something for all the members who perished next Wednesday but I am unsure if I wish to attend." Amanda said playing with her food.

"Grandmother told me of this before we departed Enterprise this morning. I am also uncertain if I wish to attend." Jim is not surprised by their reactions.

"Trust me, I get it. I absolutely despised going to Kelvin memorial services as a child and as an adult. It always felt like a political gesture with no real meaning to me. Maybe we can do something later just the three of us?" Jim suggested.

"Eventually, just not now." Amanda said. Jim heard the same sentiment from his husband mentally. Really, those two were too much alike.

XXX
It was 2:33 AM and Nyota was still wide awake. Her insomnia had little to do with the sound of teenage Vulcans roaming the halls because they need much less sleep than humans and were just as restless as her. She has not really slept a lot in the last few weeks. At least on Enterprise, she could roam the halls until she was too tired to do anything but sleep. Now she was stuck in their tiny dorm room with nowhere to go but her own mind. That was not a very fun place.

She stuck to her earlier decision to not talk to her father even after he called three more times. He finally broke down and had her half sister Ivy call her. She did actually answer that call instead of ignoring it like the others but the call ended abruptly as soon as her father joined the conversation. She just wasn't ready to talk to him.

The other thing that haunted her afternoon was the things that Jordan's mom dropped off. Claire was the sweetest woman on earth. Nyota had no idea how such a wonderful woman could produce such a horrible son. Maybe it had something to do with the fact that Jordan's father was just as bad as hers. Nyota did call Claire to express her condolences. Jordan's mother did not stop crying at all during the 45 minute conversation. She invited Nyota to the memorial service Thursday but she couldn't bring herself to let go of her anger enough to be there for someone she really didn't like. She already knew that Gaila would force her to go if she knew.

Nyota couldn't bring herself to look through the things that Claire left her. Now that there was nothing else to do, she found herself going through the various images of happy times. Her other friends Tai Sheng and Gina were in almost all the pictures. Both girls were dead because of Nero and the battle of Vulcan. Those just made her cry a little bit more.

The part that made her angry were the letters. After the breakup Jordan drafted her several apology e-mails that he never sent her. She threw her PADD up against the wall after she read the second 'I'm sorry' letter. The sound a shattered glass woke up her roommate instantly just in time to see Nyota in tears. Within seconds, Gaila was up with her arms around her.

"What's wrong?" her friend asked in a soothing voice

"The prick finally apologized for being a prick." She said as angry tears stung her face. She was unable to say more than that.

"What are you talking about?"
"I read the letters that Claire gave me from Jordan. He said he was sorry for hurting me and didn't mean to. He never had enough courage to own up to what he did when he was alive but now he apologizes when he is no longer here. Why did he do that?" She asked her friend with tear filled eyes.

"I don't know." Gaila said as she allowed Nyota to continue crying until she fell asleep in her friend's bed.

XXX

Jim's second meeting with the Admiralty turned out so much better than his first. He was still in shock. They were going to make him captain of Enterprise. He could not believe it. It was the first time in Starfleet history that an individual went from cadet to captain. This was just beyond awesome.

He was still unbelievably happy when he was waiting for his husband to come out of his meeting with other Starfleet officials and his grandmother. His happiness went away when he saw his husband's expression. Spock had an excellent poker face, but Jim always knew when something was wrong. The fact that Spock was shielding him so intensely worried him.

"What's wrong?" He asked Spock quickly as they started walking down the hall.

"Nothing is wrong." Spock said in response

"By the way you said that, I know something is wrong." Jim said as he pulled Spock in for a Vulcan kiss. Jim quickly discovered that although Spock was uncomfortable kissing in the human fashion in public unless he was drugged or they just survived not dying, he had no trouble with public kissing in the Vulcan tradition.

"Nothing is wrong. I understand congratulations are in order. You will make a fine captain." Spock said allowing his sincerity and happiness to pass through their bond but Jim wasn't buying it.

"Is that why you are upset?" Jim asked his husband. "Did you really want to be captain? I am personally shocked that they didn't make you captain because you deserve it just as much as me. Unless, they're trying to make you captain of another ship. They wouldn't do something that stupid, I hope." Jim was almost babbling at that point.

"I have no desire to be captain. I find that you are much more suited for it than I. I will be serving on Enterprise eventually as your First Officer. It will be my privilege to serve you in such a capacity." Although Spock was projecting happiness, Jim knew something wasn't quite right.

"That's great. Wait you just said eventually. What are you not telling me?" Jim asked looking directly at his husband.

"Elder Selek has already identified a planet for possible settlement. Starfleet is sending a group to survey the planet and prepare it for colonization along with several representatives from Vulcan. The mission will last just three months, however, I have been asked to lead the mission."

"Oh," was Jim's only reaction.
All I Want is You

Chapter Notes

Thank you to everyone who read or reviewed the last chapter. This is the final chapter of The Road to Delta Vega is Paved with Good Intentions and the final chapter in the original You Have to Be my Boyfriend series. However, this is not the end of the You Don't Have to series.

This chapter is dedicated to the brave men and women in the military and in public diplomacy that must leave the love of their life behind temporarily so that he or she can serve his or her country.

Chapter inspired by: If I Ain't Got You written by Alicia Keys although I have the Maroon 5 version on my iPod.

Lyric excerpt:

Some people want it all
But I don't want nothing at all
If it ain't you baby
If I ain't got you baby
Some people want diamond rings
Some just want everything
But everything means nothing
If I ain't got you, Yeah

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Noticing his husband's shock from his previous announcement, Spock pulled Jim into an empty office to continue their conversation privately. He understands his husband's reaction because he was quite shocked when his grandmother and Starfleet proposed this mission to him. He wished Jim could come with him, if he decided to accept but that was not an option. Becoming the captain of Enterprise was a once in a lifetime opportunity for Jim and Spock will not stop him from accepting a position that he fully deserves.

"Are you okay, love?" Spock asked as he kept holding on to Jim's hand.

"I'm fine." Jim's use of the word 'fine' worried Spock. "Just give me a minute. You just told me that you're leaving me for three months." Jim said with anger in his voice as he sat on top of an empty desk.

"I said no such thing. I said that I was offered the position. I did not accept it yet." Spock said trying to ease the tension that was radiating through their bond. He could feel Jim's anger and fear via their connection quite easily.

"But you didn't say no." Jim said a lot calmer now.

"I informed the Admiralty that I must speak to my husband first before accepting any assignment. I felt it was best that we discussed the situation together. Your opinion matters to me. I trust your
judgment." Spock said sitting beside Jim and pulling him into his embrace.

"Good answer. I know you want to do this. I know you said you wanted to find a way to help your people without having to leave Starfleet during our various posts sex conversations on the way back here. This would be the way." Even though Jim said this aloud, Spock could tell through their bond that Jim did not want to be without his husband for three months. Spock felt the same way but he understood the importance of the mission.

Growing up, his father would sometimes leave him and his mother behind when he was required to do certain functions of his job that were too dangerous to bring his wife and child along. That is when his mom started a lot of her volunteer work and became a major player in the refugee relief and anti sex trade movement.

"It is not a matter of want. I do not want to be parted from you." Spock said aloud as he kissed Jim on the forehead. That made Jim smile momentarily. "I wish you could come with me. However, I will not ask you to give up your dream of being a starship captain, even if Starfleet's argument that I am the best candidate for this mission was logical." Spock said sternly.

"Let's forget about me for a moment. You accepting this mission makes sense, because you are the only Vulcan in Starfleet. Also, knowing you as well as I do, you feel you have to accept the position because you owe that to your people and your dead father." Jim said understanding Spock's reasoning perfectly.

"Possibly," Spock said not completely confirming Jim's assumption.

"But you also don't want to leave me?"

"The thought is completely repugnant." That resulted in Jim pulling him in for a very long kiss.

"Again, that's a really good answer. I don't want to be without you either, but it's for three months. Yesterday, we promised the Admiralty that we would not allow our marriage to interfere with us serving Starfleet to the fullest. You know they are going to be watching us under a microscope. If we screw up, then they are never going to change their policies regarding married couples serving together in Starfleet." James raised a valid point.

"You feel I should take the position?" Spock asked hesitantly.

"Only, if you promise to come back to me." Through their bond, Spock could tell this was a very hard thing for Jim to say to him but he did mean it.

"I will always come back to you." Spock said as he kissed Jim on the lips once more.

"Good. Let's get out of here before I start crying, unless you want to act out my office sex fantasy." Jim says as a joke to break the tension, but Spock decided to take him seriously.

"I am not completely opposed to having sex with you in my office, where I have supplies and can activate the privacy lock. However, this office is not a suitable location." This statement resulted in James opening his mouth in shock.

"Did you just suggest that we go to your office for a quickie even though we're supposed to meet your mom in 45 minutes? Why do you have supplies for sex in your office? Wait another minute; you thought we were friends with benefits when I thought we were friends. That explains everything. You always believe in being prepared. You are one kinky Vulcan." Jim said with a touch of sarcasm.
"I did not suggest we go over to my office for the sole purpose of engaging in sexual intercourse. However, I do need to stop by my office to pick up a few things." Spock said with an expression that Jim refers to as his sneaky smirk. There was actually no real need for Spock to go to his office, but he felt the need to be with his husband at that moment and Jim was sending him very dirty thoughts mentally again.

"This is why I love you. It's not like we can do anything at the apartment because your mom is always up. I caught her working on our wedding at 2:00 AM this morning. According to Gaila, this is an improvement over the first few days." Spock realized his mother was not handling his father's death that well. He woke up to the sound of her crying at 3:33 AM this morning. Being able to spend more time with her was another reason to accept the temporary position. By the time he joined Enterprise again, he hoped his mother would be in a better place.

"I feel she is unused to sleeping alone." Spock told his husband as he got up from the desk.

"It's going to take a while. Your mother really loved your father. My mom was like that. That's why she had one of those old fashion body pillows to snuggle with when I was a kid before she married the ass hole." Jim said getting up from the desk. "Come on let's get to the academy we have to meet your mom in 43 minutes." Jim said smiling as they walked out of the vacant office.

They actually did not arrive at the tailor's until 93.6 minutes later after engaging in various activities that resulted in breaking his desk. He was currently trying to come up with a plausible explanation of what happened when he reported the damage Monday. Spock was just grateful that James had the foresight to send Amanda a message stating that their meetings were running late.

XXX

Several Days Later

Why did she let her friend talk her into attending her ex boyfriend's memorial service? Really, Nyota would like to know the answer to that question as she looked at herself in the mirror wearing her black ensemble. She could wear her uniform, but it just didn't feel appropriate. Then again, a uniform would be more appropriate than the bright red number that Gaila was wearing.

"You're wearing that?" Nyota asked pointing to her friend's too tight dress that showed a lot of cleavage.

"It's cheery. Funerals need to be cheery. The last one was just too depressing. It's all depressing. I don't understand why humans believe you must wear black to a funeral. It's such a miserable color. Doesn't that just make everyone sadder? Humans confuse me." Her friend did have a point. She almost wanted to laugh at that.

"I'm human and I find our species confusing, especially the male members of the species. I'm still angry at Jordan for apologizing from the grave when he never intended to in life. I can't believe you're making me go. If it wasn't for Claire, I wouldn't go at all." She said adjusting her dress again before she pulled it off to find something less miserable. "You're right about black being depressing. Not all cultures on earth consider black the color of mourning. In the region once known as India to this day, white is considered the appropriate color for mourning." As she said that, she grabbed a white outfit out of her closet. If anybody said anything, she could just say she was observing the traditions of other cultures.

"I thought that was for weddings?" Gaila asked with a puzzled expression.

"Only in western Earth cultures, in India red is worn at weddings. Also white is only appropriate if you're a virgin or if it is your first marriage." Nyota explained as she inspected her new outfit. This was much better.
"Is that why Jim and Spock are wearing black?"

"We're going with black because my husband looks absolutely fabulous in the color and he would not agree to wear anything else. You and I were just some of the many who fell in love with him because of his sexy professor uniform." Jim said walking into their room. Her roommate must have given him the code. That was so unfair.

"What are you doing here? Shouldn't you be making out with your husband right now? " she asked with hands on her hips.

"He's at meetings preparing for his new mission." She is personally shocked Jim was taking being separated from his husband for three months so well. She would have been angry as hell if Starfleet decided to send her husband on a different mission for three months during the beginning of their marriage. Then again, Jim had his new position on the Enterprise to keep him happy as well as the promise that Spock will become his first officer as soon as the current mission was over.

"Starfleet is requiring me to attend as many memorial services as possible to help boost morale." Jim continued. "I figure I could help provide backup for Gaila, since she asked so nicely. She's worried that you're going to run the other way before you even step inside the funeral home." She was deeply offended by that statement. Nyota was ready to run now.

"Thank god you're here. She was already backing out. I love you to death Nyota, but you are the most hardheaded person in the universe." Jim was actually chuckling at Gaila's statement until Nyota gave him the glare of death.

"I was not backing out. I just don't see the point of going to the funeral of a coward, who not only cheated on me but didn't have the balls to apologize to me in person." She said angrily pacing her room.

"Oh please, you wouldn't let him apologize. The moment he tried to talk to you, you ran away. He is dead now. What's the point of running away again?" Why did her friend always have to ask such great questions?

"All the more reason not to go to this funeral." Nyota said sitting down on her bed being as defiant as ever.

"I was always told that funerals were more for the survivors than the deceased. It's about getting closure. Besides, I hear your friends with his mom. I'm sure she needs you to be there." Jim said sitting next to her as Gaila sat on her other side.

"What's the point of closure? I do not need closure. Maybe, you should be having this conversation with your husband and your new mother in law. They are not even having a private memorial service for Sarek. I didn't see you trying to force your husband to go to yesterday's service for the members of the Vulcan council that died." She said to Jim feeling she had a valid point. He was being just a little bit hypocritical.

"Spock and Amanda are mourning in their own way. For example, they have been having a movie marathon every night of my late father in law's favorite Earth films as they share various anecdotes. It's how they're dealing. I think that is more fitting then some public ceremony that has no real sentiment and most of the speakers either didn't know Sarek or felt that he was a traitor for marrying out of his species". She was just about to use this as an excuse to excuse herself from attending but Jim beat her to it. "Before you say anything, the thing for Jordan is a real funeral and not some political show for the media." It irritated Nyota that he acted like he knew her so well.
"What's the point of mourning someone who broke my heart in little pieces? Why should I cry over someone who fucked around behind my back? " she asked practically screaming with one tear rolling down her cheek.

"Because you need to let go of this and everything else. Jordan's ghost has been haunting you long before he was actually dead. You need to let go. You have not had a real relationship in almost three years." Gaila said pointing this out to her as she wrapped an arm around her.

"That's not fair. I tried to have a serious relationship but the guy was completely in love with someone else. That counts." She said just as she laid her head down on Gaila's lap.

"Sorry." She heard Jim say from behind her as she felt another hand reluctantly pat her back.

"Don't feel sorry Jim. The entire thing with Spock was a safety crush. Spock wasn't going to give in to you while he was your professor unless he was in the middle of a nervous breakdown. Even then, it wouldn't be more than a friendship with make out privileges. You two were never going to be forever and you know it. You're never going to be able to move on unless you say goodbye," Gaila said as she stroked Nyota's hair.

"Fine. you win. Let's get this over with." She said as she wiped away her tears, got up from the bed, grabbed her purse, and walked out the door.

XXX
The memorial service was not as bad as she thought it would be. It was mostly Jordan's family and a few of his remaining friends that didn't die in the battle of Vulcan. There weren't that many. Claire made her sit next to her. She was an absolute mess for the entire service.

Even Nyota cried at some point. Maybe her friends were right. (Yes, she actually considered Jim Kirk, her future captain, to be her friend despite everything.) She needed closure and this was as close as she was going to get.

After the memorial, she found herself walking back to her room alone with Jim because Gaila had a meeting with Amanda to attend. Like Spock, Gaila is going to be assigned to a detail for the next three months helping with the recovery efforts before joining Enterprise. Although her friend was a computer genius, she was doing really good helping with the Vulcan children. Gaila would probably make a really good mother someday.

"Was that really so bad?" Jim asked her.

"Not really. Claire was really glad I was there. I should be able to handle your wedding now without any trouble whatsoever. At least, the bridesmaid dresses are something that I would be willing to wear in public." She said with a smile. The dresses were actually beautiful and she looked really good in blue.

"We're already married, so the worst part is over. I can't believe you agreed to be a bridesmaid." He said almost surprised.

"Why does everybody keeps saying that?" Really she was getting tired of hearing that over and over again. Even Spock's mother was shocked she said yes. She is not some fragile flower. The guy she was in love with married someone else. It's okay. Maybe, Gaila was right about the safety crush thing. She was only in love with Spock because she knew their relationship really wouldn't go anywhere. He is still her friend and she is going to be the best maid of honor/best person ever.

"A few weeks ago, you were trying to convince my husband to dump me for you. Are you just
doing this so you can disrupt the wedding during the 'speak now or forever hold your peace' part of the ceremony?" Jim asked her half seriously.

"First, you two are already married, so what's the point? Second, I am not my father and I don't screw up other people's marriages. You and Spock love each other very much, even if you're going to have to spend a few months apart due to duty." She answered Jim honestly.

"Good to know you're not planning on trying to be the other woman." Jim said with a laugh.

"He is too much in love with you for that to work." She answered back as they arrived at her building. Being the gentleman that he was, he insisted on walking up to her actual door. She can't believe that she just referred to Jim Kirk as a 'gentleman'.

"Anyway, speaking of your father, I was told by my mother in law and your roommate to try to convince you into calling the man. However, due to the fact that I rather spend time with certain members of the Vulcan council that wish me dead than even considering calling certain relatives of mine, I'm not going to push." Why is she not surprised that Gaila asked Jim to pressure her into calling her father?

"Thank you for not pushing. I am getting enough of that from my roommate. Because of those members of the Vulcan council that hate you, I will not even have the opportunity to object even if I wanted to. According to my extremely pushy roommate, Amanda has specifically asked soon to be Admiral Pike to leave that part out of the ceremony. She is worried that certain members of the Vulcan council will object to Spock marrying a human when the Vulcan race is in such a dire state. It would look bad if that happened. Is Pike even going to be well enough to do the wedding by then? I know he is still in rehab right now." She asked the last part as an afterthought.

"Considering the way they treat me, I wouldn't be surprised if that happened. Good thing they don't know Spock's great uncle is also half human. I think I gave a certain prejudiced member of the council a heart attack when I reply to him in perfect Vulcan after he referred to me by several vulgar terms for prostitute. Also, Pike will be fine. He is getting out of rehab Saturday and moving into his new Starfleet provided apartment specially designed for an individual utilizing a wheelchair. There is no way I am letting him miss my wedding. He is like the closest thing I've ever had to a real father, even if my husband had a crush on him for a few years." There is no way she heard that last part right. That was just too much.

"He had a crush on Pike?" She asked laughing.

"Yes. But I didn't tell you that. I hope you're better at keeping a secret than my husband. I know all about you not hating me," He replied with a smile.

"It's not my fault you grow on a person. It is hard to hate you once I stopped seeing you as another version of my ex boyfriend. I'm sorry for doing that to you." She said sincerely.

"I understand. I've had my share of bad boyfriends and girlfriends for that matter. I did Cupcake. We all have temporary lapses of good judgment." He said the last part with a wink.

"What's happening to him?" She asked wondering what happened to the guy she reluctantly kept from getting killed.

"If he ever wakes up from the coma, a dishonorable discharge and maybe some prison time. That's fine with me. I heard that my new chief of security, Sam Giotto is really good at what he does even if he's on the young side. Then again, we all are." Jim said excitedly.
"Are they bringing anybody else on to be your first officer during Spock's detail?" She said approaching the subject delicately. Jim obviously didn't want to deal with the fact that his husband will be away from him for three months.

"I didn't like any of the possible outside candidates. At least, one has too big of an ego to be willing to do the job for only three months and I don't think Spock would be happy with me working with anybody I slept with in the past. I'm sure he's pissed at the fact I'm becoming a captain before he is anyway." She really wanted to know whom Jim was talking about. However, she knew better than to ask for a name.

"Good point, but if you do anything to hurt Spock, I will kill you." She said with her best sickeningly sweet smile.

"I know. You are one protective friend."

"What about Dr. McCoy? He did major in command as well."

"That's only because he had no choice. I think I tricked him into doing it by promising vast quantities of alcohol. Didn't you also double major in command?" Jim asked her, obviously already knowing the answer. Because he was her brand new captain, he probably had her resume memorized.

"During undergrad but I felt I was much better at linguistics. That's what I focused on during grad school." She answered honestly, as she typed in the code for her room and the two walked inside.

"You made a very hard decision on the bridge when you decided to knock out my husband. Most people would not have had the courage to do that."

"I'm not most people." She answered putting her bag down on top of her desk.

"No you're not. I think you'll make a good temporary first officer."

"What?" She asked him in shock

"I want you to be my first officer until Spock gets back. After that, you will become our second officer but your duties are going to be a little bit different because Starfleet is a little uncertain about having a married command team. We can talk details later if you accept." Even after that, she was still confused.

"Why?"

"Because I need someone who will put the ship first, no matter what and I know you're the person. You have already proved that. I also need someone who is as committed to his or her job as I am. You are a bit of a workaholic. Most importantly, I need someone who will be willing to tell me when I am doing something absolutely stupid. Also, I owe you for sneaking me on the ship in the first place." He was smiling again.

"There's no need to thank me for that. We all would be dead otherwise. You want me to be your first officer? I barely served on a ship before."

"Your actions kept us all from ending up dead. You're good at what you do." Jim said actually praising her. She still wasn't sure she was really qualified for the position.

"Do you need me to say yes now?" She asked.

"No, I don't. Think about it. I don't need to know for a little while. You can tell me at graduation or
the wedding for that matter. I have to go anyway. I'm meeting my husband for a very awkward dinner with his great uncle Selek and his mother."

"Uncle Selek was the guy who saved your life on Delta Vega and provided a way for you to get back on the ship?" Due to accessing file she shouldn't have, she now knew exactly who 'Uncle Selek' was.

"Yes." Jim said hesitantly.

"I met him yesterday at the memorial service. He really does look exactly like Spock. It was like Spock was his uncle's clone." She said as she opened the door to her apartment

"You know, don't you?" He asked quietly.

"Yes. Have fun tonight." She said letting the door closed behind her. If she decided to actually send her father a short message, that was no ones business but hers.

XXX
The day before graduation and two days before the wedding, Jim and Spock's house was in complete chaos. There was so much to be done before both he and Spock left for their respective missions in a week. The worst was the packing. Even though Jim spent the majority of his life moving around from planet to planet, it was still difficult getting the entire contents of your life down to two bags. He had no idea how much stuff he managed to accumulate in this apartment over the last nine months. He really has been living in this apartment since the beginning of their relationship.

Everything not going with them will go into storage eventually. Amanda is staying in the apartment for now, but has decided to move to the colony as soon as the first houses were ready. At that point, the loft will go on the market. They thought about keeping the apartment but it didn't make sense considering they would be on earth so little during the next few years.

That's also why Jim finally decided to sell the old family farm to Starfleet who needed the space for the rapid rebuild of the ships destroyed by Nero. It was better to sell the property. There were too many bad memories associated with that place. Now that he was starting his new life with Spock it was time to let go of the pain.

Jim wondered if Amanda would really relocate to the colony right away considering how certain Vulcans treated her. Also Amanda was becoming very attached to two little Vulcan girl's name T'Pend and T'Pay. In human terms, T'Pend was 9 years old and extremely protective of her 10 month old cousin T'Pay, mostly because the little girl was the only family she had left. The two girls were thrown on a shuttle together by desperate parents in the minutes before implosion of their home planet. The only individual that T'Pend will let near baby T'Pay was Amanda.

Amanda has been spending so much time with the two girls over the last few weeks that he wouldn't be surprised if Amanda was considering becoming their Foster mother. If that happened, Amanda wouldn't be leaving until the new colony was well established and suitable for a small child.

He and Spock hope to have all the packing done before the wedding in two days. After the ceremony, they were taking a very short honeymoon. Jim talked Spock into renting an old fashion motorcycle and just riding down the coast without plans or reservations. Knowing his husband Jim doubted that plan would last more than 20 minutes. The tropical beach honeymoon fantasy was impractical because they had to be back to San Francisco by Wednesday to begin final preparations for their departure and separation.

The thought of being separated from his husband for three months made him sick but it was just something that had to be done. Jim was half convinced this was a test from Starfleet to see if he could
be a good captain without his husband. Jim would be happy to prove their assumptions wrong.

Jim could be selfish and tells Spock not to help out his people. However, He wasn't that type of person. This type of separation was very common in Starfleet because of the organization's arcane policies involving spouses and families. It was so common that there were classes at if the Academy on handling long-term separation.

Now that Pike was an Admiral, the man was going after those ridiculous policies regarding families living on starships in addition to changing Starfleet's policies regarding individuals with disabilities. Pike told both him and Spock this when they took the man out for a celebratory dinner. However, it will take a while before Pike's dream will become a reality and in the interim, he was going to have to get used to being away from Spock for three months.

At least, this situation was better than what his best friend Bones will be going through. Even when planet side Bones would end up going four or five months without seeing his baby girl because his bitch of an ex wife would not honor the court ordered custody arrangement. Bones was supposed to be able to see his daughter one weekend every month but Jim doesn't know how many times his friend has returned heartbroken from a weekend trip to Georgia because he didn't get to see his daughter. For some reason the evil one kept forgetting what weekend her ex husband was supposed to spend with baby Bones.

Thanks to his mother-in-law's knowing some of the best lawyers on the planet, his best friend was currently spending two weeks with his daughter before the long separation. As it stands, they were not returning to earth until winter of 2259. Maybe if the policy regarding children on starships was already a thing of the past, now that Bones had a decent lawyer and was one of the people who helped saved Earth, he could probably get full custody of his daughter Joanna. At least, his favorite pseudo niece would get to be the flower girl at his wedding.

"So how many pairs of blue jeans should I take?" Jim asked his husband that afternoon as he dumped the entire contents of their closet onto the bed. His mother in law was currently visiting her two favorite Vulcan girls, leaving Jim and Spock at the apartment by themselves. Instead of sexy time, they were packing. Jim really didn't understand this but he decided to humor his husband. Love made him do strange things.

"Considering that you will be in your uniform most of the time, I believe two will be sufficient along with a few T shirts. I personally am not bringing any civilian clothes." That was not going to do, Jim thought to himself as he placed three pairs of jeans in a suitcase including the pair that Spock like the most.

"You have to bring at least a pair of jeans. What if I want to take you out on a date during shore leave?" Jim said giving his husband his signature pout. Spock was completely vulnerable to the pout.

"What is the purpose of dating when we are already married?" Spock asked with his normal 'I think you're crazy' expression. Jim was starting to think that expression was adorable yet annoying.

"It's a human thing. Married people do date nights sometimes to put the spice back in their marriage, usually after they have kids. Not that we will ever need it for that reason, even if your mom talks us into adopting as soon as Pike successfully changes the children in space policy. I just like doing things with my sexy husband." Jim said walking over to Spock who was neatly folding his extra meditation robes in a box for storage to give Spock a quick peck on the lips.

"What do spices have to do with marriage?" Spock asked once they were parted.

"You know sometimes I don't know if you actually don't know what I'm talking about or if you're
just messing with my head because you think it's cute. I have a direct link to your mind and I'm still confused. In this case, it's an expression. Once upon a time on earth, people were afraid to talk about sex. 'Spice' was a code word for sex. Because our sex life is absolutely fantastic we don't need to worry about that. However, I still want to show off my husband." Jim said just as he kissed Spock so hard this time that he caused him to fall on the bed resulting in the bag that he just packed to fall on the floor spilling its contents.

"I have packed the two pairs of blue jeans that you forced me to buy in the things that will be sent to Enterprise. However, I doubt I will need such things during my detail." He pulled back from Spock at that moment remembering that his husband wouldn't be joining him right away.

"I forgot for a moment. How am I going to deal with being away from you for three months?" Jim asked just as Spock pulled him back down and wrapped his arms around Jim.

"We will be so busy with our duties that we will not notice the absence. According to my mother, that is how my parents survived such long absences." Jim was pretty sure that was how Amanda was dealing with the fact her husband was dead but he wasn't going to comment on that.

"Although, I am sure you will introduce me to the concept of communicator sex at some point." Spock's mouth was on Jim's neck before he had time to form a coherent thought, let alone suggest e-mail sex instead. Jim quickly realized that using the bed to pack was a really bad Idea, as all the boxes fell to the floor in 2 minutes.

They ended their various fun 'activities' just in time to take a quick shower before Amanda showed up to their apartment with takeout and her two very special guests. Jim really did not want Amanda or her two favorite little Vulcan girls to know what he and Spock were doing for 3 hours instead of packing.

Amanda seemed unbelievably happy when she was with T'Pend and T'Pay. Actually, other than her one on one time with Spock, this was the only time Jim really saw Amanda happy. Jim was sure that they were going to be talked into either adopting the two girls or Spock status as an almost only child was going to be over for good. Thanks to modern medicine, 53 was now considered middle age and it wasn't that unusual for human women to have biological children as late as their mid-sixties. (Technically, Spock had an older half brother but he disappeared a long time ago like Sam. Spock assumed his half brother to be dead based on something Sarek said long ago. It was another thing he and Spock had in common.)

Because his mother-in-law got to spend time with her two favorite Vulcan children, Jim and Spock were not woken up in the middle of the night by crying or late night wedding planning. This was a welcome thing. Amanda was acclimating to life without her husband a lot better than Jim's mother ever did, but Jim knew it was hard on her.

The next morning was the graduation ceremony which was a very somber affair by design. Normally, the Starfleet graduations involved lots of fanfare and a marching band but considering 93% of the class was graduating posthumously, it was highly inappropriate. The least Starfleet could do was graduate the students who died in battle. They deserved that at least.

This made the graduation seem more like another memorial service than an actual graduation. There were supposed to be 3000 students graduating that day at the San Francisco academy, alone. Instead there were only 221 students, all who were on Enterprise. The same scene would be taking place at other Starfleet academy campuses across earth. For the first time ever, the graduation ceremony was taking place in one of the large auditoriums instead of on the academy green because there were so few graduating.
As expected, he was valedictorian and would be required to give a speech. While Jim was sleeping, Spock completely rewrote his speech to make it more 'appropriate'. His husband was beyond obsessive, but Jim loved him anyway. Jim knew to keep things positive and talk about the upcoming mission. So he may have included a few things about Starfleet needing to change with the times and took a potshot at the fact the organization did not find Nero and his crew earlier, not that anybody but Spock and his mother in law picked up on that particular reference. Even though Spock was a little upset, Jim felt he might as well let the Admiralty know that he wasn't going to be their sweet little puppy dog poster boy.

Once the ceremony was over, he was subjected to multiple group photos by Amanda. She even forced Bones to participate, although Joanna helped. That little girl had Bones wrapped around her finger. After lots of posing, they left for the celebration/rehearsal dinner. Because Joanna and Amanda's little friends were there, everybody kept their stories about the happy couple PG. Jim was happy for that because he really didn't want Amanda to hear about a certain incident his first year at the academy involving nudity, illegal substances, public sex, handcuffs, and being found the next morning by Bones chained to a bike rack without wearing a thing. Actually, Bones had a lot of stories that Jim did not want Amanda to hear.

Scotty also told an edited version of the first time he met Jim and how desperate he was to get back to his husband. Jim asked him to be an usher as a thank you for getting him back to Spock and to even out the wedding party. Even though Jim only knew him for a few weeks, he was quickly becoming good friends with the engineer, mostly due to all the time they had been spending together lately. Scotty and most of the people who would become the main bridge crew were still in town for tons of meetings related to Enterprise and their first mission. Everyone was in place, but his interim First officer because Nyota hasn't said yes yet. At some point at the dinner, he may have asked her again to be his first officer. He also may have asked her something else that almost landed him on the couch until he convinced Spock that he was just joking, mostly.

He was shocked that Amanda planned such a great 'congratulations you graduated' party for him. Having Amanda as his mother in law was almost like having a mother again, which was why he was starting to get just as skittish around her about the sex thing as his prudish husband. In a way, it was good to have somebody who was excited about his graduation and always made him put on a sweater before leaving the apartment. Jim was pretty sure he was already falling in love with the woman. It was good to have a mom like that, for once. It was going to be hard to say goodbye to her soon.

All in all, his Starfleet graduation went a lot better than his college graduation. At least, the ceremony didn't begin with him wondering where his mother was and ending with him being pulled aside by the police to identify his mother's body via a video feed. That was a horrible graduation.

This time, despite the sadness of losing Vulcan, his father in law, and several of his classmates, this was a much happier night. Watching his friends goof around telling silly stories as he cuddled up to Spock drinking a glass of wine was the perfect ending to the day.

His commendation ceremony was a lot happier than graduation. He didn't know who had a bigger smile Amanda or Pike during the entire thing. The best part was Spock actually kissed him afterwards in front of everyone, with tongue.

If he saw a woman who looked a lot like his mom standing in the back of the room, he put it out of his mind because she was gone by the time he looked back. It was probably just another long lost relative coming out of the woodwork. Although, it made perfect sense to Jim that it started pouring outside at that exact moment. So much for an outdoor wedding.
The role of the maid of honor/best person was to make sure that the bride or in this case, the other groom, had the best wedding possible. Nyota took her job very seriously and she had her work cut out for her. This wedding was a nightmare and she was determined to make sure that Spock never realized that. The torrential downpour that began during the middle of Jim's commendation ceremony was the least of their problems.

First, they deliver the wrong bridesmaid dresses this morning resulting in a last minute trip to the dress store to find suitable replacements. Thankfully, they did not have the same problem with the tuxedos or the flower girl dress. The rental place lost Jim and Spock's reservation for the vintage 21st century Harley and Gaila spent all morning trying to find a suitable replacement in time to be decorated with the traditional replicated 'tin' cans and 'just married' sign.

Someone who will remain nameless, in the effort of getting the best images possible simply placed the wedding rings on top of the pillow instead of securing the rings. This resulted in the best man losing the rings somewhere on the academy green. Mr. Scott, who will be Galia's escort for the wedding, managed to find the rings 10 minutes before it started raining using a homemade 'metal detector' that could search the entire green in seconds.

Because it started raining, there was a frantic effort to move everything to the alternate site on campus. Because of the venue change, it was a good thing that the caterers were late and half of the food was currently stuck in traffic. It meant less running around. Unfortunately, that half included the cake and the vegetarian entrees.

Because it was taking so long to move the wedding, they were stalling as many people as they could at the commendation ceremony reception to give Amanda and Gaila time to fix everything. Spock's grandmother was doing her part by forcing Jim and Spock to meet every single diplomat in attendance that she knew. That could probably keep the happy couple occupied for hours, if not days.

Although none of those problems compared to the possible situation that could occur just by the presence of the blonde standing by the champagne table. This could result in an incident on par with what happened on Enterprise's bridge almost four weeks ago.

"What the fuck are you doing here?" Nyota asked not caring about her use of profanity. She could not believe Carol had the audacity to show up here, less than an hour before her ex boyfriend's wedding. Even though Carol was gone before Nyota transferred to the San Francisco campus for more intense linguistics training, she recognized the woman from a panel last year on women in science that she attended.

"I am a member of Starfleet and this event is open to all Starfleet personnel. I wonder how long it's going to last?" Carol said pointing her glass at the couple who were mingling with various dignitaries.

"For a very long time, unlike your relationship with Spock, Jim actually loves him and isn't using him for a cheap fuck or to satisfy some sort of alien sex fetish. Jim actually sees how great Spock is. That is something you could never do. You need to leave. Your ex boyfriend doesn't want you here. As his friend, I'm going to make sure you don't ruin this for him." Nyota said keeping her voice down to avoid a scene.

"Spock was never my boyfriend."

"Thank god for that. Finish your champagne and get the hell out of here. I have no trouble having
security escort you out. I would do it myself but you're not worth my time." She said in an angry voice.

"It's not champagne. It's sparkling cider. I'm pregnant. I'm just a few weeks along but alcohol is bad for the fetus." Carol said taking another drink of her sparkling cider. Great, now Nyota can't hit her because of the baby.

"I pity that child and the poor bastard who knocked you up. I hope he gets full custody. On the bright side, we know it's not Spock's because he hasn't touched your skinny ass in at least five years." Nyota said sardonically. "Leave now."

"You will be amazed what can be done these days with technology and a DNA sample." Carol said cryptically as she placed her empty glass on the table.

"Is there a problem?" Elder Selek also known as the other Spock said from behind her.

"No trouble at all Elder. Dr. Marcus was just leaving." Nyota replied in a tone that told this other version of Spock to get that bitch away from her now.

"Just in case, I will escort Carol out of the facilities personally." Older Spock said grabbing the woman by the arm.

"Wait how do you know my name?" Carol asked as she was essentially dragged away by a much older version of her ex whatever.

"At my age, I know a lot of things. I'm well aware of what you did to my nephew." That was the last thing Nyota heard as the two disappeared out the side door and she went back to stalling.

Once the venue change was complete and certain unwanted guests were removed from Starfleet property, the rest of the wedding from hell went smoothly. The worst thing that happened during the ceremony was there adorable flower girl requesting to use the restroom aloud when Jim was reciting his very heartfelt vowels. The humorous moment probably kept a lot of people from bursting into tears. The mother of the groom cried any way and Nyota was actually able to smile during the ceremony. Best of all, the caterers arrived with all the food just in time for the reception.

This wedding was so crazy even she was breathing a sigh of relief during the first dance to a modern version of the old R&B song If I Ain't Got You. They actually looked really cute together. The last vestiges of her Spock crush were gone by this point.

She was sitting at the head table drinking a second glass of wine when she was approached by her new captain and friend 30 minutes later.

"I think there is some rule about the bride dancing with everybody at her wedding." Jim said extending his hand.

"Yes, but you're not a bride. Also, you never follow the rules." She said smirking.

"You just said I never followed the rules. Dance with me? I'm sure you're better at this than baby Bones." Jim said referring to Dr. McCoy's daughter.

"What about your wonderful new hubby?" She asked as she continued to enjoy her champagne.

"That's not going to happen. I had to promise to bottom for most of the honeymoon without argument just to get him on the floor for the first dance. He's spending quality time with his mom right now anyway." She could not believe he just told her that. She really hoped T'Pend and Dr.
McCoy's daughter were out of hearing range.

"You should have just gone with the last part of that explanation." Nyota said rolling her eyes. "I do not need to know anything else about your sex life. I don't want to know anything else about your sex life. Jim, there are children in the room. If I dance with you, will you promise to stop over sharing?" She said putting her now empty champagne glass on the table.

"Maybe," He said giving her his signature smile.

"That's all I can really ask for." She said taking his hand and following him to the makeshift dance floor.

"I should say thank you for scaring the bitch away." Jim said as they started to dance.

"You saw that?" She asked.

"Yes, but fortunately my husband did not. Who do you think sent back up?" He asked smirking.

"Thank you for that. I was this close to hitting a pregnant woman and I couldn't live with myself if I did something like that." She told him honestly.

"She's pregnant?" Nyota nodded her head yes. "I hope the guy gets full custody."

"I actually said that to her. It was probably a sperm donor anyway. She made it sound like this pregnancy was another one of her experiments. Yet, she didn't have time to explain why she was here."

"She was probably here just to make Spock miserable. I really feel sorry for that child. I don't want to talk about her anymore. So have you thought about my offer?" Jim said blatantly changing the subject to the thing she has been thinking about all week.

"I don't do threesomes." She said jokingly, knowing that was not what he was talking about.

"I'm not talking about that offered. I was not even being serious last night and maybe I was a little drunk. I almost ended up on the couch because of that little joke." Since the two were married already, Jim saw no point and spending the night apart.

"A little drunk?" she said incredulously.

"Okay, very drunk. It wasn't like I got to have a bachelor party. The wine was really good. Anyway, I'm talking about my offer for you to become my temporary first officer when my hubby is working on creating a new home for the Vulcan people." Jim said using his signature pout and puppy dog eyes on her.

"You really want me to be your first officer?" She asked him.

"Anyone who's willing to go toe to toe with a mentally imbalanced Vulcan will make one kickass first officer. I trust you. In addition, I know that you will keep me from doing really stupid things. I'm probably going to need that."

"I have a feeling that would be a major component of my job. If I say yes, what will be the probability of you listening to me occasionally?"

"I will always listen to your opinion but I may still do things my way." He answered her honestly.

"That's all I can ask for. Fine you win. I will be your first officer. "
"You made the right decision. We will be great together."

XXX

"I cannot kill my captain." Nyota mumbled this to herself for the 1000th time since she agreed to be Jim Kirk's first officer a month ago as her ADHD captain bounced in front of her. Why did she accept this job again? He was literally driving her insane for so many reasons including the dirty messages exchanged between Jim and Spock that she keeps intercepting and deleting from the ship's record.

She wondered how Spock could handle being married to the most reckless and insane individual she has ever met. Then again, at the core the two were exactly alike. At least once a day, she had to remind herself that strangling Jim would be detrimental to her career and it would hurt her friend if she killed his husband. Before his tear inducing departure a month ago, Spock made her promise to keep Jim alive long enough for him to come back. Spock also made her promise to keep Jim from doing stupid stuff like baiting the Admiralty.

She took her job very seriously but Jim didn't make it easy on her. Do you have any idea how hard it is to keep Jim Kirk from doing stupid things or ending up dead? It was a fulltime job keeping Jim Kirk from getting killed. Yes, he's a really good captain but Jim is completely reckless. Looking without leaping is a great leadership quality but it also leads to sickbay visits and her repeating the phrase, "please don't shoot us; he didn't mean anything by it," in various languages.

In the four weeks, that Enterprise has been in space, Jim has been in sickbay twice and they barely avoided causing a major diplomatic incident on another mission. This is amazing considering they have only been on three major missions so far. One of these injuries did not even occur during a mission. There was a little incident involving a training exercise gone wrong and a security officer who had no idea what he was doing. Both times, she had to deal with constant messages from an extremely worried husband.

She could tell Spock was having just as hard a time as Jim was being away from each other. The constant e-mails and calls were not enough. She was convinced Jim was more annoying than usual just because he missed his husband. He was probably forcing her to do paperwork all the time with him just because he was lonely. Apparently, it was part of the first officer's duty to keep their captain from moping about his absent husband all the time.

Because Spock was not there, it was her duty to scare off the little girls who were trying to get with their captain, even though they had no chance whatsoever of sleeping with him. Even if Jim was not a happily married man, he was too professional to sleep around with his crew. She was much scarier than his wedding ring.

The biggest problem was she was absolutely convinced Jim Kirk believed 'regulation" was a dirty word. He doesn't follow the rules at all. She realized that this is not necessarily a bad thing but it still resulted in her getting a headache at least once a day, especially because the Admiralty was watching Jim a little too closely for her taste.

Even she was starting to believe Jim's theory that Spock was assigned to a three-month detail to see if Jim could survive being a captain without his husband. If a certain friend of the now former Admiral Johnson was hoping that Jim would fall flat on his ass without Spock, he was sorely disappointed. Jim could still perform admirably under any circumstances, even being really sad because he missed his husband.

When she and Jim were not arguing the two actually made a pretty good team and they succeeded at all their missions. They even succeeded that one time where Jim had a severe allergic reaction due to a 'cultural misunderstanding' and she had to continue negotiations to get the dilithium rich planet to
join the Federation. Together she and Jim were a good team, but in her mind, Jim and Spock were
even better. With her, Jim was good. With Spock, he would be great.

They were currently at Starbase 17 picking up more supplies and a few new crewmembers. Both she
and Jim were presently standing in the main transporter room waiting to greet the new personnel and
Jim was already showing signs of boredom. A board captain usually meant bad things happening in
engineering.

That changed seconds later as her second favorite Vulcan appeared on the transporter pad. Spock did
not even have time to step down before Jim was on top of him kissing him in a way that tells her that
they would be locked in their joint quarters for the next 6 to 7 hours and she would be in charge for
the rest of the afternoon. The poor ensign running the transporter was completely shocked by the
nearly pornographic display. The two were so lost in each other that she had to smack Jim upside the
head to break the two apart before they 'christened' the transporter pad. It was enough to make her
wonder if Spock was medicated again or really did miss Jim that much.

"No sex on the transporter pad. Get a room." She yelled to get their attention as she said it in a sweet
way.

"You are like the worst first officer ever." Jim said playfully still holding onto his husband for dear
life.

"I'm not your first officer any more, he is. I'm so thankful for that. He is insane." Spock nodded as
she pointed to Jim. "I was going to volunteer to greet the rest of the new crew members so you two
could have some private time but…" She trailed off letting Jim fill in the blanks.

"Thank you. You're in charge." With that, they were gone and everything was right in the world
again.

XXX

When he accepted the three-month assignment helping his people with the establishment of a new
colony, he did not expect that he would miss Jim so much. Spock thought if he could survive being
separated from his mother for long periods of time, he could survive being away from Jim for three
months. At the wedding, a month ago, his mother warned him that that would not be the case when
she tried to talk him out of taking the assignment.

Even though her argument was logical, Spock knew that he really didn't have a choice. Before he
formally accepted, his grandmother informed him that this assignment was a test. Certain Admirals
who were dear friends of the now disgraced Johnson did not believe Jim could be a good captain
without him. Spock did not want anybody doubting his husband's ability to do his job.

However, being away from James made Spock miserable if he would admit to having such a feeling.
It amazed Spock how difficult it was to sleep without James by his side. The constant e-mails and
calls were not enough just as his mother had warned.

Amanda was a wise woman and knew what he was going through after being separated so many
times from Sarek because of both of their careers. He realized that now. When he contacted his
mother for advice on how to deal with the unexpected loneliness her only suggestion was to stay
busy. That seemed to be his mother's coping strategy to deal with his father's death. She was staying
very busy with her council duties and her two new foster daughters.

Staying busy was an excellent distraction, if only a temporary one. He stayed so busy that an
assignment that should have taken three months, only took one. He did not tell James this during
their last communication that the Admiralty decided to allow him to return to Enterprise early. Spock
was told that sometimes humans like surprises.

By the way James was kissing him Spock knew that James really did enjoy the surprise. Once they arrived in their quarters, there was no time to talk or explain his presence before they were both undressed on the bed. Their lovemaking was even more frantic than their first time almost two months ago or their last time 4.2 weeks ago.

"This isn't just a vacation sort of thing is it or a fantasy?" James asked post orgasm.

"It is not. I missed you, t'hy'la." Spock said kissing James naked shoulder.

"So you left early because you couldn't handle being away from me?" James asked pulling Spock in for another kiss. Spock missed this immensely during their separation.

"I was so eager to return to you that I pushed my team and myself to complete our mission two months early."

"I'm completely irresistible like that. I'm glad you're back. I love you so much that this month has been torture. I was this close to leaving just to be with you. I realize I just want you. I love you too much." James said pulling him closer.

"I love you as well. Being away from you is an experience I do not want to repeat." Spock said as he pressed a kiss upon James forehead. "I have discovered that you are the only thing I desire in the entire universe." Spock said in all honesty.

"I feel the same way and I thought we were just going to be friends." Jim said with his signature smile.

"You are my friend, you are my lover, and you are my family. You are my T'hy'la and I cherish you." Spock told James as he expressed those feelings in another human kiss.

"Don't leave me again." James mumbled against Spock's lips.

"I have no desire to."

The end

Chapter End Notes

Okay, I know some of you are a disappointed that I didn't write out the honeymoon scene. I'm not very comfortable doing explicit sex scenes and we all know Jim and Spock's honeymoon will be very close to a PWP.

However, if anyone would like to write the story of Jim and Spock's honeymoon in all its NC17 glory, please let me know. So far nobody has volunteered yet and it will be exactly 2 years on 1/26/2013 since this story was originally completed.

This was originally going to be a one shot and it is now well over 130,000 words. I would like to thank everyone who has read or gave kudos for the rewrite. I would like to thank both Vampirewine and Kumada for beta reading a few chapters in this story. I would also like to give a very special thank you to Teddy Bear who was the primary beta for this story.
There is a sequel that I have started working on recently. The title is The Truth about Love. The title comes from the P!nk song of the same name. The first two chapters are done and the third is with my beta.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!