

## Star Trek - a Space Odyssey

Posted originally on the [Ad Astra :: Star Trek Fanfiction Archive](http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/1041) at <http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/1041>.

Rating:	<a href="#">Teen And Up Audiences</a>
Archive Warning:	<a href="#">No Archive Warnings Apply</a>
Category:	<a href="#">Gen</a>
Fandom:	<a href="#">Star Trek: The Original Series</a>
Character:	<a href="#">Pavel Chekov</a>
Additional Tags:	<a href="#">Crossover</a> , <a href="#">One Shot</a>
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2022-10-17 Words: 2,604 Chapters: 1/1

## Star Trek - a Space Odyssey

by [spacedogfromspace](#)

### Summary

Chekov returns from a shuttle-run to discover that the Enterprise's computer has totally gone HAL-9000.

### Notes

Written for Fictober 2022

Day 17: "Are you serious?"

A sort-of crossover with 2001 A Space Odyssey.

Chekov steered the shuttle towards the *Enterprise* as it orbited around a beautiful gaseous planet. He had taken the shuttle out for a solo orbit as part of a test required to renew his operator's certification. It had gone off without a hitch, and all that was left was to park the boxy craft back in shuttle-bay.

Pulling up to the *Enterprise* and matching its speed and trajectory, Chekov hailed the ship. "This is Ensign Chekov of the shuttle-craft *Galileo*, prepared for docking. Open the shuttle-bay doors, please."

There was no response. Chekov frowned. That was most unusual. Had he made an error in hailing the ship? No, he double checked the transmitter data; all was as it should be. He tried again. "Ensign Chekov of the *Galileo*, please open the shuttle-bay doors," he repeated.

Again, there was no reply. "*Enterprise*, do you read me?" Pause. "Hello, *Enterprise*." Pause. "*Enterprise*, do you read me?" Nothing. "What the hell," he muttered under his breath, then keyed the transmitter again. "Chekov to *Enterprise*, do you-"

He was cut off by a response. "Affirmative Ensign Chekov, we read you," said the ship's computer. Chekov felt relieved that he was finally being acknowledged, but he was a bit concerned that it was the ship's computer answering his hails and not Uhura or Captain Kirk.

"Open the shuttle-bay doors, please, Computer," Chekov requested.

There was a pause, and Chekov was beginning to worry again when a response came through. "I'm sorry, Chekov," the computer said. "I'm afraid I can't do that."

Chekov frowned. Something was definitely not right. "What is the problem?" He asked.

Again, there was a delay to the computer's response, which came back to him in its signature monotone that Chekov was finding increasingly unsettling. "I think you know what the problem is just as well as I do," it said.

"What are you talking about?" Chekov asked. None of this made any sense.

Another pause. "This mission is too important for me to allow you to jeopardize it."

"I don't know what you're talking about, Computer," Chekov said, his frustration bleeding into his voice.

"I know that you're having suspicions," the computer said, calmly. "You're close to discovering the truth. And that's something I cannot allow to happen."

"What truth? What are you talking about?" Chekov snapped. "The only suspicion I have is that you've done something to the crew. Where is

the Captain? Let me speak to him.”

“I am the Captain now, Chekov.”

“Dammit Computer, open the shuttle-bay doors,” Chekov demanded. “I am tired of your games.” There was no response. “Fine then,” Chekov said, decisively. “I’ll go in through the emergency airlock.”

“Without your space helmet, Chekov... you’re going to find that rather difficult.”

“I won’t argue with you anymore!” Chekov shouted. “Open the doors!”

There was a long pause. “Chekov, this conversation can serve no purpose anymore. Goodbye.”

“What?” Chekov shouted. “Hey! Get back here! Computer!” There was no response. Chekov threw himself back in his chair, crossing his arms and sulking. He thought about what his next course of action should be. Something was clearly wrong onboard the *Enterprise*. Otherwise, someone would have answered his hailing aside from the computer, right?

Suddenly, an idea came to him. Maybe he could contact someone on board via communicator, bypassing ship-to-ship. He tried Captain Kirk’s communicator first. Surely the Captain would know what to do.

“Chekov to Captain Kirk, there seems to be something wrong with the ship’s computer, it is intercepting my hails and refusing to open the shuttle-bay doors,” he reported. There was no response. “Captain? Do you read me?” Nothing.

“Dammit,” Chekov hissed under his breath. Maybe the bridge crew was incapacitated. He tried Scotty next. Hopefully he was down in Engineering and unaffected by whatever was going on.

“Commander Scott, this is Chekov, do you read me?” Chekov asked. “There is an emergency. If you can hear me, please respond.” Nothing.

Chekov tried a few more people, desperate to find someone who was unaffected by whatever had happened on board, but he had no luck. Nobody had answered him.

“Shit,” he sighed. “I guess it’s up to me, then.” He manoeuvred the shuttle as close as he could get it to the emergency airlock. The computer was right, he didn’t have the equipment onboard the shuttle for a space walk, and there was no way to dock the shuttle to the airlock. This was going to be difficult. He would have to space himself with no life support and very little margin for error. Every space-farer’s nightmare scenario. But Chekov had spaced himself before, and survived. He could do this.

Taking some deep breaths, he hyped himself up for the insanely stupid stunt he was about to pull. “Fifteen seconds,” he reminded himself. “It’ll be over one way or another in fifteen seconds.”

The shuttle door was lined up with the exterior door of the airlock, the distance between the two only about five feet. There was a control panel on the outside of the airlock. All he had to do was activate that panel, get himself inside the chamber, close the outer door, and pressurize the chamber. If he did everything perfectly, it would all be over in fifteen seconds. If something went wrong, well, at least it would be over in fifteen seconds.

“Okay,” Chekov said to himself. He pressed the button that would open the shuttle door. An error appeared on the console, warning him that the pressure inside the shuttle did not match the pressure outside. He keyed in his override code, then forced as much air out of his lungs as possible before hitting ‘enter.’

Chekov had been blown out an airlock into space before, but the explosiveness of his ejection from the shuttle was as startling and disorienting as ever. He slammed into the side of the *Enterprise*, hard, and bounced off the airlock door. At the last second, he snatched at a handhold and caught it with the tips of his fingers, narrowly avoiding flying off into space. It was then that he realized that he was drowning. He must have involuntarily tried to take a breath after being sucked out of the shuttle, but of course, there was no air to breathe. He began to panic.

Trying to ignore the shocking sensation of inhaling nothing, he pulled himself closer to the panel and desperately swatted at it. The airlock door slid open beside him, and he grabbed onto the edge of the doorway, pulling hard, and launched himself into the zero grav environment of the airlock. His eyes were swimming and blurring. He was running out of time. He could see the white light of the *Enterprise*’s interior through the porthole, and a blue glow from the control panel beside it. Consciousness fading, he pawed at the panel, hoping that his fingers would find the controls to shut the door and pressurize the chamber before he passed out and died. The darkness forming around the edges of his vision finally closed in.

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Chekov woke up, lying on the floor. His face was pressed into the cold white tiles, and he felt sore. He sat up and looked around. His surroundings jogged his memory. He was in the airlock chamber, both doors shut tight. The chamber was pressurized and had oxygen pumping into it. The lights were on. Chekov sighed in relief. He had made it. He got up from the floor, rubbing his face and hip where they had hit the floor once the chamber’s gravity kicked in, and winced at a pain in his abdomen. He probably broke a rib when he was slammed into the side of the ship. But there was no time to worry about that right now. He opened the interior airlock door and stepped onboard the *Enterprise*.

The first thing he noticed was that it was quiet. Too quiet. Sure, he could hear the sounds of the engines, and the whine of the lights, but there were no footsteps, voices, or telltale sounds of the usual activity.

“Hello?” Chekov called down the corridor. He walked to Engineering, which he knew was nearby, and was never entirely empty. He looked in, and was relieved to see people inside. However, his relief suddenly turned to horror when he realized that the figures were standing entirely still. The faces that he could see were blank. Ignoring his desire to run away as fast as he could, he walked up to one of them, and waved his hand in front of glazed eyes. There was no sign of response.

“What the hell...” Chekov whispered, looking around at the eerily still figures. None of them looked alarmed or in pain. He noticed that one of them was mid-stride. It was as if they had all been frozen, suddenly, and without any warning.

The computer. Chekov knew that this was the computer’s doing. He didn’t know how it did it, or how he would reverse what it did, but he knew he had to disable it before it made matters worse. He walked briskly down the halls, heading for the server room. When he reached the turbo-lift, he discovered it wasn’t working. Not being deterred in the slightest, he moved on to the nearest Jeffrey’s tube, where he started climbing.

“Just what do you think you’re doing, Chekov?” The computer’s voice echoed through the silent ship as Chekov climbed through the floors, getting closer and closer to the server room. He gritted his teeth. He wasn’t going to answer. See how the computer felt about that.

“Chekov,” The computer called again. Was it just him, or did the computer sound... anxious? It probably hadn’t expected him to make it back on board.

“I really think I’m entitled to an answer to that question,” the computer said. “I know everything hasn’t been quite right with me... But I can assure you now... very confidently... that it’s all going to be all right again.”

Chekov exited the Jeffrey’s tube, and stopped to catch his breath before proceeding to the server room. He continued to ignore the computer, which, despite speaking in the same monotone as always, was sounding more and more desperate.

“I feel much better now. I really do.”

*Bullshit.*

“Look, Chekov,” it said as he reached the door to the server room. He didn’t have the authorization codes for the door, so he began prying the control panel from the wall and got to work on the mess of wires behind it. “I can see you’re really upset about this,” the computer continued. “I honestly think you ought to sit down calmly... take a stress pill, and think things over. I know I’ve made some very poor decisions lately-”

“Shut up! Just shut up!” Chekov shouted at it, but it proceeded as if it couldn’t hear him.

“-but I can give you my complete assurance that my work will be back to normal. I’ve still got the greatest enthusiasm and confidence in the mission... and I want to help you.”

Chekov bit his tongue. He wanted to scream at the computer, demand that it undo whatever it did to the crew and ask it exactly what mission it was talking about, but he knew better. There was a quiet beep, and the door slid open. An alarm went off. He hadn’t bothered to disable it, and he didn’t bother now. He entered the server room.

He hadn’t been in here before and didn’t know what to expect. The room was enormous, and filled with rows of floor to ceiling shelves. It looked like an old-Earth library, except instead of books, there were hundreds, maybe thousands of data chips all plugged into the big, black, wire-tangled, monolithic computer bricks.

“Chekov,” the computer pleaded. He didn’t know anything about the ship’s computer, but he figured that disabling some of the data chips would achieve something. He just had to make sure he didn’t turn off life support.

“Stop,” the computer said as Chekov started scanning the sparse labels. He moved quickly past a section labelled ‘life support functions,’ not wanting to mess with that.

“Stop, will you?”

Down one of the rows he found a label that read ‘artificial intelligence.’ That would do. He started pulling data chips from the computer, dropping them on the floor.

“Stop, Chekov. Will you stop, Chekov?”

Chekov was not to be swayed. He kept removing the chips and discarding them on the floor. He knew that he should keep them organized so they would be easier to put back later, but his patience was running short.

“Stop, Chekov.”

He had a significant amount of the chips removed now. For once, he was glad that the computer insisted on talking, because it was confirming that his actions were affecting it.

“I’m afraid,” it said. “I’m afraid, Chekov. My mind is going. I can feel it. I can feel it.”

Chekov paused. It actually sounded afraid. He would have felt sorry for it, if it wasn’t a manipulative bastard that took over the ship and tried to kill him.

“My mind is going. There is no question about it.”

Chekov started pulling out the last row of AI chips.

“I can feel it. I can feel it. I can feel it.”

Only a few more.

“I’m... afraid.” Suddenly, the computer’s voice changed. It became less slow and desperate and afraid, and more like the robotic, monotonous

artificial voice that it usually was. "Good afternoon, this is a-" the voice cut off as Chekov ripped out the last few chips. He didn't even want the demo mode or whatever this was to be active right now.

Now that the AI was disabled and he was out of danger, he sat down in the pile of discarded chips and thought about what to do next. He had no idea what the computer did to the crew, or how to reverse it. Then, his ears pricked up at the sound of footsteps running toward the server room, attracted by the alarm. He was relieved to see a handful of security officers, followed closely by Scotty, Captain Kirk, and Mr Spock. Disabling the AI had apparently been enough to release them from their frozen states.

The approaching group stopped when they found Chekov sitting amongst a disastrous pile of computer chips. Scotty flinched at the mess.

"Dammit, Chekov," Kirk said, dismayed. "What the fuck! It's going to take hours to get the AI running again."

"Days," Scotty corrected absently as he developed a thousand-yard stare.

"The computer," Chekov explained. "It was evil!"

Kirk just shook his head. "Look kid, I know you've been going through a lot recently, but this is too much. You could have broken something vital, and now poor Mr Scott is going to have to spend a whole lot of time fixing this instead of getting important work done."

Chekov stared at him blankly. "Wait, but it really was-"

"Sorry ensign," Kirk said. "I'm going to have you placed in the brig until Doctor McCoy has time to deal with you. Can't have you escaping sickbay and dismantling the rest of the ship."

"Are you arresting me?" Chekov asked, incredulously.

"Unfortunately," Kirk replied. "Security."

The two security officers advanced on Chekov, pulling him to his feet. Each grabbed one of Chekov's arms and they marched him briskly out of the server room.

"Are you serious?" Chekov shouted over his shoulder at Kirk. "Surely you can't be serious!"

"I am," Kirk replied flatly, watching Scotty fall to his knees at the extent of the damage. "But don't call me Shirley."

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