

Pyrexia

Posted originally on the [Ad Astra :: Star Trek Fanfiction Archive](http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/1091) at <http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/1091>.

Rating:	General Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	Gen
Fandom:	Star Trek: Strange New Worlds
Character:	Christopher Pike , Una Chin-Riley Number One , Joseph M'Benga
Additional Tags:	Sickfic , Fever , Hallucinations
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2023-10-15 Words: 875 Chapters: 1/1

Pyrexia

by [lah_mrh](#)

Summary

Chris comes down with a fever.

Notes

Written for misbegotten in the [Fandom Gift Basket](#) fest.

Chris blinks tiredly at his computer screen, the words blurring in front of his eyes. He'd hoped to finish the paperwork for their last mission tonight, but he has a pounding headache and can barely keep his eyes open.

He checks the time, doing a brief mental calculation. He isn't that far from completion; if he goes to bed now he should be able to finish up tomorrow morning before he goes on shift. He'll just have to get up a little earlier, that's all.

Decision made, he shuts down the computer and begins to get ready for bed. It's obvious by the time he slips beneath the covers that he's made the right decision – he's so exhausted that he barely has the presence of mind to mumble, "Computer, lights off," before he spirals down into sleep.

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"Chris. Chris!"

Chris comes awake slowly, swimming upwards through a fog. He's hot and achy and so *tired* and he wants to go back to sleep but someone keeps shaking him.

He forces his eyes open with a great effort, terror shooting through him as he takes in the creature standing by his bed, tall and noisy and with too many limbs. It shakes him again and Chris pulls away, hitting out wildly. "Get away from me!"

He means to yell, but it comes out as a whimper. The creature says something that sounds like his name, followed by a bunch of other words he can't understand.

His eyes drift shut against his will and when he forces them open again there are *two* creatures staring at him. One of them waves something over him and says more words Chris can't understand, and then there are limbs on him, cold and strong and pulling him out of bed. Chris tries to resist, kicking and scratching and fighting with everything in him until he feels a sharp pinch in his neck and everything goes dark.

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Chris opens his eyes to the familiar sight of a sickbay ceiling, body aching like he's just finished running a marathon. He tries to remember how he got here, but his memories are fuzzy and indistinct. He went to bed in his quarters, and then...?

He doesn't have time to puzzle further as M'Benga appears. "Oh good, you're awake," he says. "How do you feel?"

"Like I've been hit by a shuttle," Chris tells him. His throat is dry, and he swallows before adding, "What happened?"

"You don't remember?"

Chris shakes his head.

"Well, I can't say I'm surprised. You were running a pretty impressive fever." He glances up at the readout above Chris's head and adds, "You're suffering from Deltan fever. You're past the worst of it, but you'll be off-duty for at least another week while you recover."

Chris feels like he should protest, but he mostly just wants to go back to sleep. "Is anyone else sick?" he manages.

"Just you, at least so far. It's not particularly contagious, so I don't anticipate an outbreak. Maybe one or two others at most."

Chris nods, and M'Benga hands him a cup of water and raises the head of the bed a little so he can drink. Chris sips at it slowly, the cool water feeling good on his throat.

"I should tell Una you're awake," M'Benga says. "She's the one who found you, you know, when you didn't show up for your shift."

A flicker of memory tugs at Chris's mind, but he's too tired to try and follow it. "I'm sure she'd like to see you if you feel up for visitors," M'Benga adds, and Chris nods slowly.

"Yeah," he mumbles. "Sure."

It doesn't take long for her to arrive, crossing sickbay in long strides until she's standing at his side. "How are you feeling?" she asks.

Chris rubs at his eyes, stifling a yawn. "Not great," he replies honestly.

"I'm not surprised. You were completely out of it when I found you. High fever, hallucinating... You didn't recognise me at all, you actually started fighting me and Joseph when we tried to get you to sickbay."

The words spark something in Chris's mind, a vague, dreamlike memory. "I thought I was being abducted by monsters." He studies her in concern, checking for injuries. "I didn't hurt you, did I?"

She shakes her head. "Couple of minor scratches, but nothing serious." Chris frowns and starts to apologise, but she cuts him off before he can. "It's fine, Chris. I doubt anyone could think clearly while running a forty degree fever. Frankly you were more of a danger to yourself than either of us."

Chris scrubs a hand through his hair, accepting the words. "I still feel like I should make it up to you somehow."

"Just rest and get better," she says, before smiling and adding, "And next time you get abducted by monsters, maybe try diplomacy first?"

Chris gives a huff of laughter. "I'll keep that in mind."

Exhaustion pulls at him, dragging his eyelids shut briefly, and Una lays a hand on his shoulder, squeezing gently before pulling away. "You should get some rest," she says. "I'll come back later."

"Mmm," Chris agrees. "Don't bring any monsters."

He lets the sound of Una's laughter follow him down into sleep.

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