

Phoenix

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Phoenix

by [Pixie](#)

Summary

Captain Pike makes a different choice.

Katoberfest 2023 Day 1: Kat Survives AU

Pike couldn't stand still. He hid agitation well, but he rocked back and forth on the balls of his feet and his fingers fidgeted across the casing of the torpedo holding his ship hostage. Across the way Katrina was resigned, and resolved. She knew what had to be done. She and Pike both knew when he ordered Una back to the bridge. Una knew when she said goodbye. The time for heroics was slipping away, replaced by the time for sacrifice.

A blast shook the room.

"This thing is gonna blow in 90 seconds." Kat raised her chin and turned steady eyes to the captain. "There's an emergency lever for the blast door," she said, calmly. "I can bring it down manually, from the inside, and seal off the rest of the ship."

Pike looked away. "No." The refusal was glib but the tension clear in his shoulders, his brow.

"We are out of time." Katrina remained calm and committed. "That last light will change, this torpedo will blow, and everyone on the bridge—maybe everyone on this ship—will die." The losses of the last year weighed heavy on her. She refused to lose another ship, another crew, another captain. *Enterprise* was kept out of the war to be a beacon. They needed her more than ever.

"And if you do this, you die. This is my ship, my responsibility."

Pike's voice was firm, but so was Cornwell's resolve. She shook her head. "This isn't where your story ends. And I think you know that."

Chris met her eyes. Clearly she'd read the confidential report of his experiences on Boreth. She believed protecting him protected the future as well as the present. His lips quirked up in a small smile. "If I'm meant for a different future, this thing can't possibly go off with me in here."

"Maybe not. But how many people will pay the price if you're wrong?" Truth be told, she didn't want the responsibility of the future. She was tired, had been tired for months. Tired and unable to sleep through the night. She was surrounded by ghosts of her peers, her friends, a thousand strangers, and her own decisions. Her tenfold mistakes. This was the right choice. The only choice.

Pike swallowed. It was too much to consider and there was no time. "Kat..."

"Go. It's time."

He turned away, walked toward the door, his body moving but his mind still stuck.

"And Chris—" He looked back. Katrina was lit up from behind, a circle of warm light surrounding her like a halo. A patron saint of lost causes. "Whatever your path may be, you can handle it."

The words filled the space between them, a promise and a prophecy.

Pike heard a ringing in his ears and his chest tightened. Maybe it was the thin air. Or who knew what the torpedo was leaking into the small space. His senses were overwhelmed. Eyes stung, heat and stress made him sweat. But conviction bubbled up within him and before he fully understood the choice he made he was across the room. He grabbed the admiral's arm, pulled her away from the torpedo.

"What are you—"

Chris punched the admiral across the jaw. Katrina fell back semiconscious. He picked her up into his arms and carried her to the door, set her outside the room and stepped back. "I'll handle it," he murmured. Pike straightened and manually closed the blast door.

On the other side, Katrina lifted her head. The room was spinning and in the middle of it Chris smiled from the other side of a window. Her jaw dropped in horror as the torpedo exploded and he disappeared in a blast of light.

Discovery to Enterprise, are you all right?

The room was still spinning. Kat leaned into the wall, slowly pulled herself up to standing.

Bridge to Captain Pike.

Enterprise, do you copy?

Captain? Admiral?

Saru's and Una's voices echoed around her. She swallowed and hit the communications interface on the wall. "Cornwell here. The danger is neutralized." She took a deep breath. "But we lost the captain."

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