

## From the Inside

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## From the Inside

by [mistral](#)

### Summary

Worf's path to Starfleet.

The smoke and the crisping smells of copper and rubber filled his nose. He screamed, a terrifying sound. He would not put up with this discomfort!

Mathews found her, one of the few survivors. He could tell from the chunk of metal in her chest she wouldn't be numbered amongst those who lived for very long. "Don't move," he said, "We're from the Federation, the starship Farragut. The Blue Fin and the Albacore are in orbit. We're going to get as many out of here as we can."

"Save my son, he is eldest," she said, and then her eyes stopped looking like the eyes of a living being. Mathews cast about, but he could see no child. He pushed a few pieces of plating aside but no child showed themselves, either by corpse or by cry. Mathews moved on through the wreckage of the base.

Engineer Rozhenko had a job. Salvage the remains of the Klingon base. He took his duties very seriously so when he found the child he hesitated. This wasn't something he was prepared for. He called the captain.

Captain Manigold glanced up from his couch at the sound of the annunciator. Sighing, he set his copy of *The Catcher In the Rye* down next to him and answered, "Come." The door slid open to reveal 2nd Engineer's Mate Rozhenko. He hesitated in the doorway. Manigold gestured for him to enter.

"Captain, I ... " Manigold rubbed at his temple.

"Yes, Rozhenko, what is it?"

"I told the wife about the baby, sir. She asked me to find out its ... disposition."

Manigold looked puzzled for a moment. "Oh, the child you found. He's to be returned to the Klingons, of course." The captain looked saddened for a moment. "I don't know if he'll survive. They say his father betrayed the colony to the Roms. They'll probably execute him." He sighed again. "We have to follow the treaty obligations, however. He'll be returned."

Rozhenko looked uncomfortable. "About that, sir. The missus wanted me to ask. We have an extra room and our own boy is the same age, near enough." He plucked at his uniform top.

Manigold looked surprised. "You'd take this on? Forgive me, Rozhenko, but while your work has always been excellent you've never struck me as the kind of man to step into such an unusual circumstance. Raising a non-human child..." The captain trailed off.

"I'd like to do this, Captain." Rozhenko had an almost eager look on his face. Manigold had to restrain himself. Laughing now would humiliate the man. Instead, he put a concerned look up for Rozhenko to see.

"I suppose the child might have died of his wounds. Ah, in my official report. To the Klingons." Rozhenko's face split into a great smile.

"Thank you, sir!"

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"Sergey, he's bitten through the nipple again!" Helena's voice carried through the dachau, and Sergey winced. He went to the family room.

"I have an idea that might work," he said. "The engineers at Starfleet have developed a new seal for the windows of the starships. They are going to use it on the new Galaxy class. I have a friend at Utopia Planitia. He said he would help." Helena looked up from the rocking chair she sat in. Worf slurped at the milk from the hole in the nipple, sucking it down greedily. Helena glared at her husband, exasperated.

"You're the hotshot engineer. You'd better think of something." Sergey knew that tone. He sighed. Then he put a call in to Utopia Planitia.

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Worf shoved the human boy down into the cold dirt. As the child began to cry, Worf snatched the ball from his hands.

"I said I was playing with it." Worf voice was cold and menacing. As the boy tried to stand up, Worf shoved him down again. Some of the other children on the playground noticed and began to gather.

"Fight, fight!" They took up a chant, forming a circle around the two children. The teacher on duty noticed and came hurrying over.

"Worf, Toby, what is the problem?" Mrs. Endicott looked distressed.

"Worf took the ball," the boy sniveled. Worf screwed his face up into a frown.

"I was playing with it," he said. "He came and took it from me."

"Now, Worf," Mrs. Endicott said, "Perhaps it was time for Toby to play with the ball. After all, to share is fair!" She smiled at him sweetly. The other children gathered around took up the slogan.

"To share is fair! To share is fair!" Worf glared out at the happy, shiny faces.

He wrapped a protective arm around the ball. "It's mine," he growled quietly.

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"Worf, when I said go out and kill the quarterback, I didn't mean it literally!" Coach Stepanovich looked distressed. Worf pulled off his helmet, puzzled. The rest of his team kept their distance on the sidelines.

"I did not mean to harm him." Worf did not seem upset, only puzzled.

Stepanovich looked really angry and Worf wondered what he'd done wrong. He'd learned the plays and the rules to this 'football'. He'd hit the quarterback cleanly. He just didn't get why the coach was upset.

"Worf, we had to use a transporter to get him to the hospital! That boy may not walk for weeks!"

Worf peered at his coach beneath thick eyebrows. "Is their secondary quarterback inferior?" he asked.

Stepanovich looked confused for a second. "Well, yes, he sucks, actually, but that's not the point! You almost took his head off-literally! When I introduced you to American Football I never expected a near-homicide!"

Worf stood there, his helmet in his hand. He considered what his coach had said. "Then why did you ask me to play?" he asked.

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"I do not understand! I have taken the test three times, yet the Admiral in charge has failed my solution each time!" Worf paced around his dorm room, agitated. Sergey, used to the vagaries of his moods, took a complacent tone.

"Look at it this way, Worf," he said, "You were cited for the most original solution to the Kobayashi Maru test in 81 years."

"I failed." The bitterness in his voice made Sergey's heart ache. How many times had he heard it?

"Well, tell me what you did," Sergey said. "Perhaps I can help you identify where you went wrong." He smiled at his adoptive son. "Two heads are better than one, you know."

Worf grasped the fragile-looking desk chair and spun it around, back to Sergey. Saddling it, he said, "The first time I destroyed the Maru, therefore denying the Klingons their prize."

Sergey looked uncomfortable. "Yes, well, killing Federation citizens is generally frowned upon."

Worf glared at him for a moment. "I realize that...now." He jumped up and paced some more.

Sergey prompted him further. "So what did you do on the second try?"

"I ordered a tractor beam on the Maru. We pulled it free and sent it back into Federation space. The Klingon ships pursued and I decided they would destroy the ship before it could get clear."

Sergey had a feeling he knew what Worf had done but he waited expectantly.

Worf peered at him a moment before continuing. "I detonated my ship's warp core in the Klingons's path, destroying all three ships before they could reach the Maru. "

Sergey tried not to choke on the water he was drinking. "Um, killing your crew is not exactly what Starfleet would want you to do. What was your third solution?"

Worf sighed. "I thought by this time I had it figured out. The admiral in charge...disagreed." Sergey looked at him. Using the tone he'd used so many times before he asked the same question he'd been asking since Worf had begun to learn to speak.

"Worf, what did you do?" Sergey tried not to sound perturbed, but he knew he had failed.

“I announced to the attacking ships that I was a Klingon warrior and that I was taking the Maru as my prize.”

Sergey stared at Worf. “And how did that work out?” he asked.

Worf looked smug. “They conceded my claim and I led the Maru out of the Neutral Zone.”

“So what was the problem?”

“Apparently, it didn’t fit Starfleet protocol.” Worf slapped at the chair he’d left and it toppled.

Sergey laughed so hard he dropped his glass of water. Worf’s brows came together in a furrowed frown.

“What is so funny,” he asked.

“Oh, God, Worf, you finally did it!” Worf just looked confused by his father’s comment.

Sergey cleared his throat. “Worf, you finally found a compromise between your Klingon heritage and your human upbringing! The admiral in charge may not have liked it but it worked!” Sergey got up from his seat on Worf’s bed. He embraced his son. Worf just looked bewildered. “My boy, I know the admiral in question. He’s a stuffed shirt, unable to change his ways. You, my son, have found a new way!” He patted Worf on the back. “Never forget that. Your way is new and you will change how we all look at things. That is what the Federation is all about. ‘Finding new frontiers,’ as Zephram Cochrane said. You are that frontier.” He pulled away a tiny bit so he could look his Klingon son in the eyes. “You are that frontier, you are original! You will move worlds!”

“Then you are not ashamed of me?” Worf’s voice reminded Sergey of the little boy he’d once been.

“No, I am proud!” Worf allowed his father the embrace, even though he didn’t understand what he’d done to earn it.

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