

Hidden Depths

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Summary

Uhura visits the observation deck late one night and learns something about Spock she didn't expect.

Notes

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Uhura rolls over onto her back and sighs. "Computer, time."

"The time is 0249."

She groans and rolls back onto her side, rubbing her face with her hands. It's useless. No matter what she tries, she just can't get to sleep.

Deciding to give up for the minute, she throws back the covers and gets out of bed. There's a lot of things to do on this ship, and virtually all of them are more interesting than staring at the ceiling all night. The clothes she wore last night are still folded on the chair, and it's the work of a moment to strip off her nightdress and pull them on. She glances in the mirror, then heads out of her room, locking the door behind her.

She considers the mess hall, the gym, and the arboretum, before deciding on the observation deck. She can sit there, watching the stars passing at warp, and hope that they lull her into the right frame of mind for sleep.

At this time of night almost everyone is either on shift or in bed, and Uhura doesn't see a single other person as she passes through the ship. She assumes the observation deck will be equally deserted, but as she approaches the doors she can hear music coming from inside.

It's hauntingly beautiful, played on some kind of string instrument – a harp, perhaps, or a lyre. She pauses outside the door, wondering which of her colleagues could possibly be responsible for such music. She hesitates briefly before reaching out to open the door.

It slides open immediately to reveal her mystery musician sitting on a bench near the windows, an unfamiliar instrument in his arms.

It is Mister Spock.

Uhura freezes for a second, stunned into silence. She prides herself on being more open-minded towards the Enterprise's single Vulcan crewmember than some of her colleagues, but the idea that he could be the one responsible for the music she heard still comes as a shock. She didn't know Spock had any interest in music, let alone that he could play so beautifully. She wonders what other surprises he's hiding from them all.

Spock stops playing and raises his head to look at her. "Lieutenant," he greets expressionlessly. "Should you not be resting? Alpha shift begins in five point one hours."

"I... couldn't sleep," she replies. Then, as his words catch up with her, "You're on alpha shift too. I could ask you the same question."

His expression doesn't waver. "As a Vulcan I require less sleep than you do."

There isn't much Uhura can say to that, so she changes the subject. "I heard you playing," she says. "It was incredible."

He doesn't thank her, merely ducks his head, as if he's unsure how to respond to her praise.

"What's it called?" she asks. "The piece, I mean."

Spock doesn't look up from where he's fiddling with the dials on his instrument. "It is a piece of my own devising," he says quietly. "I have not yet thought of a name."

Her admiration goes up a notch. "You wrote that yourself?"

Spock finally looks up. "I believe that is what I said."

"Well, it's amazing," she tells him. "You should play in public."

He looks at her, tilting his head slightly. "You think so?" He sounds honestly curious.

She nods, smiling. "Oh, yes."

He lapses into silence again, looking thoughtful. She hesitates, then adds, "You know, we have an open mic night every Wednesday. You should stop by sometime."

"I shall consider it."

She waits for a few seconds, but nothing more seems forthcoming. She gestures vaguely at the door. "So, I'll just go, and let you get back to your playing."

"You do not have to leave," Spock tells her. He seems to honestly mean it, and she smiles.

"No, it's fine," she says. "I think I'll try the mess hall. Maybe a hot drink will help me get to sleep."

He nods, attention returning to the instrument in his arms. "Very well."

He resumes playing as she turns to leave, and she pauses for a moment, listening. A memory surfaces, of being ten years old, singing along as her cousin played the guitar. She wonders what it would be like to sing like that with Spock.

"I meant it about Wednesday," she says quietly. "We'd love to have you."

There is no response, and she leaves without another word.

* * *

She doesn't really expect him to take her up on it. Spock doesn't socialise with the crew, and is almost infamous for keeping himself to himself. Her friend Asha actually laughs when she tells her about the meeting, and her offer.

"You invited *him* here? Why?"

Uhura isn't sure she can explain it fully even to herself. The best she can do is, "Because he's one of us."

Asha doesn't seem impressed. "He won't come, you know. He never comes to things like this."

But as it turns out, she's wrong.

Uhura's on stage, in the middle of one of her favourite songs, when she sees the door at the back of the room slide open to reveal Spock, a familiar instrument in his arms. He meets her eyes, inclining his head in silent acknowledgement, and that image of performing with him suddenly doesn't seem so far away.

Holding that thought in her mind, Uhura smiles broadly and continues to sing.

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