

Smile

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Summary

Something is wrong with Kirk.

Notes

Written for Allekha in the 2014 Trick or Treat exchange. Originally posted on AO3.

Kirk is smiling.

That should not be cause for concern, but Spock has been watching the captain for days now, and he has not *stopped* smiling. Not since their brief stop at Axes II.

It was a routine mission, delivering supplies to a colony, and ordinarily Spock would think it nothing of note. But Kirk's behaviour since then has been... unusual.

Yesterday, for example, Kirk's yeoman tripped and accidentally spilled hot coffee all over his lap. Kirk jumped up, waving off the yeoman's apologies the way he usually would, but his movements seemed ill-timed, and his reassurances forced. But the part that sticks in Spock's mind is that through the whole experience of being doused in coffee, reassuring the yeoman, handing over the conn, and retreating to his quarters to change, Kirk's smile did not fade.

And he is still smiling now.

Coming to a decision, Spock stands abruptly and clears his throat. "Captain?"

Kirk turns to him, the same unsettling smile plastered across his face. "Yes, Mister Spock?"

Spock straightens his back, forcing himself not to react. "Request permission to leave the bridge. There is a situation in the nuclear electronics lab that requires my attention." It is not precisely a lie, but he neglects to mention that the situation can easily wait until after his shift.

Kirk waves a hand, still smiling. "Go on, then."

Spock nods, before making his way quickly to the turbolift. Once inside, however he does not go to the nuclear electronics lab, or indeed any other lab. Instead he orders the lift to take him to sickbay.

Once there, he strides into McCoy's office, stopping in front of his desk. "There is something wrong with the captain."

He is prepared to argue his case, but McCoy merely nods and says, "So you've noticed it too."

Spock folds his hands behind his back. "If you refer to his seemingly unnatural good mood, then that is correct."

McCoy nods again, leaning back in his chair. "I gave him his flu shot this morning, and he grinned the whole time, like it was the most fun he'd ever had. And when I asked him why he was smiling, all he'd say was, 'Aren't I allowed to smile?'" He shakes his head. "Jim hates getting his shots. Whatever's up with him, it isn't natural."

"What do you suppose we do?" Spock asks.

McCoy waves a hand. "Can't you do some of your Vulcan mumbo-jumbo? Go into his head and find out what's wrong?"

"You are referring to a mindmeld?" Spock considers the idea. There is a certain logic to it. "It is worth a try."

"Great," McCoy says. "I'll page Jim and get him down here, then you can find out what's up." Before Spock can respond, he toggles the intercom. "Sickbay to Kirk."

"Kirk here."

"Jim, I need to speak to you. Can you come to my office?"

There's a pause, then, "I'll be right there."

Kirk arrives a few minutes later, his smile as big as ever. Surprise enters his eyes at the sight of Spock, but the smile doesn't fade. "Mister Spock," he says. "I thought you were going to the lab."

"I apologise for deceiving you," Spock says. "But the doctor and I are concerned about you."

"Me?" Kirk asks. "I'm fine."

Spock shakes his head. "I do not believe so." He steps forward, raising a hand. "May I touch your thoughts?"

Kirk stares at the hand, then straightens his back, his smile appearing to grow. "Of course, Mister Spock. Be my guest."

Carefully, Spock settles his fingers on Kirk's face and presses into his mind, searching for the source of his unusual behaviour. And, deep in Kirk's subconscious, he finds it.

McCoy watches as Spock pulls away, his hand falling from Kirk's face. "Well?" he asks. "What did you find?"

Spock turns to him calmly. "The captain is fine, Doctor," he says.

And smiles.

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