

## Bath

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### Summary

He dropped his towel on the deck and stepped inside. A gentle wave of water rippled around him as he sunk to the ceramic floor, all his muscles unknitting as the warmth seeped through his skin. Velvety flowers floated on the surface, releasing a fragrance that seemed to wrap itself around Riker's brain and loosen every swirl of tension there. And beneath the ceramic, colored tiles gave off warm glowing light that painted Troi's bare skin in luscious shades of purple, red, and blue.

And Riker's too, but he was less interested in that.

"This is a platonic bath, right?" Riker said, his towel secured around his waist. "Just checking."

"As opposed to what?" asked Troi. Her arms were resting on the edge of the tub, warm water and suds lapping at bare breasts. "Please, tell me what a non-platonic bath looks like, Commander."

Riker was tempted, but he felt something twitch beneath the towel and decided it probably wasn't a good idea to go into detail. "Does it have to be naked?" he asked.

"It's the Betazoid way. Are you complaining?"

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"Should've done this ages ago," he said, his voice coming out as a purr.

"Indeed." Troi slid a dainty hand over a recessed button on the side of the tub. With a mechanical whir, a panel opened and an ice bucket with a bottle of smoky Betazed wine inside it appeared. Riker hummed to himself and twisted the bottle open with wet hands.

"Is this synthehol?" he asked. There was only one glass, so he filled it halfway and passed it to Troi first.

"It's real," she said.

"So we'll get *really* drunk." He shot her a wolfish grin and accepted the glass when she passed it over. He put his lips exactly where she'd put hers, and tasted her on the glass. "Good," he said.

"Mm-hmm." She stretched out a little. Her foot brushed over his calf, up to his thigh. The wine warmed his throat and burned low in his stomach as it went down. When he reached up to pour another glass, he saw a pink flower sticking wetly to his arm and laughed — and Troi half-crawled, half-swam to his side of the tub, her hair trailing in the water.

And with her tongue, she swept the flower off his skin.

"Is that edible?" asked Riker, his voice rough.

"Taste it and find out," Troi said, and she stuck her tongue out, and there was the bud, flushed pink against the dark red of her pretty little mouth. Riker's breath caught in his throat. He leaned forward, her bare body pressing down on his, the water warm and fragrant and intoxicating...

And the holodeck shimmered as another life form stepped inside. Data, wearing beach shoes and a rash guard, with a liberal dollop of totally unnecessary sunblock on his nose. He approached the edge of the bath, where Riker and Troi slowly pulled away from each other. Troi covered her chest; Riker folded his hands over his lap. Both cleared their throats, and Riker felt the distinct tickle of a flower petal on his tongue.

“Is this the platonic bathing session?” Data asked. He looked from Troi to Riker without expression. “Ah. I appear to be overdressed.”

He reached for the waistband of his swimming trunks, and whatever he tried to say next was drowned out by Troi’s alarmed shout of protest. Data paused, still touching his waistband. Troi looked at Riker, her protest only half-formed.

He raised an eyebrow. She dipped her chin. He shrugged.

“Yes, Data,” said Riker, pouring another helping of wine. “You’re overdressed.” He pushed the wine glass onto the rim of the tub as Data dropped his shorts. “Have a drink,” Riker said, and Troi hid a laugh by slipping under the water entirely. Stark naked, Data lifted the glass to his lips and gave it an experimental sip.

It would be interesting, at least, to see if anyone else showed up.

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