

No-Win Scenario

Posted originally on the [Ad Astra :: Star Trek Fanfiction Archive](http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/1322) at <http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/1322>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	Major Character Death
Category:	Gen
Fandom:	Star Trek: The Original Series
Character:	Ensemble Cast - TOS, James T. Kirk
Additional Tags:	Gore , Whump
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2024-02-02 Words: 1,350 Chapters: 1/1

No-Win Scenario

by [spacedogfromspace](#)

Summary

Jim finds himself helpless in the face of the death and destruction of his ship and crew.

Notes

Day 1 of FebuWhump.
Prompt: Helpless

The *Enterprise* trembled like it was careening down a steep mountainside amidst a rock-slide, every rise and fall felt with a horrible jolt, every collision slamming them from side to side, causing lights to flicker and systems to stall. The bridge was in chaos. People were thrown to the ground, some barely managing to crawl over to their consoles to hang on for dear life, all attempting to operate under the worst of conditions.

"What's happening?" Jim demanded as soon as he caught his breath after the initial jolt threw him from his chair. He had to shout over the rumbling and groaning of the ship and the klaxon alarms that blared.

"We've been hit," Spock answered, clinging to his station as best he could to keep an analytical eye on his instruments. "Orbital integrity has been lost."

Orbital integrity... we're being dragged in by the planet's gravity, Jim thought. His next thought was to ask *what* hit them, but there were more important things to get to first, like saving his ship and the four hundred souls aboard.

"Sulu, get us out of here!" Jim commanded as he struggled to his feet, gripping the arm of his chair for balance as he looked ahead at the view-screen. All he could see was the blue-green swirls of the gas giant below as it dragged them dangerously close with its immense gravity.

"I'm trying," Sulu shouted back. He had just struggled back into his seat, and his fingers were flying frantically over the helm controls. He stopped suddenly and looked back over his shoulder. "We've lost the helm. She's dead!"

Shit, Jim thought, gritting his teeth. Leaning over the chair's comm panel, he patched to Engineering. "Bridge to Scott, the helm is fried and we need a fix, *now*."

It took a moment for an answer to come. That moment was painfully long as Jim's heartbeat slammed in his ears, each beat seemed to mark an hour. He was beginning to worry that the comms were out when they crackled to life.

"It's not just the helm, Captain," Scotty shouted through the comms, breathing heavily, unable to mask the panic in his voice. "Systems are crashing all over the place. Engines are down, the inertial dampener is out, life support keeps crashing and rebooting... what the hell is going on?"

Jim grimaced, more from the frantic tone of Scotty's voice than the actual diagnostics. If Scotty was *this* panicked, that meant this was even worse than Jim thought. With reluctance, he answered the question. "We're falling into the planet, Scotty," he said, feeling strangely guilty. Even in a time as dire as this, he didn't like to be the bearer of bad news. "Is there anything you can do to get our engines back online?"

"Captain, we have sixty seconds to start reversing our descent before our engines can no longer counter the planet's gravity," Spock interrupted, voice level, but notably tense. "Sixty seconds... Mark."

One minute to save four hundred lives. Jim was about to prompt Scotty about the engines again when suddenly, the helm sparked with

electricity, visibly short-circuiting in arcs of electricity. Chekov, who unfortunately had his hands on the console, began to convulse violently, an agonized expression on his face, his eyes bulging gruesomely from their sockets.

"Chekov!" Uhura shouted, and Jim had to lunge forward to stop her as she flew from her station to Chekov's aid. She struggled against his grip on her arm, desperate to help her friend.

"You can't help him," Jim shouted at her, his voice breaking. "You'll just end up like him, too."

Uhura stopped struggling, shoulders falling. All she could do was watch Chekov's body contort and tremble, her eyes wide in horror and her hands pressed over her mouth. Sulu was sitting in the chair next to Chekov's, narrowly having avoided the same fate by not being in contact with the helm when the electric surge began. Sulu was frozen in shock, unable to move from his chair despite his proximity to danger. So when the helm suddenly had enough and exploded, both Chekov and Sulu were caught in the blast, thrown to the floor in a shower of flame and debris.

The electric sparks having died out, Jim and Uhura rushed forward to their fallen crew-mates. Jim knelt over Sulu, who had landed face down on the floor in an unmoving heap. A stab of dread hit Jim as he rolled Sulu over, revealing wide eyes, glassy and unseeing. Jim looked over to where Uhura had her fingers to Chekov's neck. She met Jim's gaze and shook her head, but even from that distance Jim could tell Chekov was also far beyond saving—the electrical burns reaching up his face and the smoke coming off his body said enough.

"Forty seconds," Spock said, still at his station.

Jim pulled himself away from Sulu. There was no time to grieve. He rushed to his chair and patched to Engineering again. "Scotty, we have forty seconds to get that engine back online," he said urgently. There was static in response, indicating that Engineering's comm was on, but there were no voices or sounds of movement. "Scotty," Jim called again, but there was nothing.

"Thirty seconds," Spock said, and sudden turbulence rocked the ship violently to the side, throwing everyone on the bridge—alive and dead—to the port side, slamming them into whatever was in their path of trajectory. Jim was lucky, if such a word could be used in this situation. He flew straight into the flat surface of the wall, which left him momentarily stunned but otherwise unscathed. When he regained his vision, there were more unmoving bodies on the floor than there were seconds before. He could see Uhura's limp arm peeking out from behind the smoking remains of the helm, and when he stumbled around the console to assist her, he saw a pool of blood around her head, her damp hair parting to reveal an enormous dent in the side of her head. Jim went lightheaded when he recognized bone fragments in the growing red pool, and he had to look away, unable to look at her any longer. Instead, his eyes scanned the bridge for Spock.

Spock had been thrown hard into the walls too, and was bleeding profusely but sitting up on the floor. He met Jim's eyes and shook his head. Jim's knees buckled, and he let himself stumble towards the floor, leaning against the helm despite the heat radiating from it. He avoided looking at Uhura on the floor beside him, instead looking up at the view-screen. It was impossible to tell how far into the planet's atmosphere they were—the view-screen was entirely taken up by the blue-green gasses. It would have been beautiful, if they weren't all dead or dying.

With Spock away from his console, Jim didn't know how much time was left. But he knew that it was only a matter of seconds before the gravity of the planet started to crush the ship. In his last moments, he thought of his friends dying their horrific deaths. He wondered what had happened to Scotty, wondered if Bones was dead already or would be when the ship was crushed like a tin can. He looked over at Spock, the only person he would have a chance to say goodbye to. But he couldn't think of anything to say. He couldn't even raise a hand in a ta'al. The sentiment wasn't exactly appropriate given they were both seconds from death. Instead he just mouthed the words, *I'm sorry*.

This was his ship and his responsibility, but when push came to shove, he was helpless. He had never believed in no-win scenarios, but in these final seconds those beliefs were forced to change. This time he couldn't cheat death. He couldn't even save a single crewman or a single friend.

The hull of the ship creaked and groaned as it buckled from the pressure, and Jim met Spock's eyes one last time. At least he wouldn't have to die alone.

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!