

I Will Never Know Your Name

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I Will Never Know Your Name

by [SevereAnnoyance](#)

Summary

At the end of the Dominion War, a father reflects on his daughter's survival, and the people who made it possible.

There is, out there somewhere, a Cardassian doctor who saved his daughter's life.

Henry Chester doesn't understand Starfleet, or what drove his mother-in-law or his daughter to the stars. He can certainly be proud of them, and follow Diane's exploits, in the official bulletins and the times she or her ships surface in the news, but he doesn't understand what would pull you to wandering away from planets and breathable air and green things. He's an entomologist by trade, studying little living things in Earth's own ample backyard (and by necessity, through their losses and the mutations and changes in their genomes, tracing the footprints of cataclysm, the tearing scars of nuclear fallout and the horrors of the Eugenics Wars, told thirdhand in base pairs).

He doesn't understand them, though, no matter how terribly proud he is, proud in a way he can't voice around Diane, not just now with her hardly half of herself, wrung with guilt and grief. It made him very angry, for a while, especially when the news from Cardassia first came through—they'd won the war, and the USS *Bedivere* had been destroyed in action, search for survivors ongoing. The Admiral who'd called said they were holding out hope, but that they needed to understand with a crash of this type, the chances would be very low indeed.

How couldn't they hope? It had been all they did. They'd shuttered the restaurant for the day and just sat, barely talking. There was nothing to say to make any of it better, any of it at all. And then they *had* found survivors, and then there was more waiting, until the horribly short list went to the public, and then the call, shortly after—alive. Critical, but stable. What the *hell* did that mean, Henry had wanted to know. He had found out, and it too had been horrible.

And then the waiting, again, for her to come home.

And in the middle of it, he'd found out about the Cardassian doctor, painted in mentions and broad strokes of Diane's crewmates' descriptions. An older man, retired. Had served in their military, retired, come out of retirement as his younger compatriots went to the front lines in the war, been dragged along by his youngest daughter and her family once the Jem'Hadar turned on the Cardassians, taking shelter in the *Bedivere's* wreckage with the remains of its crew.

He doesn't know anything else, but he *does* know that this doctor was the one to stabilize Diane when she was wounded (what a clinical way to put it, it doesn't capture the nausea of seeing his little girl stooped on the doorstep, an arm around her waist and something made of circuits and polymer looking at him from one eyesocket, it doesn't capture what it was like, getting the doctors' updates from lightyears away, or her hollowed-out face when she was finally awake enough to call home, it doesn't capture the *waiting*). She would have died otherwise, he knows and he *wonders*.

A man who must have spent all his life at least distrusting, if not hating, the Federation. A man who likely sent his own children to the service of his world—very likely to kill Starfleet officers like Diane. Who'd come out of his retirement to serve once again, this time the Dominion. Who'd then found himself trapped in the wreckage of a burning starship with all his hopes pinned on his enemies.

Had it been mere practicality that motivated him? Had it been professional pride, the determination to provide care to all? Had it been kindness for a comrade? Had it been personal, respect for a former enemy nevertheless willing to lay down her life for his?

The questions also hurt. They tighten his throat with feeling. Because whatever it is, that nameless doctor saved her life. And Henry finds he *doesn't* care about motivation. Because she's alive, and she's here, even if she's still hurting, and for that he will thank that man every hour for all the rest of his days.

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