

For Want of a Crayon

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by [LordMcCoveyCove](#)

Summary

With Janeera out sick, Leo presides over a dispute between two enlisted marines.

Notes

Historian's Note: This story takes place after the events of "Borderline Justice."

Leo strode across the corridor into Courtroom Alpha. When the doors parted, he raised a hand to those waiting inside. "Apologies, everyone. I was just informed that Captain Ch'charhat is under the weather." He approached the bench after walking through the middle of the courtroom. While smiling, he passed by Major Bex and Lieutenant Martinez before swiftly reaching the elevated platform and finding a seat.

Striking the block with Janeera's gavel, he began the court session. Bex stepped forward to address the court for the first case.

"Your Honor," Bex said, shooting him a lopsided grin, "Case number Eight-dash-delta-omicron-gamma-niner-zero-eight-one-one-two. *Federation versus Blackwell* - two counts of assault and battery. For the government, Major Bex."

"For the defense, Lieutenant Martinez, your Honor," he said.

"Is the accused present?" asked Leo.

The private first class rose to his feet and nodded. "Here, your Honor."

Leo scanned his PADD's screen. "Having heard the charges against you, Private, how do you plead?"

Martinez said, "Your Honor, Private Blackwell is a marine with an impeccable service record. These counts come after an unusual set of circumstances that occurred in the marine barracks."

Bex raised her voice next. "Your Honor, defense fails to mention that his client struck another marine and broke their nose."

Raising both of his hands at the sudden passion in the court, Leo admitted, "Okay. I'm just here to listen to an arraignment. So, is it guilty or not-guilty?"

Martinez shook his head. "My client was provoked into attacking this marine."

"Provocation aside, the assault occurred," Bex replied, casting a sidelong glance at Martinez.

"Ale- er, Lieutenant Martinez," Leo said. "I need a plea."

"Not guilty, sir," said Blackwell.

"Okay, thank you," Leo said. "Now, can we trust Private Blackwell to keep his hands to himself, or is the government wanting to increase

holding's population by one marine?"

Bex sighed. "Your Honor, the government feels that Private Blackwell may return to duty."

Martinez pointed out, "There's another marine involved in this case, the alleged victim, Private Conklin. I believe your Honor will find that name on his docket for today, as well."

Leo looked down and nodded. "He's my next case."

"I feel that the outcome of that arraignment will determine Private Blackwell's disposition."

Leo glanced over at Bex. "Do you concur, Major?"

She nodded. "That's fair."

"Private Blackwell, take a seat and we'll determine your status after we get through this other case," Leo ordered. "Major, call it, please."

"Case number Eight-dash-delta-omicron-gamma-niner-zero-eight-one-one-three. *Federation versus Conklin* - one count of failure to obey a general order and one count of negligent destruction of property," Bex read out from her device.

"Is Private Conklin present?" asked Leo.

Conklin stood up and nodded. "Here, sir."

"Having heard the charges against you, how do you plead?"

"Guilty, your Honor."

Leo blinked. "Are you aware of what pleading guilty entails?"

"Yes, sir. The lieutenant told me."

"Major?" Leo asked, while turning his attention to her. "Recommendation on disposition?"

"The government is fine with a referral to an Article 15 hearing to determine his disposition," Bex said. "However-"

Leo sighed and muttered, "Oh, damn."

"-the property in question belonged to Private Blackwell."

Leo questioned Private Blackwell, "Aha! Okay, what was it?"

Blackwell rose. "A drawing from my daughter, sir. It was in my footlocker, and Conklin has a habit of rifling through others things to look for stuff he needs."

Leo fixated his stare on Conklin. "Is that so, Private?"

Conklin nodded. "Yes, your Honor."

"I take a rather dim view toward those who cannot respect others personal effects, Private Conklin," Leo said. "I presume the assault charges were a reaction to finding this drawing treated negligently?"

"Wadded up and tossed, sir," Bex explained. "Private Blackwell was understandably upset."

Leo agreed. "I would be, too." He sighed. "All right, seeing as Private Conklin has pled guilty to the charges, and Private Blackwell - I assume your plea is respective of the egregious acts by your fellow marine?"

Blackwell nodded. "Yes, sir."

"Did you strike him, though?"

Despite Martinez's objection, Blackwell responded anyway. "Yes, sir. He deserved it."

Conklin nodded in agreement, his eyes falling to the deck.

"I'm going to rule on both cases, then," Leo said. "Privates Blackwell and Conklin: you'll both report to the daycare center at the research base planetside. You'll spend 100 hours of community service. Conklin?"

"Yes, sir?"

"You are going to offer to draw whatever those kids tell you to draw for all 100 hours. You're about to find out how demanding kids are and you're going to understand why Private Blackwell was devastated by your actions. Understood?"

Conklin nodded. "Aye, aye, sir."

"Okay, then." Leo gaveled loudly, then called to Conklin once more. "Better bring extra crayons, Private. You're going to need them."

"Next case please."

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