

Mopping Up

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Mopping Up

by [Hawku](#)

Summary

"What of the ethical and legal boundaries we Starfleet officers are to adhere to?" -- Weekly Challenge 59: In the late 24th century, the Doctor of the U.S.S. Phoenix-X grapples with medical morality.

Ad Astra: Weekly Challenge #59

"Mopping Up"

The *Prometheus*-class U.S.S. *Phoenix-X* sat, independently within the unlimited confines of interstellar space. Lieutenant Commander Veker entered Sickbay to find a giant amorphous conglomerating blob of organic flesh sitting in the middle of the room.

"Oh! What the hell? Why???"

Doctor Xyrenia was busy scanning it with a medical tricorder. "Mr. Veker, I'm sorry for the inconvenience. I was just in the middle of an experiment and, well, I think it was successful. This is Frek."

"RRRruupp," the large fleshy blob greeted. "RRrfffleeeep, rrrp."

Xyrenia deadpanned. "Yeah, that's not translatable. But he seems fine." Then, to a blank expression, she nodded. "Oh, yes. You see, I created him, quite unnaturally, by merging several lower lifeforms together until its cognitive self-awareness would rival that of any University Grad-level humanoid. It's Doctor Lox's own recipe."

"But what of the ethical and legal boundaries we Starfleet officers are to adhere to?" the Kelpien blinked, noticing the gooey mess on the floor. "Also, the rigorous starship odor standards."

Frek burped in agreement. "RRrep."

"Oh, crap. You're right," Xyrenia struggled. "I was so caught up in trying to live up to the capricious legacy of the last Doctor, I compromised my own integrity as a medical practitioner. Lox was an immoral, rule-breaking mad scientist with the occasional bout of integrity, but he did have his own failures. Creating Attack Tribble, for one."

The giant, unrestrained, disgusting mass then began to bubble in spewing liquids. "Rrrrrppp, nnnppppp, bbbbbblllppp."

"The translator is kicking in, albeit spottily," Veker realized as he read through his own tricorder. "Frek is saying that replicating someone else's path without considering your own strengths can lead to dissatisfaction."

Frek then began a slow, undulating move toward the exit, opening them to the corridors. "Yyrrrp rppppp."

"He says that Doctor Lox's genetic-merging techniques are not quite there yet and that learning about your own authenticity would be more rewarding in the long run," Veker continued. "Also, he is off to find quarters."

Both Xyrenia and Veker watched the doors close after Frek's exit, leaving a sickening mess of goo all over the carpet. "Ugh. I suppose he's right and, since the synth ban prevents DOT-9 usage, I now have to carpet-clean this up myself," the Doctor grouched to her own self-inflicted misfortune while pulling out a standard Starfleet issue rug vacuum.

"You mean *we* have to carpet-clean this up, together," Veker corrected as he smiled and pulled a second rug vacuum out of the same wall compartment.

After realizing his generosity, Xyrenia smiled back as they got to work. "Thank you, Mr. Veker. Kelpiens really are the loomed-floor covering

care specialist, gentle giants they say you are."

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