

Starlines

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Summary

Abandoned at fifteen, Will Riker is forced to make his own way in life. That means getting a job, finding some personality trait or innate skill he can exploit for credits so he doesn't get tossed out in the Alaskan snow.

And, well, the first thing that comes to mind is ... sex.

Anchorage was the place to be, if you wanted to get paid. Will Riker sat astride an old-fashioned snow-skimmer, his pale eyes hidden by a pair of sun-shades, and studied the Federation officers who had just transported in. These Federation types loved Anchorage. They loved Juneau, too, but in Juneau, Will had run into too many clans of young toughs who thought they owned the streets – and he knew he could take them in a fight, but why bother?

Besides, he couldn't risk the damage to his face.

He studied the officers, trying to choose a likely target. He could read an officer's rank at a glance; it was a skill that served him well. The higher up they were, the lonelier. A captain couldn't afford to make friends, to have relationships. And of course, the higher up they were, the better paid. Will zeroed in on a group in command-red who had just stepped off the transport pad.

"Only you," the taller one was saying, "would drag me off to the coldest depths of hell on shore leave."

"Don't exaggerate," said the other one in a rich baritone that sizzled right through Will's skin.

"No, you're right," said his friend. "I heard up north, it's even colder."

"So we'll be in the coldest depths of hell on day five," said the shorter one cheerfully. "Assuming you stick with me that long."

He turned his head, surveying the area in the careful-casual way that officers had. The sight of his face sent another pleasant jolt through Will. Young-ish, maybe thirty or forty, with striking deep-set eyes and a hawk-like nose. Those eyes passed over Will as if they didn't see him, and then slowly circled back.

Yes.

Will stretched out, so he wasn't sitting astride the snow-skimmer so much as lounging. He let a smile curl across his lips, tipped his sun shades up so the little captain could see his eyes. They were his best asset. Cat-like, pale blue, they always got him the attention he needed. The captain's expression stuttered, like he'd started to react and then gripped his features tight, his control like iron. He looked away.

Got him, Will thought. He revved the skimmer and darted out of his spot with a flare of snow, white powder kicking up to stain the captain's coat. He glanced over his shoulder at them as he peeled out – the taller one yelling, words swallowed up by the engine, and the smaller one just watching, pensive and grave.

He'd make sure to be in the hotel lounge later tonight, Will decided. He had a feeling that, no matter what they'd planned, he'd find the captain all alone.

Competition was fierce in Anchorage, but Will had some advantages.

1. Although only fifteen, he was already six-foot-four, and in the past summer, he'd taken to a weight routine that filled his shoulders out and made him look ten times broader. The police mostly left him alone.
2. The baby-face attracted the crowd who usually sought underage prostitutes. The inordinate amounts of chest hair reassured them that

- they weren't doing anything wrong.
3. (They were, but who's counting? So long as he got paid...)
 4. Loathe though he was to admit it, Kyle Riker's survival games and generally high level of child neglect had left Will abnormally well-equipped to handle life on his own. He knew how to hack his ident card and change the data so he could rent a room. He knew how to cook his own meals and repair his snow-skimmer when it broke down. In fact, for so long Kyle had envisioned his son going into Starfleet, and if Will wanted to, he could probably file for emancipation and join the Academy today. At the very least, he was talented enough to get a normal job. But that brings us to Advantage #5.
 5. Will liked sex. A lot. And work is always more rewarding when you like what you do.

He sat at the hotel bar, sipping a cocktail he was too young to drink but hopefully pig-headed enough to keep down. He eyed the doorway while he waited. An hour earlier, he'd seen the tall guy heading out, searching for a place to eat, and now, just as happy hour was picking up, the captain showed his face.

He didn't see Will right away. He stepped through the doorway tentatively, like he expected an attack. An explosion. His eyes swiveled from one end of the room to the other, assessing threats. But he did it calmly, with a sense of serenity that made Will sit up a little straighter and take notice. Earlier he'd noticed how short the captain was; now, for the first time, he noticed the cords of muscle on his forearms, hidden beneath his sleeves, and the compact grace with which he moved. A fighter. Someone who took care of himself rigidly and never engaged in excess.

Somewhat self-conscious now, Will pushed his drink away.

"You," the captain barked, catching sight of him.

"Me," said Will, delighted. He motioned for the captain to join him. He had to lay the charm on thick, because the officer looked a little more affronted, more piqued, than Will had expected him to be.

"Is that how Alaskans greet their visitors?" the captain asked stiffly, approaching the bar. "By spraying snow in every newcomer's face?"

"Nah," said Will. He held up a finger to the bartender and slid the new cocktail down the bar until the cold glass touched the captain's fingertips. "That's how I flirt," Will said. He tipped the captain a wink. "Did it work?"

The captain just stared at him, startled. Too startled to speak. These guys really didn't get laid often enough, Will thought. All those long missions out in space really worked a number on a guy's libido, he guessed. You'd never catch him signing up for a five-year trip. He raised his glass to his lips and nodded at the other drink, encouraging the captain to join him.

Reluctantly, the captain did.

"You got a name?" asked Will, eyes sparkling.

"Do you?" the captain asked, his voice stern and disapproving. He looked Will up and down. "Are you old enough to drink?"

Will turned slightly on the bar stool, so that his leg brushed against the captain's. "I assure you," he drawled, "I'm a hundred percent legal. In every way." When the captain just scowled at him, he softened his smile, made it more genuine. "I'm Will," he said, ceding the first ground.

The captain grunted into his drink. "You won't get much traction targeting Starfleet officers," he said.

"Oh? Too noble for sex?"

"Too well-acquainted with Orion girls," said the captain.

"I've heard of them," Will said. He leaned an elbow on the bar and rested his chin on his hand. "How do I stack up?"

The captain's gaze darted over his face, eyes cool. But a ghost of a smile tugged at his lips. He hid it quickly, by taking another drink. "You have a certain charm," he acknowledged, and Will grinned broadly. "But the Orion girls have pheromones, and I'm afraid that pheromones beat charm every time."

"Assuming you like girls," said Will casually, brushing his foot against the captain's. "Do the males have pheromones too?"

The captain's sense of confidence slipped. "No," he said. He sneaked a glance at Will, more serious this time, really seeing him. "How old are you?" he asked.

"Twenty-five."

Always go high. The captain's face soured.

"So, nineteen?" he asked. "Twenty?"

That's why you always go high. Will crinkled his eyes in a smile and sang, "I can neither confirm nor deny..." Then, because the storm cloud in the officer's eyes hadn't gone away, he added, "Old enough to get rejected from Starfleet once or twice, if that makes you feel better."

The captain's defenses slipped a little further. "You applied to Starfleet?" he asked.

His voice was so guarded that Will couldn't read his tone. Amused? That would be fine, if a little condescending. But there was something else there too. Something a little sad, and that made Will's heart beat faster. He suddenly found himself tongue-tied, and he avoided the question by taking a long drink.

"I was..." the captain hesitated. "I was rejected, too. It took me two failed applications before Starfleet accepted me. The road to success is never so straightforward as one hopes, but in time..."

He was adorable, Will decided. He tried to look appropriately pep-talked.

"What department did you apply for?" the captain asked, earnest now.

"Ops," said Will. Easy. It's what Kyle always pushed him toward. "Yellow shirt."

The captain's eyes glittered. "Yes, I know the uniforms," he said tolerantly, and Will gave a self-deprecating smile. He was too used to talking to civilians. And teenagers. "At the Academy, they call operations and tactical the, ah, business majors." He half-smiled. "If Starfleet were military, perhaps they'd be busier. But on a scientific vessel, ops and tactical too often find themselves seeking the next thrill, rather than focusing on their work."

"What track did you take, then?" Will asked, trying to memorize the captain's face, those unique planes, the bone structure of a Roman emperor, the almond eyes. The captain drained his drink in one long draft.

"Ops," he admitted.

Will laughed. He shifted away from the captain, turning to face the bar instead. Something in the air had shifted, he thought. He wedged his heels against the bar stool's bottom rung, no longer playing footsie, just thinking idly about all the orbital mechanics quizzes Kyle used to give him, the survival exercises young Will had to complete alone in the woods, all in the name of joining Starfleet someday. And normally the thought of Starfleet gave him an allergic reaction, but for some reason, sitting next to this diminutive captain with the out-sized voice, he caught himself daydreaming about starlines.

He'd never seen starlines. But he got close, he supposed, on the nights when his clients touched him, when they gave him some pleasure in return. If that was all he could get, he'd take it. But he might like a taste of the real thing.

The clink of the captain's glass drew him out of his thoughts. The captain swept a napkin around the bar in circles, mopping up drops of water that had perspired down his glass. "What's your rate?" he asked, his voice throaty.

Will blinked. The captain glanced sidelong at him, expectant, eyes twinkling.

"Uh..." Will cleared his throat, an unexpected blush creeping over his cheeks. "We can talk about this in private, if you like."

"Can I afford to talk in private?" asked the captain, amused.

"Yes," Will assured him. He caught himself grinning again, the alcohol resting warm in his stomach, setting his nerves on fire.

"Then let's not waste anymore time," the captain said. He got to his feet, graceful and sharp despite the drink he'd downed, a cocktail so strong that Will's brain was feeling fuzzy. The captain offered him a hand.

"I'll show you to my room," he said.

Will closed his fingers around the captain's. Warm, strong, clever fingers, callused palms. A heady sensation rushed to Will's nervous system and set his blood singing. Hand-in-hand, he followed the captain up the stairs to the deserted hallway where the captain's bedroom was. Behind closed doors, the sound of a holo-program blared out from someone else's room; in another, laughter bubbled through, a little drunk, words wheezed out too quick and slurred for Will to eavesdrop; but the captain's quarters were quiet, the lights turned out, and there was only one bed, so Will didn't have to worry about the other officer coming home.

"Your name," Will said, and his voice came out small and rough, suddenly shy. He squeezed the captain's hand to punctuate the request. "You never told me."

The captain turned to face him. He searched Will's face, eyebrows raised. "Jean-Luc," he breathed. And slowly, hesitantly, like a kid on a first date, he leaned in for a kiss.

His lips were dry, chapped. They parted almost reluctantly, like he didn't know what to do. But he tasted divine. Will's hand snaked up to cup Jean-Luc's face, his fingers curling in Jean-Luc's shirt, tugging him closer – until their chests touched, and they could feel the rise and fall of each other's stomach with every shallow breath, and their hips slotted together just enough to feel the hardness stirring there. Will coaxed Jean-Luc's lips open, just to taste him, and then he broke away – took Jean-Luc's bottom lip between his teeth in the gentlest bite, moved his kisses lower, to Jean-Luc's neck, where the skin was so sensitive and so unused to touch that the very first kiss elicited a gasp.

"Payment–?" Jean-Luc said shakily, clutching at Will's waist.

"Ten credits per minute," Will murmured, his breath hot against Jean-Luc's neck. Jean-Luc swore under his breath, hips canting against Will's.

"That's exorbitant," he said.

"I'm worth it," Will joked. But Jean-Luc's eyes snapped open then, fierce and dark, and he held Will still.

"Yes," he said, his voice low, intense, "you are."

Will heard his own ragged inhalation, but he didn't have time to be embarrassed, to stop and think about the uneasy heat unfurling in his gut. He tugged Jean-Luc to the bed, instinct taking over: hands skimming under shirts, across the hot planes of Jean-Luc's stomach, pushing him onto the mattress, falling on top of him, Will's knee between Jean-Luc's thigh, Will's lips on Jean-Luc's throat, his chest, his nipples, his stomach, taut and ticklish, all the way down to–

Jean-Luc's hands fisted in Will's hair. Warm breath ghosted over the bulge in his trousers, where a spot of pre-cum had soaked right through the fabric.

"Will," said Jean-Luc, his voice tight, "are you really twenty-five?"

Will dug his fingers into Jean-Luc's hips. "Scout's honor."

"Swear it."

"I swear," Will said, lowering his lips until he kissed the head of Jean-Luc's cock through the wet fabric, "that if I'm not twenty-five, I'm really, really close."

The only sound Jean-Luc could make in response was a moan. With one jerk, his trousers were pulled down, the outline of his cock – short and thick – fully visible through his underwear. Will mouthed at that outline, the heat of it, the firmness, the pulse throbbing just beneath the skin, his spit turning Jean-Luc's briefs translucent, making his cock stand out all the more. Pent-up, touch-starved, he knew the type. Just this, Will's tongue on Jean-Luc's cock, with a layer of wet fabric between them, would be enough to make him come. Will felt a rush of heat against his lips, a new salt-slick in the fabric, leaking from the tip of Jean-Luc's cock, and knew they were getting too close to climax, too fast. He sat up, hair tangled over his forehead.

"Have you ever...?" he started.

Jean-Luc's cheeks were flushed, his breathing ragged. He shook his head.

"I mean—" Will tried again.

"No. No, I never—"

"Then you don't know what you prefer?" Will asked, a cat-like grin spreading over his face.

Jean-Luc just stared at him, eyes hooded, pupils shot.

"Well," Will decided, his thumb stroking the wet outline of Jean-Luc's cock, "we have all night to find out."

And he leaned down for another kiss.

Fourteen years later, on the U.S.S. Enterprise, Captain Picard's new first officer walked into his office and stopped dead in his tracks. They stared at each other, both expressionless, neither moving. Picard had read his first officer's file extensively, but he hadn't seen Will Riker's face until now. And Will Riker, of course, had heard Captain Picard's name countless times, but had never had the privilege to meet him in person. Or so he thought. He looked Picard up and down slowly, his poker-face firmly in place, and then allowed himself an innocent grin. Eyebrows raised, he gave Picard a look that seemed to say: *Your move, Jean-Luc.*

I really should have checked his staff photo, Picard thought.

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