

Extra Scenes, Codas, and Other Stuff (SNW Season 2)

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Summary

Deleted scenes, character development, and other odds and ends for Strange New Worlds Season 2.

Contains Spoilers. Each chapter title will be prefaced with the episode number.

Episode 1: My Faith Was Justified

“You sent for me Captain?”

Pike composed a stern expression before swiveling his desk chair to face the officer standing at attention with posture like a flagpole. “I did, Lieutenant.”

Spock’s shoulders drooped a fraction of an inch, almost unseen except by the very observant. He’d engaged in theoretical versions of this conversation in his mind. Disappointing his commanding officer, this mentor, this man more like a father than his own biological parent, this being whose respect he most desired, was a punishment more severe than any discipline meted out.

Maintaining eye contact with his junior officer as if gazing over glasses perched on his nose, Pike said, “Mere hours after assignment as acting Captain of Enterprise you,” he ticked off on fingers, “disobeyed a direct order from Admiral April, falsified a plasma leak which put an entire Starbase on evacuation alert, stole the family car then brought it home dented and in need of a fresh coat of paint. I remember stressing before disembarking that my ship would remain in port during your tenure. Is my recollection faulty? Have I missed an offence?”

Hands clasped behind the half-Vulcan’s back tightened. “Yes, sir. During the Klingon’s jurisdiction month, I, as well as a landing party, illegally beamed to the surface of Cajitar IV. Please note they were following my orders.”

“Hmmm. Not one of them volunteered?”

Spock shifted back and forth. “They declined to refuse my instructions.”

“That is too fine a hair to further split.”

An eyebrow raised. “I believe the correct phraseology would be ‘that is too fine a hair to split further,’ thus avoiding a split infinitive.”

Pike’s left hand moved to his mouth, its thumb and index finger spanning it, the other digits curling over and beneath it. “Are you correcting my grammar Lieutenant?”

“Ah ... yes.” Spock stared at the floor.

A chuckle cracked Pike’s steely gaze. “At ease.” His hand waved at a chair. “Sit.” He refilled his tumbler with an inch of amber liquid. “Drink? Or on the other hand not, scuttlebutt suggests water for rehydration.”

The science officer grimaced.

“Drinking a Klingon warrior under the table is ... impressive.”

“This did not occur. Captain D’Chok found the floor a steadier resting place than his chair. At no point was a table’s surface above him.”

“Okaaay. We’ll let that one lie. Your *technique* for convincing the Klingon commander of your sincerity is on its way to legend,” Pike said. “There is little you can do but accept that.”

“Bloodwine is not a pleasant beverage,” Spock admitted.

“I image not.”

“Lieutenant Ortegas hinted at an imminent a dock in my allowance. The protocol of this penalty is unknown to me.”

“She means withholding your pocket money. Parents on Earth sometimes gift their children with a fixed and recurring number of credits,” Pike said.

Spock’s brow creased as he considered the custom. “A useful tool for instilling money management skills.”

“It can be.”

“And you, did your parents employ this practice?”

Pike nodded. “They did, starting at age six.”

“If I may ask, how did you make use of the gift?”

“Saved it. For saddles and tack.”

“A wise investment,” the Vulcan said in an approving tone.

The captain inclined his head. “Until girls captured my attention over horses. After that ... well, my spending priorities, and choices for that matter, followed a less sensible trajectory.”

“Necessitating docking your allowance?”

“Forfeiting it. Permanently.” Pike leaned back in his chair and sipped his drink. “I failed Astrophysics because I missed the final. I missed the final because my father intervened prohibiting a make-up test. I needed the make-up exam because an attempt at showing off landed me in the hospital.”

Spock broke the silence. "Resolving the cliffhanger is polite."

Laughter followed. "That's a ballsy retort to a superior officer. A race on the desert flats, instigated by a dare from a pretty classmate, ended in my wrecking and totaling my father's ground car."

"Not a ringing endorsement of your piloting skills," the science officer observed.

"You steal one starship ..."

"Borrow," Spock corrected.

"Oh yes. Sorry. You successfully borrow one starship and your assertiveness grows. Una will be pleased. Long story short, my father was not happy, the girl found a new love interest a week later, I spent the summer earning money to pay for a replacement ground car. And failed a Starfleet Academy first-year class." Pike set his glass to the side and crossed his legs. "Back to the point of this meeting."

"I will accept any punishment you deem appropriate, sir."

"This isn't about discipline." Sincerity imbued Pike's tone. "I never doubted my faith in you was, is justified. Your actions prove my trust."

In a voice barely audible the young officer asked the fear of all the inexperienced. "And if my decision had resulted in tragedy?"

Pike met the other man's gaze and held it. "We'd face and fix it together." He paused. "And I'd still be proud of you."

Spock exhaled slowly, releasing tension held since learning of La'an distress call.

"Logic, data, instinct, past experience, ramification, all these inform our judgement. Yet choice is only one factor influencing outcome, cascading effects and events must still be managed." Pike's shoulders rose and fell. "Sometimes, despite textbook perfect reactions, significant turning points are out of our control. The best decisions may end badly, the worst well."

He paused allowing Spock to absorb the words. "Hunches can be informed by intuition and subconscious analysis increasing their trustworthiness, or by fear, prejudice, personal desire. The latter isn't a good guide. Learning to discern the difference is a process; building this skill relies on practice and good counsel. You listened to a gut feeling then underpinned it with advice and collaboration all of which saved a lot of lives. Well done."

"Thank you, sir." Spock remained quiet for several minutes then stood. "May I resume my duties?"

"Yes."

Outside the ready room, the half-Vulcan's lips curled into a faint smile.

Episode 2: That Hug

Those welcoming Una back to Enterprise filed out of the transporter room. Chris' eyes followed them as he walked to her. The doors swished closed leaving Captain and his first officer alone. She turned in his direction, a faint smile softened her features. His raised then lowered eyebrows accompanied by a nervous smile and a single head bob-tilt combination silently commented on the razor thin edge on which her freedom had balanced, too fine an edge. Despite the many dangers they had faced together, he had never come this close to losing her.

His emotions flooded across a wide spectrum. Gratitude, satisfaction, returned equilibrium, tender attachment. All of this propelled Chris forward as he wrapped his arms around Una, drawing her tightly against his body.

Tentatively, with care at first, she reciprocated, her hands settling around his shoulders. Being an Illyrian in hiding often meant shying away from the touch of another, a hardship given the profound sensuous nature of her people. Her eyes closed. The warmth radiating from Chris' body shut out all else. Lingering stress from the ordeal. Disquiet. Anxiety other members of Starfleet, maybe even her shipmates, feared her genetic engineering, feared what she might do, what she might become. Terrors unleashed during the Eugenics wars were ingrained in every Human survivor and their descendants' DNA. A technicality ignoring her dishonesty and granting asylum couldn't wash this away.

A quiet sigh, one of release and belonging, escaped her lips.

Years ago, her post lecture comment on his piloting error started a written correspondence. This acquaintance had grown into friendship like a sturdy oak tree, ever faithful, its roots strong and deep, rings of teacher and student, colleague, mentor and mentee, companionship, fellowship layered its trunk. Their mutual understanding was innate; when words were required theirs was a private, tailored language, twin speak. Physical attraction was present too. Yet when they had inched toward adding the complex layer of lovers to their relationship, situations intervened, or mutual, though never discussed choice, declined.

Or Una retreated.

Now Chris understood why.

And she no longer had to hide.

The embrace took them out of time. In this state of possibility the question felt right.

May I kiss you?

He hesitated rather than asking. Now his chosen fate was the barrier, not insurmountable, but there. And unavoidably, coldly real.

Piggybacking this wave of relief our journey together continues isn't the way, isn't the time to start something lasting. The moment may come, but this isn't it.

Time restarted. He pulled out the embrace; his hands grasped her arms then he stepped away. His eyes gazed at her. Playfully he rapped her arm, like a teammate hailing victory. "Good to have you back Number One."

"Good to be back Captain."

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