

Mating Season (So to Speak)

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Summary

According to Jim's calculations, it's been roughly eight years since his dreaded fight to the death against Spock on Vulcan. That means it's almost time for pon farr again, a fact he hesitantly broaches with his science officer. There's only one issue:

Pon farr isn't real.

Spock made it up.

Jim checks the calendar. He darts a glance at Spock. He clears his throat. Just when Spock looks up and raises an eyebrow, he looks away again, avoiding Spock's eyes.

Back to the calendar. He double-checks the dates, flips through the months to last year's calendar. Glances at Spock again. Scratches the back of his neck.

"You seem perturbed, Captain," says Spock evenly.

"It's nothing," says Jim at once. Still, Spock can see him moving his finger from one square on the calendar to the next, his lips moving silently as he counts the days. "Still... er, Spock, do you think we could talk in private?"

Spock sets his padd down and pointedly scans the empty room.

"Somewhere with a door that locks, perhaps," Jim suggests.

Oh. Spock jolts to his feet with as much speed as his Vulcan dignity allows. He folds his hands behind his back, and he and Jim take off down the hallway, abandoning the observation deck in favor of Jim's quarters. They keep up a light techno-babble as they walk, just in case any of the junior officers are listening, but as soon as they reach Jim's bedroom — as soon as the door is closed behind them — everything changes. Spock whirls on Jim. pins him to the wall, cocks an eyebrow.

"Spock," says Jim, "that's not what I meant." He pats Spock on the chest gently until, disappointed, Spock steps away. "It's a bit of a sensitive subject, I suppose. I just wanted to ask you ... isn't it about time for your..."

Spock waits for the end of the sentence. Jim stares at him expectantly, eyebrows raised, obviously hoping Spock won't make him say it. But Spock's mind is curiously blank. Time for his ... what? End of shift? No. Next shore leave? No. Biannual check-up? No, and anyway, it would be Bones chewing him out for that, not Jim. He and Jim regularly conspire to avoid the medbay together.

"Your...?" Jim prompts.

Spock blinks. Hesitating, Jim glances over at the locked door, double-checks the locking mechanism, and lowers his voice.

"Your pon farr," he whispers.

For one tense second, Spock doesn't know what he's talking about. Then the nonsense word slots into his memory bank, and it all comes flooding back — that rotten week of loneliness and touch starvation where he took it out on everybody else — the embarrassment when Jim called him on it — the lie he'd made up on the spot to save face — the humiliating call to T'Pring, the nonsense duel they put on in the desert, the — that is, when he pinned Jim to the ground, the way he — with his hips straddling Jim's hips, and both of them aroused—

He can feel the tips of his ears turning green.

"I thought so," says Jim softly. He puts his hands on Spock's shoulders. "No need to be embarrassed, old man. I understand completely."

Spock clears his throat. He puts his hand over Jim's and squeezes. "In truth, Jim, it *is* almost time for the ritual...in ten days, if I don't mate, I..."

The time off work. The massage lotion. The scent of candles, the warmth of Jim's hands. He's practically salivating.

"I thought it was eight days?" says Jim.

Oh, blast him.

"No, it's ten," says Spock steadily, his face blank. "You must have misheard."

Jim furrows his eyebrows and looks ready to argue, so Spock squeezes his hand again and steps a little closer, until their hips are touching.

"Jim," he says softly, "we mustn't waste time. Best to get it over with now."

"According to the log I've been keeping, we should have till Tuesday," says Jim. "Is that right?"

Oh, bollocks.

"I'm afraid not, Jim," says Spock, forcing an ounce of patience into his voice. "Pon farr cannot always be measured with precision." He leans in until Jim can feel his erection, just to hammer home the point. "I need your body, Jim. Now."

Jim nods, his face filled with the grim determination of a captain who will never let his men down. And underneath that, well-hidden, the spark of giddy anticipation that means he'd gladly do this any day of the week, pon farr or no pon farr.

Still, Spock thinks as he goes in for a kiss, he'll probably let this lie keep going a little longer. It's only when he has a life-or-death excuse that Bones gets off his back and stops snarking at him. And the fuck-or-die excuse gives him ample opportunity to ask for sex without sacrificing his pride or waiting for Jim to make the first move. And eight days of nonstop banging is nothing to turn one's nose up at.

And besides, during pon farr, Jim lets him top.

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