

Captain Honorary Dad

Posted originally on the [Ad Astra :: Star Trek Fanfiction Archive](http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/625) at <http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/625>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	Gen
Fandom:	Star Trek: Strange New Worlds
Character:	Christopher Pike , Una Chin-Riley Number One , Spock , Ensemble Cast - SNW
Additional Tags:	Children
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2023-07-07 Words: 876 Chapters: 1/?

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by [StarryEyes2000](#)

Summary

Inspired by tumblr prompt I couldn't get out of my head: TNG always makes a big deal of how Picard isn't comfortable commanding a ship with children on board. Tell me Pike would not LOVE having kids on his ship.

Chapters will be vignettes.

Notes

Contains a mild spoiler for Strange New Worlds Season 2 Episode 1

"Children," La'an said with disbelief in her tone. "I heard you say children. Children on board a starship, *this* ship. Is this a prank Captain? Have you fallen and hit your head?"

"Not recently."

Una spoke from the other end of the conference table. "He's serious. Mission parameters transmitted this morning. Enterprise will lead a taskforce of cargo and escort vessels departing in a month."

La'an crossed arms over her chest. "So we're being punished."

"Establishing a joint colony in the Hei cluster is honoring a promise to the R'Ongovians. As our crew participated in talks seeking their alliance with the Federation, it's only natural we undertake the mission," Pike said.

Spock steepled his fingers, forefingers resting against his chin. "This is not logical sir. Enterprise is a Constitution class heavy cruiser built for long-term exploration and patrol assignments. For combat. For hazardous duty."

"Sending the fleet's flagship is a message of support and permanence. It reenforces our strong commitment to the R'Ongovians needs and to the Federation's obligations."

"For a short visit to their home world, yes. But subbing as a school bus on a field trip?" La'an raised her hands waist high, palms facing up. Her fingers curled inward, beckoning. "Anyone? No? Then I'll plunge into the freezing water. It's a terrible idea. Children stray where they shouldn't and have been repeatedly warned not to. And then there's the sticky fingers, perpetually gummy and leaving, well, sticky on every wall, every button. Because they do that too, you know, touch everything encountered to see what it does. They defy supervision. There will be games of hide and seek in the Jefferies tubes with the ladders used as a jungle gym. They'll play forts under tables covered in blankets and try to sneak onto the bridge. And don't get me started on kids wiping their perpetually runny noses on their sleeves." Her head bobbed right then left and again as her shoulders quivered, a silent exclamation point on her words.

"The security chief's counter arguments, though made with her usual imprecision, are valid. The very young spread with rapidity minor illnesses and more often than not ignore posted rules. Perhaps the offspring in this colony group are skewed to those nearing adulthood. Reasoned decision-making maturity is a better fit on a starship. Such age distribution would be an advantage," Spock said with a self-confirming nod.

"Teenagers pose a whole different set of problems, worse even than toddlers. You've forgotten about raging hormones."

"Why would chemical messengers created by my cells, and which trigger various bodily functions, be angry?"

Mentally Pike began preparing for the private conversation in his future when Spock sought him out to answer this question.

“A figure of speech.” She clarified, “Roosters strutting around the barnyard. The wailing when broken hearts ensue.”

Spock’s expression remained puzzled.

“The birds and the bees. Most species’ adolescents are biologically and emotionally incapable of rational choices. Especially Humans.”

M’Benga added to her explanation. “The years immediately preceding adulthood are a period of seeking independence and experiences, then, hopefully, learning from the mistakes. This can be a painful process with unintended outcomes resulting from too little prior analysis of possible consequences.”

“You sound just like him,” La’an said.

The doctor smiled as his shoulders execute a faint shrug. “Habit picked up during my three-year residency at the Vulcan Science Academy. There I learned their puberty does not commence until well into social adulthood.”

“Lucky them,” La’an said in a sarcastic tone then pronounced. “We’re being punished.” She swiveled her chair toward the science officer. “I blame you. Admiral April’s still sore.”

“Answering your distress call necessitated borrowing Enterprise,” Spock reminded in a vexed (for a Vulcan) tone. Increasingly his and La’an’s relationship mirrored strong-willed siblings, at times in their own teen years.

Pike shook his head. “This isn’t a penance. I volunteered.”

Ortegas morphed an incredulous chuckle into a dainty snort.

He said with hints of dimples. “I may have called in a few chits, okay, most of my outstanding markers. Promised a few favors, *minor* ones ...”

Una’s eyebrow raised.

“Okay, conceded post position to the Yorktown in this year’s fleet air races, and agreed to stable indefinitely the Commander-in-chief’s niece’s horse.” Pike rubbed his chin. “May have given away my best saddle too, though that part of the evening is a bit fuzzy.” His head tilted. “Cost me my fifty-year old Armagnac as well.” A sheepish tone finished, “And I may have begged.”

“There’s no getting out of this?” La’an asked.

“Ah ... no.” Leaning forward with hands resting on the table he reassured, “Families on board will be an interruption in routine. A good one. A *fun* one.”

“A matter of opinion. Yours.” At her commander’s mock stern gaze La’an amended, “Sir.”

Pike gestured at his first officer. “Number One, you’re up.”

“Every department head will supervise an area of responsibility; I’ll post those assignments this afternoon. The quartermaster will oversee billeting and, along with security, onboarding. We’ll be doubling up in most crew quarters. Three labs will be allocated for the civilian scientists. Spock, I need a safety evaluation from you for their planned experiments.”

Pike’s face lit with a beaming grin. “And I’ve sketched a few ideas for the playroom we’re going to outfit.”

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