

Maps, Rules and Moderation

Posted originally on the [Ad Astra :: Star Trek Fanfiction Archive](http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/73) at <http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/73>.

Rating:	General Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	Gen
Fandom:	Star Trek: The Original Series
Relationship:	James T. Kirk & Leonard "Bones" McCoy
Character:	James T. Kirk , Leonard "Bones" McCoy
Additional Tags:	Humor , Slice of Life
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2023-05-28 Words: 1,314 Chapters: 1/1

Maps, Rules and Moderation

by [SLWalker](#)

Summary

Kirk and McCoy get lost while Spock is doing geo-survey with his science teams on a partially charted world.

"I thought you were bringing the maps," McCoy said, and didn't bother holding back any of the irritation or exasperation in his voice.

In true, time-honored form, it rolled off of Jim's back like water. "This planet is covered in geo-survey teams. We're not going to be lost forever."

Neither had anticipated that the crystalline veins running through the bedrock underfoot would disrupt their communicators and render them completely useless. Nor had they anticipated losing sight of Spock and the others. In truth, neither of them particularly needed to be here, but after being aboard ship steadily for quite awhile, they'd tagged a long for a breath of planetary air.

Geo-survey was usually left to science ships; actually cataloging, categorizing, mapping and exploring planets in their entirety took years, and in some cases even decades. However, the *Enterprise* happened to be in the vicinity, and was ordered to spend three days adding onto the database of knowledge gleaned so far about this particular world. A small additional contribution to the body of knowledge.

Not surprisingly, Spock was in his element. McCoy would even swear that the Vulcan was happy, though it would be hard for an outsider to notice. Regardless, he did seem to have a slightly more bouncy step as he coordinated his teams of scientists in their studies. McCoy had pointed it out; Spock didn't deny it, merely raised an eyebrow.

"Besides, it's not a bad place to be lost," Jim was saying, prompting McCoy to look back at him from where he was standing on a large rock, peering through dense trees in the hopes of seeing a flash of blue. The captain was sitting comfortably on another rock and was bringing a berry up to his face.

McCoy moved faster than even he thought was possible, jumping down and swatting Jim's hand. "What do you think you're doing?! How do you know that's safe to eat?"

Jim eyed him back, mildly. It was a look that completely defied how he actually felt; that mildness, with Jim, usually meant the exact opposite. "Who said I was eating it, Bones? I was just looking at it."

McCoy's mouth tightened briefly as he tried to find some way of replying to that. He failed spectacularly. Without apologizing, he pulled his tricorder off of his shoulder and scanned the berry that Jim had been holding. "Looks safe," he finally conceded, gruffly.

Jim smirked, briefly, then took a careful bite of the berry. After chewing on it for a few seconds, he shrugged, more with his face than with his shoulders. "Not bad. Care to try a bite?"

"No, thanks," McCoy replied, turning around to head back towards the rock. First rule of being found: Staying put.

Of course, Jim Kirk never did follow the rules.

Three hours later, McCoy could feel his legs aching from scrambling over rocks, downed trees, ferns and just about anything else. He should have, in retrospect, been more adamant about them staying put and hoping for rescue, but Jim had decided that there was no way he was just

going to sit and wait, and set off. "C'mon, Bones," he had said, with that smirk of his, "Do you really want to see Spock's face when he shows up, like a blue-clad knight saving the damsels in distress?"

Needless to say, that had been enough to prompt McCoy to move.

"Woe is me, woe is me," McCoy said, holding the back of his hand to his head, melodramatically. "Please, Blue Knight, come rescue us."

The look he got back was more than smoky. More like an inferno.

Jim had been munching on berries since they started walking; the forest was covered in bushes bearing them. A handful here, a handful there. Not all at once, just idly eating. McCoy had a few, but Jim had been enjoying them liberally on this little stroll, while McCoy was too busy cursing at every vine he managed to catch a leg in. He wasn't nearly as into nature as his friend, and it showed. He much preferred a front porch and a swing, with a nicely-mowed lawn.

Unfortunately, while the berries had been entirely safe to eat, there was the matter of moderation. Had he not been busy tripping over things, he might have pointed out to Jim that he was going through berries at a very non-moderate pace and should cut back.

Jim sat on another rock, arms wrapped around his abdomen, though otherwise pride made him sit as straight as possible. They'd managed to get a few more clicks after the cramps started, but now it was clear they should likely just stop and go with the First Rule of Being Found.

"If we would have brought some maps along, we'd be onboard the *Enterprise* right now having dinner," McCoy said, not entirely able to help himself.

"Shut up, Bones," Jim replied, with enough bite to let McCoy know that he probably should do that. After another moment, face screwed up, Jim gingerly got to his feet and disappeared into the bushes. McCoy knew full well that it wasn't to go berry-picking. Inferno applied to more than just Jim's demeanor.

He was polite enough not to call out or otherwise complain any further. Instead, he peered off into the trees and waited, idly wondering how much longer it would be until nightfall and whether or not they had started walking in the wrong direction. And after a longer-than-average amount of time, Jim came back, looking only slightly better.

McCoy absently pulled a berry off of a bush and ate it. Taken in moderation, they were pretty good.

Of course, Jim Kirk did nothing in moderation.

"Are you well?" Spock asked, carefully looking over his somewhat disheveled captain, a mild note of concern underlying his otherwise calm voice.

The cramps and the resulting effects of the berries had finally worn off, mostly, as the sun was going down. That left them to sit around and wait, and Jim to shift around uncomfortably on his seat. "I'm fine," he replied, slightly more forced than not. "How did you find us?"

"I followed your trail," Spock said. "When it became apparent that you had gone missing, I began to extrapolate where you may have gone, and why you would have been unable to use your communicators. As you are no doubt aware of now, there are numerous veins--"

"Cut to the chase, Spock," McCoy said, wearily rubbing at his eyes.

"I followed the trail of recently picked-over berry bushes, and when they ceased to be picked over, I followed..." a beat, "...other markers that indicated you came this way."

There was a very long silence, and then both McCoy and Jim cleared their throats quietly, in near unison.

"Yes, well, I think it's time to get back to the ship," Jim said, standing up as straight as he could, considering. "I assume you've managed to work around the communications issue?"

"Indeed."

"Good. Let's get out of here."

As they were preparing to beam up, Jim leaned over to McCoy, dropping his voice. "I have a rash I need you to look at, without commentary."

McCoy put on his best physician face and nodded. "Better grab a sample of those leaves."

Doubtless Spock heard them, but he was polite enough to pretend he didn't. He was also polite enough to fiddle with the communicator for a few minutes while Kirk retrieved a leaf and palmed it over for McCoy to slip into a pocket.

McCoy was true to his word, and didn't comment on the rash. But he couldn't resist, as Spock flipped open the communicator, saying, "Three to beam up-- *Blue Knight*."

He was still smirking at one confused face and one irate one when the beam took him over.

It was one of the most satisfying transports he'd had in his life.

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!