

## Blood Red

Posted originally on the [Ad Astra :: Star Trek Fanfiction Archive](http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/852) at <http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/852>.

Rating: [Teen And Up Audiences](#)  
Archive Warning: [No Archive Warnings Apply](#)  
Category: [M/M](#)  
Fandom: [Star Trek: The Original Series](#)  
Relationship: [Original Male Character/Original Male Character](#)  
Character: [Original Male Character\(s\)](#)  
Additional Tags: [Hurt/Comfort](#), [Injury](#), [Established Relationship\(s\)](#)  
Language: English  
Stats: Published: 2023-08-19 Words: 1,179 Chapters: 1/1

## Blood Red

by [lah\\_mrh](#)

### Summary

A security officer and his partner come face to face with the dangers of the job.

### Notes

Written for ArgentNoelle in the 2019 Rare Male Slash exchange. Originally posted on AO3.

The morning starts like any other, alarm beeping loudly until one of them rouses enough to silence it. This time it's Mike, and he rolls over sleepily to give Jason a good morning kiss.

"Just think," he says, when they finally break apart. "In less than twenty eight hours we'll be married."

It'll just be a small ceremony, attended by a few friends and officiated by the captain, but it's still their wedding, and Mike gets a thrill of nervous excitement in his chest whenever he thinks about it.

"I know," Jason replies with a smile, before adding, "One last day of freedom. I'll have to make it count."

Mike shoves at his shoulder, but he's smiling too. "Come on," he says, with a quick glance at the time. "We'd better get up. Don't want to be late for shift."

Jason yawns, running a hand down Mike's side. "Maybe we could call in sick."

Mike allows himself to be pulled into another kiss, but firmly restrains Jason's hands when they start to wander. "We're about to have a whole week off! And aren't you meant to be going on a landing party with the captain?"

"So they'll send someone else," Jason replies airily. "It's not like there aren't other security officers on this ship."

Mike snorts. "You say that like you didn't jump at the chance." He pulls away and throws back the covers. "You can stay here if you like, but I'm going to work."

Jason sighs. "Fine, you win," he says reluctantly. "No calling in sick. But we'd better make next week count."

"I'm planning on it," Mike says, then grins, leaning in to kiss him briefly. "Love you."

"Love you too."

\* \* \*

Four hours later, Mike is hard at work sorting through sensor data from a recent gravitational anomaly they encountered. It's slow going, and he's pretty sure his eyes are starting to blur, but he figures if he can do a good job with this, Spock might start letting him help out with stuff that actually matters.

Sometimes he almost envies Jason. Strapping on a phaser and beaming down to some possibly hostile planet has to be way more interesting than this.

He rubs his eyes and goes back to work, glad that it's only a short while until lunch. He's puzzling over a particular set of readings, trying to decide if it's just noise or something worth investigating further, when the intercom chimes. "Ensign Chen, please report to sickbay."

Mike looks up, wondering if he imagined that. From the looks he's getting from the few other people in the lab, probably not. He saves his progress and begins shutting down his terminal, wondering what they could possibly want from him in sickbay. He isn't due for a physical for another three months. Then it hits him, his body going cold all over.

Jason.

He makes the journey to sickbay in record time. The captain is there, talking quietly to Doctor McCoy, but Mike barely notices them, his eyes caught by the figure lying on one of the beds. Jason is white-faced and far too still, his chest covered in bandages, and Mike moves forwards, reaching out to touch his hand. It's cold, too cold, and the only thing that stops Mike from collapsing is that he can see Jason's chest moving, just a little.

"There was an incident, down on the planet," Captain Kirk says softly. "Your- Lieutenant Barnes was very brave. He jumped in front of a knife meant for me."

He would, Mike thinks. "How-" He stops, swallowing, before forcing the words out. "How badly is he hurt?"

It's McCoy who answers. "The knife itself didn't do too much damage, but it was coated in some kind of poison. We're doing all we can, but the next few hours will be crucial."

Mike can't help but think back to that morning, how happy they were. "We were supposed to get married tomorrow," he says faintly.

"I'm sorry," Kirk says, laying a careful hand on Mike's shoulder. It's probably meant to be comforting, but Mike barely manages to keep from flinching at the touch. It isn't the captain's fault, he knows, but Jason was injured protecting *him*, and Mike can't help but resent him for it.

With a last squeeze of his shoulder, Kirk leaves, and McCoy brings Mike a chair so he can sit with Jason. Mike brings Jason's hand to his lips and kisses it before holding it tightly, as if his touch can tether Jason to him, keep him from drifting away to a place Mike can't follow.

Minutes pass, turning into hours. Jason doesn't get any better, but he doesn't get worse either. Mike tries to see that as a good sign.

Nurse Chapel brings him food, tries to get him to eat. Mike forces down a few bites to make her happy, but his appetite is gone. He loses track of how long he sits there, wishing desperately for Jason to wake up and be okay. He falls asleep there, still in his chair with Jason's hand clasped in his.

He jerks awake some time later, almost falling out of his chair. Someone laughs, familiar enough to make his heart clench, and he looks up to see that Jason is awake and watching him. "Hey," he says, voice hoarse, and Mike all but launches himself at him, hugging him tightly. Jason gasps in pain, and Mike releases him instantly, babbling apologies.

"It's okay," Jason says, though his smile is still a little pained. "I'm just a little sore."

"I'm not surprised," Doctor McCoy puts in from behind Mike. "That's what you get for throwing yourself in front of poisoned weapons." But the annoyance in his tone is belied by the care in his movements as he examines Jason's wound. "Looks like it's healing well," he reports, "and your vitals are strong. You'll have to stay in sickbay a few more days, but I'd say you're going to be fine."

"Does that mean we'll have to postpone the wedding?" Jason asks, sounding disappointed, and Mike laughs, relief washing over him and making him dizzy.

"I think we can wait a few days," he says. "Unless you want to get married in sickbay overalls instead of that tux you spent hours picking out."

A look of horror crosses Jason's face at the thought, and Mike can't help but lean in and kiss him.

"I thought I was going to lose you," he says when they break apart. "Don't ever do that to me again."

"Get stabbed?" Jason asks. "Don't worry, I wasn't planning on it." His tone is flippant, but the way he grips Mike's hand tells him he's not as unaffected as he makes out. "Sorry I ruined our wedding."

"It'll keep," Mike replies. "Just maybe stay away from landing parties for a while?" He means it as a joke, but his voice breaks a little on the last word.

Jason smiles, tucking a strand of hair behind his ear before pulling him in for another kiss. "It's a deal."

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