

Ends and Means

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Summary

After the events of The Red Angel, Pike and Spock have a discussion about the importance of following orders.

Notes

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Spock knew from the moment he raised the phaser that there would be consequences for his actions, but he viewed it – still views it – as a necessary sacrifice. They succeeded in capturing the Angel, and nothing matters more than that.

Still, he cannot deny the twist in his stomach when he beams back aboard *Discovery* and the transporter tech informs him that the captain wishes to see him in his ready room.

The look of anger and disappointment Pike gives him as he enters the room makes Spock ache. It is not an unfamiliar expression, but one he never expected to see directed at himself.

"Computer, privacy lock," Pike orders, and Spock can hear the lock click into place. Pike stares at him for a moment before saying, with deceptive softness, "I ordered you to stand down."

Spock clenches his hands behind his back. "I could not do that, Captain."

"No, you *chose* not to do that," Pike counters. "You deliberately disobeyed my orders because you thought you knew better. Did it ever even occur to you what would have happened if you'd been wrong? We would have lost a valued member of this crew, your own *sister*."

"Michael was aware of the risks," Spock replies.

"Yes, well, as I believe you yourself pointed out, Michael has something of an affinity for self-sacrifice." Pike's gaze is piercing. "I'm sure you thought you were doing the right thing, but almost every officer who has ever disobeyed orders thought they were doing the right thing, and most of them were wrong. What happens the next time I give an order you disagree with? Will you ignore that one as well?"

Spock grips his hands tighter. "Captain, I apologise for my actions."

"But do you *regret* them? Or would you make the same choice again, if the situation were repeated?"

Spock hesitates, torn between the truthful answer and the one Pike clearly wants to hear.

Pike sighs. "That's what I thought." He shakes his head and adds, "We have rules for a reason, Spock. Yes, it all worked out in our favour, but your actions were still unacceptable. This isn't Section 31; the ends don't justify the means. If the situation weren't so dire I'd consider taking you off duty, confining you to quarters. As it is..." He trails off, waving a hand. "You're dismissed. Go make yourself useful. Computer, privacy lock off."

"Yes, sir," Spock says quietly. He leaves without looking back, forcing himself to focus on the Angel, on saving the universe, and not on the look of disappointed anger on Pike's face.

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