

Pain is in the Mind

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Pain is in the Mind

by [lah_mrh](#)

Summary

Shortly after taking command of Discovery, Captain Pike comes down with a migraine.

Notes

Written in 2019, during season 2. Originally posted on AO3.

It starts as a headache.

As a Starfleet captain, Chris is used to ignoring minor discomfort, so it takes him some time to realise this isn't just an ordinary headache. The pain grows, taking up residence in the right side of his head and making the lights and sounds of the bridge seem magnified.

A migraine. Perfect.

It's been months since his last one, but the symptoms are unpleasantly familiar. Nausea curls in his stomach, and for a moment he toys with the idea of handing command over to Saru and heading back to his quarters. He decides against it, though. This is a new crew, one that still doesn't totally trust him. If he wants to earn their respect, he can't afford to look weak.

Fortunately, it isn't too far from the end of shift, and he is able to hold the pain at bay long enough to hand over command to the Beta shift officer and make sure everything is in order before leaving.

The motion of the turbolift is jarring, increasing the pounding in his head and setting his stomach churning. He makes it to his quarters by sheer force of will, but the doors have barely closed behind him before he is rushing for the bathroom, making it to the toilet just in time.

Afterwards, he sinks to the floor and mumbles tiredly, "Computer, lights to twenty percent."

The lights dim obediently and he scrubs his hands over his face before rising to rinse out his mouth. The vomiting has dulled the pain enough to be bearable, but he knows that's only temporary. If past experience holds, his best option at this point is to go to bed and hope to sleep through the rest of it.

He makes his way back into the main room, and is sitting on the bed removing his boots when the door chimes loudly. He lets out a low groan, considering the merits of ignoring it, then stands up and smooths down his uniform. "Computer, lights to fifty percent," he orders, then, as the lights begin to brighten, "Come."

The door slides open to admit Michael Burnham, who approaches with quick strides. She stops at a respectful distance and comes to attention, holding out a PADD. "The reports you asked for, Captain."

"Thank you, Burnham." Chris reaches out to take the offered PADD, managing a smile. She steps away and clasps her hands behind her back, and he studies her silently for a few seconds. She and her brother might not share a physical resemblance, but there are times when he'll notice a familiar mannerism or turn of phrase, something that reminds him enough of Spock to send a pang through his chest. *God, I hope he's okay.*

It takes him a moment to notice she's watching him too. "Do you always keep your quarters this dim, sir?" she asks, sounding oddly wary.

Chris frowns, but answers honestly. "Only when I have a migraine."

The wariness disappears, to be replaced with something like regret. "I'm sorry, I didn't mean-" She hesitates, then begins again, "Captain Lorca

had an issue with his eyes. He liked things dark."

It isn't hard to read the subtext behind her words. "Ah. Well, rest assured, Burnham, there's nothing wrong with my eyes." He rubs his right temple and adds, "My *head*, on the other hand...."

She steps forwards, looking sympathetic. "Would you like me to get you something from sickbay?"

He shakes his head. "Thank you, but that won't be necessary. All I need is some rest."

She nods. "Then I won't keep you." She turns on her heel, but only makes it a few steps before turning back, hands still clasped tightly behind her. "I just remembered, sir, I never truly welcomed you." She smiles briefly and adds, "Welcome aboard."

"Glad to be here," Chris tells her.

With a final nod, Burnham leaves, and Chris goes back to pulling off his boots, feeling positive despite the pain in his head. *Discovery* may not be the *Enterprise*, but she's a good ship, with a good crew, and he's proud to lead them.

Right after he gets some sleep.

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