

## Shakedown Cruise

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## Shakedown Cruise

by [lah\\_mrh](#)

### Summary

Chris's first day as captain doesn't go entirely according to plan.

### Notes

Written for the [Tropes of the Month](#) comm on Dreamwidth, for the theme First Times.

Note: Upjohn the engineer appears in "Q&A", the short about Spock's first day on the Enterprise. She's not actually stated to be the *chief* engineer, but I extrapolated.

On his first day as captain, Chris wakes up with a headache and queasy stomach and spends a few moments staring at his ceiling and contemplating the general unfairness of the universe. He only had a few drinks at his party last night, deliberately pacing himself so that he wouldn't end up with a hangover, and yet somehow it happened anyway.

"Guess I must be getting old," he mutters, and forces himself up to face the day.

He feels better after a shower and a couple of painkillers washed down with coffee, and finds himself smiling as he pulls on his new uniform shirt and runs his fingers over the braid on his wrist. He knows he has a lot to live up to – he's the third-youngest person ever to attain this rank, and neither of the others had command of the flagship – but April has been training him for this position for years, and Chris is determined not to let him down.

He runs through the crew roster one more time before leaving for the bridge, even though he can practically recite it by heart. There are a few new faces in sciences and security, and a new chief engineer, but most of the crewmembers who served under Captain April have stayed on. In some ways that's good – he knows these people, has worked with them before, knows they like him and trust him – but interacting with the crew as a captain is a different situation to doing so as a first officer, and part of him wonders how he'll manage the transition.

He sets off for the bridge a little early, hoping to get there before the crew. The *Enterprise* has been refitted and upgraded, but she's still the same *Enterprise*, and stepping out onto the bridge is as familiar as breathing.

As it happens, he isn't the first one there. His new Number One is standing at the science station, studying something on the readout. Chris makes his way over, feeling something in him settle at her presence. He and Una came up together – she spent a week shadowing him to prepare for her role as first officer – and he can't think of anyone he'd rather have in that position.

She looks up as he approaches, greeting him with a smile. "Captain."

"Number One," Chris replies, smiling back. "No problems, I hope?"

"None that I can see," she says. "Everything's ready for the shakedown cruise."

"That's good," Chris says. "We'll get underway as soon as everyone's here."

\*

Chris waits until they've gone to warp before handing the bridge over to Una and starting his tour of the ship. April taught him that a good captain should be approachable and willing to listen to their crew, and he wants to make sure he starts off on the right foot. This shakedown

cruise is the perfect chance for him to visit the various department on the ship, introduce himself to the new people and check in with the old ones.

He starts in security, and over the next few hours works his way through sciences to engineering. So far everything is going well, except for the fact that his hangover hasn't gone away and the painkillers are starting to wear off. It's bearable, though, and there's no way he's going to let his previous bad judgement with regard to beverages interfere with his duty. Not on a day as important as this.

Chris has met Lieutenant Commander Upjohn once before, but only briefly, and he's looking forward to getting to know her better. She seems only too happy to show him around the engineering department, and during the ensuing tour Chris learns that she has both an excellent grasp of warp core mechanics and a tendency to ramble.

Other than that, though, everything seems to be going well, and he's about to move on and head for communications when Upjohn suggests a quick look at one of the newly renovated Jefferies tubes.

Chris follows her up the tube, making a note to stop by his quarters before he moves on to communications, as his headache is really starting to bother him. He's about halfway up when a wave of nausea washes over him, followed by a rush of dizzy heat. He tries to push past it, but his hand slips on the rungs and then he's falling, the floor coming up to meet him with a crack.

Pain explodes across his body as he hits the ground, and he lies there stunned for a moment, trying to figure out where exactly he's injured. Upjohn scrambles hastily out of the Jefferies tube and kneels beside him, resting a hand gently on his shoulder. "Don't move, Captain," she tells him, before turning to a nearby ensign and ordering, "Call sickbay. Tell them the captain fell in engineering and is injured but conscious."

The ensign dashes off, and Upjohn turns her attention back to him. "Did you hit your head?"

"I don't think so," Chris tells her. "I just... lost my grip." He feels strange, even aside from the pain; hot and cold, dizzy and-

His stomach lurches, and he rolls to the side and is sick.

"Okay," Upjohn says in a soothing tone, laying a hand on his shoulder to steady him. "You're okay, the medics will be here soon."

After a few moments the nausea passes enough for Chris to roll back onto his back. His right ankle is in agony, and his right arm and hip aren't much better. His back and head feel all right, and he isn't having any trouble breathing, so he probably isn't too badly injured, but he'd be shocked if there isn't a stay in sickbay in his future. *And I didn't even get to finish my first day...*

Doctor Boyce appears at that point and begins taking scans and barking orders. "Ankle's broken – not compound thankfully. Neck and spine look fine, no signs of concussion. Touch of fever, unlikely to be from the fall, I'll have to check that."

He turns to Chris, addressing him for the first time. "Do you know what happened?"

"Upjohn wanted to show me something in the Jefferies tube, and I got dizzy suddenly and lost my grip."

Boyce shakes his head, glancing down at his tricorder. "You've been captain for all of four hours and you've already managed to injure yourself. That has to be some kind of record. Come on, let's get you to sickbay."

\*

"Right," Boyce says, once he's finished running scans. "Aside from the broken ankle you've got a sprained wrist, multiple bruises, and a cracked bone in your foot." He fixes Chris with a look and adds, "You're also in the early stages of Retivian fever."

"Retivian fever?" Chris asks. Painkillers have dulled the ache from his injuries, but there's a fuzziness in his mind making it hard to think.

"You said you were feeling dizzy before you fell?" Chris nods, and he continues, "Well, vertigo is one of the symptoms. Along with fever, headache, fatigue, nausea and vomiting... any of this sound familiar?"

Chris frowns, the day's events taking on a new shape in his mind. "I thought it was just a hangover."

"A hangover. After you had all of about three drinks and spent most of the night sipping ice water?"

Chris shrugs, wincing when it aggravates his bruises. "I figured I was just getting older. Can't hold my drink as well as I used to."

Boyce snorts. "Yes, thirty-seven, you're practically ancient." He consults his tricorder and adds, "It should pass in a couple of days. Which, as it happens, is also about how long it'll take your ankle to heal. You'll have to be careful with it for a week or so after that, though, which means no climbing around in Jefferies tubes."

"Don't worry," Chris tells him. "I'm in no hurry to try that again." He sighs and settles back against the bed. "I wish I could've finished my tour of the ship, though. I barely made it halfway."

"Pity you didn't start with sickbay," Boyce says. "We could've avoided all this."

Chris huffs a laugh, shaking his head. "I'll bear that in mind for next time," he says. "Can you call Una? I should probably tell her she'll be taking command earlier than she thought."

Boyce crosses to the intercom and Chris stares down at the bone-knitter encircling his right ankle, imagining the look on Una's face when she finds out what happened.

*Hell of a first day*, he thinks, rubbing his good hand over his face tiredly. *But I guess there's nowhere to go but up.*

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