

Head and Heart

Posted originally on the [Ad Astra :: Star Trek Fanfiction Archive](http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/988) at <http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/988>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	Gen
Fandom:	Star Trek: The Original Series
Character:	Original Character(s) , Ensemble Cast - TOS
Additional Tags:	Mission Fic , Vampires , Friendship
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2023-09-30 Words: 2,689 Chapters: 1/1

Head and Heart

by [lah_mrh](#)

Summary

A routine mission becomes less routine when one of the crew is attacked and begins to crave blood.

Notes

Written for Silent_So_Long in the 2016 Star Trek Friendshipfest exchange. Originally posted on AO3.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Lieutenant Thompson hums to himself as he makes his way through the woods, attention fixed on his tricorder. This planet is beautiful, green and lush, the exact kind of place he joined Starfleet to see.

It's warm, but not too warm, and the glimpses of the sky he sees through the thick foliage show clouds gathering. Hopefully no storms will hit before they make it back to the Enterprise.

He's so focused on taking readings that the sudden noise makes him jump. He looks up to see a woman standing in front of him, wearing a long white dress. She is beautiful, with long dark hair and snow white skin, and he stares at her, captivated.

She smiles at him, and he glances down, embarrassed. Something catches his attention, and he frowns, fiddling with the buttons on his tricorder. It seems to be working, picking up the birds in the trees and the fish in a nearby stream, but the woman in front of him doesn't register at all.

He glances up to see that she has moved closer, now barely an arm's length away. She says something in a language he doesn't understand, reaching out to stroke his face gently. Then, in one motion, she steps forwards, pulls down his collar, and sinks her teeth into his neck.

* * *

The next thing Thompson knows, he is lying on the ground, tricorder by his side, and the woman is gone. There's a pain in his neck, and he touches it gingerly. *Did that really happen?*

His communicator chirps as he struggles to his feet, and he flicks it open without thinking. "Thompson here."

"Mister Thompson," Spock's voice rings out. "Please return to base and prepare to be beamed up."

"On my way," Thompson replies.

He scans the area around him carefully, but there's no sign of the woman. With a sigh, he turns and begins heading back.

The pain in his neck ebbs quickly, until it is gone. Still, he pulls his collar up a little as he approaches the others. Whatever happened to him out there, it feels like he should keep it to himself.

Captain Kirk greets him with a smile. "Are you all right, Lieutenant?" he asks. "You seem pale."

"I'm fine, sir," Thompson replies, resisting the urge to pull up his collar again. "Just fine."

* * *

Back on the ship, he retreats to his quarters and locks himself in the bathroom before nervously pulling down his shirt collar to see the damage.

He's half-convinced himself that the whole thing was some kind of hallucination, but his heart plummets when he sees the two small holes just above his collarbone. They hurt a little when he presses on them, but they don't seem to be bleeding.

The thought of going to sickbay crosses his mind, but is swiftly dismissed. It's a minor injury. He'll be fine.

Instead, he pulls his collar up again and decides to visit the mess hall. He's so *thirsty* all of a sudden.

* * * * *

"Chess tonight?" Kirk asks, as he and Spock place their orders at the food synthesiser. At this time of day, the mess hall is almost empty, with only a few people scattered around.

To his disappointment, Spock shakes his head. "Perhaps another time," he says. "I will be spending this evening in the lab."

"Well, don't work too hard," Kirk tells him with a smile. He's about to say more, but is interrupted by a gasp from a nearby table. He looks over to see Yeoman Martinez holding her hand in pain.

"Are you all right, Yeoman?" he asks.

She nods. "Yes, sir. Just cut my finger." Kirk sees a flash of red on her skin as she wraps a tissue around the wound. "It's not deep, though. I'll be fine."

"You're bleeding."

Startled, Kirk looks up to see Lieutenant Thompson standing by the table, staring at Martinez's finger.

Martinez smiles, a little awkwardly. "I'm fine, really. It's nothing."

Thompson doesn't react to the words. Kirk isn't sure he even heard them. "The smell," he murmurs, then, with alarming speed, shoots out an arm and grips Martinez's hand, bringing it to his mouth.

"What are you doing?" Martinez asks. "Stop!" Kirk steps forwards, intending to intervene, but is interrupted by Martinez's sudden scream. In one motion, she reaches into her uniform and pulls out a cross, brandishing it in Thompson's face. He rears back, dropping her hand, then turns and bolts out of the room.

Martinez holds out the cross for a moment longer, before dropping it against her chest. "He..." she says, sounding in shock. "His teeth..."

"What?" Kirk asks. "What did you see?"

She turns to him, eyes still wide. "His teeth," she repeats. "They were all wrong. The fangs were huge, like a cat's. And his eyes were *red*. It was horrible."

She touches the cross around her neck and murmurs something that sounds like a prayer.

Kirk rests a hand on her shoulder briefly before striding over to the intercom. "Kirk to Security. There has been an incident in Mess Hall 1. I want Lieutenant Thompson found and brought to sickbay as soon as possible."

"Aye, Captain," comes the response, and Kirk breaks the connection before heading back to where Martinez is sitting.

"We'll find him, don't worry," he says with a comforting smile.

She nods slowly, still fiddling with her necklace. Kirk frowns, remembering how Thompson lunged back when she brandished it. "Do you have any more of those?"

"You mean my necklace?" she asks, looking confused. "Yes, a few. Do you want me to get them?"

Kirk nods. "If you wouldn't mind."

The intercom whistles, and Kirk hurries over. "Kirk here."

"Giotto, sir. We've found Thompson. He's in sickbay."

* * *

When Kirk arrives in sickbay, Spock in tow, he finds Thompson strapped to a bed, unconscious, with guards watching him. His shirt is stained with blood.

"What happened?" Kirk asks. "Did he hurt someone?" He glances around, but aside from Thompson the sickbay is empty of patients.

McCoy appears at his shoulder. "No, but he gave it a good try." He jerks his head at the door to the store cupboard. "He got into the stored blood. Ripped a bag open with his teeth like an animal. I've never seen anything like it." He shakes his head. "Security came, and when they tried to stop him he attacked them. Took three shots from a phaser to finally take him down." He fixes his gaze on Kirk. "What the hell happened on that planet?"

"I wish I knew," Kirk says, frowning. "You say he was drinking the blood?"

"That's right," McCoy replies. "Like it was water and he was dying of thirst."

"Yeoman Martinez was attacked after she cut her finger," Spock puts in. "It is unlikely to be a coincidence."

"What about his eyes?" Kirk presses. "And his teeth? You said he bit the bag open."

McCoy frowns. "I didn't get a good look, but his teeth did seem a little strange. And come to think of it, he shouldn't have been able to bite through one of those bags. They're reinforced, to avoid damage."

An odd idea begins to spark in Kirk's mind, but he ignores it for the moment. "Have you examined him?"

"I'm just about to."

He moves off, and Kirk turns to Spock. "Ideas, Spock?"

"It would seem that something happened to Mister Thompson while we were down on the planet. What, however, remains to be seen."

They watch as McCoy takes readings, a frown growing between his eyes. "This isn't right," he murmurs.

"What?" Kirk asks.

McCoy looks up, still frowning. "His readings are all wrong. His pulse and blood pressure are almost non-existent, but his brainwaves are all over the place." He glances down at his scanner again, then reaches out and gently pulls down Thompson's collar, revealing two small holes in his neck.

"A bite mark," Kirk says, his idea from before suddenly seeming much less ridiculous.

McCoy gives him a sharp look. "Oh, no," he replies. "You can't be thinking what I think you're thinking."

"I'm not thinking anything," Kirk lies. "But let's look at the facts. Thompson gets bitten on the neck by an unknown being, immediately begins craving blood, and is physically repelled by a yeoman's cross pendant. You can't deny there's a pattern there."

"Yes, but-" McCoy seems momentarily lost for words. "You really think there are *vampires* hanging out on the planet below? That's crazy!"

"Crazier than Apollo? Or the spirit of Jack the Ripper?" Kirk shakes his head. "I'm just saying we shouldn't rule anything out."

"The captain is right," Spock puts in, surprising both of them. "All legends come from somewhere. Perhaps this one has a grain of truth to it."

"All right," McCoy says, still clearly unconvinced. "Let's say, for argument's sake, that Thompson *is* a vampire. What are we supposed to do, stake him?"

"If necessary," Kirk says. "But right now I'll settle for keeping him under sedation while we go back down to the planet." He frowns and adds, "I wonder if Martinez has gotten those pendants yet. Come on, Spock."

With that he heads out of sickbay, trusting Spock to follow.

As it turns out, they're in luck. They're halfway down the corridor when the turbolift doors open and Martinez appears. "I brought as many as I could find," she says, holding out a handful of chain and metal.

Kirk nods, taking the offered chains. "Thank you, Yeoman. Good work."

She smiles briefly, then looks past him at the door to sickbay. "Is he in there?" she asks, sounding a little nervous.

"Yes," Kirk says, "but he's strapped down and under guard. You're perfectly safe."

"Do you know what's wrong with him?"

"Not currently," Spock puts in. "We believe it may have something to do with the planet he was exploring."

"We're still investigating," Kirk adds. "We'll return your necklaces when we're finished."

Martinez nods, then turns to leave. Kirk watches until she re-enters the turbolift, then turns his attention to the pendants in his hand. Unravelling them gives him four separate necklaces, all with different sized crosses. He considers them for a moment, then picks out a silver cross on a thick chain and pulls it over his head.

"Mister Spock?" he offers, holding out the rest of the chains. Spock raises an eyebrow but obediently picks out a necklace and dons it before tucking it into his shirt.

Kirk looks down at the two pendants remaining, then walks over to the intercom. "Kirk to Bridge. Mister Spock and I are beaming back down to the planet. Please have two members of security meet us in the transporter room."

He waits long enough to hear confirmation of his order, then cuts the connection and heads for the turbolift. "Come on, Spock, we've got work to do."

* * *

They materialise at the same spot they beamed down to before. The security personnel seem confused at being asked to wear crosses around

their necks, but they oblige with minimum fuss, and Kirk feels cautiously optimistic as he looks around.

"He came from that direction," he says, gesturing towards the woods nearby. "Let's go."

The four of them walk for about half a kilometre, but don't see anything other than trees and grass. "Anything?" Kirk asks Spock, who is studying his tricorder.

"Nothing out of the ordinary," Spock replies. They walk for a little longer before Spock stops suddenly, fiddling with the dials on the tricorder.

"What is it?" Kirk asks. "Are you picking something up?"

"I recorded a blip," Spock replies. "Only momentary, but it appeared to be a life sign."

Kirk glances around, but sees nothing. "Can you tell where it came from?"

Spock shakes his head.

"All right," Kirk orders, "everyone spread out. Keep your eyes peeled, and stun anything that moves."

The security men scatter, and he begins heading forwards again, hearing Spock fall into place behind him.

The woman seems to appear from nowhere, between one blink and the next. She smiles at him, then shoves him aside before grabbing Spock by the shirt and *throwing* him against a tree a few metres away. Spock falls to the ground unconscious, and Kirk's heart begins to pound.

Hastily he goes for his phaser, but before he can even touch it the woman shoots out a hand and swats both his phaser and communicator to the ground. She shakes her head, still smiling, then opens her mouth, revealing a pair of long, sharp fangs of exactly the kind that injured Thompson.

She steps forwards and Kirk scrambles for the cross around his neck. He brandishes it at her, but the effect he saw with Thompson is nowhere to be found. Without even pausing, she tears it from his neck and throws it away, then presses him back against the nearest tree, stroking his face and mumbling something in an unknown language.

Kirk tries to fight, to resist, to escape, but she's much stronger than he is, and all his attempts are in vain. His hands scrabble at the tree behind, looking for something, anything, he can use as a weapon, but he comes up empty.

Help me, Spock, he thinks, as the woman's teeth lower towards his neck, but there is no response. His only hope is that, whatever happens, Spock and McCoy will find a way to fix it. They always do.

The woman suddenly pulls back, looking confused, just as Kirk's scrambling hands find a branch. Working on instinct, he pulls off the largest twig he can reach and stabs it at the woman, catching her directly in the chest.

For a moment she looks stunned, then she collapses to the ground, mummifying before his eyes. Kirk watches until she's nothing more than a pile of bones and skin on the ground, then hurries over to check on Spock.

Fortunately, Spock is already waking up when he gets there, one hand rubbing his head. "Are you all right, Captain?" he asks, and Kirk smiles.

"Shouldn't I be asking you that?" he asks. "You hit that tree pretty hard."

"There is a chance I may have a concussion," Spock admits. "But I am stable for the moment." He glances around before his gaze falls on what remains of their assailant. "Our vampire, I assume?"

Kirk nods. "Good thing the wood worked, because the cross didn't even slow her down." He frowns, remembering. "Something did, though. She was going to bite me, and then she just... paused, like she changed her mind. It's what gave me the chance to kill her."

Spock tilts his head in thought, frowning. "Perhaps it is not the object that repels, but the meaning behind it. Yeoman Martinez is religious, is she not?"

Kirk nods. "Catholic, I think. Which explains the crosses."

"Indeed," Spock replies. "To Yeoman Martinez, the cross is a symbol of her faith. To you, who are not religious, it is merely a cross."

Kirk frowns, mulling that over. "You think that she was repelled by faith?"

"It is a theory. The question, Captain, would be what you have faith in."

The answer is obvious, breaking over him like a wave. "You," Kirk replies. "And Bones. That's what I was thinking of when she attacked. That, no matter what, the two of you would save me."

He hears a communicator chirp, and follows the noise to find it sitting in a pile of leaves along with his phaser. "Kirk here."

"McCoy here. Anything happen down there?"

Kirk frowns. "Why? Is Thompson okay?"

"All of his vitals suddenly went back to normal, just like that. Whatever you did, Jim... it worked."

"That's good to hear," Kirk says. "I'll explain everything when we beam up. Kirk out."

"In lore," Spock begins, "there was a theory that killing the head vampire would release all of those he or she had turned, either by killing them, or curing them."

"Luckily for Thompson, it was the latter," Kirk replies. "But there's still one problem left to solve."

"Indeed?" Spock asks. "What is that?"

"How on Earth am I going to explain all this to Command?"

End Notes

The idea of vampires being repelled by faith (rather than any physical object) isn't mine, it's used in the Doctor Who episode "The Curse of Fenric".

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