

Intervention

Posted originally on the [Ad Astra :: Star Trek Fanfiction Archive](http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/991) at <http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/991>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	Gen
Fandom:	Star Trek: Voyager , Star Trek: Tesseract
Character:	Icheb , John Quigley , Maren O'Connor , Kathryn Janeway
Additional Tags:	Adult Language
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2023-10-03 Words: 1,978 Chapters: 1/1

Intervention

by [kes7](#)

Summary

It's 2379, and Cadet 3rd-Class John Quigley's Starfleet career is about to end before it begins ... until help arrives from an unexpected source.

Sometimes it's good to have friends -- or friends-of-friends -- in high places.

(Rated T for language.)

Fall 2379 -- Earth

It was October 20, 2379 -- the day of my second disciplinary hearing in as many years at Starfleet Academy. I felt completely numb. After putting two cadets in the infirmary with fairly serious injuries using nothing but my fists and my seemingly uncontrollable anger, I was sure my days as a Starfleet cadet were finished.

The first time I almost got kicked out of school, it was for breaking Freddie Jensen's rather prominent nose in the replimat plebe year. Maren had recently started dating Icheb -- the lone ex-Borg at Starfleet Academy -- and somehow, word had gotten out. Half the school was scandalized by it. A human woman dating a former drone? You can imagine the tone of the nasty jokes people made, to say nothing of the crueler, non-joking stuff. I remember I went to lunch with her one day, and Freddie stood there in line behind us at the replimat saying just the most vile stuff about Maren, loud enough for everyone to hear. I still wanted her so badly back then, but more than that, she was my friend. It pissed me off to hear him saying that stuff, and the scornful laughter of the other cadets and the angry, embarrassed flush on Maren's cheeks was just too much to handle. I turned around and decked Freddie, hard.

It was my first offense. Everyone knew Freddie was an ass. They put me on disciplinary probation. I managed to get through the rest of the year only *threatening* violence when people said ugly things to Maren. And somewhere along the way, Icheb became my friend. Despite my jealousy that he was dating the girl I wanted, I couldn't help but like the guy. Eventually, even the jealousy mostly faded. After all, there were plenty of other girls in San Francisco. I'm pretty sure I dated most of them.

Summer came and went, and I'd hoped everyone would sort of forget they hated those two. Icheb said my optimism was naïve. As was usually the case with Icheb, he was right. The abuse didn't let up. If anything, it was worse. Which led me to this second, closed-door hearing, and the likely end of my Starfleet career -- before it had even gotten started.

You know, I had actually made my peace with it, in a way. I had enough education, training and experience now to be an attractive candidate for a lot of different interesting off-world opportunities. And honestly, I had no regrets about giving Eric Atherton and Vinqui Rothi *exactly* what they both deserved. In fact, my only real regret was that that weasel Freddie Jensen had managed to scurry away while I was fighting the other two.

Okay, maybe that wasn't my *only* regret. There was the whole loss-of-my-Starfleet-aspirations thing, and I was really going to miss Maren and Icheb a lot. But truthfully, I also knew I wasn't anything like them -- I wasn't a genius, I wasn't a standout. In the end, I managed to convince myself that it was possible getting kicked out might actually be for the best. Perhaps this was the universe's way of saving me from a long, mediocre career in transporter control or something.

So I sat there on the bench outside the meeting chamber, waiting to be called in, quietly contemplating my future under the bright autumn sunshine that filtered through the sweeping skylights above my head and scattered intricate patterns across the gleaming concrete floor. Other than the occasional wandering aide, I was completely alone.

Then suddenly, I wasn't alone anymore.

At the sound of the low female voice calling my name, I shot to my feet immediately. After all, when you're a cadet, Admiralty means you

stand at attention.

I hadn't known she was coming. Not for the first time, I noticed that I absolutely dwarfed her. Admiral Kathryn Janeway is at least a foot shorter than I am; nonetheless, she scared the shit out of me on a good day. Today, she looked extra pissed. ... at *me*. I tried not to look as terrified as I suddenly was. *What is she doing here?* I wondered.

"Not a word out of you, Mr. Quigley," she said firmly. "Follow me." I silently, unquestioningly followed her command. What else could I do? She led me into an empty meeting room and over the next twenty minutes, proceeded to give me the scolding of a lifetime.

Then she saved my career.

I remember I sat quietly while Admiral Janeway made all the right arguments to the Academy disciplinary review board. She talked about how there was a longstanding culture of hostility toward Icheb – Starfleet's only ex-Borg cadet -- that they had failed to address. How their refusal to adequately deal with the problem had led to it growing worse each year. How they seemed to be playing favorites, letting me take the fall for my behavior while the well-connected Admiral's son who tormented Icheb constantly got off with little more than a lecture. She went on for almost thirty minutes, and she concluded by asking them to grant me leniency – *as a personal favor to her*. I was floored. Why did she care so much what happened to me? Even so, when she was done, I was sure it hadn't made a difference.

I have never been so grateful to be wrong.

The board put me on probation – again – but I was still a Starfleet cadet. I was so relieved I could barely speak, but I managed to stammer out my "Thank you, sirs" and promises of good behavior, and I meant every word of it. I swore to myself that this marked a new era in the life of John Quigley – an era of self-control and maturity I had heretofore believed impossible. I'd do whatever it took to achieve it – hell, I'd even go take meditation classes at the Vulcan embassy if I had to. The fact was, I was being given not a second chance, but an unthinkable *third* chance, here – and I wasn't about to waste it.

After the hearing ended, Admiral Janeway found me again and pulled me aside. Still looking pretty stern, she told me to stay out of trouble. But she also said she believed I'd make a fine officer one day if I could manage to develop a little self-control, and what was more, I could tell she actually meant it. I've never forgotten that. Then she hugged me and headed for the transporters. It was all sort of surreal.

Then, right after she left, I spotted Icheb.

He was waiting in the corridor. Back then, he had a way of sort of blending into his surroundings whenever he felt the need, which was often. This was clearly one of those times. He was standing against the wall next to a potted Bolian palm, kind of in the shadows, but he stepped forward when he saw me coming.

I don't know why it took me so long to put two and two together, but that was the moment I finally realized he had *asked* Janeway to step in. It kind of blew me away.

See, Icheb's got connections, but he doesn't really use them. He likes his achievements to be his own. And when he's in trouble, he's slow to call on his friends for assistance. Not that he gets in trouble often. But even with the whole bullying thing, he avoided telling anyone from *Voyager* what was going on. He didn't want them to worry.

So the fact that he told them what had happened – that he persuaded Admiral Kathryn fucking Janeway to come and personally save my ass – was huge. I suddenly didn't know what to say. Up to that point, he had mostly just been Maren's boyfriend. I mean, I liked him a lot, and considered him a friend, but it was always kind of hard to tell with Icheb whether that feeling went both ways. I guess now I knew. As I approached him, I gave him a sheepish grin.

"Congratulations," he said with a small smile. He offered his hand to shake, and I took it. I kind of wanted to hug him, but I didn't – I remember he still wasn't really comfortable being touched back then, unless your name happened to be Maren O'Connor.

"You called her," I said.

Icheb shrugged lightly and didn't reply.

"Thanks," I said sincerely. "She just saved my career."

Icheb shook his head. "No, she didn't," he said seriously. "*You* have to do that. She simply gave you the opportunity."

I realized he was right. I was still on probation, and all the problems were still there. People were still going to be cruel to my two best friends, I still had a temper I couldn't control, and I had almost three years left before graduation made me an officer. In truth, I had a lot of work to do. Still ... none of it changed the fact that he had called in the cavalry for me, something he had never done for himself. I was really pretty moved.

"I know," I said. "But it means a lot to me that you would call in a favor like that for me. Especially when you told me over and over again to ignore those guys and I didn't."

"You would have done the same for me," he pointed out. "And what you did, you did for me," he added. "I wouldn't have recommended that course of action, but I appreciate the sentiment behind it."

I grinned at him. It wasn't 'thank you,' but it was close enough. He smiled back – a pretty rare sight, all told – and together, we headed for the enormous double doors that led out of the Commandant's office building. I felt giddy with anticipation – like my dreams were once again within reach.

"Just once, I'd like to see you take one of them down," I said, only half-joking, as we stepped out into the unusual San Francisco sunshine.

“See what Borg-enhanced punches do to Atherton’s face.”

Icheb shot me a sidelong glance as we descended the steps in front of the Commandant’s building. “Striking a human in the face is an inefficient method of incapacitation. There are many more vulnerable targets on the human body for a well-placed punch, as well as other more effective methods of neutralization, such as the Vulcan nerve pinch.” A small smirk played at his lips, and I knew he was toying with me. His know-it-all Borg tendencies were kind of a running joke between us by this point.

“But none of them are more satisfying than a good old-fashioned decking,” I countered with a grin.

Icheb’s combadge chirped, and Maren O’Connor’s voice said, “O’Connor to Icheb.”

Icheb glanced over at me. “She wants to know what happened. She’s stuck in the engineering lab working on a project. She’s been contacting me all afternoon,” he explained, and tapped his badge. “Icheb here.”

“Did you find out anything yet?” She sounded anxious.

“I’m with John now,” Icheb replied. “He’s on probation, but he was not expelled.”

Maren’s relieved squeal put a smile on my face. It was nice to know she was excited I was staying. “Get ready to go out tonight, both of you,” she said happily. “We need to celebrate this.”

Icheb looked over at me and I nodded. “I’m up for anything ... except fighting,” I said, with a wry smirk.

He smiled back. “Understood,” he replied, with an approving nod, and tapped his badge again to answer Maren. “Yes, let’s go celebrate,” he told her.

“Good,” she said. “Let’s meet at my room at 1800 hours. Tell J.Q. I’m glad he’s staying!” she added, seemingly as an afterthought.

“He can hear you,” Icheb pointed out.

I just smiled and shook my head. “Just tell her I’m glad I’m staying, too.”

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!