

Where Man Goes - Personal Log of Christopher Pike

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by [Startrekandberryrolls](#)

Summary

They've been called to go clean up a genocide.

The thing about Ensign Chin-Riley is...

You don't think she's gonna be good with kids. You really don't.

I've known her for maybe five days now, it's hard to tell, the shit we've seen here has been messing with my perception of life. Of time.

Truth was I thought she was Vulcan; no I'm not joking. She does her eyebrows weird.

It was this whole thing; she pulled her hair back to go kick Kodos' ass and I did a physical double take when her ears weren't pointed.

I also asked if there'd been a transporter accident whilst gesturing at her face wildly and almost got slapped. I like her.

But-

It's- it's bad here. It's really bad. We were in the worst of it and- I'm not forgetting this. Ever. I'm not forgetting any of this. It's gonna haunt me. I can't stop hearing it. Smelling it. Feeling the heat.

Truth is, we weren't a rescue division. We were a recovery crew. Chin-Riley and I drew the short straw. Genetic sampling (which is hard when the bodies are ash, you know), tagging and some fucked up triage that included putting a sorry bastard out of their agonizing misery.

She did that for me. The ensign, I mean. I couldn't pull the trigger; my vision went blurry. That's really fucking embarrassing, isn't it? That I was too selfish to do the right thing.

Space is... you don't come out here to have blood on your hands. You know it'll happen someday but you think it'll be the entrails of the bad guys. Not some sorry, burned, bashed up kid with half his body blown away.

Couldn't have been more than thirteen and he'd been begging me. Pleading with me to grow some balls and end it.

It's... so much worse than we thought. Did I do the right thing? Did she?

There's nothing 'right' here. We've passed the point of morality. Now we're just surviving. That's what I've decided.

You can't find sense in inherent senselessness. In suffering.

That's the thing. We all come up here- the stars, I mean, to see life. To do the right thing.

The right thing isn't supposed to be mercy killings.

And then we found the kids.

I wish there'd been more left than two. Kevin Riley and James Kirk were their names. And they were alive. I'm never forgetting those names. Those faces. Their shaky, emaciated frames. Surviving.

Thing is, before this I'd have thought I was a good 'kids kind of guy'. But what do you say to the survivors of a genocide?

Cause these aren't kids anymore. That time of their lives has already passed. Been stolen away.

And Ensign Chin-Riley just started passing around mangos. I don't know where they came from- the replicator can't do mangos. But these were whole, uncut mangoes. Why does she just carry them in her go bag like that? She's an interesting lady.

Why the fuck were we eating mangoes? Why was I brought to tears over a mango?

Maybe we were all just grieving. It's something that doesn't always happen... logically.

Sometimes it happens on the floor of a cave with mango juice dripping down your chin and ash in the air and tears in your eyes as two kids try to decide whether you're trustworthy enough to follow to salvation or not. Like they've been tricked one too many times.

Yeah. I'm gonna see Tarsus every time I close my eyes.

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