

Third officer

Pilot: and that is why I hate most super hero movies, because they are Constantly retelling their origin stories.

Navigator: I don't see the problem. Every new generation needs heroes, and heroes have to come from somewhere.

P: but it's the same stories over and over again!

N: that younger people have not seen. Would you want to come in to the middle of a conversation not knowing the important questions?

P: in person? no that's rude...

N: So why is it ok to do it in a movie?

P: Because it's all out there if you just look for it. Take the Batguy for instance

N: Con, do you agree with the Pilot here?

Third Officer sips coffee before answering: why drag me in to this?

N: Because the pilot here isn't going to listen to me. You're the con, and an officer.

3rd: you out rank him...

P snorts: yeah, by two hours.

N: but it still counts

P: you're 2 months younger than I am!

N: and two hours more senior, your point?

P: My point is they don't have to constantly retell origin stories!

N: why not? Even if they are doing a period piece, a newer and more up to date story adds to the history

P: but they are constantly changing the essentials to fit the new crap, changing stuff that shouldn't be changed, and ruining a perfectly good story for the sake of "newness". Help me out Con!

3rd sips his coffee: I do not know why you are imploring me. I happen to agree with Nav here... Mostly

N: Mostly?

3rd refills his coffee at the spigot next to the Command Chair: yeah, mostly. When the remake is well done, even if it changes cannon, it adds to the history of the universe. Brings in new viewers and freshens the story for the next generation.

P: but most of them Aren't being well done. That's mostly my point. Big explosions and gratuitous sex scenes don't add to the history

N: BUT it does bring in younger blood, you have to admit that...

P snorts: I have to admit nothing.

N snickers and 3rd chuckles

P: what? You don't think I would admit if I were wrong?

3rd rolling his eyes: when have you ever been wrong to need to admit it?

P: SEE?

N: I think he's making fun of you.

P looks back and forth: think so?

N: I'm pretty sure, but you might wanna ask him, just in case.

P looks at 3rd: I admit nothing, so you are free to interpret that as you please.

P glowers as 3rd sips more coffee: ok, lemme rephrase my argument

N: Please don't

P: what if every time we sat down on the dog-watch I had to retell my origin story? The basic essentials over and over again, only changing bits to make them more exiting once in a while?

N and 3rd consider, 3rd speaks: I would need to know your origin, why? You are the pilot on an interstellar warship. I know your qualifications, competence, and demeanor during drills and routine jumps. What more do I, as an officer of the watch, need to know about you?

P scowls: well....from a strictly professional standpoint I concede the point. But what if this was a story and you open the page in the middle of a conversation?

3rd: I am not a novelist. my duties take up too much of my very valuable time to waste on such a mundane pursuit.

N: Kyle, just admit that the Con isn't interested in your personal history because it's not germane to his duties...

3rd slurps his coffee just to make a point.

P-Kyle glares from one to the other.

N: we've been on this shift for months now. I know more about you than most other pilots I've served with. Tell me something I Don't know.

P-kyle thinks: my mother made me take ballet.

3rd almost spits his coffee out, coughs

N looks at P: really? Ballet,whatever for?

P-Kyle blushes: she thought I was very graceful when I was little

N: looks like you grew out of that. I've seen you trip on your own shadow.

N grins hugely, P pouts: Not funny, distracted walking doesn't count. now you tell something about your background that we don't know...

N thinks about it for a minute: Not ballet.

P: Not ballet

3rd sips more coffee as N answers after a moments reflection: I used to go camping in the Wasatch mountains with my dad. We'd sit on a peak overlooking Yard Moose Mountain and just listen to the wind for hours. Never saying a word.

P: wow, earth? I didn't know you were from there.

N shrugs: there's a lot you don't know about me,mostly because you are always talking and hardly ever listen...

P:Huh?

3rd chokes on his coffee as P smiles and bows in his seat. P and N look to3rd

3rd: Oh no, do not look at me, I am just standing my watch listening to you two argue about minutia.

P: oh come on. We shared.

3rd: and if you jumped off a bridge would you expect me to follow you down? I think not.

N: ok, yeah. I kinda see your point. but tell us something else. Not work related. like, why'd you join the Navy?

P looks from N to 3rd: yeah, that would be interesting

3rd sips coffee again,glances from one to another: I did not join the navy, I was hatched as an ensign at OCS, just like all junior officers are.

P and N snorts, P-kyle says: oh come on.

N: one tidbit couldn't hurt

3rd makes a face like one tidbit could kill.

N: what about your mother? Surely that couldn't hurt?

3rd makes a face like it did hurt: she was... She died when I was little.

P: oh

N: I am so sorry

3rd waves them to silence with his again empty coffee cup. He refills it before continuing: my father and I were never really close. he was always busy. Work. My mother. She was the most beautiful woman I have ever seen...and I am not just saying that because I was her son.

P: well, you didn't get that from her, so I guess

N slaps his knee to shut P up.

3rd: my older brother is being groomed to... take over the family business. we... never really got along before my mothers death. In many ways it brought us closer even while shoving a wedge between us.

Mother was the glue that held us together. But when it became clear that I would not have a place in...the business...I left.

P and N look at each other, N speaks: have you been home since?

3rd shakes his head, sips coffee: no.

P: why not? Big shot Navy officer, I bet your dad would be glad to see you!

3rd shakes head, N asks: why not? You part on bad terms?

3rd : kind of. The, My father. It is not that he's against the navy, just that he does not think I need to put my life on the line for the realm. "that is what the Navy is for, let them protect the family. You need to do something IMPORTANT." he always says. Important. Like serving in the navy and protecting his people is not important enough for his off-spring. <sips coffee> at least not his firstborn, anyway.

P and N look at each other, then 3rd. N speaks: wow. I honestly believe that's the most I have ever heard you say on one shift that wasn't duty related.

P: yeah, and I can see it's a sore spot for you.

3rd: and I will thank you kindly to never bring it up again. Origin story complete.

3rd checks the ships chronometer: Position and station checks, please.

XO walks onto the bridge: how's the ride tonight?

3rd : on course and on time. Nothing to report, Sir. It has been a quite watch.

XO looks at P and then N: quite? With these two yammerheads on the watch? Please.

3rd and XO have a good chuckle, as XO gets himself a coffee: you didn't drink all the coffee again, did you Algernon?

N and P say at the same time: Algernon?

3rd sighs: Alphonso Algernon Akerman. I HATE being called Alphonso, or Algernon. I prefer Allen. That at least sounds average.

P: Tripple A?

N looks at P-kyle: Trip?

P nods: Trip.

3rd-Trip: Not while we are on duty you will not...

XO salutes: Trip, I stand ready to relieve you.

3rd-Trip stands and returns the salute: I stand relieved.

Bridge crew swap with their relief and leave. Trip goes to his cabin to get a little shut-eye before his next watch. Sits down at desk and picks up the holo-image of his car. He places a finger at the lower right of the image and it changes to a picture of the Emperor and his two sons. 3rd stares at the picture for a long time till a hand reaches around him and takes the picture.

3rd bolts to his feet, spinning around to confront the person: Captain? What are you doing in here?

Capt looks from the picture to 3rd: I met him once, the Emperor. Did you know that?

3rd: Sir, no sir.

Capt: just before we sailed.

3rd swallows: Sir.

Capt: do you know what he said to me, Lieutenant?

3rd stiffly: Sir, no sir.

Capt glares: he said 'Bring him back to me in one piece.' that's it. I stood there for 10 minutes while he tried to find the right words, and that was all he said.

Capt looks at the pic again: I was on the Trafalgar escorting your mother.

3rd: I did not know that, Sir.

Capt: no reason you should. The bandits used a pirate point.

3rd thought about that, and its implications: I was not told. I was only 6 at the time, Sir.

Capt nodded: and your older brother was already 10 years old, I remember. I wanted to be there for her funeral, but I and most of the crew were still in the Halaran system. We were told that we would not be

welcome...

3rd: because they claimed the Trafalgar failed to keep the pirates at bay. I read the report, Sir
capt: do you agree with the allegations in the report, son?

3rd: No Sir. The Trafalgar acted in Accordance to Navy doctrine, and her crew performed above and beyond the call of duty, Sir. I did not know that you had been aboard her.

Capt smiles and raises and eyebrow: I was the third officer.

3rd thinks about that: both the captain of the Trafalgar and the XO were killed in the opening salvos...
you fought the ship, sir?

Capt nods: that I did.

Capt looks back at the picture for a while, then swipes left to bring back the car image. The picture rev's and idles for a minute before falling silent again: yours?

3rd: no sir. just a picture I found on the net. I kind of like it, and it explains why I do not have a significant other back home.

Capt: Girlfriend.

3rd: yes sir. Girlfriend.

Capt hands the pic back: Carry on Lieutenant.

3rd: Aye, Sir.

Capt turns before opening the door: Oh, just for the record... no one else knows.

3rd: Sir?

Capt: who you really are, your highness.

3rd blushes: thank you sir. I prefer to keep it that way.

Capt nods: I figured you would... Trip

Capt smirks and closes the door behind him.

His Royal Highness Allen Alphonso Algernon Berkelly-Noonce-Fox, second son of Emperor Fox the first, Lord of all Humanity, Master of the western Spiral, thumbed the picture back over to his father, and his older brother, then looked to the door