



# **UNITED FEDERATION of PLANETS**

**U.S.S. Tornado  
NCC-75478-C  
Bravo Fleet TF-93**

## **We Will Rock You**

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# Conjugal Visit

by Lieutenant JG Liam Harrison & Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrان  
USS Tornado- Brig

Tyler walked down the corridor towards the brig. He couldn't believe Liam was put in the brig for something so ridiculous. The captain needs to let her hair down a bit instead of being all business. Tyler approached the door to the brig took a deep breath so he wasn't tempted to take his frustrations out on the guard.

Liam sat in tiny cell of the brig, behind the glowing blue forcefield. He was frustrated at the Captain for locking him in there, and he was growing restless sitting and doing nothing for such a long time.

Tyler entered abruptly startling the guard who was starting to nod off in the corner. "Liam are you ok?" Vorrان asked.

Liam looked up at the other side of the forcefield, seeing Tyler. He suddenly rushed up to the forcefield, wanting to be in Tyler's arms again. "What are you doing here?" he asked, concerned of what the Captain might say.

"I came to see you of course and perhaps arrange a jail break" Vorrان replied

The guard stood up hearing the jail break line. Vorrان looked at him and waved his arm. "We're not the droids you're looking for." Vorrان said to him in an even tone.

Liam looked at Tyler and smiled. The guard obviously didn't understand the reference, but Liam, being the geek that he is, did. "Be serious, Tyler. This is the second time in a week that I've ended up in here. That's going to be on my record," he said.

Vorrان glared at the guard. "I was just kidding calm yourself officer krupke". Tyler turned to Liam. "I think she's just trying to make a point, this will pass."

The guard looked even more confused now, which only made Liam smile. "I hope so," he told Tyler. "How'd the rest of the shift go?" he asked, sad he wasn't there with Tyler for it.

Tyler frowned. "After getting sufficiently chewed out the rest of the shift was uneventful." "I could have gone for a Romulan warbird to unleash some of my frustrations and the ship's complement of photon torpedoes." Vorrان replied.

"Mmm," Liam told Tyler, "At least the Captain didn't lock you in here. Although, I think we both would have enjoyed our time more if you were," he said winking at Tyler. Liam looked towards the guard as if to ask, <em>Don't you have someplace better to be?</em>

The guard looked both confused and embarrassed. "I would rather not have an audience, since we apparently already put on a show for the Captain." Vorrان replied

"Sorry, sir, I can't do that," the guard replied. However, in respect of the two, he turned away and walked to the corner with a PADD and a chair to occupy his time.

Liam smirked at Tyler as he put his hand up against the forcefield for few seconds. He wanted more than anything to just go back to Tyler's quarters and away from this prison.

"I don't suppose you know how to do the vulcan neck pinch?" Vorrان asked as the guard turned away.

"No, sorry," Liam told Tyler, curious of his intentions. He looked over towards the guard and then back at Tyler, nodded and smiled. "Yeah, no clue," said Liam sadly.

"I guess we'll have to wait until the captain lets you out of here." Vorrان replied

"<em>If</em> the Captain let's me out of here..." Liam told Tyler pessimistically.

"If she doesn't let you out soon I will have to move in here too." Vorrان said

"Well, we'll see. I think she wants me to 'learn a lesson', but who knows with that crazy woman," Liam told Tyler shrugging and walking around his cell.

"You'll get through and then I want you to move in to my quarters with me." Vorrان said.

Liam faced the bulkhead and stopped walking. He thought for a few seconds before turning to Tyler and smiling, "What would the Captain say?" he asked.

"I don't think the captain will object as it'll keep things off the bridge" Vorrان replied.

"Alright," Liam told Tyler, "I'm in!" he said enthusiastically and smiling. "Hopefully I can move over soon."

Vorrان grinned. "I hope so too, I'd kiss you but I don't think the forcefield would be good for my health."

"No, I doubt it is," Liam said smiling. He wanted nothing more than to jump into Tyler's arms and have him carried back to their quarters. Liam just wanted to be free.

"I'll be back to visit, hopefully the captain will have a change of heart." Vorrán said "I will start working on the move to my quarters in the meantime."

"Let's hope so. I haven't even talked to her yet," Liam told Tyler. "Anyway, you should go and get some rest before your shift starts. You need to be on your best behavior for the Captain," he said smiling at Tyler. "I'll see you whenever I get out of here."

"I will be counting the minutes until you are released" Tyler replied

With that he blew a kiss and left the brig heading to his quarters to get them ready for his new roommate.

Liam sighed and plopped himself down. He was happy, but still restless. He wished that he could have walked out with Tyler, but that would have to wait for another day.

# Jail Break!

by Lieutenant JG Liam Harrison & Ryoko Takato

## Brig

Liam sat behind the force field of the *Tornado*'s brig. This was the second time in a few weeks that he's been placed in custody. It hardly seemed like something to be imprisoned for, but nevertheless, he was still in that situation. He had been in the brig for the better part of the day, and he was waiting to be released, although he wasn't sure when that would happen.

He sat, looking at the door of the brig just waiting for Captain Takato to come in and release him. And yet, nothing. He knew the Captain would be upset with him and Tyler for fraternizing in her chair, but this was starting to become cruel.

"Hey," Liam told the Security Officer watching him as Liam stood up from the bench of the brig cell. "Could you ask the Captain when she intends to release me?" he asked politely.

The Security Officer looked up from her position and grins "Not any time soon, I presume the word was month" She answered him.

"Could you please call the Captain down here, for me?" Liam asked again, politely. He hated being caged up like an animal in the cell. He was growing restless and frustrated.

The woman rolled her eyes and made the arrangement. It only took about a few hours for the Captain to finally show up. Ryoko entered the brig area and nodded towards the Brig Officer to leave as she crossed her arms and looked at the young Ensign "You called for me?"

After waiting several hours in the brig, Liam had almost had enough. Although, being impatient and angry would get him nowhere. He knew that if he wanted to get out of the brig that night, he would have to be on his best behavior, and kiss some ass, if it came down to it. "Yes, Captain," Liam said as he stood up from the bench. He walked up to the Captain, but the glowing blue forcefield separated them. "I was wondering when I was going to be released so I can start my duties in Engineering?" he asked.

"Your duties? I believe they will resume around 3 weeks from now" Ryoko said cold looking at the young Ensign "What ever your going to bring up, think it like this. I, Captain of this ship, have the responsibility over all life forms on this vessel. I have to trust my officers to work with me on protecting these life's. For some reason, you think this is the love boat and think you can do whatever you wish to do..." Ryoko smirks a bit at that last line "Anything else?"

"Three weeks?" Liam asked, shocked with the amount of time the Captain was restricting him for. He could take it up with Starfleet Command and demand legal counsel, but by the time he'd get anywhere, he'd be out anyway. "Captain, please," Liam pleaded, "My relationship with Lieutenant Vorrان has not effected my duties in any way. This was a one time moment of weakness and it will not happen in public again." Liam paused and sighed, backing up a bit from the forcefield. "Captain, what can I do to show you that I'm fit for duty? I don't need to be kept in this hell hole for three weeks. I can be useful for you."

Ryoko shrugs "It has effected Lieutenant Vorrان duty, I believe a few times. Whatever happens on that bridge, I already know of it" She took a deep breath before continuing her hammering "Look Ensign, you are young and don't know what the Galaxy really is. Trust me, you will at a certain time be forced to look into it's eyes and face the dangers. I placed you in Engineering for a reason, to keep your head strait and away from Vorrان. Vorrان already came requesting for you two to be bunked...he got guts to even ask that" Ryoko smirks "But he is in love and I warned him and now you....keep that love off your duty...and private"

"Sir, I just want to let you know that we never *actually* did anything. It was just kissing," Liam explained. "But, I do understand and I will make sure that our personal life doesn't come between us and our duties."

Ryoko hovered her hand over the brig console as she looked at the Ensign "Keep in mind, we will be entering Klingon space soon. Officers and Enlist need to focus on their job as mistakes might cost our lives" She taps the console as the force field disappears and she took a step back "Go back to duty, preform it without any distractions and after your duty you may contact Vorrان. If I notice any chatter in between...you are back in this brig, for the rest of the month" With that Ryoko turned around walking towards the exit.

Liam smiled and nodded to the Captain as the forcefield dropped. When the Captain exited the brig room, he stepped out of the cell and into the brig room. He looked at the guard and winked as he too exited. He was happy to have a 'fresh start', but he knew the Captain wouldn't have kept him in there for that long. He planned on getting a shower and some sleep before he assumed his new duties as an Engineering Officer.

Honor, pride and watching your back  
by Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrán & Ryoko Takato  
USS Tornado - Ready Room

Sitting in her chair, watching a black screen that she had a conversation with the Admiral about the current condition of the fleet. The condition she knew was already evolving within the Klingon Empire. Her new first officer had to know the risk he was taking and the seriousness of their mission in the involvement within the Klingon Empire and the scars that it could have upon the Federation.

Vorrán walked up to the ready room door and activated the chime. He wondered why he had been summoned at this late hour by the captain.

Looking up at the door as her stare on the screen was broken and so her deep thought "Come in" She orders calmly and sits back in her chair looking at the door waiting for the person to enter.

Vorrán enters and stands at attention in front of the captain's desk. "Reporting as ordered Ma'am."

Seeing the Lieutenant walk into the room and standing there at attention "Do you know Klingons Lieutenant? If so do enlighten me with this information" Ryoko looked at him waiting for the explanation of what they were or whom they are.

"They are a warrior race from the planet Qo'noS, they are proud and honorable people." "Their drink of choice is usually blood wine which seems to induce some rather gruesome songs." Vorrán replied

"Correct by the standards of the Federation LCARS information source" Ryoko replied looking at him "But incomplete on all basis, they are a species with political evolution around combat and honor. They see war as a result of proving themselves rather than to talk about peace" Looking at her side for a moment "Klingons are not to be underestimated for what they are able to do or not. They can shape the galaxy to their image if they want to...because for war they live" Ryoko took a deep breath and looked back at the Lieutenant "But some houses kept them in check, such as House of Darg"

"I'm not familiar with the house of Darg." Vorrán replied. "Are they a house from Qo'noS or an outlying world like beta thoriid?" Vorrán asked

"Yes, they are an outlying world with lots of border control up to the north of the Empire" Ryoko stated "They are an important voice in the High Council. But are challenged every day by their idealism of peace and avoid battles" Ryoko answered.

"Which the other houses would see as a sign of weakness." Vorrán added He couldn't imagine how a Klingon house could have survived this long avoiding battle.

Giving a soft nod towards that answer "Weakness is something that is not the issue. It is against their beliefs, if a Klingon challenge you then it is a honored greeting to see if you are worthy of their time and if you are loyalist that the other warrior can rely on" Ryoko shrugs a bit "Peace is something that devolves this culture and the building blocks they carried upon their backs to create their history. It is kinda like you are ordered to kill me, but federation standards disallow you to do so. But someone else that is higher than you demands it off you. That is kinda the situation in the Klingon Empire" Waving her hand as if she was trying to balance something "One side wants war...battle and expansion and the other side wants peace and trading to grow their economical status"

"Which has potential of a feud with houses that oppose Darg, or possibly another Klingon civil war." "Both of these prospects could destabilize the Klingon empire from within." Vorrán added

That was the core problem, that Ryoko was struggling with "That is something you need to know, House of Darg has somehow placed their confidence in us or rather me" Ryoko sits back in her chair "The Federation has failed over and over and over to create a connection towards the Klingons. Diplomatic relationship with them is as thin as ice can be after a night of weak frozen weather. However I..." She paused as Ryoko got reminded of the whole show "...proved myself that I was worthy to be heard"

"I wasn't the best student at the academy but if we were to openly support one house over the others....." Vorrán pauses and takes a breath. "The prime directive would apply as this is an internal Klingon matter." Vorrán said tentatively

"Not quite, the Prime Directive is focused on those that are less developed. Starfleet counters that believe by saying that the Klingons are advanced or equal towards the same technology that we are using but in a different matter" Ryoko stated as she looks at him "We are not going to chance the political landscape of the Klingon Empire here

Lieutenant. That is indeed against the Prime Directive, what we do is simply laying connections. Creating a bond with them...for now the Federation lays their trust in me...in this crew to get it done"

"Understood, I do recommend we tread lightly as it is a fine line between forming diplomatic ties with a house and violating the prime directive." Vorrnan replied.

Ryoko rolled her eyes "Do not try to lecture me about how to handle the Prime Directive Lieutenant. I am been doing this thing almost two years" Sitting back in her chair she continued "But do you understand the complication situation we are in? One hand the Prime Directive and the other Diplomatic status"

"I understand Captain and meant no disrespect." Vorrnan responded

"Good" Ryoko replied shortly towards her fresh First Officer. The Lieutenant had to learn allot from the job he just filled "Questions?"

"No ma'am" Vorrnan replied

"Then you are dismissed, we will be having a meeting soon with the rest of the staff. When we arrive at the location" Ryoko explained

"Yes, Ma'am" Vorrnan replied as he turned and left the ready room.

# Parole

by Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrán & Lieutenant JG Liam Harrison

USS Tornado- Brig

Tyler waited outside the brig for Liam to be released a bouquet of roses in his hand. He had heard the captain was letting him out early and wanted to be waiting.

With the Captain just walking out minutes before, Liam exited the brig room and smiled, seeing Tyler waiting for him. He gave Tyler a warm hug and kiss.

"Guess I won't have to learn the vulcan neck pinch after all" Vorrán said when Liam finally released him.

"Guess not," Liam told Tyler. He couldn't help himself, so he gave Tyler another kiss and wrapped his arms around Tyler's neck, hanging from him. "Ugh," he said, "The Captain told me explicitly not to see you until my shift was over or else I'd be in there for a month." He sighed, but just gave Tyler another passionate taste from his lips.

"We should move finish moving your stuff to our quarters." Vorrán replied. "Also I'm going to be the ship's first officer, so we will need to come up with a plan to avoid fraternization regulations"

Liam smirked at Tyler, feeling proud of him but a bit upset at the same time. He couldn't help but see the irony in the situation. He was locked in jail, with threats for more time, while Tyler received a promotion. Yes, of course Liam was happy for him, but he couldn't help but feel a bit upset as well. "That's great news!" Liam said pulling Tyler closer, "but it's not going to change anything for me," he told Tyler winking at him.

Tyler was glad Liam was willing to work through this latest development. "Good, I'm looking forward to us living together."

"So am I," Liam told Tyler, "Does the Captain know? I don't think she and I are on good terms at the moment. I don't know what I can do to fix that, she doesn't seem like the most forgiving person."

"She has not objected and did let you out of the brig early." Vorrán replied

"Good," Liam replied, finally releasing his grip from Tyler. "When am I moving in?" he asked smiling.

"How quickly do you think you can pack?" Tyler replied grinning.

"Once my shift is done," Liam told Tyler, "then we can have dinner afterwards." Liam nudged Tyler a bit to start walking away from the brig. To him, the closer he was, the easier it was for them to put him back.

"Don't worry you're going back there over my dead body" Vorrán said taking Liam's hand.

Liam was relieved, despite just coming out of lock up. Things were looking good for Liam. Yes, Engineering was a minor set back, but it was always a coin toss between Operations and Engineering for Liam, and he was certified in both fields. Liam smiled at Tyler and held him close as the two walked off through the corridors of the Tornado together.

# The Move

by Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrán & Lieutenant JG Liam Harrison

## USS Tornado Vorrán's Quarters

Tyler awaited Liam's arrival eagerly in his soon to be shared quarters. He had tried to clean up the place, made the bed, and put dishes back in the replicator. The room was rather bland with the exception of a Bajoran prayer Mandela, a poster for a 21st century earth metal band, and a risian horga'hn.

Liam didn't have many things to bring over. He had two duffel bags and a large suitcase filled with his clothes and his uniform. Everything he needed was transported over to Tyler's quarters, that is, except for a bottle of saurian brandy. Liam believes that good liquor loses some of its taste when transported, so he hand carried it. Approaching Tyler's quarters, he was a bit nervous. This was a big step for the two, but Liam couldn't deny his feelings for Tyler. He waited outside Tyler's quarters for a good minute, pacing and thinking before he finally rang the door chime and regained his composure.

Tyler answered the door and saw Liam there holding a bottle of Saurian Brandy. "You shouldn't have" Vorrán said taking the bottle from Liam as he whisked him inside.

Liam smiled at Tyler as he walked in Tyler's quarters. He looked around, taking in the fact that this was going to be his quarters too. He had been there before, but this was different. It felt different, but Liam couldn't explain it. He shrugged it off and followed Tyler. "It's a 2340. I hear that was a fantastic year. I haven't tried it before, but it's my one good bottle of liquor."

"Well let's find out.... glasses or out of the bottle?" Vorrán asked grinning. He could barely contain his excitement for this next step in their relationship.

"Glasses, I'd say," Liam told Tyler as he walked around their quarters and plopped himself down on the couch. "So, XO, any idea what the Captain is going to have us doing next?" he asked as he looked around the immediate area.

"We're headed for a Klingon station in the Narendra system." Vorrán replied as he got two glasses for them. "I'm not clear on all the details myself but we will find out when we get there"

Liam nodded as he watched Tyler prepare drinks. "So, how's the new job?" he asked curiously. "Nice to be XO? Stressful at all? Especially considering you have to deal with, you know, her?"

"It is a lot more responsibility, as far as the captain she is an enigma." Tyler replied "I think she is colder than a Breen's heart."

"Well, that's why you're up there now too. You can be the human part of the command staff. The warm hearted and caring one," Liam told Tyler, smiling at him. He was so fortunate to have someone like Tyler.

Tyler poured the Brandy in glasses and handed one to Liam. "A little of this Brandy and you could be on Rura Penthe in shorts."

"Who knows! The Captain may trade me for a Klingon and they'd lock me up there," Liam told Tyler, taking the glass. He took a whiff of the brandy and then sipped the drink.

"Don't worry I think the captain abandoning you to the Klingons would violate a regulation or two" Tyler replied "Besides I'm sure we can find some Klingons to drink with and tell us some gory tales of battle." Tyler added as he drank some Brandy.

"Or some to fight with," Liam told Tyler jokingly. "Know if we'll be allowed to roam around the station or will we be there in an official capacity and need to maintain our stature?"

"We'll see when we get there but I don't see why we wouldn't be granted shore leave." Tyler said before taking another drink. "In the meantime, I have managed to acquire Tholian silk bed sheets."

"How?!" Liam asked with excitement. He had heard of the comfort the exotic silk sheets had, and had always wanted to try it out. He took a sip of his brandy, and then placed the cup down on the table. "Want to break it in?" he asked, smirking.

"I spent my teenage years with a crew of smugglers. It wasn't hard to arrange for them to pick some up on a run to Tholian space." Tyler replied wiggling his eyebrows. "Let's test out those bed sheets and lower the gravity in here"

Liam eagerly jumped up from the couch and grabbed Tyler, pulling towards the bedroom. He could get used to this life style. A comfortable bed, nice liquor, and, most importantly, a beautiful man to share it with.



## Entering the other side

by Ryoko Takato & Staff Warrant Officer Grace Grayfield & Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrان & Lieutenant JG Jonas Savello & 1st Lieutenant Declan Finn & 1st Lieutenant Meera Deloria

### USS Tornado - Observation Lounge

Walking into the Observation Lounge, she cracked her neck a bit. It was over time working for the good Captain. After her talk with the Vice Admiral at Task Force 93. She was now going to debrief the crew for the upcoming mission in the Narendra System. Placing the PADDs onto the table she walks towards the replicator "Cold water" The device did its job and replicated a glass of water as Ryoko grabs it and walked back towards her seat and sits down. It was now waiting for the other Chiefs to arrive at the room.

Tyler Vorrان entered the observation lounge and stood at attention. With recent incidents he thought it best to follow protocol to the letter. "Lieutenant Vorrان reporting, Captain."

Lowering her PADD down, Ryoko looked at her side seeing the young Lieutenant stand there as she looked back at the PADD and waved towards her side "Sit down Lieutenant, the others are arriving soon"

"Yes ma'am". Vorrان took a seat to the right of the captain.

"The others should be on their way" Vorrان replied

Savello entered the Lounge. Nodding toward his Captain and then to Vorrان he took his seat, third from the left of the Captain. He suppressed the strong sense of unity often felt between two El Aurians. Even though Vorrان was only half El Aurian Jonas could still feel strongly the gestalt between them.

Because the others hadn't arrived yet, he immediately went to the small console in front of him and typed in a few commands. A list of reports ran in front of him. "Lieutenant Vorrان I understand that you are half El Aurian," he asked without looking up from the screen."

Vorrان looked at Savello also feeling a sense of familiarity that he did not feel toward anyone else with the exception of Liam. "That's correct Mr. Savello." "I don't know much about them my father was El-Aurian and has been out of the picture my whole life." Vorrان Replied.

"I understand. That happens often in El-Aurian families especially after the Borg destroyed our home world. Please forgive my prying," Savello apologized.

"It's not a problem Savello" Vorrان replied

Lesson after lesson, pile of paperwork after pile of paperwork, the Orion Sergeant, soon to be Lieutenant was already wondering if getting this position was worth the effort made. Still, it wasn't like she'd been given a choice in the matter. Making her way to the observation lounge, she gave a brief salute to the Captain. "Sergeant Deloria reporting as requested." She said, settling into an empty seat near the bottom of the table from the Captain to account for her junior range among those present. She figured she'd wait, see what was about to be dropped on their plate now.

Humming over the information Ryoko finally looked at her side "Still Sergeant? Mmm sit down, we are waiting for the rest to arrive as well" Some assistance of certain departments were also there to replace their Chief. They only missed the CIO and CEO.

It was nice to be back on the Tornado, the new mission was something he was looking forward too. Declan walked on to the bridge for the First time being back and headed over to the Observation Lounge and walked in.

"Hello Captain, it's great to be back! I would like to thank you for placing me as CIO and as your Second Officer." he said. Then walked over to the table and sat in the chair to the Captains Left.

Picking up the PADD in front of her, Deloria began reviewing the information provided for this step of the ship's overall mission. Hopefully it wouldn't be as mentally confusing as the last one that most certainly didn't happen.

It seems the Chief Engineer Officer was going to be late, delays was not something in Ryoko roster "Hello Lieutenant" She greeted Finn as he sat down next to her. Looking at the rest of the Chiefs and Assistants "Welcome towards our debriefing, I am not going to delay any longer to wait on our Chief Engineer Officer. We all know that we are going to arrive soon at the Narendra System. Here we will dock at Sut HabmoHwl' mupwl' Starbase. The sector is under control of the House of Darg a powerful weight in the Klingon Empire and I worked with your previous Chiefs in getting a working relationship with them. Fruits are slowly falling into place" Ryoko stated as a hologram of the large starbase was put in the middle of the screen "The Starbase is currently in the mid of a festival of more tournaments and such, we are pulled into it as representatives of the Federation. But also on a more personal note by HoD Darg that commands this starbase. He wishes us to find out any information on rogue activity. The Empire is in a struggle when it comes towards dealing with rogue houses...they keep their mask on when being inspected"

"Captain, are we expected to participate in their tournaments?' Vorrان asked while trying to put the image of having to wield a bat'leth out of his head.

Her eyes slide to her side towards the Lieutenant as Ryoko nodded "Some of you are and some of you aren't. I have not made up my mind. But our main focus is to blend in, act as the rookies they think we are" Ryoko looked at the rest "While the others focus on information gathering and I want to point out that brawls are not going to happen...please avoid them"

Vorrان gulped knowing that brawl comment was directed toward him. "I also recommend avoiding any behavior that could be taken as a challenge by the Klingons." Vorrان added

Jade walked onto the bridge and over to the observation lounge. She stopped at the door for a few minutes to fix her tunic, after being in a shuttle for the last 3 hours and running a bit late. She knew that this wasn't the best time to make a good impression. Jade entered the lounge and stood at attention and waited for the Captain to finish talking.

With a small grimace, Deloria looked at the list of some of those present. "Well, I only hope I don't run into an specific ship captain while there. Served on her ship during the Dominion War." She says, shrugging. "As for avoiding brawls, well, Klingon festivals aren't well known for being, 'civil' affairs if I recall correctly Ma'am."

Noticing the Chief Engineering Officer entering the room "Please take a seat Captain" Ryoko said as she looked back at Deloria "The complications of any set up old fires of yours will be put out by the guards there. So don't worry about that" Ryoko looked at the others "The festival is a soft reminder for us that we are guest, so no formal clothes will be required there."

Deloria nodded, grateful for the lack of needing to wear formal wear. "Not an old flame ma'am, just a very, enthusiastic Klingon. She's also from a minor house, so I'm actually surprised she'd been listed here." Meera says, holding up her PADD a moment. "Who exactly compiled this intel?"

"The information was given to us by the Federation and compiled by Intelligence" Ryoko looked at Finn to continue the information about the situation at their goal.

Declan stood up from his chair and went over to the Screen to the side of the table. He tapped a few instructions into it and information came up about the mission.

" Well as you can all see the Starbase that we are heading for is controlled by the house of Darg a main main hub for trading/mining/diplomatic situations, the location is Sut HabmoHwl' mupwl'. What we know of Darg is that he is a veteran with the age above 100 years (around 106) and has seen war and battles more then once and is in the next in line. Also the house controls most of the area right up to where TF 93 Operates." he said. Declan looked around the room for a brief second then continued

"The Tournament is well loved and known by many Houses. We will have to be on our guard, danger lurks around every corner. Also and I hate to say this but, Captain we are out gunned. If anything goes down we will have to be ready. I recommend that we go to yellow alert, have shields and weapons at stand by." He then deactivated the the screen and sat back down.

Ryoko nodded towards Finn as she looked at the rest "Questions? Now would be a good time to ask them" She said

"None at the moment Captain," Savello said. "I have been to this part of the Galaxy years ago around the time when Archer was...Let's just say it was not a happy memory. Knowing the history of the place no matter how hospitable our host is; I recommend caution." Jonas sat back in his chair.

"Will we be granting shore leave to off duty crew?" Vorrان asked

Nodding towards Jonas as Ryoko looked at Vorrان with a raised eyebrow "Why are you asking? This is just the second mission and we have not even started yet Lieutenant?" Ryoko guessed it most likely right that he wanted some quality time with his lover.

"Captain, with all due respect it is customary for shore leave to be granted when visiting a port of call." "As your executive officer I will need to make preparations in case of emergency recall of crew on shore leave." Vorrان replied

Taking a deep breath "That is a matter that we can discuss under four eyes Lieutenant. Any other questions regarding the mission itself?" Ryoko said placing her hands over each other.

Vorrان struggled to hide his annoyance at the captain's standoffish behavior towards him. "No Ma'am." He replied simply

Meera shook her head. "Negative Ma'am. I'll supply a rotating schedule for security personnel to the XO for review ASAP." She says, giving everyone present a small glance.

"Good dismissed, any questions can be asked towards myself or my command team directly. We will arrive ..."  
Ryoko looked at the schedule on her PADD "In four hours..." Ryoko took this chance to leave for herself and left the room to let the others leave on their own pace.

# Combat Training

by Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrان & 1st Lieutenant Meera Deloria

USS Tornado- Armory

Vorrان headed down to the Armory hoping to do some combat training with Meera. He wasn't sure what kind of tournaments the klingons had planned, but was certain it would involve combat.

He approached the door to the armory and walked inside.

Meera wasn't hard to miss, having replicated several weapons herself to better reacquaint herself with some of the basics. But for those were for later, right now, there was an inventory to be handled. Which is why she had a PADD in her hand with a pen tapping every so often on it, as she stepped from locker to locker and opened them, examining their contents. Thus far, everything was in order.

Hearing the armory door, she didn't look up from her work. "It's generally considered polite to hit the buzzer before opening the hatchway, as you wouldn't want to accidentally find yourself dodging a stray training shot. Now, who's ass is about to get reamed in paperwork?" She remarked, turning around as she finished, before wincing as she spotted Vorrان entering.

"Shit, sorry Si-Lieutenant. Didn't mean to be a bitch to you. What can I help you with?" She said, and asked, hoping she didn't just screw up something cause she was not happy to try and run 3 different duties at once with only the basic training regimen to go by, most of which were books, not real deals.

"Did I catch you at a bad time sergeant?" Vorrان asked

Hand to hand combat with the Klingons was suddenly starting to seem more appealing after his welcome to the armory.

"No sir. Just running some inspections for Security's equipment. What can I help you with? Believe me, it'll be nice to step away from this for a few moments. Once I've earned my officer pip, I'll get around to delegating things." Meera replies.

"If you can spare some time I am interested in combat training." Vorrان said. "I am not sure what we can expect regarding the klingon tournaments, it would be best to prepare."

Meera chuckled. "Any particular KIND of combat training you want sir? I know a few kinds and several styles." She said, smiling as she put down the PADD and crossed her arms while she waited.

Vorrان thought back to his combat training at the academy, which was just the basics. "I've been through the basic hand to hand and ranged combat at the academy." "How about more advanced hand to hand combat and fencing?" Vorrان replied.

"Preferably with a Bat'Leth given our current mission." Vorrان added.

Meera shook her head. "I may have done a tour on a Klingon ship during the Dominion War, but I didn't learn how to use the thing myself. As for CQC training, that I can give you, though, I warn you, it isn't pleasant, and not something we'll only be able to do in a time or two and have you able to do it. Marine CQC is brutal, but effective." She explains. "I mostly had these replicated that way I could show the boys in Security the kind of armaments that they need to keep an eye out for. Including during pat downs."

"Any training we can fit in would give us a better chance." Vorrان replied. Meera apparently had quite the arsenal of klingon weapons, vulcan lirpas, even a Jem'Hadar kar'takin.

Meera shrugged. "You sure Lieutenant? This isn't something you can do for a few hours and be respectable at it. It took me 4 weeks to even earn my first, basic, proficiency rating in it. I'm also not certified as an instructor." She stated, more for a safety net than actually trying to dissuade him. If he got hurt during her training, and she hadn't warned him, it was on her head. But if she warned him, as she just did, then if he got hurt, it was more on him than her.

"You're the closest thing we have to an instructor on this ship Meera." Vorrان replied "I'm not expecting to be at your level but any assistance will better prepare me for the mission."

With a simple nod, she changes tasks on the PADD, and schedules 2 hours for training on the holodeck. "Might as well see who else wants to get something in before we dock. And while some work on CQC, I can work on getting security training on spotting these buggers on a person." She says, gesturing to the items on the table. "If you'll excuse me sir, I need to try and get the basics worked out, and get the program prepared."

"Very well, Carry On Sergeant" Vorrان replied as he left the armory. He wondered if he should put sickbay on alert prior to his training session with Meera.

# El-Aurian Connection

by Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrان & Lieutenant JG Jonas Savello

USS Tornado- Mess Hall

Vorrان entered the mess hall and went over to the replicator to get his lunch. "Hasperat and a Glass of Water, Cold"

The plate with the Hasperat appeared accompanied by a glass of water. He then took a look around the room for a good spot to sit.

Jonas entered the Mess and again felt a tinge of familiarity. Looking over for the source he found Vorrان sitting alone at a table near the viewport. He walked toward the table after ordering a sandwich and milk. "This seat taken," he asked Vorrان.

Vorrان looked up at Jonas standing there holding a plate and glass of milk. "Be my guest" Vorrان replied while gesturing toward the empty seat.

"I want to apologize first sir for my candor earlier. It's not ever often that I meet another El-Aurian," Jonas took a sip of his milk. "I hope it doesn't cause us any problems in the future." Jonas had been running what happened at the early meeting and felt that Vorrان wasn't happy about Savello acknowledging their shared heritage.

Vorrان drank some of his water looking at Jonas who was eagerly waiting a response. "Jonas you didn't offend me earlier, in fact I have only learned about my Bajoran side" "I would appreciate the chance to learn more about the El-Aurians." Vorrان replied

"Well," Savello said, "I can only give you what I remember. Have you ever heard of Rumspringa? It's an ancient Earth tradition from a group of Terrans called the Amish. Every time a young member of their group reach adolescence they are given an opportunity to leave and experience life outside the community before they choose to become full members of their society."

"El-Aurians had a similar rite called the Departure. Young members were called to leave El-Auria for a period of time to return to our Home world with the knowledge they've gained from their travels. Some, against the wishes of our parents, remained traveling."

Vorrان looked at Savello puzzled. "I'm not familiar with either tradition." Vorrان replied "The most tradition I've had was a Bajoran Vedek nearly ripping my ear off." "Apparently this was done to examine my pagh." Vorrان said cringing as he remembered how much his ear hurt after that.

"Well I can only say, that the Departure was a blessing for me. Is there anything you wish to know," Savello asked.

"Was your departure to earth?" Vorrان asked

"Only a few were sent to Earth, I was sent to a planet called Varas and found it to be unnerving. They were a humanoid species who were beyond xenophobic. I hitched a ride on a Klingon Freighter near the Delta/Beta Quadrant Border it took me to Krios and from there I went to Vulcan, then to Earth where I stayed. My father was not happy about it. But understood." Jonas smiled at the memory but suddenly his face went gray, "The last time I heard from my parents was just before the Borg destroyed our Home World." He looked up and fought a tear, "But that is in the past."

"I'm sorry" Vorrان said "We can talk about something else if you wish."

"No, no." Jonas shook off his feeling and smiled. He took a long drink of his milk. "It was a long time ago and I can't dwell on the past. The past is the past for reason. Don't you agree?"

"Agreed, the past belongs in the past." Vorrان replied

"On to more recent events how did you come to be on the Tornado?" Vorrان asked.

"I transferred here from the Raptor," Jonas replied. "During normal crew rotations. I was getting bored on that ship and applied for transfer. The Captain of that ship wasn't ready to let me go but She understood."

"Well its good to have you on board the Tornado" Vorrان replied. "I'm new here as well, in my short time here I'm now the acting first officer."

"I heard. Originally I was assigned to the Astrometrics department, but once I arrived the Captain asked me to take over the Science Department," Savello smiled. "I couldn't pass that up."

"It's a good opportunity." Vorrان replied "I had been banished to flying shuttles at farpoint station." "This has been my second chance at a real assignment" Vorrان continued

Savello looked up toward the clock above the kitchen area. "Oh, my look at the time." He stood up. "I am sorry but I a meeting with the Science Team in ten minutes. It was nice to finally meet you Lieutenant."

"Likewise Jonas, thank you for the information" Vorrnan replied.

# Prepare for Battle Captain

by Ryoko Takato

USS Tornado - Ready Room

"Incoming transmission from Narendra System Captain, it's HoD Darg" Ryoko heard over her intercom as she looked at her screen "Pass it through, no disturbance please" The line cuts as the screen changes from the Klingon logo towards the face of an old Klingon HoD "D'atow.."

"Takato..." The response came back at her from the Klingon "My sensors have detected that you have crossed the borders and seeing the signature painted on your hull, I thought I would say hi towards an old friend"

Ryoko nods slowly sitting back in her chair "I presumed I painted it big enough for you to actually be able read it. I mean age and all" She smiled at D'atow that grins back at her.

But his smile disappeared also quickly as he became more serious "Karg is making a possible move in this festival, we have no concluding precise data on this. But if so it would mean a rupture in the structure of our hierarchy" D'atow said wanting to swallow his own words and forget about it.

Karg, House of Karg was a minor house that was more responsible for mining in the asteroid belts and had great ambitions to grow bigger and get more territory. But this was held back for quite some time, due their head of house "Did something change in Karg house?" Ryoko carefully asked looking at him.

"Yes..." D'atow replied "Adak died while combating his son for the head position. Okral Kral now commands the house by force. Has spoken out his ambitions to uphold the desire of the house itself" D'atow growls a bit while finishing that sentence.

"I see, Okral is going to be a problem in the current condition?" Ryoko seemed a bit vague in this matter, she rather avoid getting dragged into a full out house conflict. This was against Federation desires and she had to stay on her feet when it comes towards Diplomatic immunity that has been granted to her.

The old Klingon laughs a bit at that comment and looked at Ryoko "I presume not, but that is a dangerous factor to presume something we don't know the scale of. Kral may pull down the alliance of his upper houses into this mess. You know how it goes, the larger houses feel obligated to protect their investments"

Ahh so it was going to be a big chess play for them. Make the right move or this balance structure was going to collapse and bring Federation down with it "What you want us to do, the same as said before we left Romulan borders"

D'atow nodded towards her "Keep low profile, scan opportunities and don't get into a fight. The houses minor, medium or large are going to find a way to provoke anyone of your crew. Select them correctly and keep them cool headed." Leaning forward he placed his hands over each other "Find me a reason to axe that bastard off my station Captain. Darg out" The screen went black as Ryoko looked outside to see the warp flow.

# Objectives

by Ryoko Takato & Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrان

USS Tornado- Ready Room

Tyler approached the door to the ready room wondering why he had been summoned. His relationship with the captain had been strained at best...hostile at worst. There were times he missed being on the Thomas Paine with Captain Rixx.

Tyler took a deep breath as he activated the door chime. Maybe a boarding party of Reman shock troops would choose that moment to storm the ship. It would save him from his latest ready room encounter with the Captain at least.

Looking up at the door, Ryoko tried to remember any appointments but could not figure out if there was one. She spoke up "Come in" Awaiting the person to come in and see what the problem was.

Vorrان entered the ready room and stood at attention.

"Reporting as ordered Captain." Vorrان said

"Did I?" Ryoko stated as she looked down at her PADD "I don't remember I did, but you have questions" She looked up at him as the Captain expect something from her fresh first officer.

"I had a message on my terminal in my quarters, it said something about combat readiness." Vorrان replied

Ryoko sits back in her chair and looked at the Lieutenant "Well not combat readiness, more readiness that we are going to arrive at the location soon. Things will change drastic, how we talk, behave and everything is going by the book. Klingons tend to seek out our weakness, provoke us towards our limits. Ready for that Lieutenant?" She asked.

"I don't back down from a challenge captain." Vorrان replied

"If you recall I held my own with them back at providence fleet yards" Vorrان added.

Nodding towards that comment, Ryoko leans forward "That was just a minor obstacle of hormone jumping around." She pointed out "The Klingons here, actually want to damage the Federation image on a whole new level."

"Is there any more information on the houses that oppose house darg?" Vorrان asked

"That is the question of the day, we don't actually know that much about Darg. I did a year over the fact to get a foothold between the door" She raised her hand "Don't image it ..."

"When we get to the station I will see what else I can find out."

"Klingons have very loose lips after drinking too much bloodwine." Vorrان replied

Ryoko blinked her eyes and wondered if Vorrان had experience with the information or those lips. "We shall see, anything else you wishes to ask?"

"No Ma'am" Vorrان replied

Vorrان still had the feeling the captain was holding something back. They would find out soon enough when they arrive at the station.

Nodding towards the Lieutenant "Dismissed" She ordered as Ryoko returned towards her own duties, with Vorrان leaving the office.



# Arriving the Lions Den

by Ryoko Takato & Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrان & Lieutenant JG Jonas Savello & Lieutenant JG Scott Erickson  
& 1st Lieutenant Meera Deloria

## Narendra System

The ship warped into the Narendra System as it glides towards the direction of the station. Ryoko entered the bridge and sits down in her chair as she notice Vorrان entering the bridge also "Status" She asked her XO as she motion towards the navigation officer to put an intercept course.

"Captain on the Bridge" Vorrان called out as Takato entered.

"We are entering the Narendra system, all systems operational." Vorrان reported.

The bridge stayed quiet as Ryoko rolled her eyes "Any reports on security or science, medical anything. We are really ready to dock at this station without problems?" Beginning to sound sarcastic

"Just as I remember it," Savello replied "Dark, brooding and like a castle in a horror film. Not much has changed sir."

"All systems are as they should, and security personnel have been properly prepared. So unless the Klingons decide to shoot us out of spite, or some other unexpected surprise, Security and Tactical is green." Meera replied, doing one last double check of the statuses on her terminal.

"There is a slight fluctuation in their power supply and several fires have broken out in the center of the main building," Savello said. "But that could be for the ceremonies. I'd say they're rolling out the red carpet for us."

"I'm sure the klingons have lined up along the red carpet with pain sticks at the ready." Vorrان said

Pain sticks, well that brought up memories for sure. As the operation officer spoke up "We got incoming message from the station, its HoD Darg Captain" That sounded double in Ryoko ears, but okay whatever "Onscreen"

The face of the old Klingon comes into the screen as he sees the bridge crew and his eye stops at Ryoko "You lazy git, why are you so late!"

"Hello back to you Darg...we had some engineering problems and had to reduce our speed. But we are here..." Ryoko wanted to continue but the old Klingon interrupted her again. It was an annoying feature in this man attitude.

"..Yes yes, dock at port 4 and get onto the station. The tournament selection process is beginning soon. Darg out" The screen went back to the stars as Ryoko nods to navigation to make docking process done.

Ensign Erickson stood in the back of the bridge near one of the engineering consoles. As an intelligence officer he tried to recall the information he knew about station, its operations capability and how many personal are normally stationed.

"Charming fellow" Ryoko mutters as she took a deep breath "Get ready people were entering unknown area and we are going to be tested to our limits" Ryoko spoke as she hoped everyone was ready to deal with the Klingons.

# Lover's Quarrel

by Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrان & Lieutenant JG Liam Harrison

## Tyler and Liam's quarters

Tyler was just getting up, he didn't feel Liam's warmth next to him anymore he must have gotten up. Liam somehow could slip out of bed without waking him, must be part changeling.

Liam had woken up early and snuck out of bed to make Tyler breakfast. He was making French toast, a recipe he attributed to his Academy roommate who taught him how to make it. He heard movement in their bedroom and smiled, knowing that Tyler was awake. He had made a bit of a mess in the kitchen, but it was going to be well worth it.

Vorrان entered what was laughingly called a kitchen in their quarters. With the invention of food replicators it was nothing more than a counter and small sink. "What happened in here?" Vorrان asked. "Did I miss the part where we were boarded by the jem'hadar?"

Liam smirked, "Very funny," he told Tyler. "Yes, there a little mess, but it was well worth it." Wearing his apron, he brought out two plates with their breakfast on it to the table. "Was orange juice or something?" he asked.

"Raktajino, please" Tyler replied He wondered if a hull breach would be sufficient to clean up the mess.

Liam smiled, "Sure thing," he said. The Raktajino was sadly one of the few things he'd have to replicate, for now at least. He walked over to the replicator and ordered Tyler's drink, delivering it to him not long after. He took off his apron and sat down at the table to eat with Tyler.

"Thank you" Tyler said as he took a sip of the Raktajino. Klingons make the strongest coffee in the galaxy.

"So what inspired all of this?" Tyler asked Liam.

"Oh, I don't know," Liam said smiling at Tyler, "I just woke up and decided I should make you breakfast."

"I appreciate it." "You didn't have to do all this though unless the replicators go offline" Vorrان replied looking at the disaster zone their quarters had become.

"I didn't *have* to, I *wanted* to," Liam said, giving Tyler a warm smile. "I love to cook, and I don't find it a chore. I think it's better than whatever mess the replicator pours out onto a plate."

"I've had a good relationship with that replicator, it only replicated a drink without a glass once" Tyler replied.

"Well, I'd like to think that you have a better relationship with me than the replicator," Liam winked at Tyler.

"That's not what I meant....." Vorrان started.

"I was joking," Liam told Tyler, with a sigh. "Well, whatever," he said as he picked up his plate and brought it back to the kitchen to start cleaning up.

Tyler brought his plate back to the kitchen and wrapped his arms around Liam from behind. "I'm sorry.... you know I love you."

Liam smiled as he looked down at the plate and enjoyed Tyler's touch. He took a deep breath before putting his hands on Tyler's and tilting his head back to rest on Tyler's shoulder, giving him a kiss as he went back. "I know, and I will clean this up!"

"We'll clean it up together" Tyler replied as he put the plates in the replicator. "I'll see if I can find a broom"

"Well, I don't think we really need a broom," Liam told Tyler with a disappointed face. He was happy they were going to be making things work together, but he did find that Tyler would do anything if Liam put on his sad face - which could be quite a powerful asset in the future.

# Disturbances

by Lieutenant JG Liam Harrison & Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrان

## Tyler and Liam's quarters

Tyler was cuddled on the bed with Liam. Slowly kissing his adorable face. The low hum of the ship's engines the only other sound in their quarters. Then the door chime to their quarters goes off.

"Who could that be?" "I thought you turned on privacy mode?" Vorrان said.

Liam's eyes were closed when the chime went off. He was busy, somewhat loudly, enjoying Tyler's gentle touch. As the two grew less intimate to respond to the call at the door, Liam sighed. "I'm not sure," he told Tyler as he turned his body around to look at his partner, "I thought it was on too..." he replied. "Want me to check to see who it is?" he asked with a smile as he pulled Tyler ever more closer to him.

"Sounds like a plan." "Otherwise we won't get any peace". Tyler replied tossing a robe to Liam. "Oh take this too." Tyler continued as he tossed Liam a type 2 phaser.

Liam smirked at Tyler and caught the robe and phaser. He tied the robe around his waist and walked over to the door with the phaser nonchalantly hanging in his hand. He pressed the button on the inside of the quarters and the doors slid open. "Hello," Liam told the officer on the other side.

Tyler quickly threw on shorts and a tank top. He heard Liam talking to whomever came to their door in the middle of the night. Tyler took the compression phaser rifle he had hidden in the closet out and walked out toward the door.

Liam heard Tyler get out of bed and turned his head to see the Executive Officer walk over with a rifle. He closed his eyes and rested his head against the bulkhead. "You realize you're not making this any better, right?" he asked with his eyes barely open and looking at Tyler.

Tyler stuck his tongue out at Liam. "For all I know we're being boarded by Orion pirates that are going to try and sell us as slaves." Tyler replied.

Ensign Ashley Davis stood outside of the quarters, wearing a nightgown herself and groggy due to lack of sleep. As she saw the Executive Officer appear with a compression rifle, her eyes widened and she took a step back from the door. She scratched her head as she looked at her boss. "Um," she said, unable to process what was going on.

Liam looked at Tyler and shook his head. "What do your dreams have to do with this," he told Tyler with a smirk as he blocked off the girl's view of Tyler. "Sorry about that. He's not used to seeing other people very much..." Liam told the woman as he glanced back at Tyler, smirking again.

Tyler put the rifle down. "Sorry, we don't usually have visitors at this hour." "I figured we were being boarded." Tyler said.

"Eh, I think it was more of you wanted to show how big your rifle is," Liam said turning back to Tyler and snickering.

At this point, the young woman's face was as red as a strawberry. "Well, anyway..." the woman said trying to avoid acknowledging that metaphor, "if you two could please keep the noise down a bit, I'm trying to get a good night's rest for my shift in a few hours."

"Noise??" Then Tyler was hit with the realization of what she was referring to. Tyler blushing said "We will do our best sorry we kept you up."

He would have to set up a dampening field next time so the noise would be contained in their quarters.

Liam turned back to Tyler and blushed in embarrassment, seeing as it was he who was so vocal. Turning back to the woman, Liam attempted to reconcile the issue. "Apologies," Liam told her, "from now on, we will be sure to be quieter."

"Humph" "you could wake a hibernating tiberian sloth cat." Vorrان said quietly.

Liam cocked his head and slowly turned back to Tyler. "What was that?" he asked rhetorically with his phaser pointed in Tyler's general direction.

With that, the woman was satisfied that she would get a good night's sleep. Wanting desperately to get away from the conversation, she quietly wished the two men a good night and slipped away back into her quarters.

"Back to bed Liam." "I'll be sure to set up a sound dampening field this time" Tyler said.

Liam obeyed Tyler like the good junior officer he was. He disrobed himself and tossed his phaser aside as he plopped himself back down on the bed next to Tyler.

# All Play and No Work

by Lieutenant JG Liam Harrison & Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrان

Main Engineering, USS Tornado

Liam was sitting at his control console in main engineering. His stomach growled at him to eat, but he was working on a system diagnostic that needed his attention for the time being. He sighed as he continued to check the time, noticing that the time until his break was passing slower and slower.

Tyler entered main engineering with a lunch for Liam in hand.

As he entered what was laughingly called engineering on a Rhode Island class ship, the hum of the warp core grew louder.

He saw Liam at a console not even noticing Tyler's arrival.

Tyler walked up behind Liam quietly and put his hands on his shoulders. He spun Liam around in his seat and planted a kiss on his adorable surprised face.

Liam's chair was spun around and before he knew it, he recognized a familiar taste in his mouth. It was Tyler. Liam smiled, "Well well, I never thought I'd see you come down here," he told the Lieutenant with a smile.

"I thought I would bring the love of my life lunch" Tyler replied.

Tyler then planted another kiss on Liam's pink kissable lips. Watching his eyes go wide in both surprise and pleasure.

Liam was shocked that Tyler was so openly displaying his affection for Liam in public like this. Liam was not usually comfortable displaying this much affection in front of his peers. "Aww, how sweet of you," he told Tyler.

Vorrان could see Liam's discomfort. "Don't worry about them they are just jealous." Tyler said in a hushed tone

"Hope you like turkey." Tyler said looking at the container he handed to Liam.

Liam smiled as he took the container and placed it down at his console. He then stood up and got a chair for Tyler to sit in. "So, how has your day been?" he asked as he sat down himself and opened up the container to begin digging in to this thoughtful lunch Tyler brought him.

"My day has been uneventful, duty rosters, systems status reports." Tyler replied. Tyler's whole body felt warm and relaxed just being near Liam. How did he get so lucky to meet someone as amazing as Liam?

Liam monitored his panel as he took the first bite of the turkey sandwich. As he chewed, his hand moved quickly across the dashboard. He wanted to eat and spend some time with Tyler, but he wouldn't be able to if this diagnostic failed and he'd have to do it again. With a few beeps and bites later, he finished the diagnostic. "Okay, I'm all yours now," he said turning to Tyler and smiling.

Tyler without Liam seeing gave the thumbs up to crewman Stevens. Stevens hit a button near the warp core and steam started spewing from a conduit nearby. An alarm sounded in engineering with the computer voice. "Warp core breach in two minutes."

Hearing that dreadful but familiar siren, Liam tensed up. He dropped his sandwich in the container and sprung up. He ran towards the warp core and checked to see what the problem was. Once he was sure, he slid under the railing and opened up a bulkhead. "Uhhh," he said, his mind rushing through the possible solutions. "Alright, I'm going to try decoupling the dilithium matrix, hopefully that'll do it," he said sweating and proceeding on to prevent the breach.

Tyler rushed over with him and as Liam opened the dilithium matrix a small black box fell out. The steam stopped and the alarms stopped.

Liam was short of breath, he was shaking in nervousness. Did he stop it? He wasn't entirely sure. When he saw Tyler rushing over, he had hoped everything was okay.

Tyler picked up the box and got down on one knee in front of Liam.

Liam slowly grabbed the railing to support his ascent to the other side of the warp core. He still wasn't entirely sure what was going on, the adrenaline was messing with his mind.

"Liam, you're the most beautiful man in the galaxy and I love you with all my heart." Tyler opened the box showing two basic rings made of tungsten. "Liam will you marry me?"

Liam's mouth slowly dropped and his eyes widened looking down at the rings while listening to Tyler. He wasn't sure what to say. He gulped nervously, but couldn't help but to smile at Tyler. He knew that he loved Tyler and he knew that he wanted to spend the rest of his life with Tyler, but their relationship seemed to be moving so fast. He took a deep breath and time froze around him. He thought deeply about his next actions, what else he was going to say, and

then slowly nodded his head. "Yes," he muttered as he broke down into tears of joy, "Yes!" he exclaimed running into Tyler's arms and holding him tightly.

Tyler kissed Liam and held him tight as the engineering crew were all applauding. It didn't take much convincing to get Stevens to set up the pyrotechnics and stash the rings.

Tyler slid the engagement ring onto Liam's left ring finger. Planting a kiss on his hand afterwards.

After he finished applauding, Stevens walked over to the the two men with a bottle of champagne and handed it to them. "Congratulations," he told them as he smiled and took a step back.

Liam was still crying and emotional as he too slipped the ring onto Tyler's finger. He took the bottle of champagne and twisted off the foil around the cork, then he popped the cork off allowing it to shoot up into the air and form to spread around the floor. As he did, he couldn't help but smile at Tyler.

Tyler grabbed two flutes from Stevens and poured the champagne. "Engagement party at 1900 in the crew lounge!!!" Tyler shouted as tears ran down his own cheeks.

When Tyler finished pouring the champagne, Liam began to passionately kiss Tyler. He still couldn't believe what just happened. Everything seemed so surreal.

"I love you Liam" "If you feel this is sudden, don't worry we can take as much time as you want to set a date." "This just announces to the universe that we are together." Tyler then resumed kissing Liam and closed his eyes.

"I think that works out perfectly. I don't want to rush into it. Plus, I want our wedding to be perfect. Oh, and where should we go on our honeymoon?" Liam asked, getting more excited at the entire prospect.

Tyler heard a humming sound and tingling and when he opened his eyes they were in their quarters.

As the blue lines dissipated around them, Liam saw where they had been transported. He closed his eyes and enjoyed the time he spent with Tyler, knowing deep down that he had made the right choice.

## The things we need to do

by Ryoko Takato & Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrn & Lieutenant JG Valok Larel & Lieutenant JG Liam Harrison & Lieutenant JG Scott Erickson & 1st Lieutenant Meera Deloria

### Sut HabmoHwl' mupwl' - Main Area

The teams arrived at the main area of the station. It was very Klingonish, what was expected as the tournament was already firing up. Houses representative were bragging up and others were here for show or to trade their goods. Others were here to make new connections. The Tornado was at this current moment no place to be and Darg wanted them on the station to investigate any kind of activity that could sever the relationships on any degree.

Ryoko took a deep breath and turned towards her team's "Well things are going to begin right now. Klingons and their alliances are here, so that would mean Gorn and Tholians walking about. We don't stand that great with them and any aggression is to be prevented at all cost" She looked at Tyler "You got Savello and Erickson to investigate the east side of the area. Darg said that there was more culture interaction and thus people might easier speak there. I got Harrison, Larel and Deloria, we are going towards the tournament itself and be entering at a certain degree. Beating the crap out of these 'dogs' as they would say is my specialty and Harrison most common problem" Looking at Harrison "Not a word about switching teams, you are going with me"

Liam gave Tyler a disappointed glare before turning his attention to the Captain after her last comment. He scoffed at her before crossing his arms and turning to get a look at the station's interior. It was quite a spiteful move on the part of the Captain to divide Liam and Tyler, but Liam knew that the Captain was quite a feisty and moody person.

Tyler gave the captain a harsh look after she announced the assignments. She better not let anything happen to Liam in those tournaments. "Yes, Captain" Tyler replied

The ships computer showed there were some less than savory establishments which would be a good starting point.

"Savello and Erickson, you're with me" Tyler said

Meera Deloria stood out amongst the other Starfleet officers present, mostly because she'd donned field fatigues as opposed to the more normal uniform. Hey, if she was going to get into combat tournaments, she would rather be doing it dressed in Marine field wear, uniforms designed to fight while worn on the battlefield, than the more 'neat' and 'orderly' standard uniform. "Aye Aye Ma'am." She said, harness belt on over the jacket, but the holster that was worn on it only carried the light phase pistol, which was currently powered off, for respect of course. Never mind that she had her combat knife worn as well since you spend enough time on a Klingon ship during the Dominion War, you kept yourself armed with a blade, just in case someone got too rowdy.

Erickson nodded and did a final check of his equipment. His low profile tricorder on one side, hie stand issue phaser on the other side. As well as a small tool kit with standard intelligence gather abilities and some other tools from his time as a infiltration specialists. "What are our orders if we are attacked by a Tholian or Breen?" he asked.

"We need to keep a low profile and avoid confrontation if possible." "If you are attacked you can defend yourself but with non-leathal force" Tyler replied

Scott nodded and made a mental not to lock his phaser on stun.

Ryoko nodded towards her first officer and spoke "That and Darg Security here has been told to keep an eye out for us. If things get ugly we are not on our own. But for Federation sake, try to avoid it"

Valok checked the phaser on his hip subtly, and waited for further orders. He would never admit it, but he was a bit nervous being on the mission. He had just come aboard, and hadn't had time to settle in. Now here he was, part of a mission on a strange station.

Seeing that no one had questions Ryoko looked at Tyler and gave him a sincere nod of succes "Move out" She said as the two teams split, one for some bashing and another for some gathering of information.

# Wrong Side of Heaven

by 1st Lieutenant Meera Deloria & Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrان

## Tornado Holodeck-A

2 Days before Mission Briefing [Program Dated 2375]

Phaser fire streaked through the sky, the mixture of Federation issue and Jem'Hadar weapons giving one a rough idea of the fighting direction. And it was decidedly against the Federation. Something more solid flew through the air towards where the Federation lines were, before an explosion ripped into the lines.

"Computer, pause." Came a voice, and walking amidst the carnage was a woman in regular uniform, a Sergeant's pips on her collar of green, only contrasted against her skin by it's much brighter shade. The figure walked towards the Federation position, and lowered herself to a knee, looking at the face of the one of the wounded from the grenade's explosion.

"Edwards. You were by far one of the craziest sonsabitch I've had the honor of knowing." Sergeant Meera said, sighing as she clapped on the hologram's shoulder. Officially, the report labeled him KIA from the grenade blast, which was as faithfully recreated in this holoprogram as possible. Just as many mission reports were, for review from those with the wonder of hindsight and the like. Meera, however, had this for a different reason. She had a small song playing in an ear piece she had in her ear, a song from a long dead band from Earth.

In a way, the song spoke of what she'd felt during the Dominion war. After all, while she may not believe in the Christian belief of life after death... In a way, she doubted she was bound for any place worthy of the title of 'heaven'. She'd forever be on the wrong side of it, afflicted by what she'd gone through, forever changed. It'd been Edward who introduced her to a fair bit of older Human historical entertainment materials. He'd been one of the few she'd known since Basic Training at West Point.

For her, this was a chance, as it'd been every time she'd revisited it, to look at this point in her life, the point she hit her emotional limit, and nearly broke. In a way, she had broken. While she didn't suffer PTSD like others, at least, not as severely, she still couldn't bring herself to leave these 5 months of grim survival behind. There'd be times when she's listening to a song and suddenly reminded of Edwards, which quickly reminded her of this moment.

Vorrان entered the Holodeck in what appeared to be a battle from the dominion war. He notices Meera standing in the midst of the battle not even noticing his arrival. "Meera?" Vorrان asked.

Meera looked over as she heard her name. She snapped to attention and gave Vorrان a quick salute. "Sir. Sorry, have I run my 2 hour's of time in the holodeck already?" She asked, pulling out the ear piece and tapping it, though the lines of 'Right or Wrong, I can hardly tell!' manage to be heard out of it before stopping.

"We were supposed to meet in the crew lounge twenty minutes ago." Vorrان said. "Dominion war?" Vorrان asked looking around.

"Yeah. Siege of AR-558. I was one of the Marines on the ground during it." Meera said, looking around. "This was the position I was holding. It rested opposite the location that Captain Sisko and his people helped reinforce 2 months later." She states.

"I remember reading about it at the academy." "They used subspace mines to inflict heavy losses on the starfleet garrison." Vorrان said.

Meera sighed, and nodded. "Houdini's someone nicknamed 'em. Fucking nightmare. And the fact that for you it was just text in a book..." She says, sighing and looking around. "For me, for 5 months, this was life. Hell wrapped in a series of dead end canyons that only brought death and pain."

"I entered the academy two years after the war." Vorrان replied

Vorrان looked around at the desolate landscape, signs of war, to think he had just missed this.

"What is the purpose of the program?" "Are we going to take part in the battle?" Vorrان asked

Meera shook her head rather quickly. "No no, nothing of the sort. I was in observer mode. As for the program, this is the mission report recreation that was used to review the battle after we finally were able to pull out once a relief force landed. Both to judge if what we'd done was right, and how to potentially prevent similar situations." Meera explained, gesturing to the sight. "I was on this section of the line, opposite the main canyon. And while it was brutal for us, those bastards deployed to the main line had it worse than us."

Vorrان continued to take in the warzone around him. The Jem'Hadar were brutal, bred to be killing machines. "The Dominion did not pull any punches, the casualties were severe during the Siege." Vorrان said

"How long were you deployed to AR-558?" Vorrان asked.

"I was part of the original troop deployment there. It was supposed to be only a 90 day deployment before the next unit was cycled in. It instead became a long grueling 5 months of brutal close quarters combat against a determined and unrelenting enemy." Meera says. Walking over to the Federation line, she sighed.

"The man you see appearing to slam into the rock from that explosion, was Sergeant Brian Edwards. He'd gone through Basic Training with me at West Point. We'd been in the same units, despite him gaining rank faster. I was still a Lance Corporal during this battle." Meera explained. "The Vulcan here, was Lieutenant Bri'leck. He wasn't a Marine, he was Starfleet. He however, had gotten assigned to us because our LT had been shot by a Jem'Hadar sniper in our last deployment. The hating of guts was mutual both ways." She stated, chuckling. "He, didn't make it past this battle either." She finishes, sighing. "Not many of us did. We were strung out, worn out, and frankly, over taxed, over those five months. That any of us walked away was a miracle." She says, standing up and looking around.

"Edwards always said, we were born in this Galaxy to suffer for misdeeds we'd done in our previous lives. The guy was big on reincarnation. But this siege, if there is another life waiting for him, for us... I hope Edwards got a better one." She finalizes.

"All those deaths....only for AR-558 to be retaken when the breen entered the war." Vorrان said

"That's war for you Lieutenant." Meera said, shrugging. "It is what it is."

"The quadrant will take decades to recover from the devastation of the dominion war. The Cardassians also paid a price for their ill fated time with the dominion." Vorrان said looking around.

Meera chuckled. "Oh, they know. I was one of the Marines who put boots on the ground on Cardassia after they went guerrilla warfare on the Dominion, and got themselves blasted from low orbit. Dominion didn't take failure or betrayal well."

"No they certainly did not. Are you going to continue the program?" Vorrان asked

"You sure you want to be present? It isn't exactly the nicest thing to watch over. I'm pretty sure most of what you learned of it was dry and 'clean'." Meera replied.

"It's part of history and it would be more accurate from your perspective." Vorrان replied.

"Alright Sir." Meera replied, nodding, and taking a deep breath. "Computer, resume." She stated, as the explosion resumed, the screams of the wounded, the roars of the survivors. The chaos of war surrounded the two, took Meera back, to that hell. Soon her holographic representation was dashing low behind the Federation's line of cover, and pulling the wounded away. The uniforms of just about every Federation personnel there was scorched or coated in dirt, the only thing that had her stick out was her skin color, darkened as it was.

"CORPSMAN!" Her voice, cracked and worn, echoed over the Federation line, but there was no reply, no reaction. Meera herself growled, looked at the corpse of the man she'd been in the Marine with from day one, and spat out a curse in Orion, before reaffirming her grip on her rifle and returning to the line, bracing herself against the barrier that existed between her and the oncoming fire of the Jem'Hadar.

Soon the enemy came into sight, apparently emboldened by the grenade's success, only to run headlong into a line of grim faced, unyielding resolve. Unstoppable force, meeting Unmovable will. The resulting clash was fast and furious, Federation Marines pulling combat knives off their uniforms while Starfleet officers used their rifles to fight the close quarter's combat that resulted as the press of Jem'Hadar reached and pushed over the defenses. If the two had not been in observer mode, they would have been splashed with the blood of at least a half dozen different race's. Here Vorrان got to witness the brutal efficiency of Marine CQC, the fast violent strikes, precision thrusts of their knives, and brutal attacks with terrain and body blows to render their enemy more vulnerable to attacks.

After what felt like ages, but couldn't have been more than a minute, the surviving Jem'Hadar were falling back, firing at the surviving Federation soldiers, and more importantly, the quickly placed bodies, the goal apparently to deny the Federation troops 'reinforcing' material for their barrier. Once the Jem'Hadar had fled back down the canyon, the Federation troops slumped against the barrier, quietly talking and passing around water and rations.

"Lost Edwards, Grontic, Undewin, and Fredricks. Starfleet losses were a little higher." The Vulcan Bre'leck said a short time later, a small field PADD in his hand as he tallied what happened. "Lance Corporal, you're now acting NCO of the Marines." He stated flatly, getting a small tired nod from the Meera of this battle. "Aye aye sir. Alright people, police yourselves. Check power packs, check armor, if any of the dead have usable kit, use it. They serve no purpose on the dead." Corporal Meera said, walking over to the corpse of her friend, and grabbing the packs for his rifle, his rations and his canteen. Her armor was still in relatively decent shape, so she had no need for Edwards'. "They'll be back folks,



let's make sure we're ready for them." She states, walking back to the barricade and slumping against it, checking over her own gear, and throwing aside a couple of power units that looked over-abused.

Sergeant Meera sighed, and looked around. "There weren't further incursions this way for the rest of the day. But once per day, we faced off against another assault. Thankfully, for every person we lost, we cost them 3. But we couldn't maintain our numbers like they could. Not without any way to resupply or even reinforce our unit. But by the grace of whatever deity was watching over us, neither could the Jem's. The space above was too contested."

"The chin'toka system is a graveyard of debris and destroyed starships from the war. Your unit did well to hold out against such an onslaught by the Jem'Hadar." Vorrn said.

"Maybe, but it often feels like we bleed for nothing at times." Meera said, sighing and looking around one last time. "Computer, end program."

Around them the canyon walls faded, before the entire hologram vanished. "Anyways, let's get to the Crew Lounge. I'd rather not get into too much trouble for being later than I already am." She says, giving a small smile before stepping out of the holodeck.

# Investigations

by Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrان & Lieutenant JG Jonas Savello & Lieutenant JG Scott Erickson

## Sut HabmoHwl' mupwl' – Markets

Vorrان, Erickson and, Savello made their way toward the Eastern side of the station containing the markets. Vorrان turned to Erickson "Do you have any contacts in this part of the station?"

"Yes, she's not scheduled to be on the station until the end of the week. She's a freighter captain." Erickson said thinking of Lakara. He had first meet her while he was stationed on DS9 before his first major assignment in the Gama Quadrant. "Her sister may still live here, however."

"Erickson see if you can confirm that. There is a com panel over there you can use." Vorrان said

"Aye," Scott said and moved to the com panel. He searched his memory for the correct information and attached a white noise generator to the comm panel to ensure only him and the person he was speaking too could be heard. "Akil," Scott said.

"Oh my Scotty, you are still looking good as ever. What bring you to this side of the galaxy?"

"My crew and I are seeking information. I don't have many informants on the this side of the Beta quadrant."

"Right you are, you still have a nice smile," the Klingon replied.

Scott deciphered the code in his head before replying, "Thanks, but it is not as lovely as yours."

She smiled, "Meet me in my quarters in 30 minutes and I'll see what I can help you with." She blew him a kiss and ended the transmutation.

He took the device off the comm panel and returned to Vorrان, "She's not be able to help us. With the code she said, she's been made already and she's leaving her room in 30 seconds." Scott said.

"So much for that idea." Vorrان said

Vorrان turned to Savello, "Jonas, in all your years have you been here before or perhaps know anyone that could provide us with information?" Vorrان asked

"Most of the Klingons I met here have died in battle. I doubt there would be any one else alive who'd remember me. I came here nearly 300 years ago." Savello walked halfway toward the center of the area, "Much has changed since I've been here. But I do recall that there used to be guard towers over this section of the Base."

Savello looked above and along the bulkheads. The walls were smooth with no sign of any structure attached nor any catwalks

that would run along any area of surveillance. "Either they were taken down or, their highly concealed, cloaked like a duck blind."

"We'll have to keep in mind we may be watched from those towers. Let's head toward the produce shop its run by House Irgh and they may be willing to talk." Vorrان said pointing toward the storefront.

"I'll scan for cloaked energy readings." Erickson said taking out his tricorder and setting it for passive scans.

Vorrان walked toward the produce stand and came face to face with an older Klingon wearing the crest of house Irgh.

"Excuse me? I was hoping to ask you....." Before Vorrان could finish the Klingon pulled his dak'tagh.

"Starfleet!!! Be gone! I have nothing to say to you and your kind are not welcome here." The Klingon said with venom.

Vorrان backing away from the angry Klingon turned to Savello and Erickson.

"I'm thinking we may need a stealthier approach after that warm welcome." Vorrان said

"Agreed. We should have disguised our attire and worn regular clothing." Scott said he removed his hand from his phaser.

"Well I think its a little late for that. Do you think you could crack their computer if I distracted them? Vorrان said

Scott looked at the computer from this distance he could tell the made and model. It would be a simple process. "Yeah. I can access it without physically touching it. Just make sure he stays close enough so the system won't lock out while his back is turned." He pulled out a small padd from his uniform pants and used his tricorder to act as a link between the outdated computer system and his padd. "I'm ready when you are. It'll take me about a minute to access and download the content of his drives."

"Alright let me see what kind of distraction I can create." Vorrان said as he looked around. His gaze settled on a Gorn that was just outside the produce shop. Vorrان walked up behind the Gorn and tapped his shoulder.

The Gorn turned and looked at Vorrان. "Yesssss?" the gorn asked "I just want you to know this is not personal I just figure you would make a good diversion." Vorrان then punched the Gorn which had little effect.

Scott got to work and was able to sneak into the system without much difficulty. The thing about Klingon tech is that's made to be dummy proof. Scott thought to himself. He looked up toward Vorrان as his hits against the Gorn completely failed.

Vorrان came crashing through the doorway of the produce shop landing on a display of fruit. The Klingon shopkeeper came running over shouting in Klingon. "Hope this is a big enough distraction." Vorrان muttered as he tried to catch his breath.

"A few more minutes." Erickson said to himself he got into the system and began downloading its contents.

Vorrان coughed and started getting up when he felt himself being lifted from behind. The Gorn picked him up over his head and tossed him through the window of the shop. Vorrان felt the glass cut his forehead and cheek as he landed with a thud.

"You've got to be \*cough\* kidding me?" Vorrان said as he got up from his rough landing feeling very sore.

"Erickson hurry up! Jonas can help you." Vorrان said between coughs as he got up.

"I'm done." Scott said. He closed the connection and quickly stored his gear. He looked the Gorn up and down and figured a best maneuver to disable him without causing to much damage. He launched himself forward into a high spin and connected the back of his boot with the Gorn's head. Hopefully with enough force to knock him out.

The Gorn staggered and fell just missing Vorrان. "Let's get out of here before he wakes up." Vorrان said

Scott nodded and helped Vorrان up. "we should get you checked out too."

Vorrان coughed as Scott helped him up. "Yeah I feel like I just went toe to toe with an angry Gorn..." Vorrان said his gaze landing on the unconscious Gorn next to him. "Right, well let's head back toward the docking area we can find a Klingon sawbones to patch me up." Vorrان said as they headed back the way they came.

# Fight Club, Trekish Style

by Ryoko Takato & Lieutenant JG Valok Larel & Lieutenant JG Liam Harrison & 1st Lieutenant Meera Deloria

## Brawl Arena

Entering the Brawl Arena was quite impressive, lots of combat houses and guest were standing there talking with potential candidates that could win. Taking a deep breath, she looked at her team "Well so far I know from Darg is that we are going to enter with 3 people, doc you got to fix us up how bad it is going to look...do your best"

Liam was nervous, to say the least. Part of the reason why he joined the Computer Science field of Starfleet was so he wouldn't be forced into compromising situations like the one he was in now. He gulped as he looked around at the other men and women in the room, most of whom had been training for this day for months, if not years. It was quite obvious who didn't fit in with the rest. Liam chose to stick near Sergeant Deloria. He knew he could trust her and they would be much stronger in numbers. As they walked, he continually glared at his Captain in hatred for not only separating him from Tyler, but putting Liam on her team.

Meera Deloria hadn't been in a situation like this in years. Surrounded by those who's focus is combat, and the victory of such. She was home again. A Marine in the field was a Marine doing their job. Her focus of course, wasn't passively admiring the sights, she was scaling up the people, searching for weaknesses or vulnerabilities. Unfortunately, this did NOT prepare her for when a Klingon broke rank with her companions to come over to the Starfleet team, and promptly slammed the Marine on the back, staggering her a few steps.

"Deloria! I wondered if I'd ever see your green face again! Last I heard you were stuck in some backwater assignment for some stupid reason! And I see you've another stripe on your collar! Congratulations!" D'LeifyaM called out, whilst Meera rubbed her back a few moments.

"Yeah, yeah I did. Captain, D'LeifyaM of House Newark. I served on her ship, the IKS Re'Gah, for a short time during the Dominion War. Captain D'LeifyaM, Captain Ryoko Takato, my new CO." Meera stated, sighing a slight bit. She'd HOPED to avoid this particular Klingon till at least AFTER the arena started up.

Ryoko looked at the Klingon and nodded "Greetings Captain Takato of the Tornado, don't want to be awkward but I am itching for a fight so we gotta go" Was her way to get out of this situation. Thought her thinking would fit the Klingons well as the fights were indeed going to start soon

Valok smiled slightly as he moved to the side of the arena, understanding his role in the proceedings. He had wished he would have had time to catch up on the finer details of the mission, but that wasn't to be. He knew once things had calmed down, he would need to speak with Takoto officially. For now, he would do his job, patching up his crewmates and scheduling up more intensive surgeries and repairs once they were back on the ship. He wasn't normally shy among people, but being thrown into the intense mission, he kind of felt at a loss. Shaking his head to clear his doubts, he began double checking the contents of his large medkits, preparing for the worst.

D'LeifyaM grinned and nodded. "Indeed! Should be a sight to watch Meera in combat once more." The Klingon says, letting the group move on.

Meera looked over to the Captain, and gave a small sigh. "Sorry about that Captain. I had kind of hoped to avoid meeting her until AFTER the Arena matches."

"Its okay, I might see some 'friendly' faces also" Ryoko said with a shrug as they continue towards the fighting area.

## Rumors and Lies

by Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrان & Ryoko Takato & Lieutenant JG Jonas Savello & Lieutenant JG Scott Erickson  
Sut HabmoHwl' mupwl' Central Corridor

Vorrان, Erickson, and Savello were making their way through the central corridor of the station. The central corridor leads to the docking area and the festival. "Scott and Jonas, when we get back to the docking area see if you can decrypt the data." Vorrان said while wincing in pain as they walked.

"I can decode it with the help of the Tornado's computer." Scott said. "Jonas can help you get treated at medical. I'll send you a copy of what I find sir."

"Alright Scott go on ahead" Vorrان replied

Turning to Jonas. "Let's see if we can find a Klingon doctor or our Chief Medical Officer. I'd rather not deal with the EMH." Vorrان said.

Scott nodded and used the site to site transport to get into the intelligence officer onboard.

"Agreed," Jonas reached out to help Vorrان to step over a strange short platform that separated one section to the next. "Up until fifty years ago the Klingon's didn't have a word for 'doctor'. 'Healer' closest to it. They were butchers, like ancient Terran barbers."

He lead Vorrان down a corridor to a lift, "According to the key on the bulkhead the Infirmary is on Deck 2. Hopefully, they won't take too much blood from you."

"Alright, I'd rather the blood letting than the attitude from the EMH." Vorrان replied as they made their way toward a turbolift.

Vorrان tapped his communicator. "Vorrان to Takato."

"Takato here"

"Erickson is headed back to the ship to decode some data we obtained. Savello and I are enroute to the station infirmary."

"Infirmary, really? Already injured..."

"I sustained some injuries during the acquisition of the data."

Vorrان replied

"Understood, try to gain information from the infirmary. Good luck on their healing methods. Takato out"

"I wonder what she meant by good luck with their healing methods?" Vorrان muttered.

Vorrان saw what looked like an infirmary up ahead which surprisingly didn't look too crowded. Klingons must really like having their battle scars.

"I think this is the place Jonas" Vorrان said as they entered the infirmary.

# Sawbones

by Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrان & Lieutenant JG Jonas Savello

Sut HabmoHwl' mupwl' – Infirmary

Tyler sat down in the waiting area of the dimly lit infirmary. The waiting area consisted of some dilapidated chairs and large door that led to the exam and treatment area. There were several Klingons waiting to be seen as well. They were bleeding from lacerations no doubt inflicted during the tournaments. A deep male klingon voice could be heard screaming in pain beyond the door to the treatment area.

Tyler looked at Savello. "Maybe I would be better off with the EMH."

"Actually," Jonas said, "The healers here are some of the best in the Empire. Or so they say." Another scream from behind the door made him wince. "Meh, that guy is a vavDaj qoH." He placed an assured hand on Tyler's shoulder. "You'll be fine."

A rather imposing Klingon entered from the back room wearing what looked like an apron. There were pink stains presumably from Klingon blood. "Next!" The Klingon called out.

Tyler made his way toward the Klingon doctor. "Have a seat on the table, human. My name is Kreg."

Tyler sat down on the table which was equipped with restraints. "Thanks, I'm Lieutenant Tyler Vorrان." He offered as Kreg pulled out what appeared to be a scanner.

"Hmm looks like some contusions and two fractured ribs. Hold still while I mend the ribs." Kreg said gruffly as he began moving another instrument over Tyler's chest. Tyler's chest hurt as the instrument started to work. "Oh yeah, this will hurt." Kreg muttered

"So many combat injuries come through my door. Stab wounds, burns, broken bones, and amputations." Kreg said as he carried on with his work.

"The festival?" Vorrان asked

Kreg shrugged. "Actually I've had a number of Warriors from the House of Lo'Rok with combat injuries. Many from before the festival even began."

Vorrان noted the doctor's information. Why would the house of Lo'Rok have so many combat injuries?

"Your ribs are mended, they will be sore for a few days." Kreg said as he put his instruments away.

"Thank you Doctor" Vorrان replied as he got up from the exam table.

Kreg grunted as Vorrان departed the Klingon infirmary.

# Chasing the data

by Lieutenant JG Scott Erickson & Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrان

USS Tornado, Intelligence office, Deck 3

Scott entered the intelligence office and began to download the contents of his drive to the main computer and began processing the data. He ordered a coffee and a protein bar from the replicator before sitting down to analyze the information at hand. He had to hand it the Klingons the level of encryptions is basic compared to the same level that the Federation uses. Within the hour he was able to break into the most secure data he had downloaded.

"Computer activate Catalog Data program E-224."

The computer beeped in acknowledgement. Scott attached his visor over his eyes as the computer began the organizations program based on highest to lowest he started to high light information and build a summery of the data.

He worked in silence for the better part of hour. He would occasionally stand and stretch while he read the information. After another hour he had build up a small database with relevant information on there current mission. If he found anything that seems altered he would compare to Starfleet's long range scans of this sector and queue other information for specifics once he could make a secure connection to Starfleet intelligence and gain information from other operatives in the area.

So far the only thing that looked interesting was several klingon doctor reporting an increase in injuries from Lo'Rok solders coming back from there 'patrols'. He flagged the information to look over the details of the injuries later. He drank more coffee before continuing.

He opened another data entry and started reading. "Whoa." He said.

It was a full log reported from a first mate on a Klingon bird of prey. It started of with and overview of the flight plan followed by scans of other raptors with orders from the house of Lo'rok to begin raids following a cat and mouse scenario the targets were a set of cargo ships and personal transporters from House of Darg's territory. They had standing orders to kill all witnesses and destroy information leading back to Lo'rok. A full manifest of goods was also listed as well as a partial passenger manifest of several other transports. He keep looking deeper into the information and found a partially completed flight plan for the next raid.

This is the information that he was looking for. The decoded information was hidden in a star chart. To untrained eye would have missed interrupted the data by mission the obvious organization of the star cluster. Double checking with Starfleet stellar cartography records show the system to be distorted. There wasn't a sender or a transmission code for the data to be sent. It was just labeled as sector 321. The actual location of the current raids is in galactic south on the plan in sector 326.

The only thing missing was the big why factor. What caused the house of Lo'rok to attack the house of Darg? Was there something that they were looking for specifically? There had be some other motivating factor besides simple attack and raid. Scott pondered his thoughts for a moment. He reread the report with those thoughts in mind. Nothing stuck out behind the why. He concluded that he needed more information. Maybe if the bird of prey that started the raids was in the system he could remotely link and download the recent contents of the computer core. Or perhaps an away team and sneak in and download the data from the ship itself.

He marked the information as priority and began working on full report of his findings. Once he was complete he secured the information into the computer and removed his visors. He rushed out the office and suited for extra equipment. He figured he might need to extract more information so he added a secondary data transfer buffer to his belt and digital arm display that would allow him to work faster then by simply using his tricorder.

"Erickson to Vorrان I have a message for you and the captain sir,"

<Outside Klingon Infirmary>

Tyler was just leaving the Klingon Infirmary when the combadge chirped. He tapped the badge. "Vorrان here, Go."

"The data from the analysis you request is complete. I am making my way towards you now." Scott said. He ordered a second site to site transport to the location of Lieutenant Vorrان.

"Alright I will await your arrival. Vorrان out" Vorrان didn't have to wait long as he saw a figure materialize in front of him.

Scott handed him a PaDD with his findings. "How are your injuries sir?"

"I'm feeling better, the Klingons know what they are doing when it comes to combat related injuries." Vorrان replied as he started to look over the PaDD.

"I'm sure they are sir," Erickson said standing near the biobed. "I'm thinking an infiltration mission needs to be carried out sir," he said just low enough for Vorrnan to hear.

Vorrnan raised an eyebrow. "Erickson, the Klingons are our allies and we can ill afford an incident. What did you have in mind?"

"The ship that I found this information from is currently going a refit in near the lower levels. Passive scans from the Tornado indicate a skeleton crew are working on her right now." Scott informed him.

"Very well, work on a plan for the mission that we can present to the captain." Vorrnan replied

"Aye sir," Scott said nodding to him.



# Enter the Changeling

by Lieutenant Caradan Eunidas  
Changeling World, Space, DS9, Earth  
*Prior to Now*

At that moment, that precise moment when Caradan felt ashamed of her people's role in the war, that precise second when she decided that maybe they were at fault, as soon as it entered her thinking that maybe it was time to leave in an attempt to find herself, that was when all the others turned to her and shouted in one loud continuous voice. The message was unclear as all the words and thoughts and emotions came to her all at once, but the emotion was clear. In the stead of falling back into line, Caradan resolved herself to one other option. Leave.

An indeterminate amount of time had passed but among the waves of anger and resentment, an arm emerged and grabbed at the dirt along the shore, pulling. Another arm showed and did likewise. Grabbing dirt, the hand threw soil back to intermingle with the waves. There came a loud outcry in objection. A head came from the liquid, torso, leg, foot. All the while she continually pulled herself up the shore and away from the liquid. Once only her right foot remained in the liquid did Caradan find the most resistance from her people. That final tug proved the most difficult and she cursed her own kind. As her toe finally separated and became free, all the voices stopped, the floodwaters of emotion receded. The anger remained among the waves but it had become only what Caradan could see. No longer did all that emotion and thoughts wave over her attempting to drown out her desire to leave.

Caradan pulled herself up the shore then rested, face down in the dirt. She was not tired by any measure, just drained of her will and emotionally exhausted. No one joined her though virtually her entire race was only feet away.

Changelings never had much need for names. Seeing how she no longer had much need for the Great Link, not to mention being something of an outcast at this point, Caradan decided perhaps a name would be of use but would dwell on that at the appropriate time. She formed a shovel and dug a hole to regenerate in as she waited. It was either through unfortunate events or perhaps the cries of the others leading her astray, but Caradan drug herself up onto a small island surrounded by an ocean of the Great Link. She knew the appearance of the being called 'humanoid' and took that form. She was ill-experienced in taking on other shapes, knew that birds could fly, but did not know exactly how to mimic flight worthy creatures. Not fully ready to rejoin the others, she resided on that island for days, weeks, months, regenerated in that hole, and waited. Perhaps a year or more had passed.

During that time however, Caradan fully realized a terror that all Changelings wished to avoid at all costs. It was something that they did not know they were afraid of until they had experienced it. It was silence. The Great Link provided no avenue for privacy for sure but all knew what all the others knew. There was no need for rest in a pool of constant regeneration so none ever grew tiresome of the constant conversation, the constant hearing of voices throughout the Link. It was something Caradan herself was not wanting to get away from, just the sudden emergence of ridicule as she thought on their role in the Dominion War.

After the surrender at Cardassia, the Changelings that returned to the Great Link never spoke on the war and the rest remained quiet about it, never asking after it, as though no war had ever happened. Caradan decided they were ashamed of their loss, after existing so long as the peak of evolution and after commanding so many worlds and peoples. Now they were a defeated race, a single collective entity residing in a pool that few wanted to interact with again, that everyone resented because of the war, because the Changelings disappeared back to their world afterward, that they made few reparations to the damages done because of the war.

Caradan thought to make some reparation but nothing she could ever do would be enough, but she wanted to do her part still.

Stuck on this small island surrounded by an ocean of Changelings was not helping matters. She felt more like a prisoner than someone attempting to liberate themselves, that this island was her prison cell. Escape was always possible. All she had to do was re-enter the Great Link and rejoin her kind.

It was there that she encountered her terror; the silence. There were no voices, no one to commune with, no thoughts, nothing. Even a moment of silence appeared almost an eternity. At first, and after some days, Caradan wanted to weep but did not know how to. She flowed down the shore to the border between dry land and the ocean of Changelings, but stopped only centimeters from relinking. Not even the ocean reached out to her.

On many occasions, she stood there, sat there, lied there, rested there as a rock or a log and dwelt on relinking with her kind. The silence was nearly too great to endure any longer. Caradan longed for conversation, even one for her

not to partake in. She just wanted the noise of others around her. Outside the Great Link, surrounded by silence, was nothing but loneliness. This became the greatest terror she felt her kind would ever have to experience.

After so long of only the moving air making any form of noise did Caradan finally decide to fall into line and rejoin the other Changelings. This rebellious streak of hers was forcibly coming to an end. It was not herself that she wanted to find any longer, it was the Great Link that called out to her. She wanted to belong and to be surrounded by all that feeling once again.

As her finger was about to brush the surface of the ocean did something explode into existence. A thunderous roar came from the sky and, looking up, Caradan saw a ship slowing in the atmosphere, descending.

A motley survey team eventually happened along. Since the Dominion surrender at Cardassia in the Alpha Quadrant, the Changelings in the Great Link did not mind others dropping by and surveying. The Changelings just did not want to be messed with, have dirt thrown at them, have people flip coins into the liquid, but others could scan and discuss and theorize all they wanted. The Changelings just wanted to be left alone.

The ship proved to be a shuttle and it landed on the island along with her. Caradan stepped away from the Great Link and observed as people got out of the shuttle. Someone approached her immediately and stuck a device in her face. Caradan leaned back in a start and watched as the device waved about her face and over her body. Another person joined the first. They spoke in a tongue she did not understand. The first put the device away and drew another device, almost gun-like, pointed it at her and sent it toward Caradan's shoulder. She withdrew.

The second person stopped the first, said a few words then took the gun-like instrument and approached slowly, with soothing words, all the whilst showing the palm of her hand. Caradan allowed whatever this was to happen but watched with inquisitive eyes and ready to defend herself. The device touched her shoulder and made a noise. Caradan felt a drop of her being pulled away and she turned slapping the instrument away from her. The second withdrew and looked at a vial connected to the back of the device and shook it. The material inside turned into the natural liquid form of the Changelings. The second removed the vial and held it out to Caradan as though pouring that little bit of liquid back out to her. Caradan took it back realizing the second actually meant no harm, she was just exploring, studying, and attempting to understand.

The first and the second spoke at short length then seemed to offer Caradan a ride aboard their shuttle. She look from them to the shuttle, then back at the Great Link. The desire to rejoin her kind was still there, but a new avenue had suddenly opened up to her. She looked back at the shuttle, then to the two before her, then back at the Great Link. Neither the shuttle, the two offering her a ride, nor the Great Link made any move or further commotion either for or against any decision she was to make. This truly became Caradan's ultimate trial thus far. She needed to choose, on her own, her path, and no one seemed overly worrisome at whatever the result was going to be.

Out of both compassion and a desire for study, the survey team allowed Caradan to accompany them back into space and then to wherever. Someone, of a race she did not recognize speaking a language she never grew to understand, kept calling her "Kiritseleshina" which she later learned to mean "formless."

She allowed them to study her, play their puppet as long as it suited her and she performed all the tricks they wanted. Once she felt her indentured servitude measured out to equate them taking her away from her world, she left their company and bounced around many worlds in the Gamma Quadrant trying to find a place to be accepted and possibly call home. She went by many names, altered her look to be more like the natives, sometimes wild or domesticated animals, went by many different names, but never found any name, any form, any place, any gender in particular, or any peoples that suited her.

Only on a few occasions did she hitch a ride through the wormhole to the Alpha Quadrant, and always to a place called Deep Space 9. It was there that she heard about the organization her people were at war with those years ago. Yeah, the Dominion surrendered and peace fell across the stars again, but they were not exactly allies just yet. They were just...talking.

After spending some time on DS9 and seeing how the people there accepted her to an extent, as she understood one of her kind spent many years there as head of security, Caradan decided to put in an application to Starfleet. Afterall, why not? The worse they could do is say, 'No' and she would continue her search, as she fully expected.

The Starfleet personnel there objected at first and went above and beyond themselves to dissuade her from attempting this. She met with the appointed commanding officer numerous times and sent communiques back and forth for a long time as she continued to gallivant about the Gamma Quadrant. She interviewed on numerous occasions,

took tests, even seemed to have been interrogated once or twice but finally saw her repeated application inquiry be sent off toward a place called Sol. She was informed that a letter of disapproval was sent along with it by the commanding officer of Deep Space 9, and to not expect any response. At best, she was to expect a letter of rejection.

As it turned out though, she was later on a transport from a random world in the Gamma Quadrant back toward the wormhole. Caradan was narrowing down a list of names to use during her time on Earth. She gazed at her tablet still surprised at the letter of acceptance she received from Starfleet. The acceptance letter included the stipulation of her being an exchange personnel since her kind were not part of the United Federation of Planets. Her exchange status also included the status of refugee since she illustrated her home to be uninhabitable, was unable to find a home, and since Starfleet had received no word from the other Changelings regarding her application. In a sense, Starfleet became the only organization in the known galaxy to accept her. If it was not for Starfleet, she would have been homeless.

The name Caradan Eunidas stuck out in her mind. 'Car' is she decided on the form of a male and 'Cara' if she chose a female. Seeing humans had a propensity for middle names, she chose the first name anyone had ever given her, "Kiritseleshina". Understanding that many on Earth were probably still a little xenophobic of Changelings, Caradan chose a form which the humans would find pretty and soft; female. Hopefully the others would not accuse her of any form of subterfuge.

Using the front-facing camera of her tablet, she looked at herself and adjusted her appearance. She used an illustration of what many on Earth would consider beautiful. She wanted something to stick with, something unchanging. She did not want people's lingering suspicion of Changelings to cause any problems but she also did not want to appear overly human as though attempting to disappear among humanity. She had the full intention to maintain this appearance and to use none other, unless absolutely necessary. Her liquid form would of course be necessary for a while every day however.

As she raised her brow, lowered it, adjusted her cheek bones, eye color, hair, she heard a scoff from across the aisle of the transport vessel.

"Disgusting Shape-Changers," said a middle-aged lady, human. She was speaking in a low to voice to her male companion, husband perhaps. Low voices did not always keep the words from Caradan's ears, not that she actually heard with her ears but with her entire being.

Caradan decided her form was adequate enough and ceased further adjustment for the time being, ignored the lady and sat back just waiting for the trip to be over, though she always enjoyed her trips through the wormhole. Just once though, she wanted to experience it without anyone aboard having to express their distaste for Changelings.

Back on DS9, Caradan was met by a security officer as she stepped off the transport. She handed him her tablet displaying her itinerary in route to Earth.

"Miss Eunidas, I was informed of your arrival." The human perused the information on her tablet. "It must be quite an honor. In my knowledge you would be the first Changeling accepted to the Academy."

"It was a surprise to be true," she said flatly. "I pursued many options. This one opened up to me."

They strolled onto the promenade and continued on toward another docking arm. The security officer did not say much else though it appeared he wanted. Caradan saw him open and close his mouth several times, like the first of many words was right on the tip of his tongue.

"Is there something you wish to say?"

"Just wanted to...say that...for security purposes..."

"To be open and cooperative. To maintain this form. Trust me I intend to."

"It's just that...there is still some resentment toward Changelings back on Earth. People do not forget war very easily. And I don't think Starfleet would just accept your application specifically for your benefit. They may want something in return."

"Believe me, I fully understand. I do hope to...sow the seeds of trust. I understand that is a human saying. Besides, nothing in life is easy."

"Everything worth working for is worth working hard for."

"And it is not like I can't take a hit." She exercised the use of her eyebrows. "Or a blade."

"Let's hope it doesn't come to that." They rounded a corner. "Just ahead is the USS Grissom an Ambassador Class ship soon departing for Earth. Your layover should not be too long. I suggest you get aboard, make yourself comfortable."

Caradan looked out the window and saw the ship docked outside. "I think I have a long road ahead of me."

“You are a Starfleet Cadet now Miss Eunidas. The roads are rarely short.”

Caradan boarded the ship after a scan, some questions, another scan, word being sent to the captain, security showing up, and being given a special commbadge she was to have on her at all times. She met only some of the people travelling, but kept to herself for most of the journey, not to mention remaining in her quarters nearly all of the time.

Her arrival at Starfleet was met with much of the same events as she experienced when boarding the starship; scans, questions and security. It was all made complete with a special commbadge she was to have on her at all times. To the surprise of the commanding officer she met, Caradan handed him a PADD with a contract she drew up herself with her signature already on it, just awaiting some witnesses.

In the contract, Caradan limited herself to only two forms while outside of her own quarters. She would either take her current humanoid form or her natural form if needed. Other than that, she forbade herself any other forms unless with the expressed permission of her superiors or by their command. She also included her agreement to all scans and tests as well as having to check in regularly, not that her special commbadge was not going to do that for her.

Her time on Earth proved tolerable. Starfleet itself was open and inviting but the people were not so much. Her instructors had to be, though did show some restraint in their trust of her from time to time. Her course of study was engineering. Her marks were promising and her simulations showed much skill and dedication. Caradan gave up her free time to continue her simulations of Ambassador Class ships, Excelsior Class, Galaxy Class, even starfighters.

Though she was on occasion asked to go out on the town with some of her peers, she always declined and spent her time in study. Caradan did not make much ground in the way of friends even though any friendships she might have made there would not have lasted long upon graduation. There were a few however she recognized as legitimately trying to be friends. Caradan became so used to resentment and being an outcast, not to mention the few that would feign friendship in an attempt to trick her into situations from time to time. It became hard even for her to recognize the lines between those who were genuinely attempting and those who were simply feigning friendship.

Nonetheless, she spent many nights in the lounge or at nearby recreation areas. Not to take in any of the activities but to simply be surrounded by people and conversation. She had grown used to the resentment and looks of others but did not let even that bother her. As long as they spoke and made noise, it took away from the silence and brought back only a little bit of the feeling of belonging, of the Great Link.

Caradan understood that, sooner or later, she would have to surrender herself to the risk of letting someone in and to deal with whatever the outcome would prove to be. She would hope that outcome would be a desirable one. And that understanding came at a time when all others simply stopped trying with her, when she saw that graduation was only a few months away. It was a time when people stopped trying to make friends in general, focused on study, because they would soon be assigned to varying points throughout the quadrant.

And upon her day of graduation, Caradan saw just that. So many of her peers given assignments taking them far away from each other. She however had another big surprise displayed on her PADD. Her assignment was to report to a Rhode Island Class starship called the U.S.S. Tornado.

She certainly had not expected a Starship assignment yet. Caradan was preparing herself for a science vessel, something small, perhaps an insignificant posting, perhaps many years of desk work at Starfleet where her superiors could keep a close eye on her, nothing like this.

She allowed her face to form at least half of a smile. Were her marks and was her performance that impressive or was this another means to keep close tabs on her? During her time at the Academy, she agreed to partake in no other shapes than as the female that walked in on Day 1 as well as her natural state, she agreed to infrequent scans and tests, she agreed to play puppet the few times her superiors wanted to test some theories as to what shapes she could mimic and how much it was take to force her to show herself. She had hoped the times of playing puppet and all the distrust was over, that she had worked her way into the trust of others.

Caradan at least allowed herself to believe that her marks and performance, and perhaps a trust from among her superiors, was what granted her this starship assignment, which brought on her half smile.

# First Fight

by Ryoko Takato & Lieutenant JG Valok Larel & 1st Lieutenant Meera Deloria

## Arena

The team was waiting for everything to settle into place. They stuck together to avoid conflicts, but it was soon noticed that the first round was going to start. Three fields with hand to hand combat. Ryoko was ensured of their victory, but was unsure if the team was morally ready for it.

"Meera Doloria step in the ring and fight for honor and glory. Your combat opponent is Murl'ogh G'girk of the house G'girk" The judge spoke standing on field two.

With a quick breath, the Marine nodded. "Well, this ought to be fun." Meera stated, checking the looseness of her combat knife in its sheath, before walking into the ring in question. As she looked over to her opponent, she gave a small grin of confidence.

While it had been a long while since she did CQC with a Klingon, then it was purely for cross-operations training back during the Dominion War, she was pretty sure she'd be able to do well. While her stance seemed relaxed and almost casual, to anyone who'd be in combat would be able to tell she was tensed in a different fashion. That pre-combat tension of readiness to react to their opponent in a fashion to win. Her field uniform helped further reinforce this appearance with it's decidedly more martial feel over the normal Starfleet uniforms, designed with combat on the field of battle in mind, as opposed to the smooth and unobtrusive lines that the rest of those present from the Tornado wore.

The burly Klingon laughed a loud braying chortle and said "Who dares insult the great warrior Murl'ogh G'girk of the house G'girk by pitting me against this p'tak? And a female at that." Looking at Meera he affected a look of disgust "What color are you wench? Is that the color of sick targ manure?"

Meera merely smiles. Easing into a more combat ready stance, her hand moves to be ready to reach her knife on her belt. "If it's such an insult, why not remove it?" She taunts.

Not bothering to respond, G'girk swung at the woman's head with his mek'leth and followed it up by a jab with his d'k tahg. He would easily defeat the wench, and after doing so, make her one of his servants.

Stepping forward and ducking under the swing of the blade, Meera drew her knife in the same motion, slamming the base of her palm into G'girk's sword arm while bringing her own knife to the Klingon's throat. She felt the blade scrape into her side, but she was focused. Her next move was to hook one booted foot under his, and pull, seeking to throw the much bigger foe off, either off balance, or off his feet depending on the momentum.

The burly Klingon stumbled slightly, and growled to cover his weakness. Struggling to recover his composure, he tried to raise a spiked boot to kick her, but he lost his balance, and tumbled to his back like an old man. Dazed, he tried to get to his feet, not willing to allow himself to be bested by the wench.

Taking the opening given by the Klingon's tumble, Meera presses a knee against the Klingon's chest, and her combat knife against his throat. "You fight like a drunken old man. Should I go easy on you, for your sake?" She asked the Klingon, a confident smirk on her face.

G'grik smiled widely, showing his impressive teeth and without warning, grabbed her by the hair and the shoulder, and reversed their positions. Both of his blades pressed against her neck in a scissor like position. Laughing loudly he said "Do you honestly think I'm that bad of a warrior? I would never let myself be bested by a female. Do you submit, or should I cleave that head from your shoulders and use it as a soup bowl?"

Meera simply smiled. "Standard Klingon pin huh?" She says, and promptly slammed the hilt of her knife against the Klingon's wrist holding the sword, while also bringing a leg up to slam her boot in his head. As this happened, she twisted her head to make sure the blade didn't cut into her jugular veins, instead working to scrap the side of her neck. The goal of this break, was to disable one wrist, knock him off balance, and then slip out past the smaller blade.

Howling in pain, he jabbed at her chest with his wounded hand, hoping the spiked glove would cause some damage to her disgusting face. Snorting off the trail of blood running down his face, he shifted his weight, hoping to crush the breath out of her.

And that was what she was looking for as she twisted again, this time to slam her knife hilt into G'grik's gut. She took the hit, hissing in pain, but her focus was on subduing her foe. Sure, she could have hit his groin, but that was not only a cheap shot, but also an expected one. Of course, she quickly shifted her blade to nick the Klingon's dagger hand, her expression one of grim determination.

Feeling the rage boil through his veins, he dropped his dagger, and shifted forward until he was sitting on her chest. Hands bleeding, he reached for her throat and began to squeeze. He didn't care if he killed her or not, he just wanted to teach her not to disrespect a warrior of his caliber. Perhaps the Federation would be pleased to have such a disgrace out of their ranks?

Finally. Having enough presence of mind to sheath her knife, she grabbing ahold of the Klingon's wrists. At a glance, she was struggling to breath. Those who were more observant, would notice she was only pulling his hands far enough away, to act on them. "Rage is good. Focus, is better." She says with a grin, and twists on the cut wrist, while sharply snapping the battered wrist back, listening to the bones crunch as they were pushed past their limit on that wrist.

Screaming in unrestrained agony, he released her throat, and with his uninjured hand backhanded her across the face. He laughed at the blood running down her cheek and said "Have you had enough wench? Or do you want me to put you out of your misery so I can face a real challenger?"

"Nope. I'm just warming up." Meera says, grinning as she now grabs ahold of his broken wrist, and begins to apply pressure, using it to attempt to direct the Klingon off her and onto HIS knees.

Knowing he wouldn't be able to continue the battle without suffering dishonor for being beaten by a female, G'girk considered his options. The pain in his wrist was intense, and he wouldn't give the wench the satisfaction of brining him to his knees in pain. Painfully he wrenched his wrist from her grasp and fell to the ground beside her. Quietly, but loud enough for the referee and her to hear he said "I yield, there is no point wasting my efforts on his wench." Then to her, he added menacingly "The next time I see you wench, I will gut you like a wounded targ. Be warned that you will pay for the dishonor you have given me today." Rising to his feet without help, he slowly gathered his weapons, and left the arena, en route to the infirmary.

Standing up herself, Meera sighed, dusting off her uniform. Giving a respectful nod to the referee, she walked back to the Captain and crew. She looked a bit of a mess, covered in splashes of blood, a few nicks to her neck, but otherwise, seemed in good spirits. "He'll be back. Damn near dishonored him by beating him fair and square." She said, shrugging. "But, officially, we won the first round of fights."

Seeing how they won the first round, it was impressing some of the houses. Yet Ryoko could hear the growling of others and rather wanted to see them lose "Good work Sergeant, Doc could you check her?" Ryoko asked

Valok nodded and guided Meera to a nearby bench. Running his tricorder over her, he said "My scans don't show anything is broken, but you do have some serious contusions on many parts of your body and some wounds on your neck. Before I patch you up, are you experiencing any other pain?"

Meera settles on the couch, and just lets the doc do his thing. "Unless you got something for family headaches, nah, only pain I've got came from the Klingon this time around." She says, chuckling slightly and wincing a bit at the sting of the cut on her side as well. Hey, just because she won didn't mean she walked out without taking hits. She just made sure to give more than she got.

Ryoko looked over her shoulder as she gets the impression that Meera was holding herself together. But the next round was something else....something not expected.

## Tag Teams Ready...I think

by Ryoko Takato & Lieutenant JG Valok Larel & Lieutenant JG Liam Harrison & 1st Lieutenant Meera Deloria

### Arena

Few combat rounds of the first round was done, the losers disappear on transport or get dragged away by their house doctors. The brutality of the warriors and their code of honor was something Ryoko was used to "The first round is coming to a close, we have two more rounds to go and they are both very interesting" The referee looked at Ryoko as she narrows her eyes "This battle is by wish of its host a combo battle between these warriors Chezohl Gozh step forward"

Ryoko eyes glared at the woman that screamed in the area and walked forward all big and bad ass. Ryoko rolled her eyes as the Referee continued "K'etrak Hocus" She looked down to the bench as she felt something and seeing cup of water shake as a loud growl came and her focus was redirected towards that seeing a large 6ft 3 Klingon male step into the Arena and in his path destruction. Well people on the ground that he pushed away.

"Against Ryoko Takato, step into the ring" Darg that bastard let her fight against something psycho's like these two. Ryoko shrugs and steps forward "Liam Harrison, join your Captain" Ryoko eyes looked over her shoulder towards the stunned and surprised Liam "Crap..." She mutters.

Liam had watched the previous fights, observing movements and patterns, calculating attacks and defenses. He knew it was only a matter of time before he was called into the ring, but that didn't change how worried he was or how nervous he felt. The knots in his stomach made it almost unbearable to stand, and knowing who they were facing made it even harder.

Looking over at his Captain, Liam began to walk slowly over to the ring. He forced himself to make each step. At that moment, the only thing he could think about was how much he loathed Captain Takato for not letting him stay with his Tyler. As he stepped into the ring, he looked nervously at his Captain, and then to their opponents. The young Ensign was only 21. He had only been to a hand full of sectors. He was too young to die, so he'd have to make sure he wouldn't.

Ryoko smirks as she did not want him to suffer the pain that might play out in this "Hahaha, you ...you are puny and I will crack your skull for fun" The big Klingon said with a laugh and steps forward as Ryoko made a radical choice and steps before Liam "That puny boy is mine, back off baktag!!" The Klingon growls as the referee smiled "Liam stay behind me...for your own safety" She was really going to do this...fight both of them?

Liam did as he was told and stood behind his Captain. He wasn't used to fighting, in fact he hadn't been in a serious fight his entire life. However, he knew he could do something to fight back, if not kick and bite his way through. He had watched these two fight before, and he had watched their basic fighting moves, but he wasn't sure what to do if they did something new. "I'm ready whenever you need me, Captain," he told Ryoko with a quiet voice.

Nodding as the referee gave his approval to begin the fight. The large Klingon stepped forward towards Ryoko and tried to grab her. Ryoko knew that the moment he got her, it was all over and so she dodge as much as she could "Come here little woman, I will crack your spine!" The woman however went for Liam.

Liam wasn't sure if he could fight a woman or not. He raised his fists in a defensive fashion, to only protect himself from whatever the Klingon woman had to throw at him. He looked the woman straight in the eyes and saw the fierce fire that brewed inside her.

The Klingon woman saw the puny human's defensiveness and exploited his weaknesses. The first hit was to his stomach, which caused him to be defensive of the lower half of his body. The second was directly at his face and knocked him to the floor.

Vision blurred, blood staining the sparring mat, Liam looked up at the two Klingons, Captain Takato was now fighting alone. His nose was in pain and bleeding and he had heard something crack in his stomach, but he had so much adrenaline running through him and there was so much pain that his senses couldn't register it. Liam grabbed the mat and pushed himself up. Feeling a little woozy, he sprinted at the Klingon man holding his Captain. He built up all of the energy he had left and punched him directly in the face.

The large Klingon was growling and yet Ryoko got free as the other woman dragged Liam down to the mat letting him get an another smack "Little one I will break your bones" The Klingon woman said as she grabbed his leg. Yet on the moment that she wanted to do something very drastic to damage Liam she had her attention diverted "Hey, stay away from him!" When her face looked at the sound direction two legs clamp around her neck and with a barrel roll gets thrown out of the ring.

Ryoko had not much time to recover as the Klingon kicked her against the stomach letting her lift up in the air. The male Klingon grabbed her back and lifted her above his head "Now you pay human" Smashing her down onto the ground as clear cracks were heard "Argg..." Ryoko mentioned to get out feeling her bones getting slammed by gravity.

After the Captain had placed herself in front of Liam to protect him, a flame grew inside Liam when he saw what was happening to her. He took a few deep breaths and then charged at the large man. He didn't have a plan and he knew full well that he didn't stand a chance against him, but he'd do anything to make sure the Captain wasn't hurt too badly. Liam launched his entire body at the man. All 170 pounds grabbed the man from behind and Liam bit down hard on the man's neck.

The Klingon growls and tried to grab the little man from his back. Ryoko gasp air and notice the doctor wanted to interfere as she shook her head. She rolled onto her back feeling every rib in her body as her eyes looked up seeing Liam getting swing around while the big fella tried to grab him. She needed to do something, rolling back onto her stomach she coughs up some blood onto the floor as she made all her effort to slam the man against the back of his legs with her own "How bigger they are...." She yelled letting Liam notice what she was doing.

Liam wrapped his arms around the Klingon man and squeezed as tight as he could, but the man was fighting back, and he was fighting hard. When Liam heard his Captain talk, he glanced down at the resilient woman. She made her move against the man, and Liam immediately knew what she meant to do. He shifted his wait to move with the man and the combined forces pushed him down to the floor - right on top of Liam. "The harder they fall," he blurted out right before he coughed up blood and threw his body against the mat panting.

Ryoko was down, Liam was down, but so were the Klingons combatives. The referee looked at the destruction that was made in the ring, someone had to stand up and he was waiting. Ryoko opened her eyes and coughs some blood as she placed all of her energy into it. This was not the best way to do this but she put all her energy into it as she pushed herself up "The humans....win" With that Ryoko collapse onto the ground.

The Klingons brulls and cheered for the bravery they had put up. But both Ryoko and Liam would remember this for a while, yet they had to recover quickly and get ready for the next round.

Meera walked over to hte pair, and motioned for Doc to take Liam, she herself, slung the Captain's arm over her shoulder, and helped her step out of the ring. The only amusement of the victory was seeing the two Klingon's brush off any attempts at help, struggling to pull themselves out of the ring on their own power.

"Well Captain, I think you and Liam are down for the count and the last round. Doc! Don't let the Captain or the Ensign do anything too stupid. They made my hurts look like scraps on the hull." Meera said, glancing behind her towards the doctor.

Nodding to the Sargent, Valok began scanning both officers. He shook his head at the extent of their injuries. Quietly he said to both of them "My scans show you both have some small fractures and bruises, and also some minor cuts. I can patch you up, and give you something for the pain, but both of you will need some time in Sickbay to recover completely."

Rubbing her face as that was the only part that did not hurt her "Send Liam towards sickbay doc, patch me up as good as you can and both me and Meera will continue this rollercoaster" She looked at Meera "Not a word, I am going to do this...."

Sighing, he tapped his combadge and said "Larel to Tornado, lock on to Ensign Harrison's biosgins and beam him directly to Sickbay. Prepare an emergency team to see to his injuries. Larel out." Turning his attention back to the captain, he loaded a hypo with his strongest pain medicine, and pressed it to her neck. He quickly ran the osteoregenerator over the most severe of her fractures. Clearing his throat he said "You're good to Captain. Be warned that you're only patched up, but not fully healed. Those fractures could split at any time, and my pain medication may not be able to numb the pain."

Seeing Liam getting transported out, Ryoko smirks as she cracked her neck "Let's get ready for the next round" With that said they left the staging area to advance towards the next arena.



# This is unexpected

by Lieutenant Caradan Eunidas & Ryoko Takato

Transporter Room

*Backpost - Before crossing the borders*

The Tornado was almost at the borders, but had an intercepting transmission from the USS Heket that it had personal and cargo delivery for the Tornado. Takato was wondering why she was required to be there, she did receive some vague details about her new Chief Engineering Officer. Yet the security report monthly was not very clear for her.

And for security purposes, precise details of this engineering chief were hidden to make sure there were no incidents along the way.

Caradan could see the dissolving images of the Heket's captain already walking away now that the Changeling was leaving and becoming someone else's responsibility. Another image was beginning to fade in. And that was the image of her new commanding officer, Captain Takato, standing in wait for her new chief engineer.

While cargo and supplies were teleported elsewhere aboard the Tornado, Caradan and what little luggage she had with her, materialized in the Tornado's Transporter Room. Her luggage comprised only one bag containing a few personal belongings. She had no clothing luggage.

With PADD in hand she looked sternly at her new captain. "Captain Takato, Lieutenant Junior Grade Caradan Kiritseleshina Eunidas, Chief Engineer, reporting for duty. Permission to come aboard?" She stood straight, erect, hands by her side, feet together, standing as straight as any human could achieve, straighter perhaps. Even Caradan knew of the secretive orders her captain was given and was herself ordered to keep any and all communique short and encrypted so as to keep prying eyes from becoming too aware of a Changeling en route. Once at her posting, perhaps that would change.

She stood there wondering briefly over how her new captain felt about a Changeling aboard her vessel, a Changeling in Starfleet uniform no less.

Seeing the person in front of her, she now clearly understood the weight of the security level on this person regular check ups. But why assign a Changeling towards the Tornado when the main objective of the ship was to restore the Klingon relationship. Mockery? Guilty card? Everything was possible with this kind of situation.

Looking down at the hand she reached out and shook it "Captain Ryoko Takato, Captain of the Tornado. I was made aware of your arrival last minute Lieutenant, but now seeing you here I can understand why" Not meaning in any kind of disrespect, just honest truth "Well you are here, if there is any problem you encounter please report it towards the Command team okay?"

"I shall do as you ask, Ma'am." Caradan looked around briefly questing as to why security was not present, then remembered that even the captain did not know the species of the new crewmember. She grabbed her only bag of luggage and stepped away from the transporter pads. "I do feel sorrow if my...being a Changeling...has caused a surprise." She held out the PADD she had in hand. "Here are my transfer orders. Should you need verification from Starfleet, I am sure they will quickly do so. Also, there is a contract I drew up for myself. Please peruse it and let me know if there is anything you do not like or wished to change." She said all that rather flatly, without emotion, and continued forth in like manner. "I look forward to working with this crew and becoming an integral member."

Ryoko nodded towards her "No sorry to say here Lieutenant, thank you for the papers" She was not waiting for paperwork as it is, but hey that is how life is. Looking at the papers, she noticed some certain warnings from Security and she choose to ignore it. Everyone had their pain or conflict with the Dominion in some kind of matter, even her own aunt had fought the Dominion on couple of points in history "Any questions so far?"

Caradan was fully expecting a security escort. Her first request however did not necessarily have to include the Captain but there was no one else present. Still, "Might I inquire towards an escort to my quarters?" If Captain Ryoko was surprised to see a Changeling then, "I wish to avoid any surprising incidents. Additionally, I request the rest of the senior staff to be alerted as to my presence and assignment aboard the Tornado," because if the captain just learned of this, surely no one else knew. "Lastly, I had little chance to regenerate during transport aboard the Heket. I would like to request 8 hours if that is not too much. I will get to work and introduce myself to my team immediately thereafter."

The request was not strange, it was actually bit of logical and Ryoko took a deep breath "Security towards Transporter Room one, I need a friendly escort" Ryoko smiled at her "Understood, team two is underway Captain" Turning towards the door "Anything else Lieutenant? If not take your rest, you will need it" A fair warning of emotional struggle that might happen.

*<i>I believe I will need it,'</i>* but Caradan decided not to vocalize that. She did, however, say, "Thank you Captain. I've nothing else. I shall await my escort here if that is agreeable."

Caradan felt to apologize for she thought Ryoko appeared one who had a heavy responsibility dumped onto her, but all captains experienced likewise. Caradan knew that being a Changeling was going to complicate matters, but she swore long ago to wade through all the time and endurance it would take for others to find themselves able to half-way trust her. She just had to keep from messing anything up.

The Security Officers walked into the room and were looking at each other for a moment when seeing the escort "Bring her towards the assigned quarters, any conflict from the crew please report to me" Ryoko said as she looked at the Lieutenant "Welcome again.." She stated and with that left the area to resume her own duty.

"And thank you again Captain." She watched Ryoko walk out and away. To the two security officers that had arrived, "I assure you I am a Starfleet officer. Captain would have ordered otherwise if this had not been the case. If you please, I have rest and schematics to catch up on. You will alert the Chief of Security of my presence I hope."

# Meeting the Team

by Lieutenant Caradan Eunidas & Lieutenant JG Liam Harrison

## Engineering

It had actually been longer than she originally anticipated. As Rhode Island Class ships were not part of her training at the Academy, Caradan spent time in her quarters going over all the schematics, learning the shape of the ship, all conduits, access points, and interconnections to give the ship power, propulsion, heat and air, and so on. It was rather quite easy to learn as the Tornado's engineering schematics somewhat resembled an upgraded Intrepid-Class schematic. Still, she wanted to know the ship inside and out as best as she could from the schematics.

Caradan spent the time exercising various other forms whilst listening to everything the computer had to say about the Tornado, whilst perusing schematic after schematic. She was actually surprised it was all available to her. Why not, since she was a Starfleet officer, but she also could not put it passed anyone to block certain files from her for being a Changeling. Perhaps the rest of the crew were not as discriminatory as she thought. She expected challenges however. And it had come time to meet those challenges. It had come time for Caradan to meet her team.

She strolled from her quarters. The door slid closed behind her and those in the corridor all took double-takes making sure they knew what they saw, a Changeling. Some immediate responses would have been to call security, Red Alert, but the Captain apparently did good on Caradan's request to make sure the senior officers knew of her presence. They in turn let their teams know. Either through report or rumor, all had, by now, gotten wind of Caradan's presence and species.

With PADD in hand, she tapped away at it as she turned and started down the corridor to Engineering. She had sent a message out earlier for Ens. Harrison to alert the rest of the engineering team to gather for a brief meeting as Caradan wished to introduce herself. Seeing as how Liam was going to be the engineer directly under her, she hoped to acquire a good trust with him. She was hoping on friendship but that was a tall order at present.

Caradan arrived in Engineering a few moments before the appointed time of this meeting. She wanted to take in her area of expertise and at least have a look at her crew. Of course they were going to get a look at her. Some kept their eyes on her longer than she would normally allow but this was a first meeting and she was giving them hard evidence that the rumor they heard was true. *'There is a Changeling on this ship.'*

She nodded to them, told them to "Carry on," and continued to take in the place whilst awaiting the arrival of the rest of her team as well as Ensign Liam Harrison.

Liam sat in a jefferies tube just above sickbay working on a faulty conduit. His engineering expertise wasn't as advanced as some of the others on the Engineering team, but he had taken some courses at the Academy on minor repairs.

Checking the time on his PADD, he saw that he was due to meet the new boss in a couple of minutes. The woman who would be stepping in to take charge was a Changeling whom Liam had mixed feelings about. On the one hand, a shapeshifter would be an incredible asset to an Engineering department. But on the other, he lived through the Dominion war and saw the things that the Dominion had done to Earth and the entire Federation, a lot of which was not easy to forgive.

Liam choose to block out any preconceptions of the woman and start fresh with a clean slate. He closed up the conduit he had been working out and crawled out of the tube into an intersection. He opened up a hatch in the floor which revealed a latter down to main engineering. He slid down the ladder, keeping his PADD in a tight grip. He checked off the repair on his PADD and turned to the LCARS station beside the latter to initiate the flow through that area.

Placing the PADD at his side and turning his attention to the rest of the room, Liam immediately found the face he did not recognize amongst the staff. Liam walked around the warp core to greet the woman. "Welcome, Lieutenant!" he said with a smile as he extended his hand to the woman.

Shaking of the hands was still a foreign practice to Caradan. It was how her kind would communicate multitudinous thoughts instantly if they ever met outside of the Great Link. To the solids, it was simply a greeting. Caradan knew this, but was still getting used to the concept. She took his hand and gave a nod of acceptance. "I thank you."

Reclaiming her hand, she addressed everyone standing around. "I will keep this brief. First of all, it gives me sorrow for having taking so long before meeting you all. I needed to regen...rest and I familiarized myself with the ship's schematics. Though I am somewhat unfamiliar with this class of ship, I do hope you will all nurse-maid me through whatever difficulties that may arise."

"Introducing myself, I am Lieutenant, Junior Grade, Caradan Kiritseleshina Eunidas. The rumors and the reports you all may have heard regarding a Changeling aboard the Tornado are true. I feel sorrow if that brings any difficult emotions or memories. I want to address any concerns any of you may have at any time. But remain mindful, we are all Starfleet personnel aboard a Starfleet vessel and bound by Starfleet regulations. That means chain of command, duty, obligation, and the carrying out of orders as given to you by your commanding officer regardless of personal feelings toward said individual. My first priority is this vessel and the accomplishment of its mission."

Still, many looked at her like they would rather kill her than to take orders. She saw the pain of loss in many of those eyes staring back at her. How many people died in the Dominion War? How many Changelings died? Many people and very few Changelings. She understood their concerns very well.

"I am enacting an Amnesty Period for the next several moments. If any of you," she looked to Liam making sure he was aware this included him as well, "have anything to say to me, any questions or concerns, please voice them now."

A hand immediately shot up, "Yeah, when are you going home?"

"Can I be transferred to another department?"

"One at a time I beg of you." She pointed to the first that spoke. "I think of Starfleet as my home now." Then to the next. "I will take that up with the Commander, but be prepared for him to disapprove a transfer at this time. Anyone else?"

Another hand went up. "Are you here to pay reparations for what the Shape-Changeers did?"

"In a sense, I do want to make reparations," she said. "Mostly, I wish to find myself."

Other hands went up and Caradan suddenly felt sorrow for having enacted an Amnesty Period. She could see in all their eyes a level of distrust and resentment. Several others just remained quiet and kept their hands down. Their faces did not show overwhelming acceptance of their Changeling of a boss. She had hoped someone would stand by her and put Starfleet professionalism ahead of personal feelings.

Liam did what he did best: observed. He watched the Lieutenant's bold moves and gestures towards her staff, and then watched those actions blow up in her face. It didn't seem like she had experience dealing with a staff on the level that she wanted, and it was clear that she needed help.

He himself was not someone whom those in the department could 'look up' to. He was transferred to Engineering as a punishment after an incident with his now fiance. However, he had been the senior most officer in the department for a bit and they had not quarrels between them, so he felt he had to stand up.

"I think that's enough for now," Liam told the other officers who had raised their hands as he gestured them to lower them. "Lieutenant, we're happy to have you working with us."

He too had preconceptions, but they were nowhere as bad as the other officers and corpsman in the room. Liam himself was young and new to the management of officers, but he understood how people worked - how they felt, what they needed, the suffering that they endured.

Pulling the woman off to the side, he looked into her eyes and empathized with her. "Look, I know this is going to be hard for you, and I know there isn't much I can do to help or smooth things along, but give it some time. Show them what you can do and maybe, just maybe, they'll start to respect you. Once you have that, then things get easier," Liam said to the woman. "I know, it's hard to work with a staff who do not respect you, but life isn't always easy. And that's something which is part of the job description in managerial roles."

As Liam had grabbed her and pulled her along Caradan was taken aback and had given him a look of <i>'How dare you touch me.'</i> but was thankful that at least Liam was looking where they were going. She dropped the expression and met his eyes as he had spoken.

She looked to the others as he finished and saw them looking back at her, talking amongst themselves in low voice, but still going about their work.

"You are absolutely right Ensign," she reconnected with his eyes. "I did promise myself that if I did not get punched or stabbed on Day 1, then that would be a good day. I assure you, I have the knowledge to keep this ship in excellent working condition. I ask you now, any orders I give to the others, as long as you see merit to those orders, to please echo them if you see the others disobeying. To be honest, this is my first experience in management."

<i>'That is why they gave me a ship assignment; to see if I fail, run back, run away, resign.'</i>

"I thank you for your candidness Ensign, and for your help. Proceed with your duties."

Liam nodded at the woman. "I'm sure no one here doubts your abilities. We all know that you wouldn't have been placed here if you couldn't do your job. But, managing people isn't like managing technology. We're...unpredictable. I'll have your back throughout this entire thing, so don't worry." Liam looked at the woman, trying to be reassuring.

When he was dismissed, he stepped away from the woman and walked over the the crowd of people. "Alright guys, let's get back to work," he said as he took a seat at a computer console and watched the rest fall in line. Now, not only was he bounced down to Engineering from the Operations console on the Bridge, but he also had to help regulate the staff in Engineering. *This'll be fun...*, Liam thought.

# Bad Medicine

by Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrان & Lieutenant JG Valok Larel

USS Tornado- Sickbay

Vorrان approached sickbay slowly, his back throbbing. The back pain had woken him up, even walking he felt the pain shooting down his legs. The doors to sickbay opened, revealing an empty sickbay. "Great the Doctor must not be on duty." Vorrان muttered. Vorrان walked toward one of the bio beds and sat down. "Computer activate the EMH." Vorrان said

The bald headed, beady eyed, ill tempered EMH Mark 1 appeared before Tyler. "Please state the nature of the medical emergency." the emh said.

"Doctor, I woke up with horrible back pain." Vorrان replied

The hologram's frown increased. "You activate my program at 0300 for a back ache?"

"Seriously? Why Starfleet felt the need to program you with an attitude escapes me." Vorrان replied

"I'm capable of treating any injury or disease." The hologram replied curtly

Vorrان grabbed a hypospray from the table next to him and programmed it for an analgesic "This was a mistake, I'll just give myself a pain killer and wait for a real doctor." Vorrان said

The EMH snatched the hypo from Vorrان. "I am a doctor!" the hologram replied "More like a malfunctioning, attitude filled, outdated simulation of a doctor." Vorrان shot back

"I'm a doctor not a punching bag!" the Hologram replied curtly

"Well doctor, fix my back instead of arguing with me for activating your miserable program." Vorrان replied

"I would be better off getting a physical exam from Crell Mosey" Vorrان muttered

Then the doors to sickbay opened.

Valok walked into Sickbay, having just arrived aboard recently. He was eager to get to work, knowing that the ship had been without a Chief Medical Officer for some time. It was relying on the EMH for most of the non-life threatening situations. He frowned slightly as he saw an officer arguing with the out of date Mark 1. Clearing his throat, he said "Excuse me gentlemen, is there a problem?"

Vorrان looked at the new arrival in sickbay. "Please tell me you're a real doctor?"

"Now wait a minute....." The EMH started to say.

Shaking his head, Valok said "I don't have time for this. Computer, end Emergency Medical Holographic Program." Turning his attention to the man, he said "I am a biological doctor yes. And you are?"

"Thank you. I'm Tyler Vorrان, First Officer." Vorrان replied

thankful the EMH was off now.

Nodding, Valok replied "I'm glad you're here sir. I'm Lieutenant Junior Grade Valok Larel, the new Chief Medical Officer. I've just come aboard, and was hoping to report in."

"Welcome aboard Doctor. I hate to put you to work right away but I did something to my back. It has been keeping me from sleeping." Vorrان replied

Frowning slightly, Valok nodded and gestured to a nearby biobed. As the Vorrان was sitting, he grabbed a tricorder and began scanning him. He asked "What type of injury did happen? It will help me know how to treat it."

Tyler blushed. "I somehow managed to roll out of bed and landed pretty hard."

Smirking slightly, and thankfully out of the man's view, Valok fought to keep his voice calm. Raising an eyebrow in a distinctly Vulcan-like fashion he said "Indeed. Do you find yourself having accidents like this often? If so, I might be able to request crash pads or safety railings for your quarters."

Vorrان's eyes went wide at the suggestion. Who knew Vulcans had a sense of humor? I thought that was an emotion.

"Umm.that won't be necessary, doc" He replied

Sensing Vorrان's discomfort, Valok replied "I'm sorry if I offended you sir. It was a joke. For the record, I'm not fully Vulcan, I'm half Betazoid." Pausing for a moment, he added "Now to your injuries. My scans do show some light bruising on your lower back, and some muscle strain.Would you like me to fix the bruising and give you something for the pain?"

"That would be great doctor. No offense taken, I didn't think Vulcans joked." Vorrان replied.

Smiling slightly, Valok filled a hypo with a pain reliever, and pressed it to his neck. He said "This will help with the pain, and should bring some of the swelling down. I will need to ask you to remove your top so I see the extent of the bruising and repair it properly."

Vorran was slightly disturbed by the sight of a smiling Vulcan. After taking a moment to process what the doctor asked, he began to take his uniform shirt off.

Biting back a wince when he saw how badly bruised Vorran's back was, Valok began running the dermal regenerator over it. As he worked he said "The majority of the bruising will be fixed in a moment, you will have some stiffness for a day or so, but you will be fine. I would recommend you refrain from any strongly rigorous activity until you've completely healed."

"I will try, Doc. Am I clear to go now?" Vorran asked

Nodding, Valok replied "Yes Lieutenant you are free to go. Please let me know if you experience any more pain. I do want to ask though, do I need to formally report to the Captain or is meeting with you enough?"

Vorran got up off the biobed and put his uniform shirt back on.

"I would report to the Captain, she is one for following protocol."

Nodding, he said "Understood sir. Thank you sir." As Vorran left, he made his way to his new office, and began searching for the latest updates to the EMH.

# Pinned

by Ryoko Takato & Lieutenant JG Valok Larel & 1st Lieutenant Meera Deloria

## Arena Two

Even though Ryoko was fighting the pain, it was something she was pushing forward and this round she still had time to rest and let the doctor do his job "The Second Stage of this Tournament is about to begin. We are going to start with the Tornado crew member Meera Doloria" The Referee spoke waiting for her to enter the arena as Ryoko looked at Meera to enter.

Meera took a breath, and nodded. Stepping into the ring, she didn't bother with hiding her combat readiness this time. She placed a hand on the hilt of her knife, watching for her opponent, and just what kind of trouble she was going to be in. She wasn't even sure if D'LeifyaM had even made it past her matches, since as a Ship Captain she would have to at the very least partake for honor's sake.

The Referee nodded and began the next announcement "From the House of G'iaz they are represented by their warrior. Ajuj step forward" A female at the same height as Meera stepped into the ring. But something was off, something was not Klingonish about her. Ajuj was to calm, not provoking and just waited for the sign to begin "This battle is a first blood drawn, cuts, damage that results in blood or anything else ...you win the battle" He rose his hand "Begin!" Ajuj quickly grabbed her knife and pushed forward at Meera to swing a too easy dodge.

Meera could tell this was going to be a strange battle, and being it's first blood now, well, it meant things were a lot more serious than straight up brawls. As Ajuj came forward, rather than dodge, Meera drew her knife, and in a smooth practice movement, blocked the oncoming swing while spinning INTO Ajuj's space, Meera's elbow coming up with the goal of meeting Ajuj's face.

Narrowing her eyes she lets gravity do her work and her body rolls down the floor to avoid the incoming blow. Ajuj looked at her and pushed away to hit her again. With the stomp of the knife she hits Meera stomach and twist around to kick her again while turning the knife to give a final blow.

Meera took the blow to the stomach, letting the motion double her over as the boot flew over her head. She dropped to a knee and then swung her leg out and around to sweep her enemy's legs out from under her. That drop was the only reason the blade missed her. Not bothering to wait to see if the leg sweep worked, she was already moving onto her feet and bringing her own knife to bear on her foe. This was no longer a match for honor, pride, or anything of the like. This was a battle of survival for both combatants.

Rolling back to avoid another hit, Ajuj stood her ground and looked at Ryoko, narrowing her eyes "Heh legh" (Watch her die) a smile came on her face as Ryoko smiled back "DoS legh" (Watch your target) Ajuj smirks and looked back at the direction of Meera

Unfortunately for Ajuj, her distraction to talk to Ryoko was all the opening Meera needed, the Marine practically atop her in a running tackle, bringing both parties to the ground to a uproar of both support and disdain. Both remain motionless on the floor for several moments, before Meera slowly pushed herself off the ground, her knife in Ajuj's throat. Meera may not have known Klingon as fluently as Captain Ryoko, but she knew enough. This fight would have only ended with one dead. And Marine training was enough to emphasis on the focus of making the other bastard dead first.

The area went silence as the woman lifeless body drops onto the floor with her blood pouring out. The Referee shrugs and his face did not approve of such brutal move, yet seeing what words the woman used against the human Captain, it was only logical that one would leave this alive "Meera wins this battle" He said with his hand rose in the air towards the favor of Meera.

Ryoko looked at the body for a moment as Meera left the arena "You had no choice Sergeant, she was either going to kill you or you her..." Ryoko said in all seriousness as the Referee walked towards them "Captain, let this fight be a warning for yourself, the houses here are dealing with an inner conflict and your presence and progress..." Looking at Meera and then back at Ryoko "... House of G'iaz is a small house member of a grand house called R'takon. Keep at bay Captain, you will need it" With that said he left the two as Ryoko looked at the leaving Referee.

"Yes Ma'am. Don't imagine many of the Klingon's would be pleased with this turn of events. I was pretty sure these were supposed to be friendly matches, not fights to the death." Meera said, looking back towards the woman she'd just killed. Considering the situation, it seemed prudent to find allies at least for this whole shebang. "Best we try and warn the rest of the crew present ma'am. This isn't going to be a mono-pronged attack."



"Doc" Ryoko spoke as she turned towards Meera "Patch her up. Am I clear to battle the next round?" Her eyes diverted towards the direction of the Doctor.

Quickly scanning the Captain, Valok replied "Yes Captain you are clear to battle the next round. Your pain medication shouldn't wear off for at least 6 hours. Just try not to cause any more damage to the fractured areas." Turning his attention back to Meera, he began working on her injuries.

Nodding towards the doctor after being checked and cleared for the next round. Even if they were getting beaten, they were moving forward and that was good thing. Ryoko took a deep breath as she waited for her round to start.

## For honor

by D'okloss Targ

### Arena Two

<i>Honor can be blinded by lust of power given towards that one person. Not seeing what it requires to be what you suppose to be. The Klingon Empire is not as it should be, for years we stood by and let the Federation and Romulans do whatever is required to keep us at bay. However things change, change is good! Yes change is something the KDF requires and if it requires some forcible push here and there, then so be it. I will bring the Empire towards the glory of expansion.</i>

D'okloss looked down the arena seeing the fights continue after the dramatic failure of Ajuj to kill the Orion soldier, he simply deep breath "Sir House G'iaz wishes to state their condition was hopeless in this battle" A young Klingon male stated as he sits down next to D'okloss "They wish to be given another chance to redeem their honor"

"Honor?" D'okloss smiled and turned his head towards the young Klingon "Mompogh there is no glory to get out this..." He thought for a second to get the right wording "...circus that Darg created. We gave them an opportunity. They blew it" D'okloss replied as he looked back down at the Arena seeing Ryoko talking to her team "You already know my answer to their hail Mompogh" D'okloss finally said as he kept his stare at the Asian female.

"Yes sir, they will get their chance in a different time. For now they will be send towards the Gorn borders" Mompogh replied "What are you going to do about her" He carefully said and reference towards Ryoko..

"Captain Takato is a sour pain in the ass to put it in Human terms. She is poking too much around that could hurt our operations" D'okloss leans forward as he placed his hands together in front of his face looking at the Federation team walking away "Mompogh..."

The young Klingon looked at his master "Sir?" He replied waiting for an order.

D'okloss stood up as his guards around him did the same as he turned his head towards Mompogh "Make sure that this Captain never bothers us again. Make sure that the Tornado will be unable to fly....for good" With that said D'okloss moved away from his seat as he stops and looked over his shoulder "Don't me son...your honor is at stake"

"Yes sir, I won't fail you sir" Mompogh replied as D'okloss left with his men following. The heavy burden was now placed upon Mompogh to get rid of two potential targets.

# Security Concerns

by 1st Lieutenant Meera Deloria & Lieutenant Caradan Eunidas

Tornado Security Office

*1 Day Prior to Current Mission*

Sergeant Meera Deloria was sitting at her... Goddesses, calling it her desk was still strange, but it was her's as she was Chief of Security, looking at the PADD in her hand. This one came straight from the Captain concerning their new Chief Engineer. And what Meera was reading, was making her feel a mixture of emotions she hadn't felt since she made the decision to break from her mother's Cartel in the Syndicate. Nerves, rage, fear, but most of all, worry.

Worry for the ship and it's crew. Meera knew how aggressive, how vindictive, how driven the Changelings had been during the Dominion War. She'd been boots on the ground dealing with their bred combat force on multiple occasions. And now, aboard this ship, was one. Who'd gone through Starfleet Academy, and passed with high enough marks to be considered for the position of Chief Engineer right out the gate.

Once was chance. Twice was coincidence. Three times is enemy action. So far, it was just twice. But Meera wasn't going to think that it. Even this second document with Captain Ryoko included didn't give Meera any feeling of confidence. Sure, it was some kind of form the Changeling supposedly wrote up stating she'd only be in one of two forms unless otherwise directly ordered to do so, but Meera didn't trust it.

In Caradan's quarters remained chairs that still had not been sat in, a bed that had yet to see anybody sleeping in it, a sonic shower still awaiting someone to cleanse, and a replicator waiting for the command to produce any form of sustenance.

In the middle of her quarters though resided the statue of The Thinker, one of the few pieces of Earth art that stuck out in Caradan's mind. Just what was he thinking on? In that form and shape, Caradan was able to find herself similarly contemplating things. The statue melted and reform her humanoid form. Caradan walked over to her computer terminal displaying a three dimensional graphic of the statue. She studied it, making sure she had to scale and the measurements right.

Speaking of getting things right, Caradan was still trying to perfect the human look. She stepped away from the computer terminal and up to a stand up mirror she had replicated. During her short trek over to the mirror, she reformed herself into how she thought a human female would look in the nude. Looking at her reflection, she knew the look was off. She never interacted with anyone without clothing and had only the Tornado's computer databanks to go on. She did manage to get the face and hair to detailed perfection as well as fingernails, pores, and the like. If anyone ever decided to do a retina scan or fingerprint her though, they would certainly find something questionable. Her detail had yet to reach those proportions.

The reflection looking back at her appeared almost completely human. Caradan was unsure exactly where her navel was supposed to be, how firm her breasts were expected to be, among other things but humanoids always had their variations so it did not fully matter in the end. Still, Caradan could understand why others feared and discriminated, and why there was so much distrust. Caradan could literally impersonate almost anyone and get her way without the others ever having a clue.

Caradan reformed into her humanoid form, pasty and not entirely perfect. Her uniform emerged from her as did her pips on the collar. She wondered if anyone ever caught on that she was in fact naked each and every time they saw her.

She picked up her commbadge on her way to the door. It was the only thing she wore that she could not produce from her own being. I was time for her duty shift. This time though, it was at the Engineering station on the Bridge and she wondered how well that was going to go over with the other Bridge officers.

First though, she needed to check in with Security. It was not something she was ordered to do or had contracted herself to do. It was simply something she had not gotten to do yet, meet with the Security Chief. Of course Sergeant Delora had heard of the Changeling's presence and had perhaps received a slew of complaints. Those complaints would certainly have been personal since she exercised great care to conduct herself as professionally as she could.

Caradan strolled through the ship on her way toward the Security office. Others looked at her and continued about their business. They were getting better accustomed to having a Changeling on board but their suspicions and their caution remained.

Approaching the door, it opened invitingly. Caradan did not even have to chime in. It was something of a surprise and it appeared to be as big of a surprise as the sergeant seemed to have seeing a Changeling calling at her office door.

Meera had been keeping an eye on a dozen things at once in the office, having her personal terminal showing a display of several the camera feeds on the ship, she was aware when Caradan was coming. Meera had picked the cameras most likely to show the changeling's route.

So simply looking up from the latest weapon status report, she gave Caradan a mild gesture to the chair across her desk. This was more an informal meeting, in terms of perception, but frankly, it was something needing to be done. "Lieutenant. Welcome aboard the Tornado." Meera says, giving only a small inclination of her head in greeting. "I understand you will be taking Lieutenant Commander Saunder's place as Chief of Engineering. Hopefully his, now your, people continue to perform at the same level of excellence they maintained thus far."

Caradan spoke as she entered and ventured to the chair in front of the desk. "They are. With the help of Ensign Harrison, they are performing professionally. They do have difficulty dealing with the species of their new boss but things so far are at least pleasant."

Pleasantries. Bullshit. Keeping things calm and controlled. More for Meera's sake than the Changeling's. She had to make sure she didn't give the impression of aggression, or distrust. She was more professional than that. "So, I don't suppose I'll need to go over the basic of security needs to you, but I did want to clear some things up." Meera says, finally pulling out the PADD with Caradan's 'contract' out and placing it on the desk towards the Changeling. "This. Pray tell, what, or rather, why, did you provide this to us?"

"This is both insurance and assurance. It was at the Academy that I originally provided that. Not wanting trouble from those I would interact with, that contract made them aware that I kept their," she sought the best word, "concerns in mind. I wish to do the same here. If anyone is concerned about me eavesdropping in whatever form, they will recall my contract and would be relieved that I forbade myself that."

"Uh-huh. You understand our mission will have us amongst the Klingon's working on improving diplomatic relations, correct? There will be those who hold a grudge far more sharply than most aboard the ship, yes?" Meera pointed out, before gesturing to the PADD. "They aren't the kind to accept such a document at face value, even if everything is covered here. And I, for one, am willing to agree with the sentiment." Meera stated, and leaned forward in her chair, steepling her fingers together as she placed her elbows on the desk.

"Old wounds don't heal easily after war. Having you aboard, could open those scars. I'm not saying you will, or are, acting as a spy for the Changelings. Not only would it be unprofessional, but it'd be letting my feelings on the matter take over. That 'contract', as far as I am concerned, is merely words on screen. Useless unless you can back it up." Meera explained finally.

Pausing a few moments for Caradan to speak or just absorb what was said thus far, before continuing. "While I imagine you will follow your own contract form as it is, understand that I will be slow to accept your word, much less trust you. I'm not saying that, to make you paranoid, or fearful. I'm just telling you upfront. I may not have dealt with Changeling's directly during the Dominion War, but I have dealt with the aftermath of their... decisions." She ends, referring in part to the Jem'Hadar, and the destruction of Cardassia.

Caradan nodded as Meera spoke. "I understand fully. I also understand that mere words, spoken or written, can never convey what someone holds within." That was however one of the advantages of the Great Link. There were no secrets and no need for words as simple thoughts spoke volumes. She did not want to bring up the Great Link though, but continued with, "Building the bridges of trust and working to get beyond pain and hardship has to all start somewhere. It starts with trying. That is what my contract reflects; my attempt at trying."

Meera sighed, and leaned back in her chair. "Alright. I'll trust your word. You'll be treated same as any other member of the ship. No extra guards, no constant surveillance, nor requirement of adherence to your contract." She says, looking at the Changeling. "BUT, if you give me reason to enforce such upon you, I will do so, after consulting with the Captain. Does that sound fair to you Lieutenant?" Meera said, almost cringing at the, casual way she said 'Lieutenant'. She was a Sergeant, she wasn't supposed to treat officers like equals. At least not until she finished OTS.

Caradan gave a nod. "That does sound fair. I will however adhere to the terms I contracted myself to. I, and the captain, still have to report to Starfleet. Starfleet Security may not be as open and accepting as you, but then they operate on a much grander scale. I thank you for your words, candidness, and especially your professionalism," for it was more than she got when she introduced herself to her team. "I will strive to not disappoint."

"Alright then. I'd best let you get to it." Meera states, gesturing to the door. She didn't WANT to be so 'kind' to this Changeling, but she had to be professional, which meant sucking it up and dealing with it.

# Arrival

by Lieutenant Caradan Eunidas

## Personal Log

I'm aboard the Tornado. Should I go ahead and end my log here? Perhaps not. Transport aboard the Heket was adequate though I had little opportunity to regenerate to the point that I gave it up entirely. I kept getting interruptions, scans, roommate transfers, transferred to other quarters.

None of that matters at this point. I have my own quarters now and inside these walls I can assume any form I wish and can even regenerate peaceably. I do miss the constant noise of the Heket however. Being interrupted and heckled regularly and randomly did get annoying but it kept the noise going. Here, it is a bit quiet save for the low hum of the ship. Noise, thoughts, that is what I miss most about the Great Link. Nothing else though, right now that is. Apologies to whoever is reviewing this log, whoever is listening in on me now for that matter. I have no intention of returning to the Great Link at this time, nor am I planning any form of subterfuge or sabotage, though I know a Changeling working in Engineering may be troubling for many.

My quarters are quaint. Not very large but I do not need space, just a place to rest in when in my natural state. The furnishings, especially the bed are not entirely designed for my kind but I doubt anyone ever thought my kind would actually serve on a Federation Starship.

What am I supposed to say in a Personal Log anyway. Am I to thank my parents of which I have not? Siblings? Well that is a large number. My siblings are all other Changelings and every Changeling I know could not care less for me right now. Friends? Well that equates to zero. Mentors perhaps? Of that, I have a few but they may not really enjoy receiving messages from a Changeling. That may look bad upon them, make them targets of regular security sweeps.

I studied the ship's manifest whilst aboard the Heket. Some of the crew did fight in the Dominion War. Well, who did not or who did not have family and friends that fought and died in the war? I can only assume to face some hostility and distrust. Hopefully time and patience will break through that. I do have to face the Chief of Security at some point though, if only to introduce myself. I understand she was a Marine in the war. She is also Orion. Female. Orion. Marine. Dominion War. Serving with a Changeling. Our first meeting is certain to go over smoothly I think not.

Is it customary to rethink life choices? I am certainly having those thoughts now. I would love to know what the others are thinking if they are even thinking of me. Better yet, I need to make my mark here. I assigned myself this undertaking and I want to see it through.

End of log.

# Infiltrating the Vo'guda

by Ryoko Takato & Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrان & Lieutenant Caradan Eunidas & Lieutenant JG Scott Erickson  
Lower level fleet repair yards

Scott had written up a fast action plan for his mission to infiltrate one of the docked Klingon birds of prey and retrieve all relative information on the ship's mission for the past 6 months into rival house territories. His plan was simple and effective. Infiltrate the Klingon ship using a series of holoprojectors to change his physical appearance and voice patterns. Once inside the ship would simply walk into the main computer download the navigation memory banks and walk out.

The federation intelligence data base had detailed schematics and internal layouts of the B'Rel class Bird of Prey. Though most of them had been decommissioned in this sector they still served honorably within the fleets of the Klingons.

Now all he needed was approval from Captain Takato and he could be in and out by the end of the hour.

"I will board through the boarding ramp on deck 3 go past the bridge on deck 4 and use the left at main body to get up to deck 2 where the main computer core is located. Download the information he needs and walk back out the same way." Scott said showing a minor presentation of the internal schematics. "Questions?" he asked.

"That seems risky for one person, we should run this by the Captain." Vorrان replied

Vorrان could see many things going wrong with the infiltration, relying on portable holotechnology that is at best unreliable.

Vorrان taps his combadge. "Vorrان to Takato"

"Takato here" The voice of the Captain sounds troubling tiring as something had wear her down badly.

"Captain, we have a plan to infiltrate one of the Klingon ships. It involves Erickson going in alone using holotech to disguise his appearance. I believe it to be too risky." Vorrان reported

For a moment it was silence as Takato heavy breathing began to talk "Take the Chief Engineer with you, she is a Changeling and it would make your job easy. If she rejects the idea, say it is by my order Lieutenant"

"Understood, Captain Vorrان out."

Vorrان sighed and tapped his combadge. "Vorrان to Eunidas"

Caradan was at her computer console in Engineering working away, stabilizing this, pressurizing that, running a diagnostic on something else. Being alone in her own corner, she had produced a sleeve out of her chest and from that sleeve came a third arm. She tapped away at her console faster than any human could ever hope to achieve. 15 fingers were dancing about making sure everything about the ship was in top working order. As someone started walking up, she drew that third arm back into herself and turned to the crewman. He handed her a PADD with a report displayed and was quick to depart.

"Thank you," she said to his back. She wanted to go after him to make sure he was aware of her gratitude but the commander's voice came out of the ship's speakers in her locale.

"^="Lieutenant Eunidas here Commander."="^="

"Thanks for the promotion, I have a mission for you. Please report to the lower level of the station repair yard." Vorrان replied

"On my way," she said then handed command of Engineering to the next Ensign that crossed her path. She made her way through the ship and turbolifted to the Transporter Room. The chief on duty already had the coordinates programmed. Taking her position atop the pad, "Energize," and the room began to fade away as another faded in. Two figures faded in likewise and proved to be Ensign Erickson and Lieutenant Vorrان.

As she was fully rematerialized, she approached the two and greeted the XO. "Lieutenant Caradan Eunidas reporting as ordered Commander."

Scott had only seen a changeling once. And that was while he was waiting for his orders to be confirmed on DS9. Now seeing one at such a close proximity was a little nerve bending. He knew the capabilities of the changelings but there was only so much an intelligence report can say about them versus seeing one in person. He kept his composure though and tried not to let it get to him.

"Welcome Lieutenant, Mr. Erickson here has a plan to infiltrate one of the birds of prey. He could use someone with your abilities as backup." Vorrان explained

"Are you able to take on the appearance of a Klingon?" Vorrان asked

Caradan was aware of their purpose in Klingon space but was unsupportive of the decision for Starfleet intervention. Klingon matters should remain Klingon matters. But orders were orders. Was this an order however?

Caradan shot a glance to Scott then back to Vorrان. "I am certain I can. For a more convincing act, I will require use of the holodeck and the help of Ensign Erickson," she said as she nodded her head toward Scott.

"I've passed as a Klingon before, teaching you should be relatively easy." Scott said.

"Does this come as an order from Captain Takato?" she asked.

"The captain has been in the loop every step of the way." Vorrان replied

"Can I get that order in writing?"

"That would be up to the captain." Vorrان replied

Vorrان activated his combadge. "Vorrان to Takato"

No response came towards the hail of Vorrان towards Takato. It might be possible that she is already in the Arena fighting her next match.

"She could be preoccupied. I don't want to waste any more time I project a lot of data to look through and I want to get started." Scott said.

"Lets get on with the mission. Erickson, this is your area of expertise so you'll be taking lead on the operation." Vorrان said

Scott nodded in understanding his position.

Caradan nodded to both recognizing Scott's command over her during this venture. "May I request at least an hour of holodeck time, Command, to perfect the look and personality of a Klingon? I would require your expertise Ensign to make any tweaks." She certainly did not wish to compromise her first away mission. Besides, "It looks like our next report to Starfleet is going to be interesting."

"We will need to do this quickly before the majority of their crew returns from the tournament." Vorrان replied

He looked at Caradan and then to Erickson. "Head to the holodeck and make your preparations. We will meet back here in exactly two hours."

"Aye sir," Scott said. "We can use th holodeck on the Tornado. I'll get us started with basic attitude and proper uniforms to pass as as part of the repair team."



# Till that final blow

by Ryoko Takato & Lieutenant JG Valok Larel & 1st Lieutenant Meera Deloria

## Arena Two

The Referee stepped forward and looked around as the Klingons were screaming and growling for the next combat to begin "D'LeifyaM of House Newark step forward" The Klingon stepped into the arena as the Referee looked at Ryoko that was standing there calmly "Ryoko Takato of Tornado step forward" With that said she steps into the ring and stood at the other combatant "I want a clean fight, no killing, the first one that drops and does not stand up for whatever reason...wins" The Referee explains "Clear?" Ryoko nodded.

D'LeifyaM nodded. She offered a hand to Ryoko. "I have more honor and respect for Starfleet than some have shown. And I know Meera well enough." She says, to make it much clearer that she intended to run this fight as it should be fought. A challenge and contest to see who was better skilled, not for survival.

Shaking the hand of D'LeifyaM "Well let we have some fun" Ryoko said as took a step back as the Referee looked at each other "Fight in honor and bravery, FIGHT!" He took a step back as Ryoko rose her hands in a defends stand and waited for her new foe to begin.

D'LeifyaM smirked, and readied herself. Watching Ryoko's motions, her stance, her bearing as they circled each other in the ring, trying to gain a gauge of their foe before the first blow signaled the physical start to this contest.

Blocking the first blow, Ryoko could feel the brute strength in it and at the same time her muscles fighting being tired. Pushing off, she slams against her side trying to gain some foothold in the early stadium of the match.

At the same time outside the Arena a Klingon male puts down a bag and opens it. Slowly grabbing components out of it and assembling them together. The people were going wild over this battle and that Klingon was using the sound barrier in his own advantage. The rifle was done, the scope was placed and he lays down on the floor pointing from the high angle above the crowd down the arena itself.

While D'leifyaM had held back some of her strength, not because of pity or because of spite, but because this was a friendly match, she quickly realized that her foe was, as humans were apt to say, deadly tired. Apparently her earlier fight was exhausting or just that grueling of an affair. While she didn't to just outright throw the match, she also didn't want to make it a complete wash.

Looking at the woman that was merely testing her "Stop holding back, don't disgrace your house....I might be human, but I have been taught the ways the Klingon by Darg" Ryoko lifted up her fist to face level to give a better defense position and waited for the striking to begin.

"You are also not in the best shape after your previous match. There is no honor in crushing a foe wounded in a previous fight. That, is a coward's path. But if you so wish..." D'leifyaM says, before stepping forward, crouching down and swiping her leg out to knock the human on her back. She was a Klingon yes, but she HAD learned from the Marines during the Dominion War. And some moves were too useful to throw away because they were 'un-Klingon'.

With a backflip she avoid the sweep and managed barely to get back onto her feet. Ryoko twisted her own foot towards her foe's face. This could be an icebreaking move, the damage could give a total K.O. As a shot echo in the arena and Ryoko leg stopped just before D'leifyaM face. Ryoko looked down to her stomach seeing blood pouring out through her shirt. She could barely place her foot back down as everything went dizzy for her "MEDIC" The Referee yelled as Ryoko dropped to the floor.

Valok immediately sprung to his feet and rushed to her side. Ripping open her shirt so he could see the wound, he ignored the fact that he had just disrobed his captain. The wound looked bad, oozing blood quickly. Moving on instinct, he grabbed a wad of her shirt and pressed it to the wound to staunch the flow. Calling out, he said "Someone get me a hypo full of lectrazine." When nobody immediately moved, he said "I need it now or she will go into shock!" He pressed harder on the wound, ignoring the blood seeping through his fingers and hoping it would stop.

The wounds were severe and blood was pushing through the doctor's fingers. Ryoko felt her body getting colder as her head looked at the side seeing everyone trying to help. "Get the medical staff here now!" The Referee demanded "Inform Darg about the development here, clear the arena!" The old Klingon was doing his best to be of any kind of support as the base suddenly shook harshly "What is going on here!" The Referee said with a demanded voice.

As the news came over the combadge of the Tornado team "This is Lieutenant Havico, we have sustain heavy damage on the rear hull and heavy multi breaches on upper decks. Engineering is in flames as plasma leaks are burning it up. We need support now!" Ryoko felt a tear roll down her cheek as she lost conscious and went into shock. The

Referee shrugs at the incoming message as she looked at Ryoko "Transport her towards our medical base...it's your only chance to save her"

Shaking his head in frustration, he used his free hand to sling the medkit over his chest and slammed his combadge with a bloody hand "Larel to Tornado. Emergency medical site to site transport to the medical base. Lock onto my signal and beam myself and Takato there immediately!" Mere moments later he they vanished, a bloody stain on the floor the only thing left behind.

# Your time is up

by Rear Admiral Ryoko Takato (Future)

Sut HabmoHwl' mupwl'

The Klingon aimed his sniper rifle and looked through the visor as he takes a few deep breath and focused on Takato. The woman had spirit to take such burden upon her of fighting another skilled warrior. He only had a fraction of time to take the shot, what a waste. She has so much potential, but it ends here "Not today!" A voice came from his side as he looked at his side just able to dodge a pipe that slams onto the ground as by accident he took the shoot "Damn it!"

The shot had taken its effect and the base was placed under high alert "No, I am too late..." The Klingon looked up to the figure that was looking at the direction of the arena "You...how can you be at two spots.." Her face turned towards the Klingon "I'm here to stop you...." The Klingon quickly stood up and began to run as he dropped a smoke grenade onto the floor.

Running in the corridors towards his escaping line. What just happened back there? How could she be in two locations at the same time? What the hell is this assignment all about...The Klingon pushed an Orion slave aside as he looked behind seeing that he was not being persuaded by anyone. Good he lost her, he needed answers and quickly. Sliding to the left he quickly pushed forward to the shuttle bay area as he stops slowly seeing a figure standing there with her arms over each other.

"Your time is up Ga'Lok, I guess I was not suppose to prevent it, I was to minimize the damage" The woman spoke and looked at him.

Ga'Lok shrugs and had a pistol at his side pocket "Who are you, I just shot you...you can't be alive"

"Funny thing you mention that...my name is really Ryoko Takato and I am from the future. Here too prevent the death of my own for certain history reasons" Ryoko stated, she had longer hanging loose and partly gray.

He could not believe his ears, Ga'Lok was witness of a future person that prevented her own dead "Tell me something, how does the KDF look in the future, have we conquered you?"

Ryoko smiled "No, but the only thing I can tell you is how Sto-vo-kor going to look like" She quickly made a move to her own pistol as Ga'Lok grabbed his. A blast was exchanged between the two...yet a blue shimmer of light reflects in front of Ryoko, a personal shield protected her. Ga'Lok however dropped to the floor with a hole in his chest.

"Admiral did you succeed?" a voice came out of her combadge as Ryoko looked at her side towards the docking port where Tornado was stationed "In a certain way, I have succeeded and failed..." With that said she saw the rapture o chain explosions on the Tornado rear hull getting heavy damage "One to beam up..." Ryoko older self disappears into the air as Klingon guards arrive to find the body of the assassin.

# Never Easy

by 1st Lieutenant Meera Deloria & Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorran

AR-558 - Chin'toka System

2375

The shuttle screamed through the atmosphere of the planet that a Dominion subspace comm station had been found on. Place was a maze of canyons and valleys if the topographic data was right. This was just one of several descending to unload the Federation forces being sent to secure the site.

"Mission plan and length is simple. Secure the enemy comm station, and hold it against any Dominion counter-attack." Lieutenant Bre'leck said, holding up his PADD as he looked over the Marines he'd been assigned to. Corporal Meera Deloria simply focused on her rifle and body armor. There were only a couple of people present who were new to the squad. The LT was one of 'em.

Edwards of course, was quick to pipe up. "Hey, this gonna be a short mission, or another slug-fest like the last hell-hole we got dropped into?" He asked, looking at the Vulcan. "If it's gonna be a slug-fest, I want outta this chickenshit outfit!" He stated before the LT could reply.

Meera and the other veterans present chuckled at it. It was Edwards usual pre-battle jokes to help relax everyone. Meera was quick to pick up. "Sorry Edwards! You signed the same paperwork I did. We're stuck in this till we die or the Marines kick us out. And we all know which one the Corps'll want first!" She replied, getting more chuckles.

Lieutenant Bre'leck was simply not amused. "Sergeant, Corporal, I don't care if your veteran Marines or not, you will show a proper level of decorum and professionalism while I am in command, is that understood?"

"Aye aye Sir." Both Edwards and Meera replied. "And to be honest, Sir, I was almost expecting to hear you say 'an Orion Syndicate Whore' in that statement." She added, grinning as Edwards laughed and shook his head. Bre'leck, just stared at the Orion with a sharp glare.

"I've read your files. You, if the reports are accurate, are not a 'whore' as you say, nor do you answer to the Syndicate. Now start acting like proper Federation soldiers, or I will be sure to assign you to a undesired position. Am I understood? Everyone?" Bre'leck ended with a bark, staring at EVERYONE in the shuttle.

PFC Jackson Riley gulped, this was his first time on a mission. He had heard stories about the Jem'Hadar, but had yet to face a real one in combat. "Aye Aye, Sir" Riley replied.

Edwards leaned over and clapped one of the new guys on the shoulder. "Riley, right? Don't worry so much. We'll put boots on the ground, kick the Dominion's asses, and get home before you know it!" He says.

Bre'leck nodded. "Indeed. Initial estimate for deployment period is standard 90 days." He says, as the shuttle rocks from oncoming fire.

"And now the fun begins." Meera mutters.

Gunnery Sergeant Vendri huffs. "Alright everyone, strap in and strap tight! Don't give the pilots a reason to worry!" He growls, pulling down his shock harness and locking it into place.

Riley secured his harness as well and braced for a rough landing. Even in the simulators he could never get used to the rough landings on combat insertions. Since the shuttle was already under attack they would not have the element of surprise on their side.

The shuttle suddenly rocked much harder than it had been. "We're hit! We're going in hard! Brace for impact!" The pilot called back, fighting the controls as the shuttle nosed sharper towards the ground than it had been.

Meera sighed, locked her harness into place, and rested her head against the rest. "One more time into the jaw of war right?" She queried, as Edwards nodded.

"And if we run right, another one'll bite the dust! And another one gone and another one gone, another one bites the dust!" He replied, sing-song as he patted his leg in time with the music.

Riley gulped and closed his eyes. He heard the shuttle groaning and the inertial dampers must have been damaged. Riley felt as if the shuttle had been pulled out from underneath him. "I think we've already been swallowed by the Jaw of war." He said.

"Welcome to War kiddo." Vendri says, simply seeming to be taking a nap.

As the shuttle sharply banks to avoid a cliffside, it manages to slow it's progression JUST enough to not plow into the canyon floor, but it certainly scraped it a fair bit.

"Everyone off now! Secure the perimeter!" Bre'leck barks, undoing his harness latch. The veterans were moving before he'd even gotten the first syllable out of his mouth.

"Deloria, Riley, on me. We'll reconnoiter the immediate area while the rest secure the shuttle for emergency repairs. Don't want the flyboys to be down here on the earth too long!" Edwards said, pointing to the pair.

Meera nods, and simply shoulders her rifle, and just as the ramp lip hit the ground, her right boot was meeting the dusty ground as well. Swinging her rifle to the right, she scanned for hostiles in her zone, and found nothing. "RIGHT CLEAR!"

Riley followed and checked to the left. "Left Clear!"

He could hear sounds of weapons fire in the distance and muffled explosions. He kept checking his zone for any sign of shrouded Jem'Hadar.

Edwards nods. "Roger. Move forward, keep your eyes open. We've got to make sure the area's clear." He states, checking his helmet to make sure it rested on his head properly, before readying his own rifle.

It was just in time too as the first shots of this conflict for these Marines came out of the canyon's surrounding the downed shuttle. "CONTACT!" Meera called out, diving behind a boulder for cover, wincing as shards of rock erupted from it due to the impacts. Not taking the time to look, she twists around to fires several shots blindly in the direction of the oncoming fire, hoping to do something.

The purple polaron bolts struck the rockface near Riley. He took cover and his training kicked in. He managed to return fire towards the Jem'Hadar positions. "I don't suppose we'll be getting air support!" Riley shouted over the sounds of weapons fire.

Meera snorted. "You want air support?! We came in on it!" She replied, returning fire. The enemy's fire had finally slackened enough that she felt moderately confident to lean around. "Count at least 3 contacts!" She reports, ducking back around as a bolt struck the rock near where her face had been.

Edwards huffed, and pulled a grenade off his equipment. "FIRE IN THE HOLE!" He yelled, priming it and hucking in the general direction of the oncoming fire.

Riley took cover as he felt the heat from the exploding grenade pass over him. The weapons fire from the Jem'Hadar position had ceased. "That got them!" Riley yelled

Meera huffed. "Don't cheer yet." She says, as a Jem'Hadar roared and came charging at them, bleeding from several wounds.

Edwards and Meera both simply focused on the beserker, and fired several shots at him, before it finally collapsed right in front of Riley. Edwards walked over, and fired point-blank range at it's head, causing it to nearly explode from the rapid heating. Looking at Riley, Edwards smiled. "You holding up alright kid?" He asked, offering a hand to the young Marine.

Meera at this point was climbing onto the rock she'd taken cover behind, and swept over the area. "Looks clear!" She reported, waiting for the move order.

Riley took up an overwatch position near Meera. "I've got you covered!" Riley said as he scanned for any movement.

"Just be careful kid!" Meera said, getting down the from rock, and stepping forward, carefully but with purpose. Slipping a bit on the downward slope of the valley, it was the only thing to save her as the dirt and rocks triggered something which decloaked and zipped after them, to detonate and leave a wave of heat to wash over the Orion.

"SONVABITCH!" She growled, backing up. "The fuck was that?!" Meera says, looking for any more, but seeing nothing. "Edwards! I think they got a fucking minefield!"

"What? Are you certain?" Edwards replied, coming forward.

"Deadly! Let the LT know..." Meera said, pulling back slowly. Who knew how many others were out there. "Fucking things were cloaked."

"I didn't think the dominion had cloaking technology." Riley said as he scanned for any signs of the cloaked devices.

Edwards huffed, and simply picked up a pool ball sized rock and hucked it down the hill, wincing as another mine chased then detonated on said rock. "Seems they do. Riley, go pass the word to the LT. Cloaked mines in the valleys, possibly other chock points." He said, sighing and kneeling down next to the Jem'Hadar corpse.

Meera eased back a bit to watch over Edwards as he began pawing through the body's uniform. "What, you think they got IFF or such?" She asked, glancing over her shoulder.

"Maybe, hell, could be sub-dermal or implanted for all I know."

"Great. Cloaked mines, with no idea on IFF measures, and what, 10 klicks to the enemy compound?"

"If you wanted an easy day Corporal, you shoulda joined Starfleet, not the Marines." Edwards replies, grinning up at Meera as he continued to search the corpse.

Riley let the Lieutenant know about the cloaked mines. They would have to proceed slowly toward the compound in case they came across more. As Riley made his way back to the others he saw one appear in front of him. He quickly dove to the side and covered his head. There was a bright flash and his ears were ringing, the ground felt like it was spinning.

To say that the opening moments of the attack on AR-558 were going poorly, would be an insult to the courage and bravery of those who landed upon it. Especially considering how long those few would hold out for.

# I Hate Doctors...

by Lieutenant JG Liam Harrison & Lieutenant JG Valok Larel

## Sickbay

Liam's eyes flared open in sickbay. He had been resting on a biobed in sickbay. Clothes off and in medical robes, he jolted upright and looked around. He blinked as he began to process his surroundings and understand exactly where he was and what happened.

A figure appeared beside him running a tricorder over him. The man cleared his throat and said "Good, you're awake. I'm the Head Nurse Ensign Daniel O'Connell. I see that your broken bones and bleeding seem to be slowly healing. Are you experiencing any more pain?"

Shocked by the appearance of a man he hadn't noticed before, Liam jumped a bit where he sat and turned towards the man. "Hello," he said as he cocked his head to the side. "A little pain in my chest, some in my nose," he told the man as he cracked his neck.

Running the tricorder over his chest and face, O'Connell said "I do see you have a few bruised ribs and a small fracture in your nose. Would you like me to work on those now or allow you time to rest." Pausing, he smiled "I'm sorry if I startled you. I was busy updating some files as Doctor Larel is on the away team, and set an alert for when you woke up."

"It's no problem," Liam told the nurse as he put an arm around his deck trying to work out some of the knots. "If you could do something for it now, that'd be great. And maybe some meds, too," he told the man.

Nodding, he reached for a nearby hypo, loaded it, and pressed it to Liam's neck. Smiling he said "That should dull the pain for now, but once the major injuries are done healing, I'll work on the others. I can however help with some of the bruising on your body if you like. It won't hurt."

Liam felt the hypospray hit his neck, and some of the pain vanished. Hearing the man's offer to clear up some of his bruises, Liam spoke, "Sure, if you could." He then laid back on the biobed to allow the nurse to heal his other wounds.

Picking up the dermal regenerator, O'Connell said "I'm going to have to remove your shirt first, the majority of the bruising is on your chest and back. The scans also show some on your legs and lower body."

Hesitating, Liam nodded at the man. He knew it was required, but it still made him feel uncomfortable. Raising his shirt, he lifted it above his head and set it at his side. Back straight along the biobed, he looked up at the nurse and waited for his bruises to be healed.

Running the device over his chest, O'Connell sensed Liam's discomfort. Sighing, he said "Have I done something wrong sir? I'm sorry if you are uncomfortable disrobing with me. I can have the EMH or one of the female officers assist you."

"No, it's fine," Liam told the man as he felt the tool tickle him, which he took as an indication that it was repairing some of his internal injuries. He turned his attention from the man and looked at the ceiling of the room.

Nodding, he continued his work, and said "I think the majority of the chest bruising is going to heal nicely. Are there any particular sore places on your lower body?"

"Not really," Liam said. "The Klingons tend not to attack in areas below the belt, thankfully," he told the nurse with a laugh looking back at him. "Thank you, though."

"Understood sir," he replied "Now if you'll carefully roll to your side, I will begin working on your back."

Liam slowly turned over, body facing down on the biobed. He turned his head to the side and rested it on the pillow. His body was still sore all over, but there wasn't much they could do to fix that other than give him meds.

Running the device over his back, O'Connell said "I will have to ask you to stay here for at least one more day to fully recover. After that, I would like you to go on light duty, and avoid any strenuous activity for at least a week."

"Um, no," Liam said as he heard the device turn off. He turned back around and sat up. "I'll be leaving. Today," he told the man with a smile. "I'm not staying here any longer. Give me meds or whatever. I won't start duties until tomorrow, but I'm not staying in this god forsaken place tonight, understood?" he asked as he put his shirt back on.

Sighing, O'Connell said "I can make my recommendation an order sir if I need to. Your injuries are barely mended, and it wouldn't be advisable to go back to normal duties so quickly." Shaking his head, he added "If you are insistent that you aren't willing to take my advice, I will have to put a note in your records that you left against my recommendations."

Liam cracked his neck from side to side. "Please tell me that wasn't a threat, Ensign. I'm really in no mood," he said as his legs moved from the biobed to hanging off the side. "I'm not going back to normal duties. I'm going to my quarters so I can rest in peace, away from all of you," he told the man with a wide smirk.

Rolling his eyes, O'Connell replied "Ok, sir. I will ask you to alert me if you experience any more pain. As I've said, I will need to log this incident in your records. Is there anything else I can help with before you leave sir?"

"More meds?" Liam asked as he stood up from the biobed. When he stood up, he felt a sharp pain in his side, but tried to hide it from the nurse as he picked up his uniform. "Definitely more meds," he said as he took off his shirt and began to put his uniform on.

"You've already been given the maximum amount of medication for today." he replied "If you experience any further pain I can provide more medication later this evening."

"Thanks for everything, doc," Liam said as he smiled at the man one last time before zipping up his jacket. He started to walk out of the room, with his hand on his stomach and lips curled inwards. "Cya around," he said as the doors opened before him.

Shaking his head in frustration, O'Connell put the devices away, and moved to update the man's medical file.



# Keeping Up With the Joneses

by Lieutenant Laurel Oakley MD

USS Tornado | Deck 3 | Counselor's Office

Laurel arrived at her office located on the Tornado's third deck and proceeded to enter after she cleared her identification with the starship's computer. The office had been left pretty tidy and reasonably organized, but it lacked personalization and Laurel was already making mental notes to change that.

She found her way over to the Counselor's desk and had a seat. The room was not large, but it was suitable to see one maybe two patients. Fortunately, she had no plans to start any therapy groups. "Computer, display Counseling logs from Counselor Jones, Charles Vasilius rank Lieutenant Junior Grade" she instructed the ship's computer. "List in chronological order, please. Oldest to most recent" she added with further instruction.

The computer processed the instructions and began to display the information accordingly. Laurel leaned back in her chair and took a deep breathe. *<i>That's a lot of logs</i>* she thought to herself. "Okay, computer. You and I are going to become friends and make my job a little easier" she said aloud.

"Improper inquiry. Please restate your request" replied the ship's computer.

Shaking her head Laurel let out a sigh. *<i>Disregard that. You and I are going to be frienemies</i>* she thought to herself. "Computer, remove all Counseling logs in relation to members of the crew no longer serving aboard. Keep only the logs pertaining to active members of the Tornado crew" ordered Laurel. She watched as the list of logs was cut down. "That's a little more reasonable" she said with relief.

Marcus cleared his throat as he gently pressed the charm on the Counseling Office door. He wanted to speak with the new Counselor before the starship undertook a new mission or assignment. He hadn't had time to see a counselor in a few weeks and it caused him stress. He was a frequent visitor of the counseling office and saw a counselor regularly. He made it a habit of talking to one due to his depression, anxiety and general cocktail of problems he has had since coming into life.

Counselor Oakley was finishing up some work on a PaDD when the door chime sounded, alerting her to the man's arrival. *<i>Odd she thought as she pulled up her schedule on the PaDD. I don't have any appointments scheduled this evening...or for several days even</i>* she thought to herself as she stood up from the chair that she was sitting on. "Come in" she said calmly, preparing herself for an unexpected visitor.

"You're new" he said slightly taken aback by the new face. It was change and Marcus did not like change. "I...well...uh I mean you aren't one of the normal counselors" he said playing with his collar nervously.

"Laurel Oakley" she said standing up and gesturing for him to have a seat. "Ship's Counselor and you are correct. I am new aboard. I am taking over for Counselor Jones" she said with a small smile.

"Oh" relied Marcus. "I d..d..didn't know we wer-were getting a new Ship's Counselor. I d..d..din't see Jones. I saw Counselor Lee" he said very nervously.

Laurel could tell the man was clearly nervous and had a bit of a stutter. "I see. Counselor Lee is on maternity leave from what I hear. She won't be returning to the Tornado and well, you probably know more about Counselor Jones than I do" she said with a shrug. "May I ask your name?" she said gently.

Marcus took a seat and tried to calm himself down the best he could. "Marcus Flint, Counselor. Crewmen Marcus Flint. I'm a medical technician"

Laurel pushed her PaDD aside, vacated the chair at her desk and took up refuge in a relatively cozy sofa, one of the larger pieces of furniture her office. On the coffee table in front of her sat the woman's stack of work and a cup containing a vanilla almond steamer.

The counselor patted the empty space beside her "Please, have a seat, Marcus" she said with a small smile in a calm, soft, and mousy voice. "Excuse the clutter and general mess at the moment. I only recently came aboard and haven't quite been able to work my way through everything yet, but actually meeting a member of the crew will be a nice change of pace" she said as she took a sip of her steamer.

"So...a medical technician, you say" she said warmly. Laurel was definitely interested in getting to know this man, or at least get a grasp on his personality. She had spent a good deal of time working closely with people who suffered from a variety of things, but this man might be one of her more interesting patients yet and she always fond of interesting characters. "Your duties must be quite interesting, Lieutenant" she said broadly. "What brings you to my office?" she asked, curious if the man was going to be a regular in her office.

"it can be at times but mostly it is just running tests and turning on machines...it can be kind of dull" he said with a small smile as he looked at her "I used to talk to a counselor every few days to clear my mind" he added "I think you already know about most of my problems from my file" he said.

Laurel crossed her legs and started to take some brief notes on a PaDD. "How about you tell me about yourself. I haven't been able to read everyone's file yet, and you know what, Marcus? That is fine. I think sometimes, we know ourselves better than what our medical files say" she said breaking the ice. "What can you tell me about yourself? What is your favorite part of your job aboard the Tornado? What do you do in your free time?" she said, asking several questions. *After I get out of here, I have to head to the Library and study up on some things* she thought to herself.

# All Shook Up

by Lieutenant Laurel Oakley MD

USS Tornado | Deck 2 | Library

Though it was true that the USS Tornado was not Laurel Oakley's first Federation starship to work aboard and in all likelihood not her last, the Tornado was very different than the USS Barton. The situation was also quite a bit different. Aboard the Barton, Laurel was simply a civilian medical student on her way to becoming a psychiatrist upon completion of her residency aboard the Barton. The Tornado was whole other creature. For starters, it was a lot smaller but had more of a bite than the Olympic class Barton. Another major difference was that unlike aboard the Barton, Laurel was not just some civilian trying to stay out of the way of Starfleet personnel. This time, she was Starfleet personnel.

The Tornado was a Rhode Island class starship, similar to that of a Nova class starship but with some cosmetic differences to the exterior and interior. None of this mattered to Laurel Oakley and most of it went way over her head. She did not know nor cared enough to know about the inner and outward distinctions between the two Federation starship classes. That was something to occupy someone else's brain, an Engineer perhaps. As Ship's Counselor, it was the personnel that mattered to Laurel. She was invested in their mental and emotional well being, and her primary duties were to ensure that they remained healthy on those fronts.

Walking into the Tornado's Library located on the second deck, Laurel was dressed in a standard issue Starfleet uniform with the appropriate departmental coloring and her proper pips worn on her collar to denote her officer's rank of full lieutenant. The library was pretty empty except for a young man sitting at a table looking over a PaDD. The Counselor saw him look up at her and she flashed a kind smile as he stood up swiftly to surrender his chair. "Ma'am" he said stiffly.

"Ma'am?" she thought as she heard it and quickly spun around, expecting to see the Captain or someone standing behind her. She nearly splashed some of her hot beverage out of her mug, but managed to keep it from going over the rim before breathing a sigh of relief. Though it then began to set in. "Oh? Oh. OH, he means me!" she thought as she nearly let out a little giggle, but kept it confined to a wide gleaming smile. "Hi" she replied softly. "Um please, as you were..." she said as she tried to count the pips on the man's collar but found a flat patch instead.

"Crewmen Barnes, Lieutenant" replied the man. "Did you want to sit here?" he asked her.

Laurel looked around the room and gestured the man to take his seat. "No, no. There's a lot of open seats, I'll just take one of them and please, call me Laurel" she said warmly before taking a sip of her lemon steamer. She could tell the man was hesitant about calling her by her first name. "Okay then...how about Counselor Oakley. Is that suitable?" she asked

The Crewmen nodded. "Yes, Counselor. I am just nervous. This is my first assignment after all and I don't want to mess it up" he admitted to her openly. He let out a sigh. "I thought I'd come in here and try to relax a little before my shift starts" he added.

Laurel pulled a physical copy of a book from the library's medical section, a book written by a Denobulan Psychologist that dealt with topics regarding and related to grief counseling. "Where do you work, Crewmen Barnes?" asked Laurel as she took a seat across from the young man.

The young man looked at the counselor "Engineering under a Lieutenant Eunidas. I work as a repair technician mostly."

The Counselor had taken another sip of her frothy drink, the whipped cream touching her nose and leaving behind a white tip on her nose as she looked at the man. "Sounds like an interesting job" she replied, making small talk.

"Lieutenant" he said trying to contain a chuckle. "I mean Counselor" he added, correcting himself as he touched his index finger to his nose. "You uh...you have a little..."

She quickly wiped the whipped cream from her nose and thanked him. "That could have been embarrassing. Thank you, Crewmen." Several minutes passed without much more conversing, and Laurel had set the book aside in order to use one of the library's computer consoles to check on some personnel files she had requested. She checked some notification and messages before letting out a small sigh.

It was enough to catch the crewmen's attention. "Something wrong, Counselor?"

Laurel blushed at first and then nodded. "Kind of. I have only recently come aboard and I am still trying to get my eyes into the ship's personnel files. I've got into about 95% of them, but there are a few I still need like the Captain's. I can't access them yet because my clearance level hasn't caught up to me yet" she tried to explain in simple terms.

Standing up, the counselor finished her drink and placed the empty mug into a food and beverage replicator and engaged the recycling function. "I need to stop by Sickbay and see the Chief Medical Officer. He'll be able to release the files to me personally or at the very least be able to get me access to them. Left or right down the corridor?" she asked.

"Right at first, but then you have to... actually, I will take you there myself" he said picking up his PaDD and walking with the counselor out of the Library and escorting her down the corridors and towards Sickbay. Before they arrived at the doors to Sickbay, something happened. The starship seemed to rock violently and trigger an alert.

Laurel was dazed and looked at the crewmen. "What was that?!" she shouted.

"I don't know, Counselor, but I need to get down to Engineering" he said. "Sickbay is just over there" he said gesturing towards the door before he ran off heading for a turbolift.

# 99 Bottles of Raktajino on the Wall

by Lieutenant Laurel Oakley MD

Federation Shuttlecraft

**BACK POST**

Laurel's big brown eyes were doe like as she held the mug of Klingon Raktajino in her trembling hand as she sat nervously and quite anxiously aboard the small Federation shuttle. At this point, Laurel had no idea was was shaking worse, her trembling hand or the rocking shuttle. "I thought these things were supposed to be safe and fly smoothly" she said aloud as she watched the shuttle pilot busily at work with the controls.

"Just relax, Counselor. I'll have you to the station safely and then you can board the Tornado" replied the pilot. "Besides, Federation shuttles are quite safe and I am a damn good pilot. We just happen to be experiencing some turbulence from an ion storm...but it is nothing to be worried about. The storm is way off in the distance" the woman added calmly as she tried to stabilize the shuttle further.

The counselor's heart fluttered as she lurched forward slightly after the shuttle experienced more of this turbulence. "An ion storm?" said Laurel. "If it is so far away, Ensign, then, why am I feeling it?" asked Laurel somewhat unsettled. "Can't we just set down on a nice planet and wait the storm out. Maybe we can just tell the Tornado to wait a few days or maybe they could come and pick me up instead" offered the Counselor, knowing full well that neither of those were options.

The ensign turned in her seat and looked back at the other woman. "Counselor, unless you want to resign that Starfleet commission before you even start, I think you had better learn to get used to shuttles and the possibility of turbulence" joked the shuttle pilot. "Most of the time, you won't feel a thing, but these things happen every now and then. You'll get used to them the more time goes on" explained the ensign. "As for the storm. Yes, it is quite a bit away from our location, but it is a pretty strong storm. We're experiencing turbulence from its wake" added the woman.

Letting out a sigh, Laurel smiled and took another sip of her drink. "I'm just on edge. I haven't been on too many shuttles in my lifetime and to be honest I am a little scared about this whole thing. How will the crew take me? Will they accept me? What will the Captain think of me?" rambled the counselor shaking her head.

"Of course they will accept you" replied the ensign. "You are a Starfleet officer and the Chief Counselor for the USS Tornado. You'll get the respect and admiration that you deserve from all of those aboard" added the pilot. "But if you keep freaking out like this, you are not going to do anyone any good. What is that your what...fifth Raktajino in the past fifteen hours?" asked the woman.

Counselor Oakley chuckled. "Uh...no. It is my tenth actually" she admitted. "I guess that might be part of the problem. I should probably switch to decaf."

# Whirlwinds

by Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrán & Lieutenant Laurel Oakley MD

USS Tornado | Deck 3 | First Officer's Office

Laurel had waited for things aboard the USS Tornado to die down a bit before she sought out the ship's First Officer. She did not know what the exterior of the starship looked like after several explosive devices planted on the hull had exploded, but even hours after the inside of the starship was a whirlwind of personnel.

Whoever was responsible for this attack had been successful in stirring up a hornet's nest. Her empathic abilities had allowed her to feel a lot of the raw emotion of the crew. Some were better at keeping their emotions at bay, and others did not care to even try to bottle things up.

As ship's Counselor, Laurel had matters to tend to and work that she was eager to start. This recent attack did nothing to stop that. If anything, it just added fuel to her already burning fire though she was relatively calm compared to some of the crew. She did, however, need to see Lieutenant Vorrán immediately.

Fortunately, the offices for many of the Senior Staff and Department Heads were relatively close to one another. After finishing up some quick work in her office, she headed out and down the corridors to check and see if the First Officer was in his office.

It was usual for a visitor to press the door chime or if not, then wait for the proximity detectors to alert the occupant of a guest waiting for them. Laurel walked up to the man's office door and let out a small sigh as she knocked gently on the door. Growing up on Betazed, she had grown to find chimes and gongs rather annoying.

Vorrán was sitting in his office going through the damage reports when he heard a knock at the door. People normally use the chime, he also didn't have any appointments with staff. Vorrán being cautious drew his phaser and stood to the side of the door before opening it.

Laurel was not usually one to pull the whole Betazoid 'eavesdropping' that a significant population of empaths were known for. She had a little more respect of privacy, a concept that was relatively unheard of or at least not considered on her home of Betazed. However, this did not prevent her from getting feelings and quick flashes of sensing of stronger emotions.

She definitely knew the man was in his office or at least someone was from the emotions she was feeling. However, when the doors started to open she didn't see anyone. She proceeded nervously...if the office was empty and there wasn't really anyone in it then she was either sensing a ghost which she was skeptical of their existence or she was breaking and entering unintentionally.

She walked forward a bit, just before crossing the threshold and caught a very sudden sweeping emotion of something bordering on anxiety and paranoia. *What the...* before she could think any further, she caught sight of someone from the corner of her eyes.

She let out a quick gasp and made a fist, sweeping it sideways as she turned sharply on her heels. Like a tiny compacted wrecking ball, her first found her target in the form of the man's sexual reproductive organs. "Sir!" she shouted after realizing she had just struck her superior officer and even worse struck him where the sun of any planet did not shine.

Vorrán doubled over coughing. "What the?" He sputtered between coughs. "There is a door chime."

"Yeah, I know" she said shaking her head. "There's also common sense. What were you even doing? A phaser...really? What kind of hostile force is going to gently knock on your door?" she said as she walked over to the replicator and ordered ice cubes in a compress.

She offered the man the ice compress. "You probably should put that...well you know where" she said blushing. "I don't like door chimes. They remind me too much of Betazed. Have you ever been? It's nothing but gongs and chimes for every ceremonial nuances."

Vorrán sat down at his desk annoyed as he iced himself. "I grew up on Qualor 3 and spent time with a crew of smugglers. If someone came to your door unexpected it usually ended badly."

Laurel felt as though she had done enough damage already and had embarrassed herself beyond what she thought was imaginable. So, she decided it best not to bring up she had taken a few classes on Risan Massage Therapy if that would help the man.

Instead, she simply apologized. "I am really sorry. So very very sorry, Sir" she said her eyes wide. "I didn't expect you to be hiding and when I saw you...I just reacted. I'll remember to just ring the door chime next time" she added.

"I usually stay out of direct sight of the door until I determine who is on the other side." Vorrán replied curtly

"I came to see you as Ship's Counselor" she said with a small smile. "I have noticed the crew is a bit stirred up over what happened when we were docked. The explosions. Do we know who is responsible yet?" she asked.

Vorran shrugged. "We're still trying to identify the explosives used, and analyze the sensor logs to see who planted them."

Laurel smiled. "Be careful, Sir. I might just have to consider that the foundation of paranoia" she said in response to his actions of staying out of sight. "Well, whoever did this to us, I really hope it was not the work of the Klingons. We've come so far in rebuilding relations after our brief war before the Dominion War. I'd hate to see us turn into bitter enemies once again."

Vorran sighed knowing every word he said would be psychoanalyzed. "We know there are renegade Klingons operating in this area. They would have no issue attacking us treaty or not."

She then moved onto a different topic. "Really what brought me here aside from the crew expressing some concerns of mistrust with the Klingons and general concern over the attack on the ship is that I need your help. I received orders to report to the Tornado, but I guess the assignment was rather last minute. Needless to say not everything has caught up to me yet and I'm still working with the security clearance and computer access level of that of a civilian. If there's anything you could do to speed up the process or get me the proper security clearance...I'd definitely appreciate that."

"Send me a copy of your orders and I will see to it all necessary clearances are implemented." Vorran replied hoping this intrusion was nearing an end. He didn't want to be in command of the Tornado. The captain being in sickbay left the weight of the ship on his shoulders. He had to protect the crew and Liam from harm.

She nodded and flashed a small smile. "Yes, Sir. I have a copy in my office. I'll just send it to your computer console here" she said softly. "I guess this was to be expected given I didn't go through the whole academy thing. You'll have my orders within the hour."

"Very well Counselor. Dismissed" Vorran replied

"And you are doing a fine job given the circumstances, Sir" replied Laurel before backing towards the door. "You might want to head down to Sickbay and have them take a look. I hope I didn't mess anything up" she added nervously before darting out the door.

"I'll be fine." Vorran replied as she left. He shook his head not knowing what to make of the new counselor. Liam is not going to be happy about the brutal attack either.

# Stand up and fight

by Rear Admiral Ryoko Takato (Future) & Ryoko Takato

Unknown

Unknown

It was blurry in her eye, yet it felt warm and it was so bright in light. Her eyes slowly get used towards the bright light as she noticed that she was nowhere. Ryoko looked around seeing blue strings of waves passing her by. Trying to reach towards it, she notice it breaks into smaller strings "What is this..."

"It's a chronicle temporal particle that is used to create, edit or even destroy something" The voice sounded like hers but older. Ryoko looked at her side seeing herself standing there. But as said, older and with Rear Admiral pips "Hello Ryoko, this will be interesting" The Admiral spoke as she took a deep breath "Where am I? Who are you? Where Tornado? What happened to me?" Ryoko had so many questions.

The Admiral smiled and placed her hands on her back as she walked a bit "Walk with me" Ryoko stood up and followed the Admiral "You have many questions, truthful questions that require answers and yet I can't answer them all" She stated as she looked at her younger self "But things have gone out of control, the very thing I tried to avoid, happened anyway" The Admiral spoke.

Ryoko smirks as she tries to remember what happened and suddenly the blue strings reformed into images showing the battle arena and the the shot that got fired. At the same time the Admiral fighting the assassin that fired the shot "I got shot, because of you..me...you?" This was rather confusing, but at the same time interesting.

"You got shot indeed, currently in emergency surgery is getting preformed on you and the next few weeks you will be in coma" The Admiral spoke and shrugs at the same time "Things are going to change for you, the Klingons, The Gorn and Task Force 93 involvement is going to increase extremely"

The Gorn? Ryoko did not understand much out of the given information, but somehow would know about it when it was going to happen "Really confusing this conversation I say" Ryoko said a bit annoyed as she looked at the Admiral that suddenly turned towards her.

"We are going to have so many conversations like these, but for now you have to fight for your life and stand up to battle the upcoming struggles of your vessel Captain" With that the Admiral disappears into the air and Ryoko is left into the white area of nothing "Where the hell am !!!!!"



# Reunited

by Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrán & Lieutenant JG Liam Harrison

## Liam & Tyler's Quarters

Liam inched his way back to his quarters on the Tornado. As much as he hated to admit it, the young nurse was right. Liam should have stayed in sickbay until his wounds had healed better. As he walked, he had a hand on his stomach where he felt a sharp pain. The other hand was pulling him along the bulkheads of the corridors heading in the direction of his quarters.

When he finally arrived he sighed in relief. Too weak to input the password, he leaned up against the bulkhead besides the door and pressed the chime to his quarters hoping Tyler was back.

Tyler heard the chime and grabbed his type two phaser. He approached the door standing to the side. "Enter." He said

As the approval was given by Tyler on the other side of the door, the computer unlocked the door and Liam moved in. The moment he took support from the wall, he fell into Tyler's arms. "Hey, boo," he told him as he leaned up to kiss his fiance as he lay in his arms.

Tyler dropped the phaser trying to catch Liam. Tyler kissed Liam back seeing the pain in his eyes. "What did they do to you?"

"Oh, you know, just a few scrapes and bruises," Liam told Tyler with a wink as he kissed the Bajoran's nose and grabbed him to regain his footing. He moved towards the couch and lounged down. "A little altercation with the Klingons left the Captain and I a little sore..." he explained.

"Altercation with the Klingons?" Tyler replied as he made his way to the couch as well.

"Yeah," Liam told Tyler. "The Captain went in the ring to fight two Klingons and I was called in to be her partner. While I was...ill-equipped to handle the fight, the Captain and I somehow managed to win. Quite a victory for us. But man, can these Klingons leave a mark," Liam said as he put his hand on one of his bruises that the Nurse's instruments were not able to fully heal.

Tyler frowned hoping Liam didn't have the EMH treat his injuries. "I hope you didn't have that malfunctioning EMH take care of you. I saw the station's doctor for my injuries."

"Ohhhh no, not the EMH or the Chief Medical Officer. Some young nurse was on duty, and I kept getting the feeling he wanted to get into my pants," Liam said hoping to get a reaction out of Tyler. "Don't worry, I put a stop to that right in it's tracks." He may have been exaggerating just a tiny bit, but Tyler didn't need to know that. Liam kind of liked it when Tyler was jealous and wanted Liam for himself.

"I'll see to it that nurse is transferred to a garbage scow." Tyler grumbled pulling Liam closer to him.

Liam smirked at Tyler. *There it is*, he thought as he looked at the man with an endearing look. He leaned in and kissed him again. "Aww," he told him as he laid back and relaxed on the couch. "How was everything for you?" he asked looking at the man as he made himself comfortable, taking off his boots and putting his feet up on the coffee table. One of the privileges of living with the XO was all of the space that his quarters provided.

"Other than being tossed about like a rag doll by a Gorn....." Tyler started.

Liam blinked and raised his eyebrow when he heard the mention of a Gorn. "Wha...what?" he asked as he appeared confused. He didn't like the idea of Tyler fighting something like a Gorn. Especially when Tyler made himself a rag doll in comparison...

"Needed a diversion, I misjudged the size of said diversion. I already got patched up in the Klingon infirmary." Tyler said as he pulled Liam closer.

Liam snuggled up to Tyler and put his hand on the other man's chest. "I don't really trust Klingon doctors," Liam told the man as he rested his head on the Bajoran's shoulder. "But, so long as you're fine, I'm fine."

"Klingon doctor, smiling vulcan, or malfunctioning EMH?" Tyler said relaxing under the Liam's touch. Tyler ran his hand through Liam's hair, placing light kisses on his neck.

"Ah, ah, ah, don't forget slutty nurse," Liam told Tyler with a wink as he pulled his legs back from the coffee table and moved himself so their bodies were facing each other. Liam put his arms around Tyler's neck and began to give him deep passionate kisses, instead of the playful pecks that Tyler had given him.

"So that settles it..." Tyler said between kisses "Klingon doctor.." There was a crash next to the couch as a vase shattered on the floor.

Liam was so engulfed in the love and emotions that Tyler was giving off that he didn't even notice or care about the vase. By then, Tyler's back was lying on the couch as their chests pressed together. Liam's head hovered above Tyler's as the two continued to exchange their love.

# Sweet and Sour

by Lieutenant Laurel Oakley MD

USS Tornado | Deck 2 | Mess Hall

It had been yet another day and evening of letdown and disappointment as Counselor Oakley walked into the Tornado's Mess Hall and loosened the collar of her uniform. The environmental controls were just fine, but the kitchen staff were at work over some open flames. This evening's special was a sweet and sour stir fry and the heat from the kitchen was making the whole room a little hotter and humid than she personally cared for after a long day. *Screw it* she thought as she undid her uniform jacket, exposing her undershirt and shedding the uniform jacket. This was definitely not something she would do when on duty, but fortunately, she was well off duty.

Laurel was not hungry yet and she definitely was not interested in the evening's special. She needed a drink though. If not because of thirst, then definitely to just unwind. However, her unwinding was quite different than others concept or practice of unwinding. At the food and beverage replicator, she stood for a moment before selecting her drink. "One Shirley Temple on the rocks" she said using bar slang which made her giggle. She had always wanted to say that to a replicator. "With ice" she said clarifying in fear the computer would take her literally and actually put the drink over pebbles or small rocks. Fortunately, she had caught the computer in time and her drink was exactly how she wanted it.

She was on her way over to a small sofa that was not presently occupied. There were only a couple of sofa in the Mess Hall and they were almost always taken. "Finally some luck" she said with a sigh as she neared the sofa with her Shirley Temple in hand. The Counselor bent over and placed her cup gently down on a small glass table that sat before the sofa. What she felt next greatly disturbed her. There was an uninvited hand placed on her buttocks which she was not pleased about.

"Only a child would drink that" said the voice of whomever had placed their hand on her rear. "Let a real man get you something" he added. Laurel was quite ready to find out who. She had let out a very clear verbal warning for the man to remove his hand immediately. He was too slow for her liking. She stood up and sharply turned around, an open hand connecting with the man's cheek in a rather loud slap.

She looked at the man who was still fully in uniform. Some baby faced crewmen who looked hardly through puberty. "Only a child would treat a person like that. When you find a real man... let him get you a drink" because I'm not drinking with you, Crewmen" she said crisply as she let the young man get a clear look at the rank pips on her uniform collar.

Backing away the crewmen fumbled with his words. "So sorry...Lieutenant. Ma'am, I..wasn't thinking" he uttered, swallowing hard.

Laurel was much shorter than the young crewmen, but this did not stop her from advancing on him, moving closer until the two were practically chest to chest with her looking up and glaring into his eyes. "Pull that sort of crap again with ANYONE aboard this starship and I will have your ass thrown in the Brig on sexual harassment charges and have your rank stripped from your uniform so fast, it may tear that uniform clear off your pathetic body" Laurel said very sharply before backing down.

"Now," she said with a gentle tone and somewhat warm smile "I am going to enjoy my drink without you bothering me. Oh, and I will see you first thing in the morning in my office to start three weeks of sensitivity training" Laurel added swiftly.

The crewmen stood there in a daze looking perplexed. "Lieutenant?" he said at a loss and not able to connect the dots.

Laurel extended her hand and gave a calm yet firm handshake. "I apologize, Crewmen. I do not think we've been properly introduced. Lieutenant Laurel Oakley, but you may call me Counselor."

## Mockery at the dying bed

by Ryoko Takato & D'okloss Targ & Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrان & Lieutenant JG Valok Larel

Sut HabmoHwl' mupwl' – Sickbay

The transport was successful as medical personnel rushed towards the aid of Lieutenant Larel to help with their dying Captain. Takato was still bleeding badly and the wounds were internal but also external, this shot was done sloppy but with a good rifle. "Give me 500ml painkiller now!" A Orion male nurse yelled as he looked at the Lieutenant "What happened.....bring me up to speed" With that being said he cuts some more of the uniform open to see the entry wound.

Taking a breath to steady himself, Valok replied "She was in the arena in the middle of a battle and she suddenly collapsed and started bleeding from her abdomen. The shot appears to be from a high powered rifle. I've given her some lectrazine to stabilize her, but was unable to do more without harming her." As he spoke, he sanitized his hands, ignoring the blood on his uniform. Moving to assist, he bit back a wince when he saw how deep the entry wound was in her stomach.

The Orion nodded and grabbed a pincer to spread the wound to see what the internal damage was. With the blood he was able to get away he could see quite some damage. He quickly gave a cloth with blood towards a nurse "Get me her blood type asap!" He shrugs as he grabbed her side and looked at the Doctor "The damage of your Captain is more extensive as we might presume..." With that he pulled her up showing the hole in the other side was quite bigger than the entree wound and placed her gently back "This might become night work Doctor, but hopefully we can manage to get her alive out of here."

Nodding, Valok took a moment to center himself, then shrugged off his bloody uniform jacket. Rolling up his sleeves, he grabbed a nearby tricorder and after a few scans said "My scans show at least two of her anterior arteries have been severed, and there is severe trauma to her spleen. I'll need more scans of her spinal column to see if that has been ruptured. I suggest we work on cauterizing the arteries first, so she doesn't bleed out, then work on repairing them. Do you concur?" He spoke with the confidence and coolness of a logical Vulcan, though inside he was trying to deal with the shock of the situation. He hoped his mental training in focusing his emotions would help him get through the grim task before them.

The Vulcan knew his game and the Orion nodded towards that "I approve, lets begin saving her life" But his eyes got diverted towards something else or rather someone else "Well she is a wild woman, being shot like an animal like that. It is a pity to see such perfect piece of breeding material getting shot down anyway" The dark low voice said as D'okloss enter the sickbay "Don't mind me, I am here to get some medication as I have a weak heart" The Orion smirks at that "The other medical staff can help you with that..." D'okloss smiled "I am in no hurry..."

"Your weak heart will not be a problem when I cut it out for your disrespectful demeanor in my infirmary." Kreg said loudly as he entered the room.

Continuing to work on Takato, Valok sighed and said "If you gentlemen have finished insulting each other, we have some delicate surgery underway. I would appreciate it if you would take your conversation outside so we're not distracted."

And suddenly the old man burst in laughing "Well you rather take care of the Federation then your own people Doctor?" Aimed at Kreg that spit out his request "Be carefully you are on dangerous grounds there..." Targ looked back at the doctor that was working on a delicate surgery "Oh I wonder if you succeed, good luck patching up your beast Vulcan" With that he left the sickbay with his guards.

"Dishonorable veQ" Kreg muttered "I will assist you vulcan. My name is Kreg I am this station's doctor." And so the team began their work on the Captain.

## Extreme conditions

by Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrان & Lieutenant Laurel Oakley MD & Staff Warrant Officer Grace Grayfield & 1st Lieutenant Meera Deloria

### Bridge

The hit was bad, the explosives were not even noticed when being planted onto the hull as Havico was trying to manage it on the bridge. Grace was doing her best to take care of the wounded on the bridge "Where is that medical team!" She demanded as Grace held the Petty Officer on her knee burned in his face.

"I have no idea Warrant, but I have my hands full guiding everyone towards their location" Havico stated, he was also in bad shape as he took an explosion of a console right to the face.

Grace shrugs and looked down at the Petty Officer "Hold on....your Chief Security will be back soon...I hope" She tapped "Grayfield to Vorrان...." No response again "Grayfield to Takato!" This was highly frustrated, no one of command responding towards her hail.

"Give it up Grayfield, the comms busted. I am trying to reroute it..." Havico replied as he tapped on the console trying to find a reroute.

She was hurrying forward, jogging through the halls of the station. Nearly hammering her badge into her chest for the third time since the Captain was shot, Meera tried to hail the ship. "Deloria to Tornado! Come in damn it!" She growled, getting nothing. Klingon's were quickly getting out of her way, a mixture of word about her kill in the arena combined with the look of near murderous intent as she hurried back to her ship being enough to get people to move aside.

Counselor Laurel Oakley was a rather recent addition to the crew and was still in the middle of unpacking her belonging, settling into both her office and her quarters, and to top it all off, she was not yet up to speed on her patients nor the ship's personnel.

Needless to say, it was just an excellent time for the starship to be rocked with explosions and for her to be swept right into the middle of it. She had been on her way to Sickbay to pick up some personnel files when the explosives detonated. By the time she walked in, medical personnel were grabbing medical kits and heading off the areas of the starship.

Dressed in her Starfleet uniform, she was rather indistinguishable from any other doctor, nurse, or technician around. In the Sickbay swarm, someone handed her a medical kit, pointed her out the door with a small shove and told her to get up to the Bridge.

Laurel Oakley arrived on the Bridge, finding it to be in a mess. Officers were injured and doing their best to man their stations. Armed with a decently packed medical kit, she was at a loss of really where to start let alone what what to do. *Breathe Laurel, breathe. You can do this. You know some general first aide* she thought as she reminded herself. "I have a medical kit" she said aloud, looking around the Bridge. "Who is hurt?" she asked as she sought direction.

Grace smirks and looked at her side to the incoming Counselor "Look around Doc, everyone needs help..." Grace replied in a gentle way. Looking back at her own patient she could stabilize him with some hypo "We got hit bad....damn it" Lieutenant Havico spoke as he finally got the reroute done.

"Yeah, I see that" replied Laurel with a heavy sigh. "Page Sickbay again. Tell them to get a nurse or at least some medics up here" Laura said aloud. "I'll do what I can, but my medical care knowledge and experience is limited to first aide" she added as she started to tend to the wounded.

Vorrان entered the smoke filled bridge at the chaos ensuing around him. He had run through the docking area when he heard the explosions. "Report!"

*Someone of authority* thought Laurel as she heard the barking order though it was more so directed at the bridge officers than it was at herself. Regardless, she felt the need to do what she could. "We have wounded. Medical has been dispersed across the ship checking on the crew. We have pretty nasty burns, contusions, and probable concussions up here, Sir" she reported. "Lieutenant Oakley, ship's Counselor" she added with a small nod in the man's direction.

"Do your best to stabilize them counselor." Vorrان replied as he looked around the Bridge. Vorrان sat in the command chair and activated the ship's comm system. "All hands to Battlestations, prepare for emergency departure once all crew are accounted for." Vorrان said over the ship's intercom.

"Unable to do so, House of Darg gives their support towards the ships port and have placed a few BoP around us to secure the Tornado. Darg advises not to leave, unknown if any enemy is still cloaked out there.." Havico said when he moved towards a different console to let Vorrان sit on the Captain's chair. He slide his hands over the console as it stops hovering over new information coming in as he shakes his head and looks down "Shit..." He had difficulty breathing as Grace walked towards the console "Whats wrong Havico!" He pointed at the console and took a step back.

Grace looked at the console and narrowed her eyes "No...no no no" She tapped onto the console to confirm the information as she slams onto it "Lieutenant Vorrان, you are now in temporally in command of the Tornado. Captain Takato has been shot and is now in emergency surgery performed by our doctor and the base medical personal....your orders sir" With that said Havico had to grab the console behind him to catch his fall. This was heavy information to bare with.

Hearing that the Captain was undergoing emergency surgery, the Counselor's eyes were quite wide and her hand trembled as she held a dermal regenerator near a crewmen's face. She was doing her best to keep these people in stable condition, but she was seeing severe burns and some of the bridge crew had really conked their heads good. "Lieutenant Vorrان...Sir. Some of these men and women need to be checked out by a doctor. I can take care of the minor wounds, but there's no telling the extent of head trauma or internal bleeding that is at work."

"It sounds like the doctor is going to be busy working on the Captain. If any of them can walk help them to sickbay." Vorrان replied

Laurel did not like the sound of that. The Chief Medical Officer was busy and at the moment, Laurel was to go to for medical care on the Bridge. Though she felt as though she was nearing the end of her capabilities.

Vorrان turned to Havico.

"House of Darg reinforcements or not we are not staying docked to this station. Their security and ours slipped up allowing this attack. We are sitting ducks docked to the station. Get all our remaining crew back aboard and I want security posted on every deck." Vorrان ordered

The Counselor directed a few men into the lift and sent them on their way. She encouraged them to go get checked out in Sickbay. "Does this starship have an EMH?" she asked, not knowing offhand. "If so, I hope they have it up and running" she added. <i>I hope his telling me to take the injured to Sickbay wasn't an order</i> she thought to herself.

Havico shrugs and goes to his console "I can try again...." He taps on to the console as Grace walks towards her own "Yes the ship has a EMH, but confined towards the sickbay only Lieutenant" Grace spoke as she taps onto her console and called for a total recall of all personnel for emergency departure.

"Darg has released the control of the ship and wishes us good luck. They will take care of the Captain and report to you as soon as possible" Havico stated as he looked at the Counselor "Something wrong ma'am?"

Laurel looked at Havico who was addressing her. "Huh?" she said at first before focusing on his question. "Oh. I'm fine...just thinking" she answered as she took a deep breath.

"Sir" she said directed at the First Officer. "If they are in the shape to walk, they can make it down a deck to Sickbay on their own. Unless you want me off your Bridge...if I can be of some use here, just point and tell me what you need" she said as bravely as she could muster.

"Alright counselor, take the operations station. I'll take the helm we're getting clear of the station." Vorrان replied as he made his way to the vacant helm.

<i>Oh you had to stay on the Bridge, didn't you, Laurel. Great job. Now look at what you got yourself into</i> she thought to herself as she took a hard swallow of saliva, gulping it down. "Aye Sir" she replied as she proceeded over to the Ops station and took the controls. Fortunately, the console had not been locked and she had full access to the station. "Operations station standing by, Sir."

"Release docking clamps and perform a departure scan of the area for any navigational hazards." Vorrان ordered

The Counselor glanced over the console readings for an initial base reading. She then proceeded to scan for potential navigational hazards as instructed. Most of this was rather new to her and definitely not part of her every day duties, but she had at least the most basic training to scan something. It was mostly the computer and ship doing the work. "Sending results to helm console" Laurel responded.

"Got it. Docking clamps released, maneuvering away from the station." Vorrان said as he skillfully took the Tornado out of dock.

"As soon as we are clear raise shields. We'll have to find a place to lay low and make repairs." Vorrnan said  
Looking at the console Grace looked up "Sir, the crew is counted for with exception of Captain Takato and our Chief Medical Officer for ...known reasons"

Meera had only just made it onto the ship with the teleporter because there was still too much distance between her and the ship when they were preparing to launch. Not bothering to wait the next few moments to orientate herself, she was already stepping off the pad and slamming her commbadge. "Meera here! I'm aboard! On my way to the bridge now!"

"Acknowledged." Vorrnan responded to Meera. Vorrnan set a course toward the nearby planet. "I'm taking us in close to the planet. We can use the magnetic poles to hide until we make repairs."

The damaged Tornado made its way to the planet taking up geostationary orbit at the southern magnetic pole. Now to find out how badly they've been damaged and who attacked them.

# Personal Log #325

by 1st Lieutenant Meera Deloria

## Personal Log

Revisited AR-558 again. Was listening to an old band that Edwards introduced me to back when we finished Basic. Some group called Five Finger Death Punch. The song in particular was one he would occasionally sing when feeling more existential. I've, in a fashion since his passing, adopted it as my own.

I may not have a severe case of PTSD, unlike some, despite what I went through ironically... But I didn't leave that rock whole. Too many down there died. Too many times I should have been shot, and wondering if we even had a corpsman to treat our wounds, and wasn't. If it's by some grace of the Goddesses, then they have a sick sense of humor. Lt. Vorrnan came in near the end of today's session, and got to see us as we were then. He, seemed awed. I'd become too desensitized to the chaos during it. I, just don't feel anything any more. No, that's not true. I do feel something. Guilt. Guilt at surviving when those more fit to do so didn't.

Gunny Vendri. The old bastard that united us, telling us flat out that if there was anything we should have learned in Basic, and that was race, gender, even political background held zero sway on the battlefield. To the enemy who sought our death's. I thought him an old relic at the time. Who was going to seek a war with the Federation then? The Klingon's were strong, but the last few tangles they'd suffered against the Federation ended in their defeat. Our thoughts were on how to pass the time during duty. Then came the call. The Dominion had stormed DS9. We suddenly were in a war, and we had an enemy to fight.

And Gunny was right. When it's you and your brothers and sisters in the trenches or foxholes, or canyons... The differences make no matter in the face of striving to survive the worst reality could throw at you. You looked left, and you looked right, and saw only siblings, if not by birth, than by blood, sweat and pain. He had took a misstep on AR-558 and we were having to pick up his pieces with tweezers when the mine blew him up.

Edwards. Guy was a living joke, but damned if he wasn't OUR joke. Too lanky, too goofy, too free-spirited that a lot thought he wasn't even actually in the Corps. But when the meat met the grinder, he was as good as any Marine you could find during the War. We were in the same unit in Basic, AIT, and beyond. Sure, he earned rank faster than I, but only because most couldn't get past my... origin.

He, introduced me to a lot of Earth's historical material. It's music, it's history, some of it's stories. The kind of things you'd need to know to look for to find. And while he often had a joke ready, he knew when to be lively, and when to be death incarnate. But, not even he could be prepared for what we suffered in those canyons. His jumping on the grenade as it landed among us saved a third of our surviving number that rush. The damned thing was a concussion grenade... so while he was fine on the outside, his entire inside was goood.

Captain Gregor. Old muscle of a man. Been in as long as Gunny... And he kept us together like no one else I'd heard of. Always right in the thick with us, never hiding behind his rank with work needing done... the Captain was a damned fine man, and a good Marine. But when he had poked his head up out of the trench to try and spot a weak point we could exploit to get out of that nightmare, the sniper the enemy had in place relieved the Captain of his head. His replacement had gotten practically no time to train with us when we landed on AR-558.

And speaking of his replacement, Lt. Bre'Leck was a good officer, a good soldier. He even understood that the animosity we flung at him was not because he was Starfleet, but because he was the available target for our grief, our anger, our rage at the loss of our CO during the previous battlefield. He took it and continued on. His command however, was about on par with what I'd heard other CO's experienced. A single tour of action. He, uhhh, he was hit by a rockslide caused during a fight... We never found his body. We never had the time. Nor the man-power by that point.

Goddesses, listen to me sound like some damned sobbing fool. I need to get my game face straight and on. We've got Klingon's to worry about now. I just hope they don't try and force us into their internal affairs. I don't want nor need the additional headaches atop taking over CS and trying to pass the crash OTS course Captain Ryoko provided me to earn my butter-bar. Speaking of, I've a lot of work and spending as long as I have in the past isn't going to help me in the future. End Log.



# The blood will stick on you...

by D'okloss Targ

Unknown

The tower view was great, everything of the city that held the culture of the Klingons was presented in this glorious view. D'okloss walked alone into the open area seeing an old man standing there "You are getting sloppy D'okloss, something I did not expect from you" He said while letting a deep breath of air go out.

"If you did not summon me back so urgently, then I could have finished my work and continue to go for our common goal..." D'okloss spoke back at him with a growl in his voice of displeasement.

"You have much to learn...." The man turned towards D'okloss as he narrows his eyes "If a Federation vessel is destroyed by whatever reason by a Klingon whatever house it might be. Then we have a problem" He said at a serious tone.

D'okloss shook his head "The Federation were investigating our operations, I had to act to knock them back from where they came from. They are Federation, they should be licking their wounds, running back towards their beloved and peaceful borders" The statement was made, D'okloss thought he made a point in pushing the Federation back.

"You still don't get it do you, the Federation does not go back towards the hole they came from. They are interested in what poked them. It's in their nature to investigate the unknown D'okloss. You just poked the one ship that you shouldn't have poked to hard" The man walked closer to D'okloss "Remember your place D'okloss, your house is called Targ for reason...you farmed pigs!!"

He shrugs as D'okloss looked down "I remember Niskoc, you made my house for what it truly is and without my support your councilship is over" D'okloss looked up at Niskoc "We are now one of most strongest houses in the Klingon Empire, because of your involvement and not one little ship is going stop the raise of the Klingon Empire"

Niskoc smirks "You forgotten the way of a true Klingon D'okloss, their blood will stick on you as the blood of a death Targ. Let them do what they desire to do....let them investigate and find out the truth" He saw D'okloss protesting already as he rose his hand "But when they find out, it's too late and our fleets will march towards their borders" With a smirk on his face Niskoc turned back towards the city night view "Continue your work and finish off Darg once and for all"

D'okloss nodded as he turned around and walked towards the exit "And D'okloss....threaten me again and suddenly you find your path to Gre'thor" Niskoc spoke as D'okloss did not respond but merely left the area.

## You must...

by Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrان & Ryoko Takato

### Ready Room

The call came in for Captain Takato, the Task Force 93 Operation Manager had been trying to get a hold of the Tornado for quite some time now. At first the Commodore suspected that it was out of range of communication, but after a while he became worried about the status of the Tornado. He prepared for the USS Skaði (Defiant Class) and USS Singapore (Ronin Class) for emergency departure. But he was stuck towards the 48 no response policy.

Tapping his desk he tried again to hail the Tornado "Come on pick up...." The line was clear, something might have gone wrong.

Vorrان entered the ready room and took seat behind the desk.

It was certainly a different experience for him to be in here for a reason other than a dressing down.

"Tornado here this is Lieutenant Vorrان." He said after activating the monitor.

The Catian Commodore blinked his eyes seeing the Lieutenant "Lieutenant? Where is Captain Takato? Why have you ignored communications, is everything okay with the Tornado?"

"Sir, I'm in command at the moment the Captain was severely wounded. She may not survive. The Tornado has been attacked and our long range communications were offline." Vorrان reported

Nodding towards the dreadful report "That is indeed awful Lieutenant and very unexpected. Do you know the condition of her? Plus the source of the attack of Tornado? Require assistance at any time?" The Commodore was rather in a questions mode then seeking answers.

"Our Chief Medical officer is with her, she was too critical to be moved from the station. We're using the magnetic poles of the planet to hide from sensors while we make repairs."

Vorrان took a breath and tried to compose himself. "We suspect the attackers were part of a renegade Klingon house looking to destabilize house Darg."

"Is see" The Commodore replied puzzled "So Ryoko was on the right track after all....and good thinking on the magnetic poles Lieutenant, its a classic and yet very effect move" He replied as he taps his claws on the desk "The issue I am dealing right now is that I got a wounded ship out there without a Captain that is on the verge of discovering something big...or am I now misled by the given information Lieutenant?"

"Sir, If we send more ships into the area it may scare off the renegades. They attacked us because we were getting close to something. I believe House Darg can be trusted but some of his men were in on it to pull off an attack like this." Vorrان replied

The Catian nodded towards him and leans forward "I think you are right Lieutenant. If you have a lead towards anything that could explain this attack. Then go for it and find me those answers!" Leaning backwards "I will keep USS Skaði and USS Singapore on standby, just in case. You are hereby ordered to stay in Klingon space and continue Takato work. Until Takato is fit for duty, you are to assume duty as Commanding Officer of the Tornado Lieutenant Vorrان...." The Catian hisses on that last part and looked up as he shook his head "...Let date state as of today you are acting Lieutenant Commander until Captain Takato can approve of it of course" He smiled at Tyler.

"Thank you, sir" Vorrان replied "Do you have any other orders for me?"

Smiling at the Tyler and shaking his head "Only to survive the day Commander....good luck and report in every 24 hours. Command out" The screen went black

Vorrان took a deep breath sinking deeper into the chair.

"Swell." he muttered

## Hearing the bad music...

by Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrán & Lieutenant Laurel Oakley MD & Lieutenant Caradan Eunidas & Lieutenant JG Valok Larel & Staff Warrant Officer Grace Grayfield & 1st Lieutenant Meera Deloria

### Observation Lounge

Things went from good, to bad to very wrong and the ship suffered badly from this mission. Not one of crewmembers would have thought that the Klingons would go so far. The crew was in mixed feeling, away the station and yet eager to fight for what they have lost. The Klingons, can they still be trusted with their Captain life hanging on the balance between dead or alive? Are they still save in Klingon space? What about the Tornado? It suffered badly....Vorrán has a difficult task ahead, their role model Captain is out of commission and the crew is feeling demotivated to push forward.

Vorrán sat at the head of the table in the observation lounge and cracked his knuckles. Usually the captain would be sitting at the head of the table, now the responsibility of command fell solely on him. The crew is on edge, snipping at each other over petty things. Ready or not he had to come up with some way to keep them pushing forward.

The last time Meera had been this harried, she was dropped into being the NCO of the surviving personnel of her section of the line during the Siege of AR-558. Her people were stretched thin keeping order on the ship, and the brig was at capacity, or damn near. It didn't help that a lot of people were angry at Security for their letting the saboteurs get aboard and planting the charges that damaged the ship.

PADD in hand, Meera is going from one section of the ship to the next. "I need reports on the explosives used to cripple us, and I need it NOW." She growled at the Lieutenant next to her. There was still some animosity even now amongst Security about her being an enlisted woman being put in charge of the entire section, despite the fact that she'd been working on finishing OTS in her spare time. But with the situation as it was, most were just grateful she was keeping things relatively in order. "I also need those reports on who the hell threw those punches first in the medical ward on the station. If it was one of ours, then I want their name. If it was one of theirs, I want their House AND name!" She barked, slamming the PADD with the report of that into the chest of the next security officer coming up.

Anxiety, hatred, and fear were among the negatively strong stew of emotions that Laurel was reading from the crew. Nowhere aboard the starship could she escape said emotions. Hundreds of people, strong negative emotions stretched bow to stern. The Counselor, having finished a report, headed to the Observation Lounge per request.

Valok, having grabbed a quick shower and a change of uniform, entered the Observation Lounge and took a seat. He was still worried about the captain, but knew he'd done everything he could to help her.

Caradan left Engineering in capable hands. She knew it and so did Ensign Keselowski, though she could tell that he felt her hands were not capable. The respect of the crew was still in short order, but at least it was growing.

She scrolled through the report detailing and listing the extent of the damage done to the Tornado. Something was adding up. There was no suspect but then again, finding such a person was not Caradan's job. Her job was repairing the ship and keeping it in working order. Right now, the Tornado was not. It was crippled and would require some time in Space Dock for repairs. Caradan had to find any option that did not include going back to Starfleet.

She entered the Observation Lounge seeing several already gathered. She looked to each in kind. "It is agreeable to see everyone."

Caradan was unsure how the others felt about a Changeling on board. Being new, still, to the crew, she even went as far as imagining someone blaming her for the attack. <i>'Founders framing Klingons for an attack on Starfleet.'

The Counselor was staring at a PaDD, reading through it skimming for information to prepare herself for the oncoming conversation. She wanted to at least be somewhat on an even footing with Security and the other departments.

When Caradan came into the room, what broke Laurel away from the PaDD was the woman's greeting rather than the woman herself. <i>Curious</i> thought Counselor Oakley who tried to focus on Caradan to get a sense of her emotions. What Laurel felt instead was nothing. Blankness. It was as though Laurel had attempted to read the emotional state of a rock.

<i>Definitely not human</i> Laurel noted as she remained seated in her chair, waiting for things to get underway. "Hello, Lieutenant" the Counselor said politely to Caradan.

Caradan looked to the Counselor first with a look she realized would have been asking her 'Just why are you talking to me?' Caradan quickly dropped the seriousness of her expression and gave a nod in return. She thought to ask how Oakley was doing. It was a greeting used in abundance on Earth. Given the situation, no one was doing very well. Caradan just gave a dry smile then focused on the door as others entered. This meeting was about to get underway.

As Meera closed on the Observation Lounge she was handed another PADD. "Goddess damn it..." She growled, looking over the latest report that's come in. Shooing away the personnel she had, she took a breath and stepped in. She hadn't even had a chance to change out of her uniform after the Arena matches, so her combat utilities were a fair bit worn in, and more importantly, still lightly stained in blood from the Klingon she'd been forced to kill in the match. Compared to most present, she was obviously the most ragged run. "Please tell me someone here HAS good news." She asked, looking over those present.

Wandering into the room, Grace was not having her day as she was filling the gaps of Operation Chief in due the fact that he was laying in sickbay with second degree burns. The amount of stress that was facing them was no longer funny.

Vorran sighed at the outburst from Meera. "I don't have much in the way of good news other than we're out of sight. Let's go around the room with status reports. Lieutenant Eundias, Damage report?"

Caradan stood. She realized she had not yet met everyone aboard the ship and figured many were still at odds with a Changeling serving alongside them, but this was not the time for introductions or settling of nerves. It was time to report, to act, and to press on.

Holding the PADD before her, "The stern of the ship sustained the most damage. We have extensive hull buckling. Several decks are still decompressed and exposed to the vacuum of space. Emergency shielding is in place in sensitive and necessary areas. Any area deemed not essential had emergency shielding deactivated. The power is needed to maintain primary shields, life support, and artificial gravity. I have crew in space suits working both in and outside repairing the damage. Several plasma relays ruptured and exploded. I managed to save a few and lessen the impact of others. However, backup power storage is gone. Teleporters, replicators, and holodecks now have only enough power for essential use, only when absolutely necessary. We do have parts to repair some of the damage, but this attack was well orchestrated. They knew where to hit us, where to plant explosives. Someone gave them precise specs and locations. Engineering does not have enough spare components to repair all of the damage. Aft torpedoes and phasers are offline. Power from forward shielding has been rerouted to aft giving us a cumulative total of 55% shielding across the ship as a whole. Hull plating is weakened, especially across the stern, but I have managed to get polarization back up to 100%. We have zero chance of UV, X, or Gamma Ray exposure. Forward phasers and torpedoes are online. Port and Starboard phasers are likewise online. With secondary power out and power rerouted as we continue with repairs, phaser power remains steady at only 40%. The Warp Core is operating only at 45%, but I can get that up to 60% if we take power away from other areas. Given that scenario, and once half of the relays are back up and running, I can keep the ship steady at a cruising speed of Warp 4.35 with our maximum at Warp 7...maybe."

Caradan looked about the room taking in people's expressions. "It will take some time but if I can have permission to work my crew around the clock, we can be mobile in 2 days. A situation such as this dictates that, once we can move, we return to Federation Space and to Space Dock for repairs.

"Top priority on engines and tactical systems Lieutenant. It may be some time before we can return to starbase. I would prefer not to ask the Klingons for assistance either with recent events." Vorran replied

Counselor Oakley sat, listening to the report of Eundias and gaged the room for indication of reactions. She felt her own report would be best suited following the lieutenant's. Laurel cleared her throat. "As Ship's Counselor, I regret to report that I have noticed issues among the crew given our recent situation. Junior officers are expressing concerns bordering on distrust of senior officers and at times even their superiors" stated Laurel.

"Furthermore, I have definitely been made well aware that a significant population of the crew are expressing some negative emotions mostly that of anger and hostility towards the Klingons. Many feeling a sense of betrayal" explained Laurel. "I'm doing my best to quell things before they spiral out of control. Personally, I feel these negative emotions towards the Klingons are misguided and ill placed at this time" added the Counselor.

Sitting back in her chair she smirks "You don't say Counselor, the crew got backstabbed by the Klingon while we were trying to help them. While you are right that its not the Klingons in a whole, it is part of it that attacked us. House of Darg has not shown much interest in helping us out..." Grace replied angry.

Meera shook her head. "They can't. Not openly. Some House is out for blood. OUR blood. One of their contestants during my matches wasn't looking to win. She was trying to kill me. If the House of Darg was against us, I would have been arrested for killing her first. But the referee ruled in our favor due to the words exchanged between my opponent and the Captain. Simply put, whoever is running this attack on us, is trying to undermine the House of Darg AND sow animosity between the Federation and the Klingon Empire. And from what my people have been dealing with from the crew alone, it's working. Brig's damned near full from my people arresting personnel who've gotten violent to their superiors. I'm damned lucky no one in Security's tried taking a pot shot at me yet." She said, not so subtly referring to the fact that she was the only enlisted division head in the room currently.

"I've got people looking into what was used, much less how they got it aboard. And until we can irrefutably prove which House instigated these events, the House of Darg CANNOT act. It's politics, and it damned well sucks." Meera finishes, looking over those present.

Nodding in agreement with what the Security Chief added, Laurel looked at the woman representing the Science Department, a warrant officer from the looks of it. *Grayfield. Grace Grayfield* Laurel thought to herself, the name coming to her. "What the Sergeant just said is correct, Ms. Grayfield" said the Counselor in a gentle tone. "We're inside Klingon domain and dealing with Klingon politics. As much as we may want to see this as a Klingon act of violence against the Federation, we cannot afford to. The power struggle between various houses and the high council is something we cannot ignore" added Laurel.

The Counselor looked over at the Security Chief. "Sergeant, could we be looking at outside involvement?" asked Laurel calmly. "Even if one Klingon is behind this...can we rule out outside influence or assistance?"

Caradan stood immediately. "Recalling two separate incidents, House Duras was once being aided by the Romulans. It took an entire fleet of ships headed by the Enterprise to expose the Romulan role during Duras' struggle to take the Klingon throne. The second was just before the Dominion War."

Caradan did not wish to bring the war back up and throw the obvious back into their faces, but if there was even a slight possibility this was true, it needed to at least be considered. "A Dominion operative infiltrated the Klingon High Command, replaced then General Martok and played the Chancellor like a puppet. Outside influence or assistance is certainly a possibility. An attack the likes we have experienced cannot have been down without someone having thorough knowledge of this ship's schematics."

Caradan taking on the shape of a table in a public area, listening out for any information was an idea, but she felt everyone had enough of hearing about the Dominion for now. If such subterfuge was to be suggested, Caradan would let the captain do that.

Trying not to interfere too much into this discussion. Digging in the past was however a dangerous move to begin with. Grace smirks and looked at the Lieutenant "Basically the lieutenant here is presuming that we have a traitor in our midst. That would totally boost our ships moral like 120%. I advise to get the ship working again and licking our wounds to go back to federation space...."

Laurel looked at Grayfield. "I believe that the lieutenant was simply stating facts, not necessarily presuming. We may not want to believe it likely that one of our own could be responsible, but sabotage is not unheard of, especially not these days" the Counselor added with a heavy sigh. Her thoughts were with those elsewhere.

The Counselor stiffened in her seat. "No offense, Ms. Grayfield, but I do not believe licking our wounds and heading back to the safety of Federation space is the answer" said Laurel shaking her head. She looked towards the head of the table. "If we set course for Federation space we will be displaying the image of tucking tail and running. Klingon psyche in mind, such an act would speak rather lowly of our abilities. It may be seen as a cowardly act. I needn't elaborate how poorly that reflects on the Federation and Starfleet as a whole out here in the Klingon backyard."

"Besides," Caradan spoke up, "running away is probably exactly what is wanted for us. Klingon warriors do not generally attack and let you run. Their fights are customarily to the death. I know little of Klingon politics, but enough to know that Klingons care little for politics, only honor. The fact that we are not all dead means that someone does not want a large scale investigation to go on here. Something big is going to happen here and someone does not want us here when this happens. If that is the case, I suppose it is luck that we cannot leave for 2 days. Repairs to make us mobile may take longer."

The counselor did mention uneasiness from among the crew and that was something Caradan could almost see from among those in the Observation Lounge. She hoped it did not appear like she was taking anybody's side.

"I can't say if Lieutenant Eunidas is correct on previous events running in similar vein as this event, but I don't think we CAN rule out outside influence. From the time I spent amongst the Klingon's during the War, there are a large number of minor and some major houses who would see aide from any faction OTHER than the Federation as a boon to restoring the Empire to it's position of strength." Meera said, sighing. "The trouble is, I can't even be sure my friend D'LeifyaM of House Newark can remain our ally, as she's simply a ship captain in her house. If ordered, she'll fight us as well, no matter her views on the matter."

"As for returning to Federation space? Not only would the Klingon's see it as an act of cowardice, but also as an opportunity to declare war on the Federation because it's become weak in their eyes. If we're going to prevent another Federation/Klingon Empire war, we're going to have to tough it out here in Klingon Space, and damned well find out who is behind this, and expose them. Once we've done that, we can learn who is really acting." Meera added.

Laurel continued to nod with every vital word. "My thoughts exactly, Sergeant. Very well worded" added the Counselor. "Unless Starfleet Command directly orders us to return to Federation space, my recommendation is that we do as the Sergeant suggests and find out who is responsible for this and expose them and or whomever else is behind this. We must stay in Klingon space."

The Counselor looked at Lieutenant Vorrان. "Whether we went through the academy, basic training, or found our way to this crew by any other means, we all know and understand the risks. Whatever decision you make, Sir...you have my support" said Laurel firmly.

"Thank you counselor. I have spoken with starfleet command, they want us to remain in the area and continue our investigation. However I don't intend for us to get caught with our pants down again." Vorrان stood up and walked to the window looking out briefly. "We were able to acquire some encrypted data that may hold some clues. In the meantime we will maintain yellow alert in case this attack was just a prelude." Vorrان continued turning to face the table. "I know this is hard for everyone without the Captain, we still have each other and I will do my best to get us through this."

"Understood Sir" replied the Counselor with a small nod. "It is difficult for everyone seeing the Captain down like this, but you are in command for the time being at least and I have no doubt that the crew will follow you" added Laurel. "I would, however, like to see you after this meeting is over though."

"I'll get a rotating schedule for security written up shortly Sir." She stated with a simple nod. "What are your instructions for the people we've got in the brig? I know several of them are needed at their positions, not sitting in the brig." Meera asked.

"We are attacked and they turn on their own, they can rot until starfleet can sort them out." Vorrان replied. If anyone turned on their shipmates like they did back in his smuggling days they would have been tossed out the nearest airlock. They are lucky starfleet has regulations.

And so the Lieutenant spoke his mind Grace nodded "What you want on regards of Science and Operations sir?" She asked as she waited like everyone else.

"Grayfield, I want you to work with Erickson on decrypting the data from the Klingon ship." Vorrان replied

Grace looked at him and nodded "Don't worry sir I will" She simply replied as in a way she saw a Lieutenant on war path.

There were some rather choice words that Counselor Oakley had storming through her mind listening to Lieutenant Vorrان. Were he telepathic, the lieutenant would have received a few colorful vocabulary terms.

She did, however, look clearly down the table towards the head and made eye contact with the man. The look she gave him was one to indicate that she meant business when she requested to speak with him after. The lieutenant's most recent decision definitely merited her speaking with him.

Valok took the moment of silence to deliver his report. Clearing his throat he said "I want to update everyone on Captain Takato. We've been able to repair the majority of her wounds, but after consultation with the station's medical staff, have decided it would be best for her to remain on the station to recover." Pausing, he added "She is also in a medically induced coma to assist in her recovery. Please be assured that I am in constant contact with their medical staff about her condition. I am confident she will eventually fully recover. Also, the station has stepped up security around her recovery room to avoid any further attacks against her. "

Looking at his padd continued "I do have to report however we have suffered some losses during the attack. The current death toll is 5 enlisted and 1 officer. We also have 4 wounded in critical status, including the captain, 15 medium wounded, and 12 lightly wounded and already back on duty." He paused and waited for any questions or comments.

That news sunk in deeply with Laurel. It only meant she had more on her plate than she had initially thought. The Captain being in a life or death status was one thing. Having her in the hands of physicians off of Tornado was a whole other story.

"Of the six we lost, did they have any family aboard the Tornado?" asked the Counselor, already preparing herself for grief counseling, even if it were friends colleagues. "Lieutenant, have you prepared letters to their families back home and have you received word from Starfleet that said families have received notification that their loved ones have died in the line of duty?"

Vorran looked down for a moment wishing the captain was here to handle this. He tried to hide his annoyance at the counselor before he spoke. "Counselor I will need to review their personnel records." Vorran turned to Valok. "Doctor, send me the full casualty list and the death certificates so I can start making notifications."

"With all due respect, Sir" began Laurel...words that were seldom placed together for a positive delivery. "You are Acting Commanding Officer. You have more than enough on your plate with the Captain's life hanging in the balance and this potential Klingon threat. I can handle the notifications and letters to families if you have no objections" the Counselor said jumping in.

"That won't be necessary counselor. However please arrange any necessary grief counseling and a memorial for the fallen crew." Vorran replied

Laurel contained her sigh at the man's reply. "As you wish, Lieutenant" replied the Counselor. *I just do not want you over stressing yourself* she thought privately. *Maybe Liam can talk some sense into him.*

"We have a lot of work to do so let's get to it. Dismissed." Vorran said as he started heading towards his quarters. He needed to see Liam, hopefully he was feeling better.

# All Shaken Up

by Lieutenant Caradan Eunidas & Lieutenant JG Liam Harrison

## Engineering

Caradan was in engineering as the ship rocked. There was no indication from any computer terminal or any of the crew that anything was in error or out of the ordinary. Sensors immediately had erupted indicating an external explosion, possibly something attached to the hull. At least the issue was not an engineering error but had become an engineering issue. She needed to see to repairs of the hull and any other damage in the area.

Slapping at her commbadge, ^=“Ensign Harrison to Engineering.” ^=

Liam was already on his way towards Main Engineering after his day of recuperation when the ship shook violently. He heard the order for his presence come through over the comm, and he immediately tapped his com badge and began to run down the corridor. "Harrison to Engineering, I'm on my way," he announced.

But first, Caradan had another issue to deal with.

A proximity alarm sounded and she looked up at the top of the Warp Core. A conduit burst releasing a shower of sparks and steam.

“Stabilizer!” she called out toward her crew. “Get a stabilizer on that conduit!” and, as her team scrambled to get the appropriate material, she absorbed one leg into her other, grew to about 15 feet tall, sent an arm out toward the wall for stability and extended her other arm toward the ruptured conduit. Her hand turned into a stabilizer clamp and she wrapped it around the fracture as a temporary fix until the actual stabilizer was ready to be put into place.

There she stood, 15 feet tall, with only one leg and an arm span of about 20 feet holding her betwixt the wall and the ruptured conduit. She could feel the heat and electricity in the clamp and reformed her clamp of a hand into a more hardened alloy of titanium. That did the trick.

“So, is anyone else having fun?” Other members of the crew look at her in awe, or in shock, but did continue about their business.

As the doors leading to sickbay swooshed open, Liam dashed through, only to stop right in his tracks as he saw the tall shapeshifter standing before him. He noticed that other Engineering staff had stopped their work to stare at the Lieutenant.

Taking a moment to process the situation, Liam stood watching. Finally, he shook himself out of the moment and moved towards the other officer. "Back to work!" he announced as he walked to the Lieutenant. "What was that all about?" he asked the woman as he looked up at her.

“An explosion. External. Something planted on the hull apparently.” An engineering crewman showed up with a stabilizer. Another down below managed to reroute power through a secondary conduit thus shutting down the one Caradan was attempting the stabilize. Allowing the clamp she made return to a liquid state, she withdrew from the deactivated conduit and started shrinking herself back to her self-contracted size and state. The crewman went about stabilizing the conduit. A repair team was already underway.

Caradan felt a tingling sensation in the liquid meant to be her hand. Perhaps a low grade radiation exposure from the ruptured conduit. Perhaps it would pass in time. Perhaps it could be taken care of in SickBay. Would the doctor even know how to work on a Changeling. It was only minor, so Caradan ignored it. She was able to reform her hand afterall.

She produced her second leg and was finally back to her contracted self, facing Ensign Harrison. “Perhaps a group of Klingons do not like our presence here. I will need a detail to oversee damage and repairs to areas affected by the explosion. Once security has investigated and secured the area that is. Do you feel up to overseeing this task?”

"Of course, Lieutenant," Liam told the woman as he glanced over at a console to see if he could get a look at the damages. This would be some day if the Klingons did indeed attack a Federation vessel.

“Yes it would,” she handed him a PADD. “I have synced the Engineering computer with all engineering PADDs with live and up-to-date information. Every bit of damage from this attack is listed here. When something gets repaired, you will be notified. When something breaks, you will be notified. I understand you are still recovering from the tournament. Do no more than you have to. I ask you to oversee repairs.”

Another conduit ruptured and an alarm sounded. The crew started scrambling to get it under control. “It looks like I have my work cut out down here.”

"Okay," Liam replied. "I'll head up there to assess the damage and oversee repairs now." Liam immediately went to go grab his tricorder, which he holstered to his belt, and a tool kit in case he needed to get his hands dirty to fix



something. He knew repair crews would already be on site, so he wouldn't need to steal anyone from Engineering to help him. He ran out of the room and headed for the damaged sections of the ship.

## Personal Log #330

by 1st Lieutenant Meera Deloria

### Personal Log

Well, finished OTS... Of course, it came at a really shitty time. Been a week since our little 'fun times' on the Klingon Station Sut HabmoHwl' mupwl'. Klingon Politics are fucking headaches to deal with as an outsider. Especially as we have to gather anything we can on who the fuck is trying to instigate a war between the Federation and the Klingon Empire.

I've had to start putting some of the people causing trouble into 'house arrest', basically stuck in their bay or room, as the brig can't take more bodies. Not without health issues arising. And everyone's damned well worried about the Captain.

Fuck, another damned report. Computer, end log.

# Mimicking a Klingon

by Lieutenant Caradan Eunidas & Lieutenant Commander Tyler Vorrán & Lieutenant JG Scott Erickson

## Holodeck One

Caradan stood in the Holodeck. The room was in its default templative state, just waiting for a holoprogram scenario to be called up. Beside her was Ensign Erickson. They had less than two hours to get what they needed to get done. Caradan was ordered to mimic a Klingon and infiltrate a ship for information. Caradan could hardly believe it. So new to the ship and in her career in Starfleet and already doing what her people did best during the Dominion War, infiltrate.

First of all, she had to perfect her mimic of a Klingon and put on a convincing act as one.

"Computer," she said. The beep of acknowledgement sounded. "Produce a random, life-like appearance of a Klingon Bird of Prey crew member." After another beep a Klingon materialized before them. He did not appear too frightening and stood at attention. He did not move a bit. "Make him a few inches taller. Increase the number of ridges in his brow. Give him a facial scar. Make him grin evilly."

Caradan walked around the holographic Klingon while she gave the computer commands and watched as her creation took on its form.

"Ensign Erickson, Have you any adjustments you would like to make?"

"No, it looks good." Erickson said.

Caradan looked the holographic Klingon over, satisfied that it was life-like and believable enough. She eyed the hulking beast. "Merely looking at him is not entirely adequate for me to perfect the look." She looked back at Scott shyly then back at the Klingon. "Don't be..." Time was short. They had less than two hours to report back to the Commander. "Try not to freak out by what you are about to see. And don't..." Her eyes met with his. "Do not expect anything from this either."

'Noted," Scott said he had seen changlings before, nothing about them scared him... anymore.

But that did not ease the discomfort Caradan was feeling. There was something about this she did not like but decided to wade through it and get this all over with. "Computer, begin holo-recording. Note that this endeavor comes at the order of Captain Takado. Here I am to mimic a Klingon in an away mission to infiltrate a Bird of Prey. Secure this recording to be accessed by only Ensign Scott Erickson, Captain Ryoko Takado, Lieutenant Tyler Vorrán, and myself, Lieutenant Caradan Eunidas. Authorization code, Eunidas Seven Theta Omega Five."

Caradan's body waded into a liquid state and slowly flowed into a puddle that ventured to the holographic representation of the Klingon. It flitted as she came into contact with it. Flowing away, she produced a head. "Computer, complete the holographic representation to be tangible." There came a bleep in response. Caradan's head melted away into the puddle and she flowed back to the Klingon. The liquid wrapped around a foot and started flowing up the leg. The liquid waded, folded, and flowed over the Klingon. Reaching the groin area, Caradan sent her liquid state around the Klingon's waste, down the other leg, up the torso, around the back. Once to the shoulders, she continued covering the body by going down the arms and over the head, finally covering the face. In the end, it looked like the Klingon was being engulfed in a viscous liquid.

Caradan produced a face in the middle of the chest. "Ensign Erickson, will you go over some details for my cover. I need a name, rank, duty aboard the ship, etc. I assure you, while I...do this...I can hear you."

"The house names begin with a Ra'. We'll be of a lower level class, so Ra'Elec will suit you fine. You're rank is Crewman, you're a computer specialists. You're on assignment from the station to update the computer guidance systems. I will be Ra'lok, your supervisor with the rank of Lieutenant. I am to watch you and keep you from making any mistakes." Scott said.

"Reaching the vessel will be simple, we will beam on board with the night shift rotation, I already have forged clearance papers to get us in. From the transporter room to the main computer control junction it's 27 steps a right turn 20 steps and the first door to the left. Klingons keep things simple and generic for easy crew rotations. Since, I'll be taking you in with me, you will have to follow my orders. If a fight breaks out with a Starfleet officer you will have to disable them to keep your cover." Scott said.

The liquid started leaving the Klingon hologram. It flowed down his body and onto the floor where the puddle grew and oozed away off to the side where Caradan's normal self rose and took form. "Understood. Computer," followed by a bleep, "Remove all clothing from the Klingon." The computer bleeped an affirmative sound and the clothing faded away leaving behind a naked Klingon.

"Just in case there is a struggle and clothing gets torn. I need to know what they look like underneath." She started oozing back into a puddle again. "We will have open comms during this mission or will we observe communication silence? I can store my commbadge inside me and hear should the Commander wish to relay anything."

She completely melted away into the puddle and went back to the Klingon, up his legs, flowed over his groin and up his abs. The liquid took in every inch of the Klingon's naked physiology.

Scott looked down to his pads and while he made some quick side notes on Changeling physiology.

After another moment of feeling every inch and committing to memory the mold of the Klingon, Caradan flowed down the naked body and away to an open area of the holodeck. From the puddle emerged a humanoid form, like a body made of liquid. It began to take on the size and shape of the Klingon. Then came the color and other tones, muscles, brow ridges, hair, any scarring customary to Klingon warriors. It took a moment, but Caradan formed herself into the naked Klingon to her side. She then caused the body to melt away and reform in full Klingon military uniform.

"How does this look," she asked. Feeling the female voice emerge from the mouth, Caradan knew that would not go over very well and made the neck wave about as the vocal chords inside were reformed. "How does this look?" Still not satisfied with the voice, further tweaking of the chords was in order. Caradan likewise made the mouth a bit bigger with bigger gums and sharp teeth. "How does this look?" For good measure, Caradan added, "P'Tahk!"

"It looks good. Your voice patterns sounds good also, is there anything else you think we need to cover?"

The Klingon melted away and reformed as the form the crew had become familiar with. "I can think of nothing else." Her commbadge, the only thing about her that was not part of her physiology emerged from inside her chest. "If you feel we are ready, please inform the Commander. Also, if you feel it will not be traceable, I can hold my commbadge inside me and hear whatever the Commander says, though we will not be able to openly communicate back to him."

"I'll wear a subnormal ear implant." Scott said.

"Yes, of course," she said, nearly ashamed of herself for not already concluding that. Scott was an intelligence officer. Of course he would have thought of everything. "Apologies. This is my first away mission, not to mention infiltration."

"No need, as soon as you're finished we can let lieutenant Vorrán know we are ready to beam onboard."

"There is nothing more I can think of. You are the intelligence officer. If you see that we are ready, then let's get underway."

"Let's get going then." Scott said. "Lieutenant Vorrán, we are ready to begin the mission."

Vorrán tapped his combadge to respond. "I'll be monitoring your status from my office. Good luck."

# Leave Him Begging for More

by Lieutenant JG Liam Harrison & Lieutenant Laurel Oakley MD

USS Tornado | Deck 1 | First Officer's Quarters

First impressions were everything or so Laurel had been taught all her life by her mother, by textbooks, and now by Starfleet. How many times had the Federation or Starfleet fumbled when it came to first contact missions? Any cadet could name a few dozen times, and any Starfleet officer could name several dozen more. Laurel could name a few off the top of her head, but the lack of her Federation and Starfleet history did not matter. What mattered was the simple fact that first impressions often made or broke friendships and relationships of any kind. To add salt to an already open wound, a failed first impression followed by a disastrous second impression probably all but sealed her fate aboard the Tornado. At least that was how her mind worked it out. She was out of place on Bridge as she tried to provide medical aid to the wounded, something she was not really trained in doing, and her second time meeting the First Officer resulted in Laurel slugging the man in the testicles.

There was perhaps no worse encounter in the history of inter personnel relations between a First Officer and one of their subordinates than that of Laurel's. *<i>I cannot believe I struck the First Officer...and there of all places</i>* she thought to herself as she picked up the tray. She still was waiting on access to key personnel files and medical files for professional usage of course. However, she knew that the First Officer was Bajoran or at least partially. She had noticed the distinctions on his nose. She wanted so desperately to right wrongs and make up for hitting the man. Laurel needed things to be alright between the two of them if they were going to have a comfortable working relationship. There was an old Earth idiom that Laurel had taken to heart 'The way to a man's heart is through his stomach' and with said idiom in mind, Counselor Laurel Oakley had managed to get some time with a stove and spent several hours making a complete mess, and after a dozen failed attempts at baking, she was finally satisfied with the result. She had made a batch of Kava fruit bars from Bajor and lemon squares from Earth.

She was hoping that her efforts behind an oven would pay off and that she and the Lieutenant could talk things through and patch over any possible damage she had caused from their brief encounters thus far. Dressed in off duty casual attire, she carried the tray of desserts down the corridors of the Tornado. With a simple request from the ship's computer, she learned the whereabouts of the man's quarters. What the computer had of course neglected to inform her was that the First Officer shared his quarters with someone and without having access to the man's files, she knew nothing about him, including that he was engaged.

Arriving outside the man's quarters, she remembered to not knock. Instead, she followed standard procedure and pressed the door chime and patiently waited for a response. She was anticipating that he would either be in his quarters and would answer or he would be elsewhere and she'd simply have to come back later. Her plan was to be invited in, have a cup a tea or two, and let the First Officer have some of the bars and squares, and hope to leave him begging for more. What happened instead was not something she had prepared herself for.

After just finishing a relaxing sonic shower, Liam wrapped a towel around his waist. As the nurse had suggested, Liam took a personal day to recuperate from his injuries - some minor bruises still showed on his body. He didn't think he'd be needed much anyway, now that they had a Chief Engineer on duty. As he stepped out of the bathroom, he heard the door chime buzz. Liam sighed as he began walking towards the door. Pressing the button to open the door, Liam instantly remembered that he only had a towel covering his body. He was even more surprised when he saw the short woman standing on the other side of the door. "Hello?" Liam said to the woman with an intrigued face.

Her initial reaction was a gasp followed shortly thereafter by blushing and looking away from the nearly naked man. "You're not the First Officer" she said nervously. "I'm so sorry. So Very sorry. I was looking for Lieutenant Vorrin...the computer directed me here" she said apologizing left and right.

Her eyes lingered back over the man, but she made sure not to look anywhere except his face. "Where are the Lieutenant's quarters?" she asked. "I made these for him" she added with a small smile.

Liam smirked at the woman, "A secret admirer, eh?" he asked as he leaned on the side of the door. "Well, you are in the right place, he just isn't home at the moment," Liam explained. "I'm Liam, the Tyler's fiance." He extended his hand for the woman to shake while the other supported the towel to make sure it didn't fall down.

Laurel breathed a small sigh of relief. She was glad that she hadn't showed up at the wrong quarters, but she was slightly caught off guard by the other man's presence. She managed to balance the tray long enough to shake the man's hand. "Hardly a secret admirer" she said with a smile. "I just arrived aboard recently and our past encounters have not got well. I made these as a peace offering for punching him in the testicles" she said blushing.

Liam's eyebrow raised at the mention of his fiance's testicles. "That sounds like quite an interesting story," he told the woman with a small smirk. "Please, come in and tell me all about it. I'll just put on some clothes," he told the woman as he turned around and walked into the bedroom to get changed.

Coming into the quarters, Laurel was already at work looking at the decorations and getting a better sense of the First Officer through his shared quarters with the man. "Your quarters are quite lovely" said Laurel. "So, is it Lieutenant Tyler or Lieutenant Vorrán. I noticed he was Bajoran, but he didn't quite give me the sense of being full Bajoran."

Liam threw on a shirt and a pair of pants as he listened to the woman in the other room. "I don't know, actually," Liam told the officer. "I've only ever called him by his first name," he said as he walked out of the bedroom in a tight shirt and jeans. "So, what is this about his testicles?" he asked with a chuckle as he moved closer to the woman.

"And you two are engaged?" she said inquisitively. "What do you consider his first name? Bajoran naming methods can get complicated when it comes to half or part Bajorans" she said with a small smile.

"Don't change the subject here," Liam told the woman with a smirk as he leaned back on the couch. "Get back to the story about the testicles!" he exclaimed with a chuckle as he looked at the woman.

Laurel sighed "Oh don't remind me" she said shaking her head. "I went to go see him in his office and I personally hate door chimes. So, I knocked instead. Apparently, your fiance found that suspicious and hid behind the corner as the doors opened...I walked in and was startled. My reaction led me to kind of punch him down there."

After a quick laugh, Liam had a wide grin on his face. "Yeah, he's pretty defensive with things like that. Someone knocked on our door the other night and his reaction was immediately to grab phasers. Turns out the girl was just knocking to complain about the, um, noise I was making," he said with a small grin on his face.

"I see" the Counselor said with a small smile. "You're welcome to try some of the squares and bars that I made...just save some for the Lieutenant of course" added Laurel. "He does seem like a very cautious and protective man. Was he a security officer in the past?" she asked curiously.

"Hah, you'd think so, right?" Liam said with a wide grin as he extended his arm on the sofa. "No, actually. When I met him, he was a helmsman. He has a bit of a rebellious side to him, but I'm not sure where exactly the protective side comes from," he explained as he took a look at the food the woman prepared. He tried not to eat what and when he didn't need to, so he abstained from trying whatever it was that the woman prepared.

"Makes sense" replied Laurel with a nod. "He took over the helmsmen's seat on the Bridge and got us away from the station after the explosion. It isn't unheard of for a flyboy to come with a rebellious streak" added the Counselor with a small smirk.

She crossed her arms and watched as the man did not take her up on the suggestions to give some of the dessert she made. "Protectiveness comes with the territory of being in a serious relationship with someone and it often is a trait found in many of first officers in Starfleet" offered Laurel.

"Indeed," Liam told the woman with a smirk. He liked the protective and jealous side of Tyler, it made him feel safe and cared for. "I'm getting the sense that you're a counselor, but I've never seen you on the *Tornado* before. Are you from the station?" he asked, curious of the woman.

Laurel smiled. "I am new from the station. Just came aboard and yes, I am the Ship's Chief Counselor" replied Laurel. "Though I like to think myself as a variety of things including honorary morale officer and apparently impromptu medic given the things I had to deal with on the Bridge during the aftermath of the explosion" added Laurel.

The Counselor let out a small sigh. "This is my first assignment as an officer of Starfleet and my first time as Ship's Counselor. Double whammy for sure. I'm a clinical psychiatrist to be more precise, perhaps a little over qualified for a Starfleet Counselor, but I don't look at it as taking a step backward so much as I try to see it as exploring a new world or aspect of myself."

*Great*, Liam thought, *a Counselor who is* over *qualified...just what we need*. He gave the woman a small smirk and then said, "well, welcome aboard. I'm sure you'll be put to good use with the lot we've got on here." He looked down at the goodies the woman brought with her, which somehow seemed a bit more tempting as they sat just there.

"Undoubtedly so" commented Laurel with a small chuckle. "Your fiance is setting the bar high. He will be a tough patient I suspect" added Laurel.

"Mmm," Liam told the woman understandingly. "And, what about me? You haven't punched me in the balls yet, I'd say we're off to a pretty good start," he said with a jesting laugh.

"Yet" replied the Counselor with a slight smile. "I think the two of us will get along just fine, Liam. Though I cannot say how things will be between The Lieutenant and myself. So far, I seem to be just building up on the wrong side of things" she said with a sigh.

"Any advice you can offer would be greatly appreciated" she added.

"Well, if it were me, I'd take him out to a nice dinner and then have some 'fun' afterwards, but I'm not sure you'd be able to do something like that..." Liam told the woman with a small smirk. "So, I'd recommend just trying to get to know him better and not let the incident make things awkward between you two."

Laurel smiled. "As Ship's Counselor, I think it would be inappropriate for me to date the First Officer, purely from the standpoint of Doctor and patient. I consider everyone aboard a patient" she said politely and with tactical gracefulness. "I will take your advice and try to get to know him better, but the best I can do for now are those squares and bars. The next move will be his to make."

Liam nodded. He was really *loving* the woman's sense of humor. "Well, that's no fun, now is it? If you think of everyone like that, how are you going to have a relationship - romantic or otherwise - with anyone?" he asked.

The Counselor crossed her arms and looked at the ensign with a sneaking smirk, curling up the side of her mouth. "I've been in your quarters for close to half an hour, you have told me about your fiance, the First Officer, and how to deal with him. I've learned some rather significant tidbits...I'd say I am doing pretty good an otherwise type of relationship" countered the woman.

"Touché, Lieutenant. Touché," Liam told the woman with a wide smirk. *Maybe she wasn't as bad as I first thought she was...or maybe, she was even worse...* Liam thought.

Laurel stood up and walked over to the ensign with a smile on her face. She bent down just enough to give his one shoulder a good pat and whisper in his ear "Much worse, sweetie...so much worse" she said softly before walking away and heading for the doorway.

"Enjoy the lemon bars, hun. They are sweet and tart just like me" she said with a small chuckle.

Liam cocked his head to the side as he watched the woman leave. He scratched his head and raised an eyebrow. "She's a telepath? Great..." he mumbled as he finally opened up the container and tried one of those damn lemon bars the woman had brought them. As much as he hated to admit it, they were delicious.

# Sculpture or Sculptor

by Lieutenant Laurel Oakley MD & Lieutenant Caradan Eunidas

USS Tornado | Deck 7 | Main Engineering

Counselor Laurel Oakley was facing a dozen of issues with the crew since the alleged Klingon attack. Junior officers starting to question senior officers, small pockets of insubordinations, and a general wave of hostility sweeping through the ship deck by deck. The Counselor had appointments scheduled throughout the day. However, she cleared a two hour block in order to take care of some personal matters.

Walking into the Tornado's Main Engineering, the Counselor stuck out like a sore thumb. One blue teal uniform in a room swarming with golden yellow. She had come down to Engineering for a reason and that reason was to speak with the Chief Engineer.

Finding the person in question was not all that difficult. Caradan Eunidas looked almost human, but no quite and certainly did not 'read' as a human when the Counselor reached out with her empathic abilities. Catching sight of the Chief Engineer, Laurel moved towards the lieutenant. "Lieutenant Eunidas" called out the Counselor. "If I could have a few moments of your time?"

Caradan was slumped over a computer console with her arm wormed down into the inner workings of wires and frame. This was one of those situations where you could see what you needed to do as long as your arm was not in the way and as long as you had your arm down there, then you could not see. Luckily, no one else could see that Caradan had given herself two more elbows and another eye in the palm of her hand so that she could actually see the computer relay she was trying to reconnect.

With her face pressed against the screen she allowed one of her crew to continue reading off the schematics.

"Another inch down, you should feel a three-pronged Phoenix Adaptor. That plugs directly into the computer board relay," though Caradan already knew that and could easily see it with the eye in her palm but she wanted her crew to feel needed regardless.

"Just one moment counselor. I am al...most..." the adaptor clicked into place, "...done." Caradan made the eye in her hand disappear and shortened her arm, getting rid of the addition elbows. Finally she pressed herself up and withdrew her perfectly normal arm from the opening. "There. Please continue seeing to the reactivation of this terminal Crewman."

"Now," she turned to Counselor Oakley, "I can spare some moments. Do we require privacy Counselor? My office is but around the corner. Or are we okay to talk here?" She took in Oakley's appearance. The woman was short and thin, but looked human enough. Caradan knew though that the counselor was a Betazoid but could not help but to settle her eyes on the bridge of her nose. This woman was not entirely Betazoid. There was another type of blood flowing in those veins, something Caradan was not familiar with.

The Counselor allowed a small smile to form as she gently gestured Caradan to walk with her towards the Chief Engineer's office. "I guess it depends on your comfort level, but let's take this away from the others for the time being" said Laurel as she proceeded to head off.

"Very well," Caradan nodded and started following the Counselor toward her own office. She paused as Ensign Keselowski was arriving back in engineering. "Ensign, please see to further repairs and run a diagnostic on that terminal we just finished assembling."

Ensign Keselowski made no motion of understanding and gave no words. He only gave an irritated sigh of acknowledgement.

Caradan continued to follow Oakley toward the engineering office. Inside was just a plain office. There were no pictures adorning the walls, no certificates and not even Caradan's diploma from Starfleet. Lying around though were a few parts and pieces. Though generally not regulation to use such an office as storage, but, given the situation, they had to make do while repairs were still underway.

Laurel was not quite sure how to approach the subject, but she decided it was best to just jump right into the matter at hand. "You are not human" said the Counselor. "I noticed that when I first saw you, not by your appearance but by the lack of feeling anything from you. It wasn't until you shifted a bit that I fully understood."

"I do what I can to make myself appear human enough but not too much. I've never attempted to mimic a human perfectly. And I am certain people would not like knowing that I have tried. That would only add more to what we are experiencing among the crew."



"What we are experiencing aboard is something that I am keeping a very close eye on. Subtle hints at insubordination, questioning the decisions of senior officers by those underneath them, and a general sense of anxiety due to the recent attack" briefed Laurel. "I cannot imagine how that may possibly feel being a...what do you prefer? Changeling? Shifter? Founder?" she asked pleasantly.

Caradan's eyes grew wide and her face gave a grimace. "Certainly not Founder. Founders would have found something. The eldest of my kind were the ones who created the Dominion in the first place. That was well established when I had my first conscious memory. I am by no means a Founder!" As she finished, Caradan realized her voice grew both in volume and in tempo. Not to mention, there was a slight wave of anger, which she extinguished hurriedly. "I apologize," she gave a nod. "My kind does not even have a language. Changeling will suffice."

"There is no need to apologize, Lieutenant" replied Laurel quickly adding a smile. "I'll be sure to make a mental note that you prefer the term Changeling. However, I believe it is best that I learn the name you like to be called" added Counselor Oakley. "Caradan Eunidas, right?"

"Caradan is fine. Cara, if you prefer a shortened form. Though I do take a special interest in the middle name I gave myself. Kiritseleshina, though my friends like to call me Kiri."

<i>'But I have no friends.'</i>

"Whatever you prefer," Caradan finished.

She stepped around to her desk and motioned for Oakley to sit opposite of her. "I was not sure if this dissension was due to my presence or was preexisting. When I first came aboard, I was met by only the Captain. She was surprised at my arrival but seemed distracted, maybe even undesiring of something. The Chief of Security seems dissatisfied with her job, as though her position is something of a punishment. Again, I thought it was me at first. I know she fought in the Dominion War. I just hope my being a Changeling does not add to her grief. Ensign Harrison, in my department feels out of place in Engineering. Our Commander holds the rank of Lieutenant. It seems to me that Starfleet assigned me to a ship filled with...what is the word...misfits, if you will, and threw us into an impossible situation. And here I am, a physical embodiment of what the Federation was at war with not too long ago. If there is dissent here, I am only adding to it."

Laurel chuckled "Want to trade jobs? You sound like you would make a very interesting Ship's Counselor" joked Oakley. "Misfits might not be the best term to use. Though this crew is certainly unique. Try not to think of yourself as the cause or trigger for all of these problems. I can assure you that you are not" added the Counselor.

Caradan nodded an understanding. "Believe me, I do what I can to diffuse any situations that arise. I try not to take anybody's side. It is almost a full-time job just to keep my own team together. Almost every day ends with me just wanting a nice long lie-down."

"It will take time, but your engineers will get used to you and ideally they will come to see you as no different than any other species" replied Laurel. "That goes for the rest of the crew. I imagine Klingons, Romulans, and Cardassians certainly faced similar challenges when members of those species first joined Starfleet."

The Counselor smiled. "I just wanted to come down here and let you know that my door is always open, Cara...and not simply as Ship's Counselor, but also as a friend" added Laurel.

Caradan had not yet tasted the sensation of friendship with anyone and everyone she had, in her definition, grown close to always had some kind of angle. It took just about every drop of her being just to not outright reject Laurel as ever being a friend in the truest definition of the word. "I thank you," she said with a nod. "I will keep that in mind." Wanting to reciprocate the offer, "My door is open to you likewise."

The Counselor nodded "Thank you, Cara. I'm sure you have your work cut out for you here given everything that has happened" said Laurel as she began to make her exit. "I look forward to seeing you again soon."

# Mission: Vo'guda

by Lieutenant JG Scott Erickson & Lieutenant Caradan Eunidas

## Vo'guda

Erickson and Eunidas, or Ra'lok and Ra'Elec appeared in the transporter room of the Klingon vessel. Their credentials showed them as a Lieutenant supervising his crewman underling of a computer specialist. The Klingon guard looked at the information displayed then thrust the PADD back at them.

"Check for bugs while you are in there," and he walked off laughing.

There were no further checks. Caradan decided a Klingon attempting to infiltrate the ship would not even pretend to be a computer specialist. That job was among the lowest of the lows. If it did not mean taking life at the point of a bat'leth, then it was not worth being. Ra'lok pushed Ra'Elec along and both ventured out of the transporter room. Just as he said, they turned right and walked exactly 27 steps, Klingon steps, turned right, 20 more steps, and a door to the left led them straight to the main computer junction.

Ra'Elec/Caradan had the commbadge contained within the body of the mimicked Klingon. Commander Vorrان would be able to track their position and even communicate with Caradan should he feel the need to. Caradan would not be able to easy comm back to him though.

Ra'Lok/Erickson entered a pin on the door pad and opened the door to the computer junction, "Keep an eye out for anyone else. I'll get started on download." He pulled a device from his tool belt and began a download of the navigational data for the last year. Every plot and course adjustment will be downloaded and reviewed later. "30 minutes until the download is complete."

Ra'Elec stood by the door listening for anyone approaching. "That give us plenty of time to be found out. Should we do something else, aboard the ship or stay here and hope the guard we saw does not wish to check up on us?"

Scott turned around too look at her, "If you really want to do some work you can pull apart that panel to make it look your actually working other than just standing around?"

"Yes, of course." Caradan stepped to the side of a computer terminal and pulled the panel off. Klingon circuitry and mechanics were foreign to her but everything made a bit of sense. She studied the pathways, the connections. Accessing the terminal itself, she began to better understand Klingon proxy connections. She went back to the open panel and fiddled around inside but did not disconnect anything, fearing setting off an alarm of any sort. Fearing the worst, she poked her head up, and said, "You don't think anyone aboard this ship will see a download in progress do you?"

"No, I have computer showing a reboot in progress while I'm doing the download. They shouldn't be able to access the core from any other station. I know it sounds like a problem waiting to happen but it'll show the same thing here unless they look at my monitor directly."

Caradan was impressed with the man. That was why she was not in the area of intelligence. "You certainly seemed to have thought of everything. Let's hope the Klingons do not see anything out of the ordinary."

"I hope so too. We still have 20 minutes left." Scott said attempting to make the download faster.

As Caradan continued to study the circuitry before her, she realized the time dragging by. This away mission was going easily enough but the ease of progress weighed on her, made her nervous. Perhaps a little conversation would be in order to help pass the time more quickly. "I do apologize," Caradan said whilst worming a hand inside the wiring of the computer terminal. "For being uncomfortable earlier in the holodeck before mimicking the Klingon. I shall not let personal feelings interfere with my duties again."

"Don't worry about it. Personal feelings are part of who we are. If we take them out of consideration before singing up for a mission we can be blinded by what's really at stake. I don't like to show emotion or objections because it has been trained out of me. However, every time I step into a new mission I always wonder if it will be my last."

"You are a wise man. I shall take these ideas into consideration. It's just...the last time I molded myself over someone or something to learn its shape...well that lead to...a troubling experience. No need to talk about this here. We need to focus," she said mostly to her own benefit.

Scott looked down, and nodded. He had witness first hand the destructive capabilities of changelings. "I know what you mean. Working in this field I have had to do things that I never thought I would be capable of doing. When I joined starfleet I wanted to be a scientists."

"I had no idea what I wanted to do. I put in an application to Starfleet only to test it as an option. When it opened up to me, when nothing else did, I was suddenly faced with the dilemma of what I wanted to do. In truth, I

wanted nothing more than to be away from my kind. I wanted to fix things, make what reparations I could from the war. Engineering is a way of fixing things. I hope what we are doing here is also a means to fixing something."

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