

Stardate: 2445.09.19

(USS Illuminar- Deck 1, Bridge - CO Lieutenant Commander Sekal and ACSO- Lieutenant (jg) Jatón Alyl- 1010)

(Temple -- Bajor -- CMO Lt. J.G. Quinna Solice -- 1432)

(Bajor- Ashalla- Kai's Temple Quarters-- Medical Technician Palmer - 1433)

(USS Illuminar -- FO's Office- FO Lt. Sienna Williams-Verin – 1434 )

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 1- Ready Room - CO- Lt. Commander Sekal – 1435 )  
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Stardate 2445.08.20

(USS Illuminar - Talence's Quarters- SO Ensign Tressa Talence – 01:34)

(USS Illuminar - Prancing Pony - SO Ensign Tressa Talence – 01:39)

(USS Illuminar – Deck 3 – Personal Quarters - Ensign Vic “Raid” Montero – 0600)

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(USS Illuminar – Deck 3 – Personal Quarters Ensign Vic “Raid” Montero – 0830)

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, Brig- Security Ensign Keung, PO3 Hercules Devers. Observation Security, Penny McTaggard – 0840 )

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(USS Illuminar, Transporter Room 1 - Vedek, Jeal Holder - 0843)

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(USS Illuminar- Deck 1 - Bridge - CO- Lt. Commander Sekal- 0857)

(USS Illuminar, Bridge – ACSO Lieutenant (jg) Jatón Alyl - 0903)

(USS Illuminar- Deck 1- Bridge- Lt. Commander Sekal- 0908)

(USS Illuminar - Deck 8, CSO's Office - ACSO Lieutenant (jg) Jatón Alyl – 0910)

(USS Illuminar - Bridge - CO- Lt. Commander Sekal- 0911)

(USS Illuminar - Bridge - ACOUNS ACMO ENS SG Ariel Trei – 09.15)

(USS Illuminar - Bridge - CO- Lt. Commander Sekal- 09.20)

(USS Illuminar – Deck 3 – Personal Quarters Ensign Vic “Raid” Montero – 0930)

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, Brig- Security Ensign Keung, PO3 Hercules Devers. Observation Security, Penny McTaggard – 0940 )

USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, Brig- Security Ensign Keung, PO3 Hercules Devers. Observation Security, Penny McTaggard – 0941 )

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, Security Conference room- Security Ensign Keung Lee, PO3 Hercules Devers. 10:40)

(USS Illuminar, Deck 1 - Conference Room - CO- Lt. Commander Sekal- 1105)

(USS Illuminar, Deck 1 - Conference Room – Operations Ensign Dieter Gregory - 1115)

(USS Illuminar, Deck 5- Isolation Ward - Kai Hetel Krevi – 1218)

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(USS Illuminar- Deck 1, Bridge - CO Lieutenant Commander Sekal and ACSO- Lieutenant (jg) Jatón Alyl- 1010)

Jatón was sitting at his station on the bridge, feeling very uneasy. He didn't know what Sekal knew of his orb encounter and with what he'd said this morning, Jatón knew he needed to come clean. After checking one more time that everything in his station was clear and at station keeping, he gathered up the last of his courage and turned around.

“Captain, may I please speak to you for a moment in private?”

The CO had been reviewing some of the preliminary data on the omicron particle surge noted by DS9 before the interruption, he turned his attention to the scientist with eyebrow quirked at the request then stood from the command chair and motioned toward the Ready Room with the padd and walked to it.

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(USS Illuminar- Deck 1, Ready Room - CO Lieutenant Commander Sekal and ACSO- Lieutenant (jg) Jatón Alyl- 1013)

Entering the office Sekal placed the padd on the desk and moved around it to the chair which he took and nodded toward one of the two chairs facing him.

"Have a seat Lieutenant."

Jaton did as he was told, and sat in the proffered chair. He began to open his mouth, but his voice failed him. He realised he was sitting there with his mouth open a second or so later and shut it again.

The Trill appeared uncomfortable, fidgeting as he was at the edge of the seat.

"I believe there is an old terran expression that is apropos here and that would be 'spill it' Lieutenant Ayl." He cocked his head as he waited for the reply.

"Well, sir," he began, "you told me earlier during our morning brief to be sure not to touch or come into contact with the orbs in my study of them."

Sekal nodded. "Indeed."

"Well sir, that's just the thing. Last night in scanning them, I opened one of the orbs."

The Vulcan leaned forward and interlaced his fingers. "I interpret from your perceived need of confession that there was a reaction from the orb."

Jaton nodded, words failing him once again.

"And that was..." Sekal prodded.

"I had a vision of the birth of my children. And the Prophets implied that they might have had a hand in bringing me back. But I can't be sure. It's something I'm still trying to process myself. I've never been a spiritual person before so to have an experience like this is truly profound."

The Vulcan was silent for a moment as he considered the ramifications of the statement. "If these prophets did have a hand in your revitalization as you believe possible then it is logical they would have used an orb at some point to contact you. Did they shed any enlightenment on our current dilemma?"

"No, or if they did, I didn't catch it."

"Curious. Have you drawn any conclusions on their purpose in contacting you?"

"I'm not sure they purposefully contacted me. At first, they seemed more perplexed by my presence than anything. It was only once one of them explained the nature of who the Trill are that this seemed to dissipate. I think it might have been Captain Sisko."

The Vulcan considered the ramifications of this. "That would indeed be enlightening if so. Captain Sisko's final status has been listed as missing and his body was never found. Did the one who might have been Sisko speak to you? What did he say?"

"He explained about the dual nature of joined Trill and mentioned that one of his best friends was a Trill. He didn't seem to know me personally though."

"Curious. This is unexpected. Visions from the orbs are a well documented phenomenon, Captain Sisko himself logged his encounters as well as in the wormhole with extra-dimensional aliens which appeared to be disembodied or fluid in form and taking on the shape of known individuals. This brings up the possibility that Captain Sisko himself was not there but one of these 'Prophets' may have been using his guise." He leaned back as he digested this, the fingers of his right hand moving slightly upon the desktop as he was deep in thought. His eyesight was turned inward due to the depth of his concentration, his eyes slitted.

A resolution of Captain Sisko's final whereabouts would be beneficial, was he indeed now in their dimension? The possibility of this was logical but a final diagnosis of the question would be elusive. To prove his presence would be difficult considering the ability of the aliens to assume other forms or more accurately to take on the shape of known individuals from a person's past.... That could be the key!

He opened his eyes and looked directly at the Trill. "Did the Alyl symbiote ever meet Captain Sisko?"

"No. Jatón is Alyl's first host."

Sekal folded his arms. "If Captain Sisko was never in Alyl's past then why would one of them take his form? This is an enigma and leaves open the possibility that it was indeed him. Consider this, it is logical that Benjamin Sisko if he were in their dimension would naturally appear in his own form. While it is not conclusive evidence it is compelling. Is there anything else you remember?"

"No, sir. That was it. The Prophets made an implication that they had a hand in bringing me back, but that seemed more obfuscation than anything."

"Obfuscation?" Sekal considered that for a moment. "It is said that beings of a higher evolutionary plane must be extremely careful of what they say. Consider the Federation's prime directive for example."

He shifted in his seat. "In order to not pollute a species evolutionary trajectory only those civilizations that have achieved warp flight are contacted due to the inherent dangers of introducing higher technologies to a primitive culture that has not yet made the societal adjustments to accept them and will invariably misuse them. It is logical then that beings that have evolved to a non-corporeal state and commensurate power have similar rules of non engagement."

Sekal then gave Jatón a searching look. "It is highly likely that if they did indeed have a hand in your resurrection that they want you to find out the truth for yourself rather than spoon feeding you the information and that in doing so it will elevate your understanding."

He quirked an eyebrow. "That is of course only a theory as we have only vague insinuations upon which to base a hypothesis."

Jatón nodded. "But in any case, sir, I felt it important to come clean about what I did last night

in light of the orders you gave me this morning. And I am willing to accept any disciplinary action you deem appropriate."

Sekal shook his head. "As the contact appears to have been accidental and prior to my orders I see no reason for disciplinary action. " He stood to his feet. "However I suggest caution around the orbs in the future."

"Understood, sir. And you can be sure I will not do that again." Jatón smiled, relief washing over him. "Is there anything else you need while I'm here?"

The Vulcan didn't bat an eyelash. "Find us the answers we need Lieutenant. You are dismissed to do so."

Jatón nodded in respect. "And I intend to do just that, sir." With that, he turned and went back to his station, a weight having been lifted off his shoulders.

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(Temple -- Bajor -- CMO Lt. J.G. Quinna Solice -- 1432)

"Verin to Dr. Solice. Doctor, when would be a good time for me to visit with the Kai? I have been working with the institute of sciences to get that research that you wanted. They have not been very forthcoming."

Quinna had been sitting on the stoop at the temple's side door. She felt very overwhelmed and just wanted to go to bed for a week. She wondered how they were going to get away with moving the Kai. Quinna tapped her combadge to reply.

"Thanks for looking. I am wondering if we may have to go to Cardassia Prime to find the information." Quinna replied.

(Reply Verin)

"Yeah, why don't you come now." Quinna then had a bright idea, "No, I need you to come now." Quinna jumped up as she was about to pull a maneuver.

(Reply Verin)

"See you when you get here. Solice out." Quinna then cut the Comm link.

She made her way back to the Palmer and the Kai. She smiled when she saw Palmer. "How is the Kai? We are going to move her out of the temple and a more secure location."

(Reply Palmer)

"It is risky, but it may be riskier keeping her here. We still do not know who or how she is being administer the pathogen.

(Reply Palmer)

Quinna bit her lower lip. There was some details that she needed to work out. "I am waiting for a little help. When she arrives, then I will have things nailed out. While we wait, prep the Kai for transport. I want to be out of here by 1700 hours."

Quinna turned to the test results as she waited for Verin to show.

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(Bajor- Ashalla- Kai's Temple Quarters-- Medical Technician Palmer - 1433)

It was never easy to watch a life slip away. Greg was seated in a chair with the early afternoon sun shining through a large gap between the light drapes. Such things normally only happened to the aged now although accidents weren't uncommon.

No dust danced in the sunlight since the room had been immaculately cleaned and was kept that way. No chance for infection could be allowed to come near someone who was but a few steps from the grave. There was some dim noise coming from the city that he couldn't place. It was off and on, not distracting or discordant, just there in the background.

Her breathing was shallow and her exposed skin drained of color. If he strained his ears he thought he could hear her respiration.

He looked at the monitor which showed no change. Since they had come here there had been a gradual decline. Such plateaus weren't uncommon however otherwise she would already have expired. Her vital signs were inspected minutely at least every half hour.

His eyes returned to her face and he spoke after a moment.

"Here we are on another world and it's all the same. The wringing of hands, wondering what you could be doing differently and the wait. Always the wait." He shook his head then placed his right cheek against his hand, the elbow resting on the chair arm.

His eyes were sad. "You're still young enough to have children and pretty enough to attract a mate. What has your life been like here? What stories would you tell if you could speak?" He gave a sad smile. "What wisdom would you impart to us if you could? Most of the others are gone but your supposedly wise peers have condemned you to remain here while you slip away. What did you do to make them so mad at you?"

He sighed and shook his head. "It makes no \*\*\*\*ing sense."

He stood to his feet and stretched then verified the IV fluids. "All good."

His ears picked up hurried footsteps coming from the hallway outside and getting closer. Doctor Solice had been gone for a few hours and he wondered if she had returned, he couldn't think of anyone else currently around who might be in a hurry.

The door opened and sure enough she looked inside then stepped in.

"How is the Kai? We are going to move her out of the temple and a more secure location."

He shook his head. "Vital signs are unchanged doctor but I'm glad to hear we are finally getting to move her." His eyes traveled around the room, it was feminine, airy and bright. It was also currently a death trap for the woman confined here

"It is risky, but it may be riskier keeping her here. We still do not know who gave it or how she is being administered the pathogen."

He nodded his head. "I agree. If we are cautious she should be all right but if she crashes during the move there won't be much we can do." He looked over at the unconscious woman. "But in the end no matter how it goes it will be for the best."

The CMO gave him a nervous look. "I am waiting for a little help. When she arrives, then I will have things nailed out. While we wait, prep the Kai for transport. I want to be out of here by 1700 hours."

He gave a sharp nod. "Will do doctor." As he began running over the things he would need. An anti-grav gurney would have a built in monitor and arms for her fluids. The rest of the meds and equipment were already here so he put in a call to the ship for the gurney as he left the room.

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(USS Illuminar -- FO's Office- FO Lt. Sienna Williams-Verin – 1434 )

=^=Thanks for looking. I am wondering if we may have to go to Cardassia Prime to find the information. ^= Quinna replied.

"It certainly feels that way right now. I think the Commander is going to reach out to his Father and get us the data from Starfleet. I just hope it comes in time." ^=Yeah, why don't you come now. No, I need you to come now. ^=

Sy laughed softly over the comm, "All right then Doctor, I'll be on my way as soon as I can arrange some security. Could you imagine the smoke billowing from Peters' ears if I went outside the ship without one?"

=^=See you when you get here. Solice out. ^= Quinna then cut the Comm link.

The comm link broke and Sy was smiling. She hit her comm badge again, "Lt. Verin to security. Dr. Solice has requested my presence on the planet. Can you have two security officers meet me in Transporter Room 1 in about ten minutes please?"

(reply Security)

"Thanks, I'll be there in a few." She cut the comm then had a little thrill go through her. She wanted to get a feel for the orbs as well while she was there. Q had given her these psychic abilities for a reason, and she was determined to use them.

"Lt. Verin to Commander Sekal. Dr. Solice has requested my assistance at the Temple. While there, I wish to get a 'feel' for both the Kai and the Orbs, and likely will not be back in time for my bridge shift."

(reply Sekal)



Sienna ran for her quarters, and in record time changed into her under uniform body armor, and added her phaser with it's custom grip designed for her hand. Her uniform was changed to a slightly more formal one but not the most formal one. She had a feeling she was going to be the authority needed to assist Quinna. Meeting her security detail, she beamed down to the Temple site.

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(USS Illuminar -- Deck 1- Ready Room - CO- Lt. Commander Sekal – 1435 )

=^= Lt. Verin to Commander Sekal. Dr. Solice has requested my assistance at the Temple. While there, I wish to get a 'feel' for both the Kai and the Orbs, and likely will not be back in time for my bridge shift. ^=

He tapped the comm button on the raised viewscreen. "Affirmative Lieutenant. Permission granted."

He then sat back while considering what was happening. Doctor Solice had enlisted his executive officer in moving the Kai to an unknown location citing "plausible deniability".

He had found her plan illogical but given permission after asking for her recommendation.

The question was why she felt the need to isolate him from the move after he had expended every effort to gain the permission necessary to do so.

The dean of Vedeks had made thinly veiled threats certainly but not at him specifically, his aim had been toward the civil unrest which had been particularly active at the time. At this moment Prylar Tekan had released that pressure and the plaza before the temple was cleared with those restive elements returning to their daily routine.

Reports also had the press attempting to gain entrance to Ashalla dissolving and the civil authorities were on a media offensive.

The Edict handed down by the Vedek council was now unenforceable if indeed it ever had been which it had not and the evidence Kai Hetel alone had been poisoned released to the high commiteeman and minister of security. This evidence of foul play had rendered the edict

moot since leaving her in-place constituted undue threat to her safety from unknown elements.

His logical deduction that the edict was evidence of a plot against the Kai's life had been further strengthened though there was no evidence yet with which to charge any of the council members directly in the collusion.

Starfleet Command itself had been informed of the dissolution of the edict based on this new evidence and his decision had been made based upon prior orders.

There was no need to keep him "in the dark" as to her whereabouts since there was ample justification and a strong foundation for it.

Logically the Kai's place should be aboard the ship along with the others who had recovered or were recovering.

He shook his head and decided that he would speak with the CMO at a convenient moment to ascertain the reason for her motivation. While he was much more knowledgeable of interspecies relationships than all but a handful of his race it might perhaps help in the future to gain more insight into her thought process, certainly it should lead to a more thorough understanding of the officer who led his medical team.

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(Bajor, Ashala, Temple - FO Lt. Sienna Williams-Verin - 1450)

Sienna and her security detail arrived, and Sy looked around in curiosity, extending her psionic senses to get a 'feel' for the place. It was sad, and a little gloomy, the spectre of illness hanging heavily in the air. She withdrew to her own mind, and asked one of their security people stationed here for directions to the Doctor. She headed up to the area where the Kai was quartered and nodded to the security, both bajoran and ship, that was stationed here.

"Dr. Solice?" She asked, entering, and drew back at seeing the Kai for the first time. Sienna's heart hurt and she could barely believe the woman was still alive. Drawing off her silk glove from one hand, Sienna approached the Kai.

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(USS Illuminar - Talence's Quarters- SO Ensign Tressa Talence - 01:34)

The mission had been trying, the situation was fluid and changed almost constantly. But now however Tressa was able to return to her quarters and after a round in the sonic shower finally felt clean, and like a weight was lifted off her shoulders. She sighed as she eyed her bed. Wasting little time Tressa slid into a soft flowing night dress as she yawned.

~Oh sweet comfort how have I missed you. ~

She settled into the mattress and slid her form under the soft sheets and drifted off to sleep or so she thought.

It seemed she had just fallen to sleep when the call came in. =\=Lt. Verin to Ensign Talence, Tressa, would you be interested in meeting me at The Prancing Pony Lounge? I have my flute and was going to play some since I can't sleep and I can't get the Bajoran Government to release the data I need. =\=

She reached over and pressed her comm badge. "I'll be there as soon as I can." Sliding from her bed, that she didn't want to leave. Sy would have to play her something nice for rousing her from her slumber. After throwing a kimono style robe over her night dress and securing the tie around her waist she made her way to toward the prancing pony.

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(USS Illuminar - Prancing Pony - SO Ensign Tressa Talence - 01:39)

She entered the communal gathering spot, even though it was so earlier there were still a few people wondering in and out as the duty shift carried on. True is was no where near as crowded as the mid day rush. But there was a calmness to lower crowds. It allowed the air to fill more fully with the sounds of Sy's flute more than idle conversation. Finding a seat Tressa slid into place and in a matter of moments was slowing bobbing her head with the melody from the flute.

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(USS Illuminar – Deck 3 – Personal Quarters - Ensign Vic "Raid" Montero – 0600)

The morning started like every other morning. After hours of rehashing failed missions and remembering lost pilots, especially the kids from the Academy, he'd fallen into a restless sleep. When the alarm rang at 0600, Montero dragged himself out of bed. Coffee started the morning. As he changed into exercise gear, Montero made a note to talk to one of the ships counselors. He'd been avoiding it since joining the Illuminar at Mars base. But for now, he'd sweat it out and plan for his day. Fortunately, there were not many pilots on board, since the ship was comprised of shuttles for the most part. That meant more time in the simulator for him. Gunsmoke wasn't half bad, and she'd make a good pilot, if she survived his tutelage.

Snapping his fingers, he made a second mental note. If the Illuminar was going to land on planets, it might be worth getting a few fighters on board. Yes, Bajor was a peaceful planet, but who knows what other action there may be. Having aircover would be a good thing, and Shuttles were not designed for the swift maneuvers the fighters would be able to do. If it came from someone else, perhaps it could happen and he'd be able to fly proper again. He would write up his assessment and forward to the Squadron XO.

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(USS Illuminar – Deck 5 – Gymnasium - Ensign Vic “Raid” Montero – 0630)

Morning exercise was always a good way to wake up and forget the demons that appeared in the night. He ran onto Gunsmoke on the way. The two ran silently and went through the standard routine. Once that was done, Vic moved over to start his daily yoga ritual.

“Never would have taken you for a yoga practitioner.” Bebe said.

“Lots you don’t know about Gunsmoke. One of my instructors turned me onto to the practice. It helps center and keep flexibility, something that helps in the cockpit.”

““K, have fun Raid.”

Vic focused on his movements. Trying to center himself for the day. He'd have to try a new simulation today, something that he'd not actually participated in. Something to challenge him. Perhaps simulate the aerowing and see how far he could push it in simulation.

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(Bajor, Council Meeting Room - Dean Vedek Horavei Taelsi & Vedek Jeal Holder - 0727)

Horavei was sat waiting in the conference room. Calm. Serene. Things hadn't gone perfectly to plan, but now was not the time to dwell on that. He had managed to swell support for himself within the ranks, that if the Starfleet people weren't able to revive the Kai as they thought they would he *would* be the obvious and easy choice to become the next Kai.

His leadership shown in the face of events that he knew were coming and won a lot of people over. There were still holdouts to his regime, but not many. Even if the Kai were to return, he felt that he'd shown enough of himself to maintain the Deanship without question for the next few terms and who was to say there wouldn't be another crisis involving the Kai in the future? He smiled.

The door swiftly opened and in walked the woman he'd been waiting for. A tall, thin & wiry woman trotted in. Her usual slow pace long forgotten as she brushed past the guards and into the seated conference room. Here in front of him, was his main rival for Deanship in the next term. He knew it, she knew it. She'd done everything possible in the last few days to corral

support for herself in case of the Kai's death but she just wasn't as cunning as he- nor as suited to the role he thought.

Before speaking Jeal decided to take a seat, wondering what the Dean could have need for her at a relatively early time in the morning. She eyed him with the curiosity, his smile was off-putting to say the least. She'd never really got on with the man personally, but she was a professional and if the Council deemed him esteemed enough to lead then she wouldn't stand in their way. Not yet, anyway.

"Thank-you for your swift arrival Jeal." The dean said with a smooth voice. "I'm sure you're wondering why I asked for you."

"Yes." She said matter-of-factly, "That's almost exactly what I was thinking, though what else *would* I be thinking about after arriving as a spontaneous meeting called for within the last half hour?" She laid on a thick level of sarcasm.

The Dean masked a look of frustration as she spoke. "As you will know the Kai has been removed from the Temple to help the folk from Starfleet cure her of whichever malady the Prophets chose to test her with."

She nodded.

He took that as leave to continue, "No doubt as you know as well, there is a large portion within the Temple who were resistant to this and now my ear is being chewed off day & night about allowing this to happen."

She nodded. Of course there was a large portion of the Council against the move. She had no proof, but she was fairly sure he had orchestrated the disapproval himself.

"So I've sent a request into Lieutenant Commander Sekal- who is the commander of the Illuminar- that he allow a Vedek observer onboard to keep an eye on proceedings. Make sure that nothing nefarious happens to her and to keep all the ones moaning at a manageable level."

"And you want me to be that observer?" Jeal replied.

"Absolutely. You seem like the ideal candidate. You've worked on Starships before your time in the Temple. You know their language and quite frankly, I thought it would be a good move for you... politically." Horavei said.

She squinted, her eyes closing in a little. "Playing the game are we, Horavei?"

"Always."

"Well I cannot refuse. Absolutely I will go see to the Kai. It would be an honour." She said, her tone not shifting from absolute frustration.

"Fantastic." He said as he stood up and forced a yawn out. "Sorry, not had much sleep the past few days."

Following him to standing and beginning to follow him to the door, “I don’t think many hav.. OH..” she watched as the Dean tripped over his robe and instinctually she made a grab to catch him before he fell.

He grabbed at her, as she helped straighten him up. “Old fool.” She said as she pulled him up straight.

“Perhaps I’ll stay seated.” He joked as she straightened her robes from the position they were now in.

“When are they expecting me?’ She asked as she got to the door.

“I’m expecting a response from them inviting you onboard within the hour. I’ll let you know when they do.”

“Ok” and she left the room. As the door closed behind her, the Dean smiled for a moment before removing the gloves he had been wearing.

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(USS Illuminar – Deck 3 – Personal Quarters Ensign Vic “Raid” Montero – 0830)

Finished, Vic headed back to his quarters and got ready for the day. Shower, shave and dressed in his flight suit. Time for some breakfast.

Entering the officers mess, he debated going to the chef, but decided human interactions were not for him. Ordering his meal from the replicator, he grabbed a table and looked out the window. As he sat down, the blue alert went on. ~great, back to space where we belong.~

Lingering over his breakfast, he watched as the ground departed and the ship was soon in orbit. ~Grey Wolf is good at driving this ship. Better her than me. ~

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(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, Brig- Security Ensign Keung, PO3 Hercules Devers. Observation Security, Penny McTaggard – 0840 )

The brig was occupied by the two Bajorans who were in detained in separate soundproof cells. A security officer was monitoring the prisoners from his console and looked up as Keung and Devers walked in. Keung had reviewed what little information he had on the PADD and had been updated by Devers about what happened on the surface. Devers was taking it quite well, thought Keung. The idea of Devers being the silent partner who was at the scene of the bombing might be a good strategy to unnerve the prisoner. At least that what Keung thought. He will make a start on Voha Ejise first. Keung reckon that Voha was a proud man who wanted to live up to the reputation of his family

background in the resistance. On the other hand, Ihas might be different. He might be more forthcoming.

Keung and Devers stood outside the cell of Voha EJise. Keung held the PADD in his hand and pressed a few buttons to get what he wanted. Then stopped and glanced at Voha who was lying on his bunk, his eyes closed. Keung decided to play the strategy of 'Who will react first'. As they waited for a reaction, Keung glanced quickly at Devers wondering what he was thinking.

Devers stood there, silent. Moving around he cracked his neck. Stretching his arms out, fingers interlaced, he cracked his knuckles too.

It was a couple of minutes later that Voha suddenly opened his eyes aware of the presence of two people looking at him. Voha stirred from his cot, looked up glaringly at the couple.

"You know, the food here is horrible. How do you people get any enjoyment from this synthesized garbage?"

Keung ignored what Voha said, lifted up his PADD and said unpassionately "Mr Ejise. Would you so kindly take a look at the video."

"Seeing how my appointment with the Kai for tea has been postponed..."

Voha reluctantly stood up and moved and walked towards the PADD which showed a video of the bombing scene.

"Terrible isn't it, Mr Elise? This is your handy work?"

"Fraid not, I was, you see, detained by your brute squad over there.

Keung coldly glanced at Voha. Usual denial reply. "Mr Elise. I would like to point out that you were detained as a result of your bombing actions. Do you enjoy hurting innocent people not to mention destroying the livelihood of the hotel owners?"

(reply anyone

"Along with your colleague who is in the next cell, I would say that you planned, planted the bomb and executed your plan." Pointed out Keung

(reply anyone)

"Our scans shows your fingerprints over the bomb fragments that we managed to find. Look." Keung lifted up his PADD again so that Voha can see the video of the fragments!

(reply anyone)

“Actually I apologise. I don’t think you are the planner or even someone who is capable of making a sophisticated bomb. You not that intelligent! Otherwise you wouldn’t be easily captured! You can’t even haven’t considered an escape plan. “ Keung quickly said and raised his voice a notch for effect. I say that you are the cannon fodder who been ordered to plant the bomb”

(Reply anyone)

“Your nothing more than a Pavrak Dal ‘Rok’” accused Keung . That should rattle him!. Keung had checked the language that Pavrak was a strong insult and Dai’Rok was a demon spirit

(Reply anyone)

“Tell me something what it is like being a member of the Duranja Fellowship.” Asked Keung, lowering his voice, suddenly changing his tact. The Duranja Fellowship was a faction whose members engaged in various anarchistic and terror activities. Keung in his research found out that Voha was an admirer of the Duranja Fellowship but couldn’t be sure that he was active member

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(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, Brig- Security Ens. Penny Mc Taggard 08:41 )

Penny was angry. More angry then she had ever been , in her adult life. Once when she had been nine years old however. She had really lost control. It was poor wee Angus her best friends brother. He actually thought it was ok to pull girls hair. A swift angry kick to the groin taught him , it was not.

She had already planned what she would do in the interrogation. Lee would interview the prisoner while she stood at the back. Then if he refused to speak or gave Lee cheek. Penny would walk behind the prisonor grab the hair. The happily smash the prisoners face into the table. The first time would just be a gentle tap. The next a bit harder and harder and harder. Until brains oozed out of nostrils.

Penny gave herself a shake. No this was wrong. She knew it would be mistake to go into that room.

“ I kinnah go in there” she said

( Reply , Lee & Devers )

“ The image of what was done to Taya is strong in me heed. I will loose control and really hurt someone. It’s best I stay away.” Penny said

( Reply , Lee & Devers )



“ That would be best.” Penny agreed

---

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, Brig- Security Ens. Penny Mc Taggard 08:42 )

Penny was angry. More angry then she had ever been , in her adult life. Once when she had been nine years old however. She had really lost control. It was poor wee Angus her best friends brother. He actually thought it was ok to pull girls hair. A swift angry kick to the groin taught him , it was not.

She had already planned what she would do in the interrogation. Lee would interview the prisoner while she stood at the back. Then if he refused to speak or gave Lee cheek. Penny would walk behind the prisonor grab the hair. The happily smash the prisoners face into the table. The first time would just be a gentle tap. The next a bit harder and harder and harder. Until brains oozed out of nostrils.

Penny gave herself a shake. No this was wrong. She knew it would be mistake to go into that room.

“ I kinnah go in there” she said

“Penny. You would play an important in getting the prisoner to talk..just being present. You don’t have to do anything. If you’re worried about him getting to you. Don’t worry he can’t attack you because of the force field in front of his cell” insisted Keung.

( Reply , Lee & Devers )

“ The image of what was done to Taya is strong in me heed. I will loose control and really hurt someone. It’s best I stay away.” Penny said

Keung could sense the stress that Penny was under. It would be indeed unfair to make her suffer like this.. He suddenly had an idea. “I tell you what. Why don’t you go Room 19 opposite the Brig Put a earpiece on. You don’t even have to use the computer monitor if its too upsetting. You can then hear everything that is going on and if there are questions you want me to ask the prisoners, then tell me over the com. That includes any useful information you may have picked up.” Said Keung.

( Reply , Lee & Devers )

“ That would be best.” Penny agreed

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(USS Illuminar, Transporter Room 1 - Vedek, Jeal Holder - 0843)

She returned to her home after speaking with the Dean. Just as a matter of picking a few items up, packing her bag and letting her family know she may be unreachable for a few days. Wearing the same robes she'd put on this morning, she looked around as the beaming technology placed her within one of the USS Illuminar transporter rooms.

Stood in front of her was a younger good looking man in a gold uniform. Before she could say anything he welcomed her to the ship. He was clearly too enthusiastic to having been doing the job for more than a few years.

"Indeed. I am here to observe that your medical staff do not interfere with the Kai's natural recovery. I'd ask that you take me to her immediately. I have no interest in tours or food." She said to the man before stepping forward. Having spent the last 15 minutes before transport thinking about how they might try and dissuade her from seeing the Kai straight away, she'd decided to cut those methods off at the start.

He agreed before introducing himself as a Lt. Carson Peters. The ships second officer. So a member of the Vedek Council, didn't rate the First Officer or Captain welcoming them aboard?

"Hmm." She said as she began to follow the Security Escort which had been assigned to her. Again she'd expected this and was somewhat grateful for it. Jeal didn't fancy just aimlessly walking about a Starship with no directions.

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(USS Illuminar, Deck 5- Isolation Ward - Vedek, Jeal Holder - 0850)

The two security guards were silent apart from whenever they needed to change direction at which point a quick "This way, Ma'am" would be said. A turbolift and a short walk later they entered the Isolation Ward, a quick look around told her more Security was present, also Vedek Jisel. She nodded to him warmly, now even more confused as to why her presence was required.

A security man was standing in front of what she assumed to be the Kai's medical suite. Before she could take another step, one of the Security men stepped up to her with a tricorder and said "That's far enough."

"What is the meaning of this?" She asked calmly. Sure she was just being scanned to make sure she had no weapons on her. She didn't, so she had nothing to be concerned about. However she wasn't pleased that they would scan her without just asking first.

"This will only take a moment." The man said, not answering her question. She could feel the security guards behind her begin to stiffen at the tension in the room. Last thing she needed was to anger them needlessly so she stood casually and stayed calm.

"Not a problem. However if you'd just asked, you would know I'm carrying no weapons. I'm a religious person not a..." she didn't get to end the sentence as the man looked at her and gruffly commanded one of the men behind her to "Restrain her."

Before she could move, her arms were in a painful lock behind her back as the security man who had scanned her began patting her down. Very undignified. "What is the meaning of

this?" She repeated herself, this time more alarmed than before. No one was answering her. He continued checking her pockets before, "Well, well look what we have here."

"Can I say it now?" The man which had been aggressively standing in the front of the door to the Kai's room. He stepped forward now and took the tri-corner and a vial that the first man was now holding from him.

"What the..?" Jeal was now scared and confused.

"You can let her go Miles, she's been disarmed." The first security man said.

It took a second but she felt the pressure ease on her arms and she allowed them to drop to her sides. "DISARMED?" She panicked. "I had NO weapons."

"Step backward through the door slowly. The second officer will be here momentarily to take you to a nice little cell."

She began looking about the room frantically. There had to be some explanation they were missing. This wasn't her. She was innocent and she was being treated like a murderer. Her legs were shaking so much she wasn't sure whether she'd collapse or move if she stepped backwards. Trying to stay upright she moved slowly backwards.

"What is happening?" A voice piped up from the outer room she was now stepping into. She recognised the voice, trying to say his name but unable as his voice was dry.

"Your Vedek friend here brought a nice little death cocktail for the Kai."

"What? Cilest what is the meaning of this." Kissel cried as he began moving towards them.

"I have no idea!" She cried, her voice coming back to her at the most inopportune moment. Lowering her voice a little before continuing, "This buffoon stopped me and pulled something from my pocket!"

Jisel stayed calm, "Who sent you?"

Clearing her throat a little, "Horavei told me to come here and act as an observer. I have no idea what it was they just took from me." She said and then as an afterthought added, "Or rather, planted on me. Whatever it is, it is not mine!"

The door opened behind her to the outer room and the Second Officer she'd met previously arrived. "She had it on her?" He asked the Security officer that had searched her.

"I handed the vial to Boyles inside. It seems our elderly poisoner put in an appearance after all." He grinned whilst looking towards Jeal. "I'd say your part in this drama just changed to being a bird in a gilded cage."

"Elderly?" Jeal said in disgust. "And I'm no poisoner. I have no idea what you've planted on me, but you won't get away with it. Jisel, you know me, why would I want to poison the Kai?"

(Reply Jisel)

The Second Officer- Lieutenant Peters, she now remembered his name. "Vedek Jeal Holder, I am placing you under arrest un Starfleet regulation 34f. You will be held in the ships brig until a senior member of our staff can sit with you and take your statement. You are of course entitled to a member of legal counsel if you so wish."

Shock. Horror. She'd been on the ship for a matter of minutes and her world had been turned upside down.

"I... I..." struggling to say anything as the Security Officers began escorting her away. "Jisel, help." Was all she could managed before they marched her out of the room.

-----

(USS Illuminar, Deck 5- Isolation Ward - Vedek Gele Jisel - 0853)

"Elderly?" Jeal said in disgust. "And I'm no poisoner. I have no idea what you've planted on me, but you won't get away with it. Jisel, you know me, why would I want to poison the Kai?"

Jisel moved his mouth but no words came out, he was in shock at the sudden and unexpected turn of events. Only minutes ago he had been settling into the chair in the waiting room nearly asleep due to being awake since Kai Hetel was brought aboard.

The reason he had felt he could relax? The medical officers who had looked so grave when she had arrived were now smiling and relaxed. Temple Physician Elec had also been given a place to sleep and had left several hours ago after talking with him and noting she was now out of danger.

Everything had been going well, the two security officers who had shown up had been laughing and joking around until...

He remembered a medical officer coming in and one of them asking him to wait outside. He hadn't been smiling or joking then.

"Vedek Jeal Holder, I am placing you under arrest un Starfleet regulation 34f. You will be held in the ships brig until a senior member of our staff can sit with you and take your statement. You are of course entitled to a member of legal counsel if you so wish."

Jisel listened numbly as Holder was placed under arrest. Yes she had a strange given name but she had never been violent. ~Ambitious perhaps, not afraid to defy the Kai if she felt she was in the right but never, ever violent.~

"I... I...Jisel, help."

He shook his head in disbelief and looked at the Illuminar second officer and the security officer whose name he didn't know as she disappeared from the room.

"A death cocktail? Poisoner? Tell me this is a nightmare so I can wake up from it." His eyes turned to Hammons. "Just what did you find on her?"

Hammons looked at him as his triumphant grin faded and was replaced by a sober mein. "A vial of the same poison Krevi was found with in her system. Lieutenant Peters gave us a heads up before she arrived."

Jisel's eyes widened at that and he turned his attention to the command officer.

"How did you know she had it on her?"

(Reply: Carson)

"This makes no sense to me." His gaze moved between them. "I've known Vedek Jeal for almost two decades. The very thought of violence makes her stomach turn over. She couldn't possibly have poisoned Kai Hetel, she would have fainted before the act."

(Reply: Carson)

Weariness washed over him anew as he digested the words. "I don't doubt you did what you had to do. I just... I can't ever imagine her doing anything like that."

He looked back to Hammons. "I hope you're not going to bar me from returning to my chair after this fiasco."

Hammons shook his head. "No sir I wouldn't think of it but there is a superior officer present and it's his call not mine."

He looked at Carson. "What will it be sir? I know the Captain gave him permission to be down here but that was before we had a poisoning suspect waltz right into medical. For what it's worth he's given us not one whits worth of trouble and has been on the ship the whole time."

-----

(USS Illuminar, Deck 5 - Isolation Ward - Vedek Gele Jisel and SecO- PO(1) Steven Hammons- 0856)

The officer's voice was grim but he had a strange air of distraction about him as though he was unsure of something.

"I think we can rule you out as a suspect Sir. But before you can go back in, I'll need you to give a short statement to Mister Hammons before returning to the Kai's side and you won't be surprised to hear that you'll have a security detail attached to you whilst on the ship?"

Jisel nodded in agreement. "I completely understand. Thank you. I'm sure your security detail and I will get along very well."

Truth be told he would have swum in a pool with piranha if it meant being close by if and when something happened and if what he had heard this morning was any indication he expected it to be good news. He was aware setbacks could occur but was hoping for the best.

Besides the two men who were currently standing guard over her seemed to be fine chaps and he had no issues being around them, at worst their running jokes might keep him awake.

"Get that statement in the system ASAP." The 2/0 gave the instruction to his escort then hurried off.

"Yes sir!" Hammons gave a sharp reply then looked at his charge. "I'll be back in a few seconds sir, hang tight."

With that Hammons ducked back into the waiting room. "I'll take the evidence down to the lockup Boyles, you stay here and stand guard. I need to get a statement from Vedek Gele while I'm down there. Hopefully it won't be too long."

Boyles nodded and passed over the tricorder and vial. "You didn't say it did you?"

Hammons played dumb. "Say what?"

"You know... what I said."

Hammons grinned. "I don't know what you're talking about."

Boyles frowned. "I know better Hammons, you did say it didn't you?"

At Steven's laugh he stomped his foot on the deck. "Damn it you stole my line. I'm the one who came up with it.!"

Hammons was laughing as he swept out the door with Boyles grumbling good naturedly at his post.

Jisel didn't have to wait long before the Security officer returned, his face red from laughing. He gave a wan smile and followed in his wake.

"By the way my name is Hammons, Steven Hammons, Petty Officer First class. I answer to either one, you can call me what you like."

Jisel fell into step behind him until Hammons altered his pace to keep from outdistancing the older man and they were walking side by side.

The Vedek was troubled, if Holder had been in on the poisoning of the Kai he was sure she hadn't been the one to initiate it but that left open the question of why she had it on her if she wasn't capable.

But if she wasn't involved then who was? And who was malignant enough to plant it on her? And again why?

He shuddered. So many questions.

Steven noticed the man's discomfort out of the corner of his eye and shook his head sadly with an understanding of what he must be feeling. Hammons had become inured long ago to the dirty, stomach churning and depraved acts that were routinely committed in the shadows. The Vedek seemed to have a gentle soul. ~These are Bajorans we're talking about here, the

correct word is Pagh.~ Whatever the word it amounted to the same thing. And getting a glimpse of that side of life had to be unsettling.

"I promise we won't be long..." he said as they got to the lift. "I'll have you back in a flash. And as long as you remain in the waiting room while Boyles and I are on duty you won't need your own tag-alongs."

Jisel smiled and nodded appreciatively. This was a day when he could use some good laughs.

-----

(USS Illuminar- Deck 1 - Bridge - CO- Lt. Commander Sekal- 0857)

=^= Peters to Sekal. We've just arrested Vedek Holder for holding a vial of the same poison cocktail which was used in Taya's & the Kai's attempted murder.=^=

Had the CO been human he might have shown surprise, as it was he simply turned his head, it was an unconscious gesture signaling interest.

"Illuminar will be lifting off in seven minutes, what is her disposition?"

=^= She's been remanded into custody within the last few minutes and the evidence is on it's way to lockup. As a high ranking official from Bajor I feel it would be unwise for the arresting officer to be the same person to conduct the interview. I'd ask that either yourself or the First Officer make yourself available to lead the interview instead. ^=

The Vulcan gave a nod. "Logical as well as proper procedure. I will have Lieutenant Verin take her statement when she becomes available."

=^= Excellent. I'll have everything prepared and will sit in on the interview. It's likely she'll want legal assistance from the ground. I'll leave it to you to break to the Dean Vedek what has happened. ^=

The Vulcan's eyes narrowed until they were almost slits. "Indeed. This should be a fascinating conversation. Any legal representation required will come aboard after we have achieved orbit and not before. I know that I can count on you both to be extremely thorough. "

He turned off the comm and considered his options. Ensign Trei's duties were crucial but Counselor Ravenstone had been with him during his meeting with the Dean of Vedeks and he was aware of her abilities. While Horavei could not block his thoughts to a telepath there were ways to mask or misdirect them at a distance and he would be on his guard.

Emotional content however could be more difficult to control and Hoavei was not aware of Counselor Trei's gifts, he might be more apt to let something slip.

The Vulcan wasn't interested in gathering evidence to convict as much as he desired to obtain the pieces to the puzzle he had been presented with while in Horavei's office. It was similar to a session of Kal-Toh, finding the correct pieces and using logic to assemble the framework which represented the end product of a logical extrapolation... the truth. A truth he meant to uncover before their mission to Bajor was complete.

His finger initiated the comm. "Counselor Trei to the bridge."

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(USS Illuminar, FO's Quarters - FO Lt Sienna Williams-Verin - 0902)

Sienna had been awoken all too soon by an extraordinarily happy Luma'lenai who was actually singing telepathically as the ship was in the process of launching. By the blue lights flashing through the ship, Sienna knew they were preparing to lift off. How had she missed

that? She sighed and stumbled out of her very comfortable bed and over towards the window so that she could watch the process, this time in reverse. Rubbing the sleep from her eyes, she simply watched as the ship slowly launched itself skyward, the planet receding as she felt the engines come online. She was pleased at how easily the exercise had been executed, one hand on her port as she stared at the planet below.

::Luma?: Sy sent with a smile in her voice. The ship was ecstatic to get off the planet she had been stranded on for several days. ::Some of us were trying to sleep.: She pointed out with a grin in her mental 'voice'.

::The Sekal is going to want you soon. You should be awake when he calls.: Luma sung, her mental voice trilling as she still sung happily, almost like she was welcoming the universe.

::Do you know why?: Sy asked curiously.

::Alaya's Hammons caught some religious woman who had the poison on her that hurt the Kai woman.::

::When did Hammons come to belong to Alaya?: Sy wondered if either of them knew that was how Luma referred to him and tried to imagine what Hammons reaction was going to be.

::They are going to bond. He is not a telepath, but he is a suitable mate for her. Strong, and a warrior. Maybe the Q creature will fix him?:

::Uh, Luma, you realize that when Q interferes, it's not exactly a good thing? We really do not want to have him come visit again.: Sy finished the projected thought with 'other than to rid me of these damned abilities he gifted me with'.

::The Q assisted the Lenai with escaping our planet. They gave Sienna many abilities and made her more Betazoid. The Q gave us help and dreams. Luma does not understand why Our Sienna believes more visits would not be an excellent thing.:

::The Q are very... self centered, Luma. They did not help you and Vex?: Luma was quiet for several long moments.

::Luma did not tell Vex everything. The Q assisted Luma in revealing to Vex all the things that Luma could do, and Luma was able to help us...but Luma would have done so anyway. Luma will not let the skin or the small ones be hurt.:

::We are very lucky to have you Luma.:Sienna said sincerely.

Taking a deep breath, she hit her comm badge, "Lt. Verin to Commander Sekal. Luma woke me up with her singing and said that you needed my assistance with something?"

Sienna moved over to her replicator to get the breakfast she had ordered while talking with Luma, a chocolate nutritional shake. She sipped it while waiting for the CO to reply.

---



(USS Illuminar, Bridge – ACSO Lieutenant (jg) Jatón Alyl - 0903)

"Launch when ready Lieutenant.. All hands. Illuminar is lifting off."

Jatón couldn't help but grip the edge of his console just a bit tighter as he felt the engines rumble to life as the Illuminar lifted off into space.

"Retract the landing feet," the Captain said as the ship slowly gained altitude. Jatón looked back towards the panels in front of him, making sure everything was still green across the board.

Gregory entered the command. "Landing feet retracted Sir," he called out after confirming that the landing feet were retracted and secure.

The next few minutes saw the ship continue to climb through the atmosphere. The Illuminar passed through the cloud layer quite quickly, and the curve of Bajor appeared slowly but surely on the monitor. Jatón began to relax a bit.

"Orbit achieved Commander," called out Grey Wolf. Jatón let out a sigh of relief and let go of his console.

"Activate the warp engines and place on standby."

"Lieutenant Alyl please display the cone of the omicron energy field on the forward viewer with the temple coordinates on the planet at the base," came the Captain's order.

"Aye, sir. Calibrating now." Jatón began tapping away as quickly as he could, but he knew it would be a few moments before the computer could pull everything together.

"There will be a senior officers meeting at eleven hundred hours to discuss the issue of the orbs protective fields and possible ways to inhibit its breakdown. The meeting will be held in the deck one conference room."

"Illuminar is in geostationary orbit."

"Overlay is ready, sir," Jatón said as the view of the planet from orbit was replaced by the live referenced satellite map that he had created a few days earlier. In a few more moments, an overlay appeared over it, displaying the concentration of omicron energy in the vicinity of the temple. "The energy field overlay is delayed by a couple of seconds due to the computer having to pull and compile the information from the sensors and various databanks."

-----

(USS Illuminar - Bridge - ACOUNS ACMO ENS SG Ariel Trei - 09.05)

She heard the call to the Bridge. She made her way from Sickbay checking on Taya and the Kai. She didn't know why she was called to the Bridge but she had some suspicions. Namely her empathic abilities to be used to get information from the prisoners but that was just a guess. She entered the Bridge and located Captain Sekal.

"You requested me on the Bridge. What is the nature of the call sir."

-----

(USS Illuminar- Deck 1- Bridge- Lt. Commander Sekal- 0908)

They were running checks on the bridge after settling into orbit and verifying functionality. Atmospheric checks showed no loss of containment. So far Illuminar appeared to have gone through landing and takeoff procedures in excellent shape, just as she had been designed.

Sekal was monitoring these follow-up checks from the viewer on the chair arm when the comm activated.

=^= Lt. Verin to Commander Sekal. Luma woke me up with her singing and said that you needed my assistance with something? ^=^=

He shook his head slightly at the Lenai's exuberant interference in ship affairs.

"Interesting. I was not aware that Luma had taken command of Illuminar Lieutenant but since you are currently available there is an issue which needs to be addressed and I am currently occupied."

(Reply: Sienna)

"Affirmative. The Vedek ostensibly sent aboard as an observer was found to have a vial of poison upon her person and is currently under guard in the brig. As Lieutenant Peters took her into custody it would be preferable to have another member of the command team take her statement."

(Reply: Sienna)

His recall of the events was immaculate and something occurred to him, a test if you will of her Q gifted abilities.

"The vial has been entered into evidence. I recommend you check it after you get her statement with your precognitive gift and see if what you find matches up with what you are told. While Argelius II is one of the few member worlds which recognizes psychic abilities as evidence it may potentially aid in targeting any future investigation."

---

(USS Illuminar - Deck 8, CSO's Office - ACSO Lieutenant (jg) Jatón Alyl - 0910)

"Possibly.. let's see the scans though, there's always the possibility that *if* we discover anything, we did so without you breaking the rules." Vex said, "Anyway, good investigative work, breaks most of the rules anyway..."

Jatón nodded. "That is very true, but I don't want to go against the orders of my captain. Which is why I need to come clean to him after this meeting. And that's not something I'm looking forward to." He walked over to the monitor to his left, and activated it, bringing up the data that they had on the orbs.

(Reply Stennin)

"What is it you needed me to look at?"

Jatón brought up the last of the pertinent data, and turned around. "This data is everything we have on the energy we observed in the reliquary. We need to find solid evidence that this energy first off is what is causing the disease, and that it's

the orbs emanating from it. Medical is looking at the scans in relation to the disease already. We just need your help in connecting the dots on the other half of the puzzle."

---

(USS Illuminar - Bridge - CO- Lt. Commander Sekal- 0911)

After Ensign Trei's arrival he had directed her to sit to his left while he checked the most crucial post flight readings.

After he was satisfied that all was in order he turned to her.

"Counselor I am about to initiate a transmission to the Dean of Vedeks. This individual stands to profit from the expiration of the Kai and indeed Counselor Ravenstone noted during our visit that he finds her death desirable. It is my intent to find out at some point if he is in collusion in an attempt on her life and how."

"I do not expect to obtain that information today but at some point I intend to find out. I called you to the bridge to sit in on our discussion. It is possible that he will refuse to speak with me after our last conversation but if he attempts to deflect my report to another he will not be successful."

(Reply: Trei)

"My plan is simple Counselor. If he had nothing to do with the smuggling of poison onto this ship his surprise will be evident. If he was involved he will pretend surprise but it will be only pretense, his true emotions will give him away. I want you to observe and not only note his replies but determine also if he is lying and after I have spoken with him and ended the transmission I want your report."

(Reply: Trei)

"While evidence is circumstantial at best Vedek Horavei is the common denominator in a number of areas, the last being a stellar example. He demanded one on the council come aboard as an observer and then she comes aboard with a vial of poison. Is Horavei an unwitting participant in events in which he has no knowledge or is he at the center of the conspiracy against the Kai? This is the question I want answered. It may not be useful in evidence against him if he is but it will tell me which way to direct an investigation."

---

(USS Illuminar - Bridge - ACOUNS ACMO ENS SG Ariel Trei - 09.15)

She took her seat at the left of the Captain as she was getting used to being a prominent member of the Bridge . She listened what Captain Sekal had to say and made mental notes on how to respond to the action she was about to take. She understood what he wanted her to do. The question is how she was going to execute the action. She turned to him.

"Understood sir. I will report as truthfully as I can."

This will be a most revealing conversation. The question really will be her empathic skills never lie but detecting lying behavior always reveal itself. She hoped for the Vedict's sake that he tells the truth.

"Ready when you are sir."

---

(USS Illuminar - Deck 8, CSO's Office - ACSO Lieutenant (jg) Jatón Alyl - 0920)

"So to be clear, these scans here are from when you opened the orb?" Vex asked.

Jatón looked up from his PADD and at the monitor that she was working at. "Yes, those are them. The most detailed of the bunch. And I think could be the lynchpin in our hypothesis."

"Hm. Well it seems that we have a container issue. I'm assuming that's what you're alluding to?" She did a quick search on the Starfleet database for the container specifications. "The *prophets* orbs emit high levels of Omicron radiation. The Bajorans built the containers to contain that and it seems that the protective fields built into those are failing. Why though I'm not sure, there's no obvious reason here as to..." she trailed off in thought.

Jatón nodded. "That seems like the best theory we have so far. The question is how we can block it, and in a way that is culturally acceptable to the Bajorans."

(Reply Stennin)

"I suppose there's no chance of us getting one of the orbs and it's container onboard the ship?"

"Not a snowball's. Not unless we get the go-ahead from the captain, the Kai, and the Vedek Assembly."

---

(USS Illuminar - Bridge - CO- Lt. Commander Sekal- 09.20)

"Ready when you are sir."

The Vulcan nodded and turned to Ops. "Get Vedek Horavei on comm, main viewer."

(Reply: Ops iyw)

It took multiple attempts before the Dean of Vedeks was reached, Sekal stood up with his hands at his back and stepped forward as Horavei's image came on screen.

"Vedek Horavei thank you for accepting my transmission. Allow me to express my formal apology for the misunderstanding during our first meeting."

(Reply: Horavei)

"I trust your security issues have been rectified since the attack at the hotel."

(Reply: Horavei)

"Affirmative. An issue has arisen concerning the Vedek you detailed to observe the Kai beamed aboard that needed your personal attention hence this transmission. It appears that you have subversive elements within the council therefore it was necessary to inform you immediately."

---

(USS Illuminar – Deck 3 – Personal Quarters Ensign Vic “Raid” Montero – 0930)

Finishing his breakfast, he headed down to the flight deck to check in with the Boss to see if there was anything specific on the agenda.

“Sure, Raid. What to do an inspection of the shuttles with me, now that we are back in space, it would be good to make sure there is nothing unusual from all the ground operations.”

“Copy that, Have the ‘rats been over them.”

“Yes, the engineers have checked them out already. This is to check to make sure they did their work right. Its a young crew and if one of these shuttles blows up, it’s my ass on the line.”

Montero grabbed a PADD and started over to the first shuttle. After a detailed walk around the outside of the craft, he noted no deficits. Entering the craft, he sat down in the pilot’s seat and powered the shuttle up. Going through the standard checklist, things looked fine.

Onto the next shuttle. He didn’t resent the busywork the Air Boss had hm do. Only a handful of pilots on the ship and he had the most experience. Helps with getting a few demotions but having enough skill that Star Fleet didn’t bounce him out of the nearest airlock. Only 9 more shuttles to check, assuming the Aerowing was on the list.

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(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, Brig- Security Ensign Keung, PO3 Hercules Devers. Observation Security, Penny McTaggard – 0940 )

The brig was occupied by the two Bajorans who were in detained in separate soundproof cells. A security officer was monitoring the prisoners from his console and looked up as Keung and Devers walked in. Keung had reviewed what little information he had on the PADD and had been updated by Devers about what happened on the surface. The idea of Devers being the silent partner who was at the scene of the bombing might be a good strategy to unnerve the prisoner. At least that what Keung thought. He will make a start on Voha Ejise first. Keung reckon that Voha was a proud man who wanted to live up to the reputation of his family background in the resistance. On the other hand, lhas might be different. He might be more forthcoming.

Keung and Devers stood outside the cell of Voha EJise. Keung held the PADD in his hand and pressed a few buttons to get what he wanted. Then stopped and glanced at Voha who was lying on his bunk, his eyes closed. Keung decided to play the strategy of ‘Who will react first’. As they waited for a reaction, Keung glanced quickly at Devers wondering what he was thinking.

Devers stood there, silent. Moving around he cracked his neck. Stretching his arms out, fingers interlaced, he cracked his knuckles too.

It was a couple of minutes later that Voha suddenly opened his eyes aware of the presence of two people looking at him. Voha stirred from his cot, looked up glaringly at the couple.

“You know, the food here is horrible. How do you people get any enjoyment from this synthesized garbage?”

Keung ignored what Voha said, lifted up his PADD and said unpassionately “Mr Voha. Would you so kindly take a look at the video.”

“Seeing how my appointment with the Kai for tea has been postponed...”

Voha reluctantly stood up and moved and walked towards the PADD which showed a video of the bombing scene.

“Terrible isn’t it, Mr Voha? This is your handy work?”

“Fraid not, I was, you see, detained by your brute squad over there.

Keung coldly glanced at Voha. Usual denial reply. “Mr Voha. I would like to point out that you were detained as a result of your bombing actions. Do you enjoy hurting innocent people not to mention destroying the livelihood of the hotel owners?”

“It seems that you have mixed up information. I am a farmer caught up in a scheme by Star Fleet to discredit the Bajoran way of life and try to make us more like the rest of the Federation. I work the soil, grow crops and feed people. What do you do?”

“Along with your colleague who is in the next cell, I would say that you planned, planted the bomb and executed your plan.” Pointed out Keung

“Starfleet, you seem to give me too much credit as a criminal mastermind. The only planning I do is what I am going to grow in my fields. The only planting I do is to plant seeds in the ground. As for executing my plan, yes, I grow my crops and sell them to others. Where is the crime in that?”

“Our scans show your fingerprints over the bomb fragments that we managed to find. Look.” Keung lifted up his PADD again so that Voha can see the video of the fragments!

“More fabrication from Star Fleet. You wish to make the Bajoran people bow to you?”

“Actually, I apologize. I don’t think you are the planner or even someone who is capable of making a sophisticated bomb. You not that intelligent! Otherwise you wouldn’t be easily captured! You can’t even haven’t considered an escape plan.” Keung quickly said and raised his voice a notch for effect. I say that you are the cannon fodder who been ordered to plant the bomb”

“Told you I plant seeds in the ground, nothing more.”

“Your nothing more than a Pavrak Dal ‘Rok’” accused Keung. That should rattle him!. Keung had checked the language that Pavrak was a strong insult and Dai’Rok was a demon spirit

“And you are a Star Fleet lackey doing what your betters tell you to do. You’re not smart enough to make these lies up yourself, for that I’m sure. “

“Tell me something what it is like being a member of the Duranja Fellowship.” Asked Keung, lowering his voice, suddenly changing his tact. The Duranja Fellowship was a faction whose members engaged in various anarchistic and terror activities. Keung in his research found out that Voha was an admirer of the Duranja Fellowship but couldn’t be sure that he was active member

“I don’t know what you are talking about. My family fought honorably against the Cardassians during the occupation. When they were gone, we returned to farming. We don’t have time for politics, or terrorism, or anything else the Duranja stand for. Your information is clearly wrong, or you’re again making things up. What do you want from me?”

Keung’s felt a notification buzz on his PADD. “The truth, Mr Voha. Just the truth”

“The truth is what the Prophets provide us. We seek it everyday in how we live, how we breath.”

Keung paused to glance at his PADD. "I just received some information that puts you at the right of the bombing along with your colleague Ihas. This is CCVT footage from a camera opposite the hotel."

The video footage on the PADD showed Voha and Ihas both wearing bulk backpacks outside the hotel. Ihas took out a device which was clearly an explosive device and Voha was seen admonishing Ihas for taking the device out of the backpack before it was put back into the backpack. They both disappeared into the hotel. When they left a few minutes later, they no longer had the backpacks and the next thing that happened, an explosion occurred.

"I would hardly call that fabrication Mr Voha" pointed out Keung

"You Star Fleet make films and lies all the time." Voha replied

"Furthermore we have evidence from witnesses who have seen you attending covert Duranja meetings on a number of occasions..not as a spectator. I understand that you are very vocal in those meetings"

"Again, you have me mistaken for someone else. Perhaps you Human's can't tell Bajoran's apart. Your prejudices are showing."

."You say and I quote 'you plant seeds in the ground..nothing more'. There is a element of truth in what you say. Nothing more! Judging from comments from your farming neighbors, you not exactly a dedicated farmer either...especially as your crops keep failing and you neglected to do anything about it".

"Times are tough, droughts, insects. If you worked the land, you'd know," sighed Voha.

“Be that as it may. You and Ihas are mere foot soldiers..cannon fodder. No one is going to protect you or your family. Can you not see... you been thrown out into the cold. Basically you have outlived your usefulness..face it..the glory days are gone. You nothing more than a murderer!”

"Whom am I accused of murdering? Where is the body? I have done nothing wrong."

“I want a name! The person who organized the bombing and who sent you to plant the bomb?” Insisted Keung

"Fine, it was the Kai. Kai Krevi, she wanted to get a signal to the people. That change is coming. The Prophets demand it," Voha said defeated.

“Thank you Mr Voha. You been most cooperative” said Keung, closing his PADD.

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USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, Brig- Security Ensign Keung, PO3 Hercules Devers. Observation Security, Penny McTaggard – 0941 )

Keung felt a sense of relief and satisfaction as he ended the interrogation with Voha Ejise. Voha was defiant even though he was presented with the evidence. As for Isha Poann, he was a different kettle of fish compared with Voha. As far as he could work out, Isha wasn't a known terrorist and probably had nothing to do with Keung wondered if he was just an opportunist who needed money. He and Hercules approached the cell that held Isha.

Keung and Hercules stood in front of the force field. Keung would lead the interrogation whilst Hercules was the silent partner. Poann was pacing up and down the cell, looking distinctively worried.

“Mr Ihas. We just had a very interesting conversation with your friend, Voha” smiled Keung

“Wha... What did he tell you?” the man asked, clearly nervous.



“I like you to look at this video” invited Keung, as he bought up his PADD with the video of the aftermath of the bombing

Poann turned away, eyes downcast to the floor.

“Nasty isn’t it? Are you proud of what you achieved here? Was it worth it?”

Poann dropped his shoulders, “no.” he said softly.

“I understand that you are unemployed” Said Keung, quickly. “There is something else I want to show you.”

Keung showed his Padd to Poann and it revealed his bank account. “For someone who is unemployed. You seemed to have awful lot of credits. Where did you get this?”

“I ... I ... “ he paused and broke down, “I friend introduced me to a friend, who offered me some money if I did a job. I didn’t know the job, but I needed the money. I have a family to feed, my mother is sick, and they shut our factory down. I figured it wouldn’t be anything. I later learned it was ... was the Duranja. And when I tried to back out, they threatened my family. My family. Don’t you see I had to do it. I had to,” his voice was pleading now.

“Let not beat around the bush. CCTV showed you and Mr Voha outside the hotel with you holding an explosive device. I can show you the footage, if you like.” Threatened Keung. “You can’t deny it. The evidence is strong! I want a name. Who sent you. Where did the credits come from?”

“The contact who recruited me was Shemes Dilgul, from the Tozhat Province. He worked with me at the factory. The head of the cell, the person who gave us the assignments was only known by the name of Gaarhirr.”

He continued, “We were supposed to attack Dean Vedek Horavei Taelsi. We were supposed to kidnap him. Bring him back to a place north of the city. The Duranja had plans for him. That’s all I know. I’m telling the truth. By the Prophets, I’m telling the truth.”

“Star Fleet wasn’t supposed to be there. His guards were in on it too. So someone has them bribed as well. We were supposed to take him alive, then the shooting started.”

Keung switched off the intercom so Poann who was now in distress and shouting! “Well that’s it. We got the name and I guess it’s up to Security to deal with this now.”

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(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, Security Conference room- Security Ensign Keung Lee, PO3 Hercules Devers. 10:40)

The second interview over, Devers lead Lee back to the conference room.

"Sir, would you care for a drink?" he asked moving to the replicator.

"Thank Petty Officer. I have a Redbush tea. No milk or sugar."

"Very good, Sir. You can call me Devers, or Hercules if you wish, Sir."

After ordering Lee's beverage, Devers ordered a hot coffee. He placed the Redbush tea in front of Lee.

Sitting down at the table, Devers pulled up the two interviews on separate screens, along with voice stress analysis and biometric data. "Sir, here are the results of the two interviews."

"Voha Ejise seems to know more than he is letting on, but is clearly prideful. We'll need to make him sweat more. His accusation of the Kai seems disingenuous, but who knows with Bajoran politics," Devers began.

"He certainly does. I sense he's hiding behind a mask but there is probably a bigger picture here and Voha is just another cog in the wheel." Less said

"I am sure that there is someone greater behind the attempted bombing in the temple. The man I chased Janus, I don't think would be the mastermind, just another lucky brainwashed to do someone else's bidding. A bidding that would have killed many people." Devers replied.

"I agree with you. I think this is more than a...er...local... conspiracy. If that what it is"

"Sir, I'm just an enlisted grunt. I'm good at hitting things, and running into the fray. Politics and conspiracies are not something I am good at. My ancestor did once say, "Ce n'est pas une conspiration s'ils sont après toi," Deter said.

"With the Kai getting sick, a power struggle within the Vedek assembly is sure to occur, and as I understand Bajor, how the Vedek assembly goes, so goes Bajor. That could negatively impact the Federation, how would the President, Stiave Atremi react?"

"To be honest Devers, I have no idea. This is getting too political!! Way beyond our pay grade" Said Keung

"Turning our attention to Isha Poann, he was clearly scared and in over his head. I've requested information on Shemes Digul and Gaarhirr from the Bajorans. We'll see if they honor that request. The name Gaarhirr sound Cardassian, and working in the shadows to destabilize Bajor seems to be their modus operandi. However, since Cardassia is part of the Federation, it would be a dangerous game to play."

~mm..Cardassia!! thought Keung, "They may not be openly involved. Last thing we want is a diplomatic incident never mind war. I would like to speculate that Gaarhirr may be an agent for the Cardassian Intelligence Bureau but we have no proof for that..."

"Correct, but it is a line of enquiry we need to follow up on. Does it feel like it'll be a rabbit hole, There is no love lost between these two planets," Devers added.

"I think watching Voha's interview will be interesting. What lies is he telling, and what truths."

"Maybe we need to bring in an expert to study Voha's behaviour and attitude." Said Keung.

What be a lot easier is to remove Voha from his cell with a mask over his head, and put him in a room somewhere with a couple of guys to persuade him to talk. That wasn't be the way of Starfleet not even Section 31.

“Sir, do you want to reach out to Medical, see if one of the counseling staff can help, or do you have an idea of someone else. You could probably check the security roster to see if there was someone with that training. My specialty is more physical intimidation.”

Keung chuckled. “I’m still getting to know my colleagues so I wouldn’t know. I don’t think getting someone from the counselling would be appropriate unless Medical can produce a truth drug! Which, by the way, is illegal and unethical. No, I think we better call in the Acting Chief of Security for his decision.”

Devers tapped his communicator =^= Chief Saarsgard, can you please come to the security conference room.=^=

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(USS Illuminar, Deck 1 - Conference Room - CO- Lt. Commander Sekal- 1105)

He waited until everyone had gathered and taken their seats. There were a few stragglers which was highly unusual but then again the situation they found themselves in was unusual as well and they had come as soon as they could be made available.

Once quiet had settled over the expansive holo table he stood to his feet and looked about the room. Vulcans were known for their brevity but that would have to be put aside for today, there was a lot of ground to cover.

"As you are all well aware we have found ourselves in a difficult and delicate situation." His eyes settled momentarily on a number of officers who had not been among the crew when the ship had launched on its maiden voyage. "What none of you has been informed of until this point has been the full scope of the task. I am rectifying that now."

He reached for the interface inset into the table before him and it illuminated with the image of Commodore Remae Ktell speaking before an assembly of Admirals.

“Thank you all.”, said Remae, who was on an outer part of the table as he wasn't included with the Admirals.

The Commodore now, Captain at that time spoke for a few moments about what he saw, Bajor on fire, Q confirming that a level of a civil war was going on and that it was so bad the Republic was sent along with other resources. The status of the Republic indicated the time frame was in excess of 1 year, give the time it would take to get the ship up and running. He ended his presentation with this final sentence.

“I recommend we keep a close eye on Bajor to see if we can predict the timeline of these events.”

The tableau froze on those words.

Sekal then continued. "This took place one year ago after a new admiralty was chosen due to the arrest of Admiral Cayne and the disgrace of its corrupted membership. Owing to the source of the information there was reasonable doubt as to its veracity. Because of this Illuminar and Exeter were sent here for the mission parameters initially noted, to show a renewed Starfleet resolve and solidarity to the Bajoran people."

He paused and looked over their faces again, noting their expressions. "That was our mission but our findings here have been conclusive, from the moment Vice-Admiral Janeway notified me of the request for assistance from the Bajoran government our goal has been to stamp out any embers that flare before they ignite the civil war Commodore Remae was shown."

"Our own encounter with Q was an enigma at the time, why had he chosen officers from this vessel to contact? What was his game? It appears we have now been provided a clue."

He nodded to Sienna. "During Lieutenant Verin's encounter with the being Q told her something enigmatic. If the roots of the tree fail then the leaves die. Without context it means nothing but given context it comes into focus."

"During Petty Officer Hammon's interview with Vedek Gele he used the same words. It was a warning issued to the Kai during her last foray into the orbs. Now we have context. While this crew has tirelessly worked to serve the Bajoran people and disarm the triggers leading to conflict our greatest challenge remains."

He gave a new input to the interface and the cone of energy before which Illuminar even now was stationary appeared above the table, growing increasingly larger as it reached out into space.

"This is the final and greatest trigger we must disarm or lose Bajor to a horrendous bloodletting."

He left the image there. "Ensign Gregory was the first to discover this energy field and I will ask him to tell us what he knows about it. After that Lieutenant Alyl and Ensign Stennin will detail its effects on living organisms and why it is escaping from the orbs. I will be calling on many of you after that over ongoing issues to get your reports and conclusions."

He nodded to Dieter. "Mister Gregory you have the floor."

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(USS Illuminar, Deck 1 - Conference Room – Operations Ensign Dieter Gregory - 1115)

Gregory sat nervously at the end of the table, opposite the Captain. He watched with fascination as the hologram played. The additional information about Q being involved disturbed the man. Q was an unpredictable, petty, narcissist according to the records of interactions with him. Most notably from the famous Jean-Luc Picard.

The Captain adjusted the display on the table, and the cone of Omicron particles appeared in front of everyone.

"This is the final and greatest trigger we must disarm or lose Bajor to a horrendous bloodletting."

Continuing the Captain added "Ensign Gregory was the first to discover this energy field and I will ask him to tell us what he knows about it. After that Lieutenant Alyl and Ensign Stennin will detail its effects on living organisms and why it is escaping from the orbs. I will be calling on many of you after that over ongoing issues to get your reports and conclusions."

"Mister Gregory you have the floor."

~Damn. What do I do?~ he thought.

Standing up, he took control of the hologram table, this time expanding the view to cover Deep Space 9 and the Denoris Belt. "Before I came aboard the Illuminar, on stardate 2445.09.03 my colleague Murdok, a Benzite, noticed a strange Omicron radiation. As we searched, we noticed this radiation getting stronger, with a vector pointing directly to Deep Space 9. We were able to place three probes in the Denoris Belt to capture further information. We did not, at that time know the source of the radiation, nor did we consider the planet as a source.:

"On stardate 2445.09.10, there was a massive explosion in Quarks bar. It killed a Bajoran and damaged the Ferengi's business. Reconstruction of the accident and based on the scans we had, a highly concentration beam of Omicron was identified as the cause of the explosion. Oddly, it passed right through the Bajoran temple on the station before inducing the explosion."

Gregory paused and readjusted the hologram. "After learning of the transporter issue around the temple, the distortion field and all, I took a lot of readings and with Murdok's help, came up with some ideas how to penetrate the field. Working with Chief S'Kakz, we started trying these ideas."

"The results were a good news/bad news kind of thing. With the second probe, we learned there was a strong Omicron radiation to this field, and the adjustments would allow us to use the transporter. Bad news is ... well ... Transporter 2 is offline for the moment."

"I reported these findings to the Captain, along with the fact that there was an injection that could protect humanoids from the most deleterious effects of the radiation. Operations has provided additional sensor bands to Science, as well as re-tasked the two probes we launched to Science to help them expand their operational reach."

"That is all, Sir. Are there any questions?"

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(USS Illuminar, Deck 5- Isolation Ward - Kai Hetel Krevi - 1218)

There was no fluttering of eyelashes, no deepening of breath. No muscle moved except the tip of her right index finger as deep within her cerebral cortex a neuron pulsed sending impulses along the pathways of synapses and nerve cells.

Where before all had been still, silent and velvety black light flared within her mind's eye and she began to dream. It was not an end to her unconsciousness, no wakefulness occurred, the sound of voices would not rouse her yet.

No this wasn't an end to weeks of suffering.... but it WAS a beginning.

"If the roots of the tree fail then the leaves die." This echoed through her mind until her living brain responded.

"I do not under..." The thought was cut off as abruptly as it began. That wasn't right, something about the answer was wrong so her brain brought up the memory of dazzling light and words in her own voice. "The answer lies within the orbs."

That seemed right, was right she knew.

"You are correct dear one but not in the orbs you know."

Where did this voice, this answer come from? There was little enough to see except the vague outline of a man, someone she had seen before outlined in mist. The voice was familiar as well. Where had she heard it? Its timbre was deep and melodious. Rich and strong.

Her brain responded sluggishly yet it responded.

"There is another."

"You refer to the one that was found and lost again."

"Yes the tenth."

"It is."

This sent the thrill of discovery through her.

"Yet it is not."

The thrill turned to ashes at the words.

"It is coming here even now and its end will be the restoration of what was. All that which has been torn will be made whole again."

This answer sent warmth through her. This was hope in its purest form. But one can never completely foresee the end result of change.

"Now sleep dear one and awake refreshed. And when you awake you will remember."

The presence withdraw and she drifted away into a dreamless sleep where pain was only a memory and the future was bright.

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