

Mission: the Root of Decay

Day 19

Stardate: 2445.08.19

(USS Illuminar -- Bridge -- Deck 1 -- CMO Lt. J.G. Quinna Solice – 1203)
(USS Illuminar -- Deck 1- Ready Room -- CO -Lt. Commander Sekal-- 1205)
(USS Illuminar -- Ready Room -- Deck 1 -- CMO Lt. J.G. Quinna Solice – 1210)
(USS Illuminar -- Deck 1- Ready Room -- CO - Lt. .Commander Sekal- 1211)
(USS Illuminar -- Captain's Ready Room -- Deck 1 -- CMO Lt. J.G. Quinna Solice – 1230)
(USS Illuminar – Deck 4 – Officer's Lounge – Pilot Vic 'Raid' Montero – 1300)
(Bajor, Temple -- CMO Lt. J.G. Quinna Solice -- 1301)
(USS Illuminar, Bridge - 2O, Lieutenant Carson Peters – 13:26)
(USS Illuminar- Deck 10, Main Shuttle Bay – Pilot Vic 'Raid' Montero – 14:15)
(USS Illuminar, FO's Office - FO, Lieutenant Sienna Williams-Verin - 14:30)
(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- Security - Ens. Penny Mc Taggard - 14:34)
(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- Security PO3 Hercules Devers - 1435)

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- aCSec - Ensign (sg) Svend Saarsgard and PO (1st Class) Steven Hammons- 1438)

(USS Illuminar - Sickbay - ACOUNS ACMO ENS SG Ariel trei – 14.45)
(USS Illuminar- Deck 5 – Holodeck – Ensign Keung Lee and Ensign Penny McTaggard - 2201)
(USS Illuminar- Deck 11 Section 4 Room 6 - Sec Off, Ensign Keung Lee & Sec Off. Ensign Penny McTaggard - 2205)

Day: 20

Stardate: 2445.08.20

(USS Illuminar, The Prancing Pony (Observation Lounge) - FO, Lieutenant Sienna Williams-Verin - 01:30)
(USS Illuminar- Deck 5 – Holodeck 1 - 0600)

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- aCSec - Ensign (sg) Svend Saarsgard – 0730)
(USS Illuminar- Deck 4 Transporter room 2 – Operations – Ensign Dieter Gregory – 0731)
(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- Security PO3 Hercules Devers 0740)
(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- aCSec- Ensign (sg) Svend Saarsgard- 0741)
(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- Security – PO3 Hercules Devers – 0742)
(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- Security – aCSec- Ensign (sg) Svend Saarsgard – 0743)
(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- Security – PO3 Hercules Devers - 0745)

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 1- Bridge-- CO - Lt. .Commander Sekal- 0800)
(USS Illuminar, Bridge - 2O, Lt. Carson Peters – 0801)
(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, Conference Room- Security – PO3 Hercules Devers – 0802)
(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, Conference Room- Security - Ens. Penny Mc Taggard - 08:03)
(USS Illuminar, Bridge – Operation – Ensign Dieter Gregory – 0805)
(USS Illuminar, Bridge - CO-Lt. Commander Sekal- 0806)
(USS Illuminar, Bridge – Operations, Ensign Dieter Gregory – 0810)
(USS Illuminar - Sickbay - ACOUNS ACO ENS SG Ariel Trei – 08.11)
(USS Illuminar, Bridge - Flight Ops/Conn- FSXO Lt. (jg-) Tempest Grey Wolf- 0812)
(USS Illuminar, Bridge - 2O, Lt. Carson Peters - 0813)
(USS Illuminar -- Deck 2, - Personal Quarters – SecO- PO 1, Steven Hammons – 0820)
(USS Illuminar -- Deck 5, - Sickbay– SecO- PO 1, Steven Hammons – 0828)
(USS Illuminar, Bridge – Operations Ensign Dieter Gregory - 0830)
(USS Illuminar, Transporter Room 1 - 2O, Lt. Carson Peters – 0842)
(USS Illuminar, Deck 5- Isolation ward - SecO- PO1 Steven Hammons - 0845)
(USS Illuminar, Bridge - Flight Ops/Conn- FSXO Lt. (jg) Tempest Grey Wolf and CO- Lieutenant Commander Sekal- 0900)
(USS Illuminar, Bridge – Operations Ensign Dieter Gregory – 0901)
(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- Security office Ensign Keung and Security Office,
Penny McTaggard – 10.00)

(USS Illuminar - Observation Lounge - ACOUNS ACO ENS SG Ariel Trei - 10.55)

(USS Illuminar -- Bridge -- Deck 1 -- CMO Lt. J.G. Quinna Solice -- 1203)

Quinna entered the bridge. Looking around, she noticed there were any that she did not know. She figured it was about time to give the crew annual physicals. It was a good excuse to call them in and get to know everyone. Right now she had a more pressing matter grasped tightly in her hands.

She approached the captain's chair with a stealthy glide. "Captain, Do you have a few moments?" Quinna asked.

(Reply Sekel)

Quinna added, "This is rather a sensitive issue"

(Reply Sekel)

Quinna took a step behind the Captain as she followed him.

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 1- Ready Room -- CO -Lt. Commander Sekal-- 1205)

He had been at the science station getting updated readings on omicron radiation levels in the area when she had spoken up behind him.

Owing to the apparently sensitive nature of the information on the padd she was carrying he had taken the discussion into his bridge office where he now turned to face her as he stopped short of the desk.

"What is the nature of the issue Doctor" He cupped his hands at the small of his back as he balanced lightly on the balls of his feet.

(Reply: Solice)

His face became stony as he heard the news.

"Indeed. I presume you have confirmed this to your satisfaction. You have the results on the padd?

(Reply: Solice)

He took the padd and began paging through its contents. The data was exhaustive and had been well documented. It took only a few minutes to read through the results after which he looked back up at her, his face unreadable as was common with Vulcans.

"Exhaustive and detailed Doctor, what is your recommendation?"

(USS Illuminar -- Ready Room -- Deck 1 -- CMO Lt. J.G. Quinna Solice -- 1210)

"What is the nature of the issue Doctor?" He cupped his hands at the small of his back as he balanced lightly on the balls of his feet.

"Medic Palmer, found evidence of a pathogen administered to the Kai, that is not present in the others in the hospitals. The pathogen is Cardassian in nature."

His face became stony as he heard the news.

"Indeed. I presume you have confirmed this to your satisfaction. You have the results on the padd?

Quinna nodded her head. "The results were doubled check. There is more. The Kai seems to not be recovering as she should. Palmer has background knowledge of this pathogen. The Cardassians created it to use against the Bajorians. The Kai is not strong enough to wait for the Pathogen to cycle out of her system."

Quinna handed her PADD to the Captain and stood blankly staring as the let the Captain evaluate the data himself.

"Exhaustive and detailed Doctor, what is your recommendation?"

"I would feel better if we could move the Kai to a secluded location," Quinna gave a brief pause before continuing. "We need the initial research on the pathogen. And the subsequent research. Hope I am not asking for too much."

(Reply Sekal)

"Do we have anyone onboard that can help with locating the research?"

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 1- Ready Room -- CO - Lt. .Commander Sekal- 1211)

"I would feel better if we could move the Kai to a secluded location ... We need the initial research on the pathogen. And the subsequent research. Hope I am not asking for too much."

He shook his head. "Negative. All of my efforts have been bent toward giving you as much latitude as necessary to deal with the situation. You have permission to move the Kai." He paused only for an instant. "Do you know of anyone in the Bajoran medical contingent in the temple who would be of use in obtaining the research? The minister of medicine herself could be an impediment."

"Do we have anyone onboard that can help with locating the research?"

He nodded his head. "Indeed. I will have that investigation begun immediately. Is there anything else you require?"

(Reply: Quinna)

"Thank you Doctor. You may move the Kai immediately. I will notify Starfleet Command. Where will you be relocating her?"

(Reply: Quinna)

"Understood. Report to me when that is complete. You should have that data available shortly."

(Reply: Quinna)

He watched the door close behind her then moved immediately to the desk. He had a report to make.

The monitor came to life at his command.

"Computer open a channel to Starfleet Command, Vice-Admiral Saleke, Mars Base. Code Alpha, Gamma, Green, 3, 5, 7"

He waited for the transmission to be answered.

(USS Illuminar -- Captain's Ready Room -- Deck 1 -- CMO Lt. J.G. Quinna Solice – 1230)

"Do we have anyone onboard that can help with locating the research?"

He nodded his head. "Indeed. I will have that investigation begun immediately. Is there anything else you require?"

"A small shuttle to move the Kai."

"Thank you Doctor. You may move the Kai immediately. I will notify Starfleet Command. Where will you be relocating her?"

"Sir, I prefer not to say. With the politics, it is safer you don't know. Plausible deniability." Quinna knew of a small clinic next to a temple. She would be in a small secluded clinic on the other side of the clinic.

"Understood. Report to me when that is complete. You should have that data available shortly."

"Thank-you, Sir." Quinna left and headed back to the Temple.

(USS Illuminar – Deck 4 – Officer’s Lounge – Pilot Vic ‘Raid’ Montero – 1300)

“One hundred fifty-two to close. Think you can do that Raid?”

twack *twack* *twack*

Looking amazed at the throw, “I should never doubt you again.”

“That’s ok R’Mirl. You keep the shuttles flying and we’ll call it even.”

The Caitian nodded, “As long as you don’t keep going hard on the simulator. It’s not a real attack fighter.”

Vic sipped his drink, an Allira punch. The replicator made it nice and tart like he had on Betazoid. “You know R’Mirl, work hard, play hard, or as it has been said ‘Nunquam non paratus.’”

R’Mirl nodded, “We have a similar saying on my world. Very well, just try not to break anything.”

“Another round my Caitian friend?”

“Of course, breaker of equipment.”

The sound of darts hitting a dartboard filled the space as officers drifted in and out grabbing lunch or dinner, depending on their shift.

Vic’s badge beeped, “Look at the time. I’m got some more time on the simulator. I wonder if the brass could be convinced to equip the Illuminar with a couple of fighters.” Draining his glass, he retrieved the darts. “What would it take R’Mirl?”

“A lot more pull than an Ensign has, even one as talented as you.”

“Yea, yea, yea. “ Vic said, “Catch you later R’Mirl. Good games.”

(Bajor, Temple -- CMO Lt. J.G. Quinna Solice -- 1301)

Quinna was now back at the temple. She took the time to look around to see where she could easily get the Kai out of the temple. Things seemed a bit off. A shiver ran up Quinna back as she felt a bit uneasy. It was then that something caught Quinna’s eye peripherally. She moved closer to see a figure laying on the floor.

A gasp escaped Quinna lips as she noticed that the person was from the Illuminar. Pulse was thready.

"Oh Taya, What happened to you." Quinna said knowing that she was not going to get an answer. She then in turn called for an emergency med kit. As she waited for the Kit, she then made the call to the Illuminar. She requested an emergency Transport.

With the Med kit in hand. Quinna worked on trying to stabilize Taya for transport. At times, Quinna lost Taya's pulse. Luckily she was able to regain it again. It was still thready but they had no choice but to transport her back to the ship.

At this point, Quinna was torn. She wanted to go with Taya, however she also needed to be with the Kai. In the End, she trusted Trei with Sickbay, and therefore she trusted Trei with Ensign Taya.

(USS Illuminar, Bridge - 20, Lieutenant Carson Peters - 13:26)

Carson was running hot. Ever since the ops officer on the Bridge had brought up the images of Taya strung up and mutilated inside the Temple he'd gotten angrier. Somewhat happier to see the Illuminar's Security team baring down on her... body? fairly quickly.

"I want that stream cut, immediately. I don't care what you have to do, get it jammed." He said to the room. He didn't bother to follow it up, he knew one of the officers around him would be scrambling to follow-up on the order.

The security team seemed to take their time clearing the area of the internal Temple staff which had stayed behind and carefully getting Taya down from the statue.

"Get a shuttle out to the Temple straight away." He said, turning to the Operations officer, before tapping opening a channel to Sickbay, "Bridge to Sickbay, Medical Emergency. Prepare to receive..." he took a breath, "Ensign Taya has been grievously injured. I need some Medical personnel to report to the Shuttle bay pronto for transport to the Temple."

(Reply Medical)

Of course there were medical staff already present, alongside the Science teams within the Temple. "Ensign Solice, Ensign Trei. Whichever one of you is inside the Temple with the research teams, you're needed stat in the Fountain Courtyard. It's Taya, she's bad."

(Reply either/both)

"Trei- prepare sickbay to receive Taya once we've got the shuttle out to them."

(Reply Trei)

The channel closed and he knew the medical staff would do all they could to save her. The image of Taya's body flashed in his eyes again before the viewscreen changed to a shot from a Bajoran TV network. A man high up on the Temple's balcony. "Zoom in." he ordered, before the screen transitioned to a closer look.

"Is that Devers?" came a comment from an officer behind him. They were right, that was Security Officer Devers who'd been a part of the fight in the Hotel the day before, standing on the balcony clearly trying to talk the individual down from the ledge. "What's he doing?" came another comment before a hushed chatter began to break out around the Bridge.

The tension was palpable. The man went from speaking to the news networks and the Bajorans gathered outside the Temple to conversing back and forth with Devers. This was too neatly executed to have been an off the cuff situation that the Petty Officer had found himself in. The large screens either side of the Balcony had lit up and were broadcasting the individual loudly around the Square.

"Put me through to the ground teams." Carson said quickly. Was there something else going on? Hopefully Devers could keep stalling him until they could discover it.

"Line's open."

"Talence," Carson said, knowing full well that the Ensign was stationed with the team in the courtyard. "Take your men and get as close to the Balcony as you can. I need you to use the tri-corders you have and begin jamming all known improvised frequencies that you can."

(Reply Talence)

"I think there is more to this than this man trying to become a martyr. Just get there ASAP."

(Reply Talence iyw)

They watched on the screen. Carson was sure Devers was about to make his move, but the man saw it too. Flinging the large knife at the security officer, he then flung himself off the balcony whilst fidgeting with something in his pocket. Nothing happened and then he hit the floor. Carson breathed a sigh of relief,

"Anything Ensign?" he said down the comm. channel to Talence,

(Reply Talence)

Carson shook his head, "Take control of the scene Ensign. I want you to track down where the explosives are and have them shut down and brought back to the ship for investigation."

(Reply Talence)

The comm. link shut down and Carson forcefully sat back down into a chair. His heart hammering as if he'd been in the heat of the battle himself. His brain couldn't stop thinking

about what would have happened if they hadn't begun jamming, or the officers hadn't gotten over there in time. The entire square would have gone up in smoke, along with a lot of people.

"Bridge to Captain, You should know, Ensign Taya has been found. It doesn't look good and she'll be transported back to the ship just as soon as we can get to her."

(Reply Sekal)

"Aye, Captain. You'll be kept updated."

(USS Illuminar- Deck 5 – Holodeck – Ensign Keung Lee and Ensign Penny McTaggard - 13:27)

"Computer. End program" said Keung. The Fitness Suite where Keung spent the last hour working out on the cross trainer, shimmer out of existence. It was amazing thought Keung as he made his way back to his quarters, that in this day and age, no one has worked a way to replace the need for exercise like a tablet of some sort. Perhaps a Hypro spray to combat the effects of fatigue. Keung didn't mind any form of physical training. After all it was one of the requirements working for Starfleet. Mind you, it probably enhances the routine of ship life! It was ten o'clock in the morning and he yet to report for any orders!

(USS Illuminar- Deck 11 Section 4 Room 6 - Sec Off, Ensign Keung Lee & Sec Off. Ensign Penny McTaggard - 13:28)

Keung arrived at his quarters and press the door entry which slide open to reveal a red headed women sitting at the table examining the firing pin of his 9 mm semi-automatic Glock 16 pistol which had been disassembled. Keung had earlier dismantled the parts of his pistol before he left for the holosuite with the intention to spend a bit of time with it afterwards

"You must be Penny" greeted Keung with a smile. "I wouldn't drop that. It quite awkward to find it on the deck."

Penny had heard she had a new male roommate.

" Yes. You must be Keung. Why is this over our table? " Penny asked

Keung was momentary taken aback by Penny's abruptness but quickly recovered and said almost apologetically "They are parts of my pistol which I took apart earlier. I was planning to reassemble the pistol when I got back from the Holosuite."

“ You know we both have to share this dorm. In future please do not leave. Your stuff over it.” Penny said gumpily.

“I’m sorry. I understand. I thought you were still on the planet so I thought...” Keung drifted off as he glanced at Penny’s body language. She was quite tense. Something was bothering her and it wasn’t the pieces of the gun that was on the table that was annoying her...especially the way she was tapping the firing pin on the table. “Look..Is there something bothering you other than fact you seems to be annoyed about my stuff on the table.” Challenged Keung..

“ Sorry. It’s me..... och sometimes I feel like screaming. I get knocked on my face, nearly blown to pieces and then have treat poor Taya. After those monsters sliced pieces off her. But do I get thanks? No. I have to stand before

Keung nodded with understanding. ..the effects of being on a dangerous mission and seeing a colleague wounded can be quite traumatic. He went and sat down by Penny, slowly taking the firing pin from her twilling hand. “Penny. You want to talk about what happened.” Asked Keung

Penny did not think her new room mate was an appropriate person, to speak about her feelings. Concerning what she felt over the recent mission. It did not do to show weakness to a new colleague.

“ Not really. It happened and talking about it will nay. Stop me eyes from what I have seen. So what brings yer to this ship? “ Penny asked.

Keung noticed the Scottish twang when she spoke. “I was a lecturer in history and a training instructor at the Academy. I was supervising a survivor exercise for cadets in the Brecon Beacons in the Welsh Mountains. "Explained Keung who decided to see what her reaction was like when he mentioned the Brecon Beacons. It was likely that Penny had gone through the same training experience. “It was there I received new orders to be assigned to the Illuminar. Came on board yesterday. What about you?. How long you been on board ”

“ Only a few weeks really. Just a newbie like you.” Penny said “ Who else have you seen so far?”

“Apart from meeting Lt Carson and Lieutenant Sienna Williams-Verin...I’ve yet to receive any orders who I suppose to be reporting to?”

“ To be honest after what happened before. I am not sure. Your best bet would be to go for your medical and ask them. I’m thirsty do you fancy a something to drink?” Penny said getting up and moving over to the replicator slot.

Keung thought what sort of drinks can be served up on a replicator on a starship.
“I’ve...er..anything like a cold larger. That’s if alcohol is permitted otherwise anything non-alcoholic”

“ Any alcohol is forbidden on a Starship but they do a reasonable Raktajino.” Penny explained

“Raktajino? Okay I try it.” Said Keung.

Penny went over to the replicator and ordered a Rakajino. Keung took the opportunity to assemble the parts of his pistol which took no more than a couple of minutes by which time Penny returned from the replicator with the hot drink and looked suitably impressed by Keung’s skill!.

“Thank you.” Keung took a drink. “It’s not bad at all. ”

Penny had heard that Keung had come from the 20th century. So she wondered how he would take to Klingon coffee.

Then over the next few minutes, Penny shared with Keung about the some of the beverages that she experimented with the replicator then she asked. She had heard that Keung came from the 20th Century and asked him what it like living in this century

Keung sipped his drink He was so used to the culture that he was living in that he had nearly forgotten about his old life. "Well... it was different, that's for sure. Compared to now... life was obviously restricted to living in one area because of the problems related to travel technology... no faster-than-light systems, just atmospheric flights. I was lived in old London...

it wasn't as big as we know it now but the place was... er... compact, if you see what I mean! Ground vehicles ran on internal combustion techniques so there was pollution and uncontrolled weather. Times were uncertain and different groups sought their own alternative lifestyles and some extreme trying to achieve it through crime, terrorism and war!!

"I was involved with the military operations during the Third Gulf War in 2003 and the Eugenic wars. I read some history books about life in the late 20th/early 21st century. To be honest with you, most of it is absolute rubbish. I spent a bit of time teaching History at the Academy and made some corrections from my prospective."

"Yes an instructor at the Academy was talking about that." Penny said

"Now you know about me..tell me your storyf" asked Keung

"Well I am from Edinburgh born and bred. Have a famous Grandfather who was killed during dominion war. I graduated from Starfleet Academy with full honours. Despite being rather gazed out. Because I had been up all night. Listen to my room mate telling me her woes. Decided to go to Bajor for a holiday. Got pulled in to help the security teams of this vessel. Became a member of the crew. Oh and my Grandmother warn me to be one the look out for a bearded man called Stan. That's it really." Penny said

Keung processed what Penny was talking about. He didn't know who her 'famous grandfather' who fought in the dominion wars but at somepoint he will do a search as he knew nothing aobut the Dominion wars having arrived much later in this century. "So why did your grandmother warned you about this Stan?"

"Apparently there has been a family feud. I have a load more relatives then I thought. She waited until I graduated because apparently. This bearded man is in Starfleet." She said

"Any idea where he is serving?"

"I have no idea. For all I know he may be on the Exeter." Penny Replied.

Keung finished the rest of his drink which took some getting used to and threw it into the waste basket. He picked up his gun "Well. I go and get a shower. Then probably make an appointment to visit Medical."

(USS Illuminar- Deck 10, Main Shuttle Bay – Pilot Vic ‘Raid’ Montero – 14:15)

“Your simulation is setup. You sure you want to run this?” the flight control officer asked.

“Gotta keep in shape, cause when you’re flying you’re touching the face of God.”

“Very well Ensign, you’re set to go.”

Vic entered the simulator and sat down. Donning his helmet, he strapped in and let his fingers drift over the controls, eyes closed. Sensing the location of each control, calming his mind as he prepared for reliving one of his own personal demons.

“Begin simulation ‘Battle of the line’” he said.

Suddenly the simulator became dark, and the voices started. “Alpha squad, return to base. Return to base.”

“Alpha squad, this is Alpha 1. Maintain Course and Heading. There’s a lot of people down there counting on us.”

“Bring your vectors to 195 mark 223. Charge weapons, starbust pattern delta on me.”

Vic watched as the rest of the pilots adjusted their trajectories and got into position.

“We’re going for that big cruiser there, I’m painting the target now, link with my computer.”

“Excellent, begin attack run now, accelerate to 0.7, use evasive maneuver Charlie 2. Alpha 6, you’re with me. Alpha 2, Alpha 3, target weapons system. Alpha 4 Alpha 5, try to get the power core. I’m heading for the bridge.”

The acknowledgements came quickly. These were good kids. If they survived, they’d have their pick of the jobs. It was impossible to believe that the defense of Earth was left in the hands of these pilot trainees.

“Alpha 1, you are ordered to return.”

“This is Alpha 1, cannot comply. Alpha squad begin your run.”

“Raid, this is Captain T’Lack, you are ordered to return. Don’t disobey this order. I’ll bust your ass.”

“Sorry Captain, when this is over my ass is yours.”

The squad accelerated and started taking fire from the Cruiser. Breaking up, each pair locked onto their targets. “Alpha 6, follow me in. Let’s see if we can get their attention.”

The two fighters began their run. Being so close made it hard for the Cruiser’s weapons to lock on. Vic jinxed right and got a lock on the target. “Torpedo 1 away. Torpedo 2 away,” he said as he pulled up and accelerated.

“Walk in the part Alpha 6,” he said, “Just like training.”

Vic watched on his screen as the young pilot, an aggressive Tellarite named Gisrig , began his run. “Too fast,” he called over the radio as the fighter approached the target. Vic watched as two more photons were released. Gisrig scored a hit, which blew out armor plating and parts of the ship, creating a dangerous debris cloud. “Bank right, bank right.” He called, too late, as some of the debris slammed into Gisrig’s fighter, blowing it up.”

“Alpha 6, alpha 6. Come in.” he called, hoping Gisrig was able to transport out before the ship disintegrated in front of him.

“Alpha 1, this is Alpha 5, I’ve lost power and the ship is fighting me hard. Tell my parents I did my duty.”

“No!” he called out as his screens showed the fighter crashing into the engineering section of the cruiser.

[Warning, Overload detected in target. Move to a safe distance.]

Vic automatically started maneuvering when his proximity alarm went off.

[Missile launch detected. Collision in 10 seconds.]

His fingers working over the controls as he tried to shake the missile.

[8 seconds]

Furiously, he kept moving the fighter left, right, up, down in a random pattern.

[6 seconds]

In a last ditch effort he started a steep climb and accelerated to 0.9

The fighter shook as the missile scored a hit... red alerts and collision alarms sounded loud and furiously.

Suddenly everything was black. [Simulation ended. Mission failed]

Vic sat there, shaking. Breath ragged. He opened his flight jacket and reached for a small vial.

(USS Illuminar, FO's Office - FO, Lieutenant Sienna Williams-Verin - 14:30)

Sy had heard about Taya, but there was nothing that she could do to help the engineer. The woman was a strong fighter, well trained and had been security and tactical on Mars. That she had been taken and tortured so... it was unimaginable. No, Sienna was staying far away. The psionic talents that Q had left her with made getting near sickbay a difficult thing for her. But still, those talents were what she was going to be employing when she visited with the Kai. She needed to check in with the CMO, and then with security. There was zero chance that either Carson or Saarsgard were going to let her visit the planet without an overwhelming security contingent.

Sy tapped her comm badge. "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." Sienna was frustrated by the stupid bureaucratic nonsense that had been throwing up roadblocks to getting the necessary files from the archives. She didn't understand it, but information from the Occupation had been classified.

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- Security - Ens. Penny Mc Taggard – 14:34)

After Ensign Mc Taggard added to Dever's report, Saarsgard spoke "All right you're all dismissed."

Devers felt Saarsgard gaze lock onto him "Not you Devers, stay right where you are."

Hercules remained at attention, as the others left.

The door closed and Saarsgard stood. "Of all people you should have known better Devers. Why the hell did you go solo?"

"Sir, the mission parameters stated to first rescue Ensign Taya, and second try to find those who kidnapped her. We found the Ensign, and I observed a figure moving away from the scene. Knowing that Ensign Taya was found, and there were three people there to help her, I took a chance and went after the figure. When he started to rabbit, it was clear he had

something to do with the situation. If I had not run after him, we would have lost him, and I didn't believe I had time to wait for the others."

"Bloody hell! Do I need to walk you down every catastrophic possibility that could have and DID occur because of the half-witted decision you made?" Saarsgard voice loud with anger.

""First of all you could have died in the tunnel but you survived only to put yourself at risk again by not having your partner at your back."

"Secondly it caused a delay while you tended to the man in the temple and gave Janus time to set up. He could have been waiting for you with a phaser, you're lucky he only had a knife on him."

"Thirdly the delay allowed him to slip your grasp."

Lowering his voice, Saarsgard continued. "While his death doesn't exactly fill me with remorse he almost certainly wasn't working alone due to his elaborate preparations and whatever he could have told us is now gone."

Growling at Devers, "What have you got to say for yourself that isn't already obvious before I lay the hammer down on your sorry arse? You broke regulations with that act and you're going to have to answer for it!"

"Permission to speak freely, Sir?"

(Reply Saarsgard, IFW)

"Thank you, sir. The decision was not half-witted, nor would you have known anything more about Janus if I didn't begin pursuit. He would have gotten away into the temple, and completed whatever task he started. We don't know what was disrupted by my pursuit. Second, I rendered aid, as required. Did that delay me, yes Sir it did, but I did catch up to Janus. Third, after overriding the lock on the door of the office, I followed protocol for clearing a room. I regret that I was unable to talk him down, or that I didn't have the foresight to prepare the abseiling gear before I went onto the balcony, so yes I lost him."

"I accept responsibility for my actions and while I recognize and acknowledge the regulations exist to protect, there are times when it is necessary to follow ones instinct and training, Sir"

Devers stood there, still at attention, waiting for the hammer to fall.

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- Security - Ens. Penny Mc Taggard - 14:34)

When Penny was a child of six she had once been dragged in front of the headmistress Miss Sharp. Heather McCreevy had accused Penny of cheating. Something Penny viciously denied. Someone pushed Heather down the stairs. Breaking the girls arm and Penny got the blame.

Miss Sharp went on and on at Penny for ages. Trying to get her to confess. But Penny stuck to being innocent. Finally Penny was let go. In truth she had not cheated. But she did push Heather down the stairs.

Standing before Saarsgard felt like being six again. With the headmistress looking sternly at her. Except it would be headmaster this time.

Mc Taggard gave a full report but left out any personal comments. It did not do to openly make remarks. About your bosses in front of them. Once her report was made she was pushed to the back. Then they were dismissed.

She followed the others out.

~ He was not even listening to me. I could of stood there naked as the day I were born. No one takes nay notice of a newbie. Yet they expect us to die for them. Ensign try and stop her bleeding..... Ensign search the area..... Ensign convince these people we are their friends..... what U am doing here? ~ Penny thought.

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- aCSec - Ensign (sg) Svend Saarsgard and PO (1st Class) Steven Hammons- 1438)

"I accept responsibility for my actions and while I recognize and acknowledge the regulations exist to protect, there are times when it is necessary to follow ones instinct and training, Sir"

"It's nice to know you don't think Lanis is able to keep up with you." Saarsgard commented dryly. He let out the breath slowly and sat back down without taking his eyes off of the PO.

"And off record that defense only works when someone does something heroic and the brass turns a blind eye."

There was a lot he could say, wanted to say but now wasn't the time.

"We are doing this by the book, sidearm on the desk. You are relieved of duty while an investigation is conducted. Don't try to leave the ship. Any questions?"

(Reply: Devers)

Svend placed the phaser in the drawer as Devers walked through the door and let out an explosive breath after it had closed. "Damn!"

Devers story about the confrontation on the balcony had to be verified of course and there were a lot of potential witnesses. Still he needed a good, unbiased investigator to head that up. He groaned as the available choices came to mind. Topping that list was none other than you know who.

He shook his head and tapped the comm.

"Hammons I need you in my office."

He didn't have to wait long as Steven hadn't gone far. The door opened momentarily and the Petty Officer sauntered in.

"You rang chief?"

Svend gave him a sour look.

"Since you want something to do Hammons I've got a job for you which shouldn't take long."

"I'm all ears."

"Get back to the temple and round up any eye-witnesses to Janus' final moments and take their statements then bring me the report so I can go over it."

Hammons nodded. "Sure thing. I'll get right on it. Anything else?"

"That will be all."

Steven turned to go.

"Ah Hammons, make sure the report is polished up before you turn it in, nice, concise and professional looking."

Steven turned his head back to Saarsgard and gave him a thoughtful look then bit back the reply that was in his head. That made the assignment perfectly clear. "Will do. I'll make sure this gets expedited Chief and wrap it up with a ribbon."

At Saarsgard's nod he stepped out of the office and made straight for the lift, time was wasting and a career might hang on the report. He needed to get to the temple fast to catch any who were still available who might have seen the confrontation on the balcony from the grounds and the longer he waited the harder it would be to track them down.

He stopped only long enough to grab Jared and enlist him in the enterprise which his partner was only too happy to jump into since it got him out of the more mundane chores aboard Illuminar.

He tapped his combadge as he left the security enclave. "Alaya I will be off ship for a while, nothing dangerous, just paperwork."

(Reply: Alaya)

"Administrative stuff, I'll see you when I get back."

"Think we'll have time to grab a drink before we report back in?"

Hammons gave him a sideways look that was uncharacteristically sober.

"No buddy, this can't wait."

"Dang, oh well. Maybe we'll get some shore leave time eventually."

"Maybe, I won't hold my breath for it."

Jared gave him a long look but kept silent, that didn't sound like Hammons at all. "Let's get this done and over with then."

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- PO3 Hercules Devers – 1440)

Saarsgard gave Devers a good dressing down. He listened while standing at attention. Yes, he did flaunt regulations. However, leaving three crew to help Taya made the most sense at the time. Talk about going from the highs of the hotel battle to the lows of a dressing down.

"We are doing this by the book, sidearm on the desk. You are relieved of duty while an investigation is conducted. Don't try to leave the ship. Any questions?"

Devers laid both his mark I and mark II phaser on Saarsgard's desk. Next he took his ASP out and placed it on the desk as well.

"No Sir, I have no questions."

Devers saluted, executed and about face and walked out the door.

Relieved of duties and confined to the ship. And the Security team was already shorthanded and spread thin. Not a good thing. Most likely he'd be busted in rank and labeled a glory hound. If the Captain didn't transfer him, he's have to work extra hard to make up this mistake.

Devers made his way to his quarters on Deck 6. He was fortunate that his roommates were not in at the moment, which gave him time to change out of his uniform and into his workout gear. He didn't know if his status allowed him to use the holodeck, as a good Muai Thai workout would be the perfect way to get out his frustration.

First, he go to the gymnasium and lift weights, maybe hit the heavy bag for a bit.

(USS Illuminar - Sickbay - ACOUNS ACOMO ENS SG Ariel trei - 14.45)

Ariel began her preparation for receiving Taya. Normally she would have silence for her counseling sessions but she thought some music would calm her for the task ahead. She liked Teran Classic Rock circa late 1960's to 80's. She asked the computer to play random songs of that era. The computer complied with a "request accepted." About a minute later, a song began to fill the room. She knew by the opening bars that it was ELO (Electric Light Orchestra). She liked ELO for they rocked hard but with a light soothing tone. The song was "Livin Thing" a nice blend of back beat rock with an orchestra feel. When Taya arrives, the music will have to be much softer. Something like "Lady" by The Little River band or "Imaginary Lover" by Atlanta Rhythm Section would be workable. She began to visualize what the scene will be like when Taya is ready for surgery. She will revisit that picture in her mind when it actually happens.

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 5, Gymnasium- PO3 Hercules Devers – 1500)

Walking into the gym, he saw the usual complement of off-duty crew working out. He tried to give off a don't bother me attitude as he went over to the free-weights. Sure there were all those iso this and fakeer that's. Nothing like real iron.

He cinched his belt and checked his lifting straps and loaded up 200 kg on the squat bar. Going for reps today seemed the right thing to do.

Moving from one station to the other, Devers was lifting like a man on a mission. It felt good to get things out this way. Man and muscle.

An hour later, and a good body workout later, he moved to the heavy bag. He was ready to dish out a hurting.

(USS Illuminar- Deck 5 – Holodeck – Ensign Keung Lee and Ensign Penny McTaggard - 22:01)

“Computer. End program” said Keung. The Fitness Suite where Keung spent the last hour working out on the cross trainer, shimmer out of existence. It was amazing thought Keung as he made his way back to his quarters, that in this day and age, no one has worked a way to replace the need for exercise like a tablet of some sort. Perhaps a Hypro spray to combat the effects of fatigue. Keung didn't mind any form of physical training. After all it was one of the requirements working for Starfleet. Mind you, it probably enhances the routine of ship life! It was ten o'clock in the morning and he yet to report for any orders!

(USS Illuminar- Deck 11 Section 4 Room 6 - Sec Off, Ensign Keung Lee & Sec Off. Ensign Penny McTaggard - 22:05)

Keung arrived at his quarters and press the door entry which slide open to reveal a red headed women sitting at the table examining the firing pin of his 9 mm semi-automatic Glock 16 pistol which had been disassembled. Keung had earlier dismantled the parts of his pistol before he left for the holosuite with the intention to spend a bit of time with it afterwards

“You must be Penny” greeted Keung with a smile. “I wouldn't drop that. It quite awkward to find it on the deck.”

Penny had heard she had a new male roommate.

“ Yes. You must be Keung. Why is this over our table? “ Penny asked

Keung was momentarily taken aback by Penny’s abruptness but quickly recovered and said almost apologetically “They are parts of my pistol which I took apart earlier. I was planning to reassemble the pistol when I got back from the Holosuite.”

“ You know we both have to share this dorm. In future please do not leave your stuff over it.” Penny said grumpily.

“I’m sorry. I understand. I thought you were still on the planet so I thought...” Keung drifted off as he glanced at Penny’s body language. She was quite tense. Something was bothering her and it wasn’t the pieces of the gun that was on the table that was annoying her...especially the way she was tapping the firing pin on the table. “Look..Is there something bothering you other than the fact you seem to be annoyed about my stuff on the table.” Challenged Keung..

“ Sorry. It’s me..... and sometimes I feel like screaming. I get knocked on my face, nearly blown to pieces and then have to treat poor Taya. After those monsters sliced pieces off her. But do I get thanks? No. I have to stand before

Keung nodded with understanding. ...the effects of being on a dangerous mission and seeing a colleague wounded can be quite traumatic. He went and sat down by Penny, slowly taking the firing pin from her twirling hand. “Penny. You want to talk about what happened.” Asked Keung

Penny did not think her new room mate was an appropriate person, to speak about her feelings. Concerning what she felt over the recent mission. It did not do to show weakness to a new colleague.

“ Not really. It happened and talking about it will help. Stop my eyes from what I have seen. So what brings you to this ship? “ Penny asked.

Keung noticed the Scottish twang when she spoke. “I was a lecturer in history and a training instructor at the Academy. I was supervising a survivor exercise for cadets in the Brecon Beacons in the Welsh Mountains.” Explained Keung who decided to see what her reaction was like when he mentioned the Brecon Beacons. It was likely that Penny had gone through

the same training experience. "It was there I received new orders to be assigned to the Illuminar. Came on board yesterday. What about you?. How long you been on board "

" Only a few weeks really. Just a newbie like you." Penny said " Who else have you seen so far?"

"Apart from meeting Lt Carson and Lieutenant Sienna Williams-Verin...I've yet to receive any orders who I suppose to be reporting to?"

" To be honest after what happened before. I am not sure. Your best bet would be to go for your medical and ask them. I'm thirsty do you fancy a something to drink?" Penny said getting up and moving over to the replicator slot.

Keung thought what sort of drinks can be served up on a replicator on a starship.
"I've...er..anything like a cold larger. That's if alcohol is permitted otherwise anything non-alcoholic"

" Any alcohol is forbidden on a Starship but they do a reasonable Raktajino." Penny explained

"Raktajino? Okay I try it." Said Keung.

Penny went over to the replicator and ordered a Rakajino. Keung took the opportunity to assemble the parts of his pistol which took no more than a couple of minutes by which time Penny returned from the replicator with the hot drink and looked suitably impressed by Keung's skill!.

"Thank you." Keung took a drink. "It's not bad at all. "

Penny had heard that Keung had come from the 20th century. So she wondered how he would take to Klingon coffee.

Then over the next few minutes, Penny shared with Keung about some of the beverages that she experimented with the replicator then she asked. She had heard that Keung came from the 20th Century and asked him what it like living in this century

Keung sipped his drink He was so used to the culture that he was living in that he had nearly forgotten about his old life. "Well... it was different, that's for sure. Compared to now... life was obviously restricted to living in one area because of the problems related to travel technology... no faster-than-light systems, just atmospheric flights. I was lived in old London... it wasn't as big as we know it now but the place was... er... compact, if you see what I mean! Ground vehicles ran on internal combustion techniques so there was pollution and uncontrolled weather. Times were uncertain and different groups sought their own alternative lifestyles and some extreme trying to achieve it through crime, terrorism and war!!

"I was involved with the military operations during the Third Gulf War in 2003 and the Eugenic wars. I read some history books about life in the late 20th/early 21st century. To be honest with you, most of it is absolute rubbish. I spent a bit of time teaching History at the Academy and made some corrections from my prospective."

"Yes an instructor at the Academy was talking about that." Penny said

"Now you know about me..tell me your storyf" asked Keung

"Well I am from Edinburgh born and bred. Have a famous Grandfather who was killed during dominion war. I graduated from Starfleet Academy with full honours. Despite being rather gazed out. Because I had been up all night. Listen to my room mate telling me her woes. Decided to go to Bajor for a holiday. Got pulled in to help the security teams of this vessel. Became a member of the crew. Oh and my Grandmother warn me to be one the look out for a bearded man called Stan. That's it really." Penny said

Keung processed what Penny was talking about. He didn't know who her 'famous grandfather' who fought in the dominion wars but at somepoint he will do a search as he knew nothing aobut the Dominion wars having arrived much later in this century. "So why did your grandmother warned you about this Stan?"

"Apparently there has been a family feud. I have a load more relatives then I thought. She waited until I graduated because apparently. This bearded man is in Starfleet." She said

“Any idea where he is serving?”

“ I have no idea. For all I know he may be on the Exeter.” Penny Replied.

Keung finished the rest of his drink which took some getting used to and threw it into the waste basket. He picked up his gun “Well. I go and get a shower. Then probably make an appointment to visit Medical.”

Day: 20

Stardate: 2445.08.20

(USS Illuminar, The Prancing Pony (Observation Lounge) - FO, Lieutenant Sienna Williams-Verin - 01:30)

Unable to sleep, Sy had stopped in her quarters long enough to change. Dressed in a long, silk sundress in a betazoid style and simple silk slippers dyed in a marching rich blue. She checked her flute with a soft smile, tuning it in her quarters before heading to the Prancing Pony, which was a ridiculous name for the lounge, but the crew had voted and Sekal had agreed with their choice, likely not caring what the large lounge was named.

"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."

(reply Talence)

Arriving at the lounge, Sy stopped at the bar and ordered a tall glass of apple cider on ice. Sy was allergic to most alcohols and alcohol substitutes unless they were made off-earth. Importing them was expensive, and often more trouble than it was worth. Taking the stage, she sat down after adjusting the microphone and turning the sound system on properly.

::Luma, I'll be playing my flute if you wish to listen.: Sy sent to the ship, then leaned back in her chair, putting the flute to her lips and began to play, a rather pretty lullabye. Sienna was a gifted musician and singer and had played several times with her twin and her former partner on Mars base. Seaguing from the lullabye into a happier song, a lilting, sprightly tune.

(USS Illuminar- Deck 5 – Holodeck 1 - 0600)

Devers checked and learned he still has access to the holodecks. Entering the room, he spoke, “Computer, Devers 1.”

The room quickly turned into an open gym. Palm trees in the background. The floor padded with mats, and several white circles. In two of the circles, two fighters were sparring each with a different headband and armband. An old man, leaning on a cane looked at Hercules as he approached.

“Hello Kru Petchyindee.”

“Welcome home nak muay farang Devers.”

The old man raises his cane, “Pathit Ho’thai, come here. Please join Hercules Devers in the ram muay.”

A young man, bare chested came trotting over. He bowed to Devers “I would be honored.”

Devers stripped to his shorts and put on a headband with a fleur de lis, Barefoot, he entered the circle. The two men bowed low to Petchyindee and then to each other. Standing up, they started a slow, ritualized series of movements. Starting from a fighting stance, they lifted their left foot in unison, set them down and repeated this for the right foot, finally, they lifted the left foot and advanced, changing their fighting stance. They continued this dance till they had made three complete circles of the ring.

Turning to each other, they again bowed to show respect to each other, before bowing again to Petchyindee.

“Very good my students. The Yang Sam Khum helps to center one’s mind, and prepare for the challenges ahead.”

“Thank you Kru.”

“Do you have time to spar?”

“Not now, I must get back and wait for the decision as to my future in Star Fleet.”

“You always have a home here.”

“Thank you Kru. Computer end program.”

The room returned to its grid pattern, and the door appeared.

Devers headed back to his quarters on deck 6 for a shower and to wait.

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- aCSec - Ensign (sg) Svend Saarsgard - 0730)

Svend stepped into his office and moved to the replicator from which he extracted a mug of steaming coffee, black and unsweetened.

He moved to the desk and took the chair then activated the monitor.

"Is that report from Hammons ready yet?"

Luma answered. "The Hammons finished the report last night and downloaded it. Luma will display it for the yous."

Saarsgard grunted as it appeared on the screen and began poring through it. No one had ever accused Hammons of being a less than able investigator. An irritant? Yes but otherwise damn good at his job.

He had interviewed twenty potential witnesses and six had verified Dever's version of events.

At the end of the report a clip of video was included.

Saarsgard played it then laughed out loud. "All right you son of a gun, all right!"

The clip was taken by the media and unimpeachable. "Hell I should have just watched the local news."

He then hit the comm.

"Devers you're reinstated, get to my office and pick up your gear."

(USS Illuminar- Deck 4 Transporter room 2 – Operations – Ensign Dieter Gregory - 0731)

~Going to be a long day.~ Gregory thought as he entered transporter room two. After his bridge shift last night, he spent another 4 hours working with the engineering crews. They had gotten everything disassembled and the debris was being recycled.

It would take about 2 days to finish replicating the parts needed for the repairs, having on one industrial sized replicator was a drag.

With the damage removed, today was the meticulous work of checking each of the circuits and connections to see which might have to be replaced. They would repeat it tomorrow, with different crew going the circuits. It would be catastrophic if there was a failure due to faulty connections. Also, it was, in Gregory's eye, mind numbing work. Something his SPOTS creation could help with, if he could get the Captain's permission to build it after this fiasco.

He had reviewed the information Murdok had sent based on the analysis, and there was no obvious reason why the probe should have exploded, it was a standard probe used all over the fleet. Murdok had said he would continue his research. That was something.

Walking over to S'Kakz, they had a brief conversation and discussion of the timeline. After they completed their discussions, and filled in the status report for the accident, Gregory filed it with a priority to the senior staff.

It was only then Gregory realized the time, and knew he was going to be late. It seemed running was going to be his MO as he started down the hall to the turbolift.

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- Security PO3 Hercules Devers 0740)

Devers walked into the security chief's office. Three feet from the desk, he came to attention. "Petty Officer Hercules Devers reporting as ordered, Sir."

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- aCSec- Ensign (sg) Svend Saarsgard- 0741)

Svend looked up as the door opened and the PO reported in.

"Petty Officer Hercules Devers reporting as ordered, Sir."

He grunted. "At ease Devers." Then leaned back and opened the drawer.

"The investigation was conclusive and you're in the clear." He laid the weapons on the desktop and motioned to them.

(Reply: Devers)

Svend eyed him as he geared up. "I trust you've learned your lesson, having your partner nearby would have sped the investigation up considerably."

(Reply: Devers)

Svend chuckled. "Relax, this isn't a beat down. You got the job done and gave the rest time to stop the bombing that Janus had planned, the plaza would have been blown sky high. I'm putting you in for a commendation."

(Reply: Devers)

"Well done, you put in a good days work just remember to have someone watching your back next time."

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- Security – PO3 Hercules Devers - 0742)

"At ease Devers," Saarsgard said. "The investigation was conclusive and you're in the clear."

The Chief laid Devers weapons on the table. Taking each item, Devers did a quick check before placing them on his person.

"Thank you, Sir," he replied now that he felt like a security officer again.

"I trust you've learned your lesson, having your partner nearby would have sped the investigation up considerably."

"Aye sir, I read you five by five." Devers replied cautiously.

Svend chuckled. "Relax, this isn't a beat down. You got the job done and gave the rest time to stop the bombing that Janus had planned, the plaza would have been blown sky high. I'm putting you in for a commendation."

Devers looked surprised, "Sir? Thank you, Sir."

"Well done, you put in a good days work just remember to have someone watching your back next time." Saarsgard said.

"Aye, Sir. I'll make sure to remember that advice. Do you have any specific assignment for me today?"

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- Security – aCSec- Ensign (sg) Svend Saarsgard - 0743)

"Aye, Sir. I'll make sure to remember that advice. Do you have any specific assignment for me today?"

Svend sat back and considered the question then nodded. "We have those two Bajoran prisoners from the hotel who haven't cracked yet. Ashalla security has taken over the investigation at the scene and hasn't asked for them yet but that could change at any time and I'd like to get something out of them before the minister of security starts making demands."

(Reply: Devers)

"We've got two fresh faces aboard today, McTaggard who you've already worked with and Ensign Keung Lee. Keung is a transfer with some experience under his belt and I'd like for you to evaluate him for me. McTaggard is wet behind the ears and needs to get some experience. Take both of them down with you to the brig and see if you can pry any information out of those two goons."

(Reply:Devers)

"Take as long as you need. If something else more pressing comes up I'll let you know. That's all for now."

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- Security – PO3 Hercules Devers - 0745)

"We have those two Bajoran prisoners from the hotel who haven't cracked yet. Ashalla security has taken over the investigation at the scene and hasn't asked for them yet but that could change at any time and I'd like to get something out of them before the minister of security starts making demands," Saarsgard said.

"Have we gotten names at least from their intake? Anything the techies can come up with their families would be a potential in."

(Reply: Saarsgard)

"We've got two fresh faces aboard today, McTaggard who you've already worked with and Ensign Keung Lee. Keung is a transfer with some experience under his belt and I'd like for you to evaluate him for me. McTaggard is wet behind the ears and needs to get some experience. Take both of them down with you to the brig and see if you can pry any information out of those two goons."

"Yes Sir, I'll do my best," he replied. "How long do you think we have?"

"Take as long as you need. If something else more pressing comes up I'll let you know. That's all for now."

“Copy that Chief.”

Devers left the room to ponder the prospects. He his is communicator,

=^= Ensign Lee, Ensign McTaggard, please report to the security conference room. ^=

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 1- Bridge-- CO - Lt. .Commander Sekal- 0800)

He walked onto the bridge precisely on time after another extended conversation with Starfleet Command.

The Vedek Council had made their displeasure clear at Kai Hetel's removal from the Temple but the data obtained by Doctor Solice had been airtight and their objections had been rebuffed by Federation authorities. She was currently resting comfortably according to the latest reports and had gained enough strength to have the remainder of the poison purged from her system.

On another front Ensign Taya remained hovering at death's door despite the best efforts of the medical department who had turned their full attention to restoring life to her broken body. The consensus was that today would tell the tale whether she would live or die, otherwise she was not expected to survive to see another dawn. The procedure to detoxify her had been modified from the Bajoran data received to treat the Kai. Whether that treatment had been obtained and used quickly enough was yet to be determined.

Evidence had been mounting that the protective field of the orbs themselves was breaking down and causing the debilitating effects in those at residence in the temple. A number of the Vedeks and priests had already been released at the determination that they were not infectious and of those brought in the first day only the Kai's personal physician remained who was assisting in her treatment and Vedek Gele who had refused to leave her side.

With the verification the Bajoran civilian government had immediately gone on a media offensive against the remaining fanaticism begun by Prylar Tekan Herla and the crowds besieging the city had dwindled. Security forces were being culled and an end to quarantine of the city was in sight.

Science, Operations and Engineering were now wrestling with the question of how to reinforce the protective fields. If this did not happen the orbs would become unusable and with the loss of such religious heritage treasures upheaval was sure to follow. At the moment the peace on Bajor was fragile and such a loss could have catastrophic results.

The Exeter was accomplishing her mission, the cultists were on their heels but the issue of the orbs remained undecided.

Commodore Remae Ktell and the Republic were enroute to give assistance as needed.

Illuminar and Exeter were close to accomplishing their goals but a misstep now could ignite the Civil War they were working so diligently to avoid.

He stepped up to the command chair and looked down at Carson Peters who was currently in charge.

"Is there anything to report Lieutenant?"

(USS Illuminar, Bridge - 20, Lt. Carson Peters - 0801)

Carson stifled a yawn. His shift on the Bridge would be complete momentarily- he'd not seen Sekal be late for a shift yet and sure as anything as he thought that the Captain strolled onto the Bridge.

He'd spent the last 15 minutes since the notification came through that Ensign Saarsgard had reintroduced Petty Officer Devers to active rotation adding a special note to the mans Starfleet file commending him for his quick thought and actions on the day previous. From all accounts he'd taken an active portion in the investigation into finding Ensign Taya and then risked his life- somewhat needlessly- chasing down the man known as Janus.

Devers had allowed the ground teams lead by Ensign Talence to get into place and jam the signal from the mans device as he jumped, avoiding a mass casualty accident. He'd give the man his thanks in person, just as soon as he had chance to.

Sekal stepped around the Bridge to the Captains chair and looked down at Carson sat down, "Is there anything to report Lieutenant?"

Carson smiled as he stood from the chair, "Morning, Captain. The team Ensign Vex'ahlia sent to deactivate and recover the improvised explosive devices around the Temple Square has successfully done so. They should have a report by mid-day to go through, but upon first look they can say with reasonable certainty that they were made by the same person who created the explosives that Ensign McTaggard & Hammerfield's team came across during their search for Ensign Taya."

(Reply Sekal)

Carson moved around the Vulcan to give him the opportunity to take the command chair if he so wished. "A message came in late last night from the Dean Vedek that you might be interested in reading. He shares his displeasure on behalf of the Vedek council at the removal of the Kai from the Temple and asks... well demands that a member of the council be allowed

to be with her throughout her treatment. He also adds his personal thanks for your help managing the situation with the incident with the man Janus yesterday and the assistance we provided him and his team in the hotel.”

(Reply Sekal)

“Hmmm. You’re probably right, but it may be worth bringing a member of the council to where she’s being treated. Give them an inch so they don’t try to take a mile. Allow them to look through the glass and ‘be with her’ but not actually be in the same room. Comply with the spirit of the request but not the total of it.”

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, Conference Room- Security – PO3 Hercules Devers - 0802)

Devers entered the conference room. “Computer, can you please display the two prisoners in the brig?”

He looked at the pictures, and sipped his coffee while he thought of a plan. “Computer, raise the temperature in the two cells to 35 centigrade.

Sitting down, he looked over the scant information that they had on the two subjects. Both male, one named Voha Ejise, the other Ihas Poann. It seemed Voha’s family were pretty famous in the resistance, but nothing of note for the last 50 years. They seemed to be living as substance farmers and past glories. Ihas, on the other hand, was an enigma. Factory worker, down on his luck.

He stood up when the door opened. “Good morning Ma’am, I hope you are rested after yesterday’s excitement?”

“Ensign Lee?” he asked “Good morning, I am Petty Officer 3rd class Hercules Devers. Welcome aboard the USS Illuminar.”

“Have you been briefed on the events of the last few days?”

(Reply Lee, McTaggard, IFW)

“Long story short Sir, two days ago, when the Captain, second officer and one of the counselors were meeting with Vedek Horavei, we were attacked by Bajorans disguised as Vedek Council guards. That’s where we met Ensign McTaggard. During that firefight, we captured two of the attackers. They are in our brig, as you can see from the videos.”

“Yesterday, one of our engineers was captured and a SAR team was dispatched. After a long, slow trek through the Bajoran tunnels, and a few traps later, we emerged inside the

temple garden. While Ensign McTaggard and the rest of the SAR tended to Ensign Taya, I ran after a Bajoran, named Janus, who sacrificed himself. Fortunately, other security teams were able to jam the signal of the remote detonator that the man had on him, preventing a major casualty event.”

“The Chief is not sure if the Bajorans know we have these two, and if they do, they’ve made no indications as of yet. So, we have some time to see what we can learn from these two. Were they involved with this Janus fellow and his plot? Who ordered them to attack the Vedek’s chambers, and even if the Vedek was the target? Questions like that.”

“I’ve taken the liberty of increasing the temperature in the cells to a warm 35C. All we know is on those PADDs,” he pointed to the two PADDs on the table.

“I understand you have some experience Ensign Lee, do you wish to take the lead in the interrogations? I’m not sure what they teach at the Academy, Ensign McTaggard, but this will be a good time to practice those skills.”

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, Conference Room- Security - Ens. Penny Mc Taggard - 08:03)

Penny had been walking along a corridor when she received Devers call. Acknowledging she made her way to the conference room. Ensign Lee arrived at the same time.

Devers was standing when the door opened. “Good morning Ma’am, I hope you are rested after yesterday’s excitement?”

~ Excitement..... is that what yer call it. One of us is at deaths door. After being mutilated I would nay call that fun! ~ Penny thought. But just nodded instead.

“Ensign Lee?” he asked “Good morning, I am Petty Officer 3rd class Hercules Devers. Welcome aboard the USS Illuminar.”

“Have you been briefed on the events of the last few days?”

“Good morning Petty Officer. Thank you. No, I haven’t been brief on the events. I only been on the ship two days!” said Keung

“ I lived it “ Penny said softly.

Then she sat listening as Devers brought Lee up to date, on what had happened so far. All the time visions of Taya’s mutilated body. Plus the Bajoran she tried to speak to. Being so scared they shook with fear. Went through her head.

“I’ve taken the liberty of increasing the temperature in the cells to a warm 35C. All we know is on those PADDs,” he pointed to the two PADDs on the table.

~ Burn the sassenach's to heal ~ Penny thought.

"I understand you have some experience Ensign Lee, do you wish to take the lead in the interrogations? I'm not sure what they teach at the Academy, Ensign McTaggard, but this will be a good time to practice those skills."

Keung glanced at the Padd on the table. He felt the need to read what was on the Padd so he can be prepared for the interrogation. He thought about Penny role in this interrogation of what she can do. "thank you" said Keung. "I need a few minutes to familiarise myself before going in there."

Penny raised her hand.

(Reply , Devers , Lee)

" I dinna think I am the wright parson for this interrogation. It's too personal I'm to involved. After seeing what they did to Ensign Taya. I am not going to be very calm and neutral. " Penny warned,

(Reply , Devers , Lee)

" You mean like bad cop good cop? Are yee sure?" Penny asked.

(USS Illuminar, Bridge – Operation – Ensign Dieter Gregory – 0805)

Gregory stumbled onto the bridge to see the Commander and Second Officer in discussions. Coming to a halt, he walked as nonchalantly as he could to the Operations station. After a brief discussion with the night watch officer, they exchanged positions. Gregory logged into the system, and started his morning diagnostics.

Turning around to where the Captain was, "Sir, operations reports all systems nominal. Repairs continue on Transporter 2. Scanners show no unusual traffic near the Illuminar. Seems there are no lookie-loo's from the populous."

(USS Illuminar, Bridge - CO-Lt. Commander Sekal- 0806)

"Morning, Captain. The team Ensign Vex'ahlia sent to deactivate and recover the improvised explosive devices around the Temple Square has successfully done so. They should have a report by mid-day to go through, but upon first look they can say with reasonable certainty that they were made by the same person who created the explosives that Ensign McTaggard & Hammerfield's team came across during their search for Ensign Taya."

Sekal nodded. "Logical. The number of devices found would suggest that Janus was not alone in this endeavor. It is also possible that the Pagh Wraith cult is involved. If so then everyone on the security team involved in shutting down this operation is to be commended for their actions."

He noted the opening to the command chair but passed, preferring to stand for now.

"A message came in late last night from the Dean Vedek that you might be interested in reading. He shares his displeasure on behalf of the Vedek council at the removal of the Kai from the Temple and asks... well demands that a member of the council be allowed to be with her throughout her treatment. He also adds his personal thanks for your help managing the situation with the incident with the man Janus yesterday and the assistance we provided him and his team in the hotel."

The Vulcan turned his head slightly as he considered the demand. "The Kai is still weak and unconscious and it had to have been someone with access to her to administer the toxin. As we have no suspects as of yet no one, not even the Vedek Council is above suspicion."

"Hmmm. You're probably right, but it may be worth bringing a member of the council to where she's being treated. Give them an inch so they don't try to take a mile. Allow them to look through the glass and 'be with her' but not actually be in the same room. Comply with the spirit of the request but not the total of it."

"A logical alternative. A security detail is to be posted at the entrance to her isolation room. The council may send an observer but that person will not be allowed entrance to her room as you suggest. Have it taken care of immediately."

(Reply: Carson)

He was turning his head toward operations to issue an order when Gregory broke in on cue.

"Sir, operations reports all systems nominal. Repairs continue on Transporter 2. Scanners show no unusual traffic near the Illuminar. Seems there are no lookie-loo's from the populous."

"Lookie Loo's ensign?" Sekal was familiar with hundreds of Terran euphemisms but drew a blank on this one.

(Reply: Gregory)

"Ah I see. Send a message to Vedek Horavei that the council is allowed to send one observer and one observer only to witness the Kai's recovery."

(Reply: Gregory)

He then turned to Carson. "How many of our people are off the ship?"

(Reply: Carson)

The Vulcan looked toward the viewscreen which was showing the grid locations of personnel as triangulated by both Illuminar and the probes in orbit. He had set the ship down on the city periphery for a reason that had now been satisfied. The cause of the malaise was known and treatable by distance. The press outside the temple and city had been relieved and mass movements of personnel and logistics were no longer necessary. The presence of Starfleet resolve had been satisfied beyond Command's expectations and the remainder of the task no longer required Illuminar to be on the ground. Now all that remained was to stabilize the orb's protective fields.

He stepped toward the command chair and tapped the comm button.

"Lieutenant Grey Wolf your presence is required on the bridge."

The reply came back quickly. =^= Understood sir, leaving flight operations now. =^=

He shut down the comm and turned to Carson again. "All non-essential personnel on the surface are to be recalled immediately. After they are aboard security manning checkpoints outside the ship are to be recalled as well."

(Reply: Carson)

He then turned to Gregory again. "Contact planetary control and notify them Illuminar is preparing to lift off and taking up an orbital position. Time to liftoff one hour. All personnel on the surface are to be notified. "

(USS Illuminar, Bridge – Operations, Ensign Dieter Gregory - 0810)

“Lookie Loo’s ensign?” the Captain asked.

“Yes sir, mid-20th century Earth Slang. It is used to describe someone who goes to look at something, usually a scene of an accident. It also has been used to describe people who look at items for sale, but don’t intend to buy.” Gregory replied.

“Ah I see. Send a message to Vedek Horavei that the council is allowed to send one observer and one observer only to witness the Kai’s recovery.”

“Aye, aye Sir.” Gregory turned around to his station. Connecting with the Vedek’s communication staff, he left the message as ordered.

A few minutes later, the response came. It seemed that this Vedek Horavei was not happy with the Captain’s message, and wished to speak to him.

“Sir, I have a Vedek Horavei on the channel. He is expressing his displeasure at your directive. Shall I put him through?” Gregory asked.

(Sekel)

“Aye, sir,” he replied. “I will relay that message.”

Gregory continued to monitor the comm channels. “They will send a representative to us within the hour, Sir.”

Listening with one ear to the bridge interactions, and the other on the communications traffic, Gregory was pleased to hear the Captain request Lieutenant Grey Wolf’s presence.

“Contact planetary control and notify them Illuminar is preparing to lift off and will be taking up an orbital position. Time to liftoff one hour. All personnel on the surface are to be notified.”

“Yes sir,” Gregory replied.

Clearly, they were going back to space, where a starship belonged.

Gregory typed in some commands into his station and connected to all the crew who were off-ship. "Attention all crew. Please return to the ship. We will be lifting off in one hour. I repeat, all crew are to return to the ship, we will be lifting off in one hour. "

He added another command to automatically confirm any replies, while monitoring when someone checked in.

Turning his attention to the next order of business, Gregory reached out to Planetary Control. "Bajor Planetary Control, please be advised that the USS Illuminar will be lifting off in one hour. Request clearance and recommended flight trajectory. "

Turning his attention to the manual, he started reviewing Operations responsibility during planetary takeoff.

(USS Illuminar - Sickbay - ACOUNS ACOMO ENS SG Ariel Trei - 08.11)

Ariel got some much needed rest the night before. Taya was being monitored intensively in an intensive care bed. She will check on her shortly.. The music in her office played the classic rock she liked. The random Que was on a Fleetwood Mac block. The songs were from a excellent album "Rumors." The first one was "Chains. A great song from that album. The second was "Second Hand News." She felt like that was appropriate to her being uninformed of Taya's situation. She knew that it was probably no ones fault that the situation was they way it is but she felt left in the dark anyway. That feeling will pass when the got to work on Taya. A good song from that album would help the situation at hand and it came up on the Que as if the computer was reading her thoughts. She knew that was impossible but it played nonetheless . "Hold me" played filling her office with the great classic rock sound. She might have this as one of the songs playing during surgery. She will discuss it with Quinna."

(USS Illuminar, Bridge - Flight Ops/Conn- FSXO Lt. (jg-) Tempest Grey Wolf- 0812)

The full blood Cherokee woman stepped onto the bridge and strode confidently to the CO who was standing before the command seats and looking intently at the viewscreen. There was movement in all of the red dots that were being monitored and they appeared to be shifting toward Illuminar.

"You wanted me sir?" She spoke as she came up beside him.

He turned his head slightly to regard her. "Prepare the ship for launch Lieutenant. We will be leaving the surface to enter orbit in approximately fifty three minutes."

Her dispassionate demeanor cracked only slightly as she almost smiled. "Yes sir!"

She moved quickly to the helm and took her station to begin preflight checks. All was in readiness as she settled in and checked the readouts except for the impulse engines which were only outputting enough energy (Auxiliary power) to power the ships systems and would be cycled up just prior to launch.

The nacelles were flattened as she had left them and would provide some lift in the atmosphere like wings. The hull anti-gravity field was off since it wasn't needed on the ground. As she went through her checks Bajoran control sent through a flight plan which she studied in detail, found some areas that needed tweaking and sent the updated flight plan back.

Her checks were completed before the updated request came back as accepted. Illuminar required a longer initial upward curve due to its massive size than had originally been suggested. Tempest would make up for that with a higher altitude launch point.

Course and speed from that point to meet the required trajectory would easily be met from there.

(USS Illuminar, Bridge - 2O, Lt. Carson Peters - 0813)

"A logical alternative. A security detail is to be posted at the entrance to her isolation room. The council may send an observer but that person will not be allowed entrance to her room as you suggest. Have it taken care of immediately."

Carson nodded, "Absolutely,"

As the Captain turned away to consult with Ensign Gregory of Operations, he took the moment to send Saarsgard a message asking him to up the Security detail in Sickbay and to have a team ready to bring the esteemed guest aboard.

Skeal then turned back to Carson. "How many of our people are off the ship?"

Directing the CO to the view screen Carson called up the location of all their personnel. It was a screen he'd had open on his padd already. It was a screen he'd be staring at for portions of the day making sure no one else had gone missing.

"A handful of science & medical personnel. The vast majority of our people off ship are Security. Either securing the Temple grounds or the grounds around the ship." Carson said, pointing out the various locations that Security had set staging points up at.

He stepped toward the command chair and tapped the comm button.

"Lieutenant Grey Wolf your presence is required on the bridge."

The reply came back quickly. =^= Understood sir, leaving flight operations now. =^=

He shut down the comm and turned to Carson again. "All non-essential personnel on the surface are to be recalled immediately. After they are aboard security manning checkpoints outside the ship are to be recalled as well.

He shut down the comm and turned to Carson again. "All non-essential personnel on the surface are to be recalled immediately. After they are aboard security manning checkpoints outside the ship are to be recalled as well.

"Aye, Captain." He said before tapping his comm. badge, "Ensign Hammerfield, prepare your teams to return to the ship. 59 minutes and counting before take off. Ship security to be last to board."

=^=Wilco, Sir.=^= came the response.

Carson listened in to Gregory's response and then waited for the Captain to be free.

"If you'll free me Captain, I'll freshen up and meet our Vedek Council guest and be apart of his escort to the sickbay. Put on a bit of a show for him." He smiled.

(Reply Sekal)

"Of course. Ensign if you could let me know when they're ready for transport."

(Reply Gregory)

Carson then walked off the Bridge to get ready.

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 2, - Personal Quarters -- SecO- PO 1, Steven Hammons - 0820)

Steven was still lounging in bed and considering a morning shower. He had thought about a foray into the holodeck but since he was on call had decided against it.

The investigations on Bajor had been taken over by Bajoran security who were now able to reallocate their forces away from the entrances to Ashalla now that tensions had ramped down significantly. The capitol of Bajor was no longer a city under seige by fanatical hordes and was breathing easier.

Steven hadn't seen the Prylar since the night he had passed him at the checkpoint after assuring him that Alaya was safe. How Herla had known that was a mystery to which Hammons had no clue.

The word was that Bajoran forces were looking for Herla to ask him some questions which Hammons figured wouldn't lead to anything, they were just covering their bases.

As for Hammons, he had been ordered to report in late by Saarsgard unless something important came up.

Steven was in the sonic shower when his comm activated and Saarsgard's voice came through.

=^= Hammons I've been ordered to send a security detail to medical to keep a close eye on an observer the Vedeks are sending over and I know I can count on you to keep him or her away from the Kai.=^=

"What?" Hammons turned the unit off. "The Vedeks already have someone on the ship. Why do they need another?"

=^= My gut tells me Gele isn't one of 'theirs' if you get my meaning. His loyalty seems to be to Kai Hetel and they want one of theirs aboard. I don't need to tell you that everyone right now is under suspicion.=^=

"Seeing as the Kai was poisoned hell yes everyone is under suspicion."

=^= Glad you understand. Get to sickbay as soon as you can and don't forget your sidearm. Make sure it's highly visible. I've already sent Boyles up. Look tough and stay sharp.=^=

"Not a problem, I'll be out and about shortly."

Hammons left the lavatory and got dressed, after setting his sidearm on his belt he added the wicked looking knife Alaya had given him for good measure. The blade was bowie knife length though not nearly as wide and the pommel was intricately crafted. It looked mean and nasty which was the look he was going for. While the CO might not put his stamp of approval on wearing it inside the ship Hammons was following orders and could use that defense to his advantage.

After his preparations were complete he left the cabin in a hurry to take the lift.

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 5, - Sickbay-- SecO- PO 1, Steven Hammons - 0828)

Hammons strutted into medical making no effort to hide what he was wearing and made straight for the isolation ward where Kai Hetel Krevi was being treated. He nodded to one of the nurses he knew and kept on going.

He could hear Boyles' voice before he got there.

"No chair for us but you can get one for your expected visitor. We don't want an elderly poisoner to have to stand while he's waiting do we?"

Hammons stepped around the corner. "You might want to keep that kind of accusation on the low Boyles.,"

Jared laughed as he looked over at his partner. "It was all in fun Hammons. I promise I won't say any such thing to his face."

"I know you won't, you're more apt to talk about people behind their back."

Boyles made a mock frown. "You insult me buddy. I swear the only person I talk about behind their back is you."

"That's supposed to make me feel better? Steven dead-panned.

"Heck no, why would I do something like that?"

Steven grinned and looked over at Vedek Gele Jisel who was smiling even though he looked like he hadn't slept in a week.

"Sir it looks like you could use some sack time."

Jisel shook his head. "Believe me young man I've slept plenty in the last week. It won't hurt me to stay awake a few more hours."

Steven nodded as the man scrunched lower in the comfortable chair, it looked like he planned on taking a nap here in the waiting room.

Hammons moved to the door after looking through the window at the sleeping religious leader. she had appeared well on her way out after being brought to Illuminar but a night and a half day here had worked wonders,, she was sleeping peacefully and appeared on the mend. There was even a little color in her cheeks.

When is our visitor expected?" He asked Boyles as he took one side of the door.

"Next fifteen or twenty minutes."

"Plenty of time to get my game face on." Hammons pasted a frown on his face, decided it would probably do then settled in to wait on the unwanted guest.

(USS Illuminar, Bridge – Operations Ensign Dieter Gregory - 0830)

With Lieutenant Grey Wolf on station, Gregory continued through his pre-launch checklist, while checking to make sure all personal were back on the ship. Sure enough, his boards showed green in that department.

"Captain, Operations reports all ground personal have returned to the ship. I am broadcasting a launch notice in the area."

Carson stood there, a changed uniform and a quick splash of water on his face before arriving had freshened him up a little. Standing in the Transporter Room with two security officers flanking him, he understood that the Vedek Councils representative would be beaming in due to the ships imminent departure from the planet Security had decided they didn't want any security threats coming from the ground.

That was absolutely fine Carson had thought as he'd agreed to it.

"Councilwoman Vedek Jeal Holder will be beaming in on your order, Sir." Came the voice of the Transport operator for behind him,

"Excellent." Carson said in a cheery voice, "Whenever your ready." He said nodding to the officer. A woman, for some reason he'd not expected this. Everyone had been saying "he" rather than "she." There was a lesson there, he supposed. "Be ready for anything." He said as he stood straighter.

The transporter beam initialised and a tall, thin and somewhat wirey woman stood in full Vedek robes on the padd.

"Welcome to the Illuminar Councilwoman Holder. You are most welcome." Carson said with open arms, inviting her to step off the padd into the room.

The woman seemed to survey the room before moving or saying anything, looking down at Carson and his team, she finally responded, "Indeed." Her accent was thick and felt condescending, he had the feeling of being in front of a headmaster pop into his head. "I am here to observe that your medical staff do not interfere with the Kai's natural recovery." She said matter-of-factly, "I'd ask that you take me to her immediately. I have no interest in tours or food." And she stepped down off the padd.

"Of course." Carson said, ushering her towards the door. "I am Lieutenant Peters, Second Officer. If there is anything you need whilst onboard, please, don't hesitate to ask either myself or the detail assigned to you." He nodded his head towards the security officers.

“Hmm.” Was the only response he got from the woman.

“If you’ll follow these gentlemen, they’ll take you straight to the Sickbay.” Carson said, as he changed his mind on walking with the Vedek as the Transporter Operator caught his eye with a look of panic.

“If you’ll follow me, Ma’am.” The security officer stepped forward and activated the automatic door, stepped out and guided her towards sickbay.

“What’s wrong?’ Carson asked just as soon as the door closed behind them.

“Medical added a new trace element scan to our transport protocols.” He said from behind the podium.

“And?’

“The Vedek. She scanned positive for it. If I had to guess she has a pocket full of the stuff hidden somewhere on her OR she’s been as badly dosed as Ensign Taya was.”

It clicked. The Vedek had the same stuff Taya had been poisoned with. He tapped his comm badge, “Peters to Sickbay. You have councilwoman Vedek Holder inbound with a security escort. Once she gets there have your Security detail attached to the Kai search the woman. If they find nothing, she’ll need immediate medical assistance. If they do, well, they’ll know what to do. I’ll be there momentarily.”

(USS Illuminar, Deck 5- Isolation ward - SecO- PO1 Steven Hammons - 0845)

Hammons looked toward the medical officer who came through the door and walked up to him. (Good morning Ma'am. What can I do for you?"

(Reply: Medical)

"What?" He swore under his breath as he took the tricorder. "My thanks. I would suggest you return to what you were doing. It may get chaotic in here."

(Reply: Medical)

"No problem." He said. "Thanks again. We won't let anything happen to her. You can bet your last credit on that." He watched her walk off as Jared Boyles began whistling innocently.

"Ah shut up Boyles, no one likes a know it all." Jared just laughed.

Hammons looked toward the other occupant of the room.

"Vedek Gele I'm going to have to ask you to wait outside while we take care of something. It won't be long."

Jisel nodded, yawned and stretched before rising from the chair. "I'll be right outside the door."

Steven didn't like the sound of the message that had co been delivered, if the woman was sent in as a bio weapon...."

When the security escort entered Hammons met them right inside the door and his frown wasn't feigned. Boyles was standing before the door to the Kai's room completely blocking the entrance and his hand wasn't far from his phaser which was set to stun and on wide dispersal. If the woman tried anything he had been ordered to take down everyone in the room if necessary. No one was getting into Krevi's room, most especially not their 'observer'.

The Vedek was the first inside. "That's far enough." Steven initiated the tricorder which was pointed at the woman who stopped and huffed.

"What is the meaning of this?"

Her security escort stiffened and looked from Hammons back to her. They knew Hammons and the look on his face portended something momentously wrong. Miles stepped back with his hand on his phaser while Tolens stepped near enough to grab her if she moved.

"This will only take a moment."

Hammons had a hunch as to what what he was looking for but was still taken aback when the unit dinged at the end of the scan. He managed to keep the surprise off his face as he spoke to Tolens without taking his eyes from the woman.

"Restrain her."

Tolens quickly grabbed her arms while Boyles and Miles phasers came up and out.

She cursed Hammons as he activated the unit again and began moving it around her form until he had isolated the location.

She was struggling as he reached into her pocket but Tolens was more than up for the task of holding her still.

Steven's searching fingers found what they were looking for and he pulled out a vial of emerald green liquid.

"Well, well look what we have here."

"Can I say it now?" Boyles piped up from the door as Hammons stepped back away from her then passed him the tricorder and vial.

Hammons grinned as he pulled his own sidearm. "You can let her go Miles, she's been disarmed."

His eyes had never left the woman, when released she seemed to deflate..

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

Hammons followed her and Miles through the door. Once in the corridor he heard Jisel speak up. "What is happening?"

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

"What? Cilest what is the meaning of this." Jisel stepped into Hammon's field of view.

"I have no idea!" She shrieked. "This buffoon stopped me and pulled something from my pocket!"

"Who sent you?"

"Horavei told me to come here and act as an observer. I have no idea what it was they just took from me!"

Hammons heard the 2/0 as he came upon the scene.

(Reply: Carson)

Hanmons lowered his phaser. "I handed the vial to Boyles inside. It seems our elderly poisoner put in an appearance after all." Then he grinned and looked back at the woman. "I'd say your part in this drama just changed to being a bird in a gilded cage."

(USS Illuminar, Bridge - Flight Ops/Conn- FSXO Lt. (jg) Tempest Grey Wolf and CO- Lieutenant Commander Sekal- 0900)

She began cycling the impulse engines to greater output as she opened the hull vent plates. As they neared optimal output she could feel the rising hum through the deck plates. The ship, leashed and quiescent until now was thrumming with energy and poised to leap from the grasp of the planet's gravity well. She called out. "Three minutes to launch, energize hull anti-gravity field."

(Reply: Any)

The anti-gravity field lightened the thirty thousand ton ship so that it needed less thrust to ascend or descend. The ship would not float off the ground on its own but would need far less power to become airborne. A message flashed on her screen which she replied to with a few taps of her finger.

"Bajoran control has given Illuminar the green light. Our course is clear." Outside Bajoran security forces had cordoned off the area to hold out any that might stray into the launch point and were pulled back in a radius that extended over halfway to the temple.

"Launch in two minutes."

She hit the blue alert button and the lamp began to flash. Any who weren't already aware now knew that the rising hum from Illuminar signaled her imminent launch. The hum of impulse engines building to a glorious pitch was like the reverberation of her ceremonial drum calling the spirits to a powwow. The ship pulsed with life and energy which she could feel.

"Launch in one minute."

Her face, serene and yet sever all at the same time softened as Illuminar crouched ready to leap and without warning the corners of her lips upturned in a slight smile. This was what the ship had been built for, the reason she had been born. To travel between the stars where the spirits made their home.

"Launch when ready Lieutenant." Sekal then opened the comm. "All hands. Illuminar is lifting off."

(Reply: Any)

The smile remained fixed on her face as she transferred impulse power to the thrust plates slowly, the thrust building as the volume of sound rose to thundering heights. Illuminar wiggled slightly as her landing feet broke free of the surface and she began to climb.

"Retract the landing feet." The CO intoned from the command chair.

(Reply: Any)

The viewscreen showed the city which soon began falling away. As they neared 1,500 feet of altitude she backed off on the power to the thrust plates and transferred power to the forward impulse vent, lifted the nose and fired the forward engine.

Illuminar leapt ahead and began to rise as she fed it more power building speed to escape velocity. The ship was dead on course, eager to once again reach the vast expanse of space.

It seemed like only seconds before the blue ahead of them deepened to black and Illuminar reached its weightless abode.

(Reply: Any)

Tempest cut power to the thrust plates as the hull anti-gravity field was cut off and the deck plate anti-gravity field was initiated giving the ships occupants simulated gravity. She backed off on forward impulse power as she eased it into orbit. The ship now once again in its preferred environs began leisurely circling the planet.

"Orbit achieved Commander."

She then reconfigured the warp nacelles for warp flight.

Sekal spoke up again. "Activate the warp engines and place on standby."

(Reply: Any)

The warp engines were routinely powered down when planetside or at dock due to the extreme hazard a warp field could perpetrate if it went out of control. Illuminar wouldn't be going to warp soon but the half hour warm up time before use necessitated it always be powered up and available when in space.

The CO then spoke up again. "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."

(Reply: Alyl)

The cone shaped field was golden in color and radiated into space ahead of them as they came around the curve of Bajor and continued on out into space.

"Helm get us as close to Ashalla as you can and take up geostationary orbit outside the field."

"Aye sir."

Sekal thumbed the comm. "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."

(Reply: All)

"Illuminar is in geostationary orbit."

Sekal nodded his head. All they had accomplished on this mission could swiftly be undone if they could not rectify the core issue that had brought them here. This was the crux of their dilemma, to power something beyond their limited understanding or watch a Federation member world be consumed in the flames of a civil war.

He sat back deeply in thought as Tempest Grey Wolf was smiling at the freedom of space.

(USS Illuminar, Bridge – Operations Ensign Dieter Gregory - 0901)

From the conn came the first command, "Three minutes to launch, energize hull anti-gravity field."

Gregory active the anti-gravity field while broadcasting the launch status. "Conn, Ops reports anti-gravity field is energized."

Lieutenant Grey Wolf continued the countdown. "Bajoran control has given Illuminar the green light. Our course is clear. Launch in two minutes."

The blue alert sounded. "Launch in one minute."

The last minute seemed the longest before the Captain spoke, "Launch when ready Lieutenant.. All hands. Illuminar is lifting off."

Gregory kept closely monitoring the ships sensors and energy consumption, making sure everything was in the green.

The ship slowly pushed against gravity as the Illuminar began its ascent to the stars.

"Retract the landing feet," the Captain said.

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

It must be a sight to behold from the outside as the ship returned to its element, Space. Grey Wolf made it look easy. Checking his boards again, he showed all in the green as the ship journeyed through the layers of the Bajoran atmosphere. As the ship emerged from the exosphere, Gregory swore he heard a sigh of relief from the Illuminar.

“Orbit achieved Commander,” called out Grey Wolf.

"Activate the warp engines and place on standby."

Gregory sent the appropriate command to Engineering and watched on his scree as the warp core came to life, filling the ship with its energy and promise. Soon it would be at full strength as the Engineering teams ran their final diagnostics, making sure the Illuminar was warp capable.

“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.

Gregory made sure science had enough bandwidth on the sensors. Operations needed to maintain a certain level, but the rest of the resources he forwarded to the Science station

(Reply Alyl)

"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."

Gregory who all the senior officers were. He’s still not met most of the bridge officers, as this was only his second day on station. What an eventful few days it had been.

“Illuminar is in geostationary orbit.”

Gregory smiled; this was where he was meant to be. Sure the time on DN9 was good polish, but exploration was why he climbed mountains. Man’s urge to seek out the unknown.

(USS Illuminar -- Deck 14, CSEC office- Security office Ensign Keung and Security Office, Penny McTarrard – 10.00)

The brig was occupied by the two Bajorans who were in detained in separate cells. A security officer was monitoring the prisoners from his console and looked up as Keung and Penny walked in. Keung had reviewed what little information he had on the PADD and had been

updated by Penny about what happened on the surface. Penny was taking it quite well, thought Keung. The idea of Penny being the silent partner who was at the scene of the bombing might 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 otherhand, lhas might be different. He might be more forthcoming.

Keung and Penny stood outside the cell of Voha EJise looking at the figure lying on his cot. Keung played the strategy of 'Who will react first'. It didn't very long as Voha stired from his cot, looked up glaringly at the couple.

(reply Dieter as Voha)

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

(reply Dieter as Voha)

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?"

(USS Illuminar - Observation Lounge - ACOUNS ACOMO ENS SG Ariel Trei - 10.55)

She walked into the conference room moments after checking on Taya. She ordered an Earl Gray and a strawberry scone from the replicator. She took the items to her seat near the front of the table which she normally sat. She placed her PADD down and sat down. She sipped some Earl Gray and waited for the rest to arrive.
