

Stardate: 2446.09.16

[illegible][illegible]

(Starbase Freedom - Level 6 - Authorized Diplomatic Level- Conference Room - Vice Admiral of Security Alejandro (Alex) Mayorkas, Vice Admiral of Tactical Jericho (Jack) Haynes, Admiral Saleke, StarFleet Science Division, Director of SFI Avril Haines, Captain Sekal- 1200)

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Security Suites - Security Conference Room - CO - Captain Casian Dahr - 1210)

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Security Suites - Security Conference Room SPA LT Ariel
Trei - 1211)

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Private Security Suites - Private Security Office - CMO - Commander Quinna Solice - 1215)

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Private Security Suites - Private Security Office - SPA LT Ariel Trei - 1216)

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Private Security Suites - Private Security Office - CMO Commander Quinna Solice and Klingon T'Ken - 1225)

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Private Security Suites - Private Security Office SPA LT Ariel Trei - 1227)

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Security Suites - Security Conference Room 3 - JAG -Lt. Commander Jar'el - 1230)

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Private Security Suites - Private Security Office - CMO
Commander Quinna Solice - 1231)

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Security Suites - Security Conference Room 3 - CMO
Commander Quinna Solice - 1235)

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Security Suites - Security Conference Room 3 - JAG - Lt. Commander Jar'el - 1237)

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Security Suites - Security Conference Room 3 - CMO
Commander Quinna Solice- 1238)

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Security Suites - Security Conference Room 3 - JAG - Lt. Commander Jar'el - 1239)

(Starbase Freedom - Main Docking Concourse- Klingon Ambassador K'Shan and Aide Keketh - 1240)

(Starbase Freedom - Level 1 – Main Ops - CO's Office - CO - Captain Casian Dahr - 1245)

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Security Suites - Security Conference Room 3 - CMO
Commander Quinna Solice - 1239.5)

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Security Suites - Security Conference Room 3 - JAG - Lt. Commander Jar'el - 1245)

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Security Suites - Security Conference Room 3 - CMO
Commander Quinna Solice - 1250)

(Starbase Freedom - Main Docking Concourse- CO - Captain Cassian Dahr - 1250)

(Starbase Freedom - Main Docking Concourse- Klingon Ambassador K'Shan- 1252)

(Starbase Freedom - Main Docking Concourse- CO - Captain Cassian Dahr - 1253)

“Very good, come in Captain and have a seat so that we can get this briefing started.”

Sekal's eyes flicked to the director of StarFleet tactical and he nodded then made his way to the burnished, wooden chair that faced the group. Settling into the chair, his eyes scanned the faces of all present, their return looks gave no hint as to their intentions.

“Despite errors found within the Raptor, the navigational aids provided by the science department have proved our theory prior to that mission correct. It is possible to navigate the Expanse, something that the Xenolithe are well versed in.”

Sekal nodded at his father. “Indeed. Without the readings analyzed from the Maelstrom we would have stood no chance against them.”

“I'm glad everyone is in agreement.” Jack sported a wolfish grin. “Intelligence and Security believe they've happened upon something of importance through their contacts and scans. I now turn the briefing over to Admiral Mayorkas.”

He looked up as a liveried officer entered with trays holding carafes of cold water, glasses and finger foods, after depositing them masterfully where everyone could serve themselves he hastily departed.

Mayorkas waited for the liveried officer to leave and poured himself a glass of water. He took a long drink then stood up. He was still the junior officer in this meeting with some big shoes. But he was ready, and ready to prove himself.

“Good morning Captain Sekal,” he began, “and thank you for joining us here. What I'm about to say cannot leave this room... with some exceptions that I will point out at the end. However, I believe you will see the need for secrecy almost immediately.”

He took another drink and continued, “After your experience with the Xenolithe it was decided to send probes across the Expanse. The Xenolithe already know that we are here and they know that we know that they can cross the expanse. Two of our probes made it across and began transmitting data back from their long range scans. Thanks to our science department,” he nodded to Saleke, “one of the probes was equipped with... what I can only call an extreme long range scan. I'm sure Admiral Saleke has a more precise name for it.”

Alex stood up and turned on the holo-projector in the center of the table. It showed the planet of Duronis II. Then the image moved quickly through unknown star systems, and beyond any recorded star charts by the Federation.

“As we know, the Duranis embassy was set up in 2386. Eventually the Laudeans chose to ally with the Romulans. Now they may have had more information but it was all probably lost when

their sun went supernova. So this IS uncharted territory. We are currently calling this area of space the Epsilon territory.”

The image switched to an overlay of energy signatures. As the scan reached its furthest range there was a new energy signature. Alex paused the image. “There.” He pointed to the new signature. “I wonder if you recognize that energy signature, Captain Sekal?”

The one addressed took an interval to consider the energy pattern then leaned forward in the chair intently, his eyes narrowed. “Fascinating.” He turned toward Saleke who nodded with exaggerated slowness.

The Captain stood to his feet and remained silent for a moment before his eyes found those of Mayorkas. “It is quite obvious that you are also aware of what this energy pattern signifies as my father no doubt has already briefed you. Tell me, Admiral Mayorkas, what is your intent if more of the Lenai are found? Capture one or more? Experiment on one as Luma Lenai was once treated? Diplomacy perhaps or assistance against the Xenolithe?”

“I believe that question is more for me than for Alex,” Haines said, sitting forward. “After all, what happened with Luma was an SFI fiasco, and an albatross hanging around our necks for a long time.” The SFI Director stood up and began to circle the room as she spoke. “I can understand your reluctance to trust us on this matter, Captain Sekal, considering the relationship that you have with Luma. But our intention is one of exploration and understanding.”

Haines stopped in front of Sekal and looked into his face, “And if I’m being honest, I feel we owe it to Luma to try and reconnect her with her own kind. And to find out, considering her abilities, why she could not sense their existence. Is the distance too great, or did the Expanse provide interference. But yes, if we could elicit their aide with the Xenolithe that would be a good thing as well.”

“Which is why we asked you to be here, Captain Sekal,” Mayorkis cut back in. “We would like to send the Illuminar, and Luma, out there to find these Lenai. You will be in uncharted space, and we have no idea how far away you’re going to have to go. Our closest estimate would be at least two years at high warp. We won’t order you to go, Sekal, and any of your crew that want to transfer will be accommodated.”

His face was rigid as his eyes bored into those of the Intelligence officer, did he trust them? No. Could the mission be accomplished? He was calculating the odds as he stood there. Was it safe for Luma to venture through Xenolithe controlled space with odds of capture at 98 to 1? No. Would Luma even comply? Logically, no. What were their odds of finding a Lenai that was psychologically stable? Unknown.

His voice as he replied was unchanged. “As Admiral Saleke will attest, the chance of finding another member of that species that is coherent and approachable is quite low unless there is a

grouping or they serve or are served by others. The species cannot maintain their sanity if alone.”

“We didn’t say it was going to be easy, Captain,” Mayorkas interjected. “We also are aware of the odds of finding exactly what you are speaking of. But what if you did find a... pod of Lenai, or even a pair, that are stable and approachable. Would that be worth it for Luma to not be the last of her people?”

Sekal abruptly turned away to study the map as he spoke. “Luma will refuse, she has already seen the Xenolithe treatment of the Nageri and the odds of her death or capture are astronomical on an unsupported mission. The Illuminar will go but I will transfer her to the Mystique when she requests it.”

He turned back to the others. “You are aware that I am a former mind bondmate to her and I am aware of those things that she is terrified of, the danger of the Xenolithe will override the desire to find more of her race and I refuse to attempt to persuade her otherwise.”

His eyes fixed on Haines. “It was Starfleet Intelligence, as you acknowledged, that taught her to fear enslavement and she learned the lesson well. Leaving her on the Mystique will also necessitate reassigning her mind bondmate, Temas Laredo, to remain with her.”

“As for exploring Epsilon,” he nodded to Jack and Saleke, “I accept the mission. Illuminar will attempt to find and make contact with the Lenai. It will be my goal to transmit news about the race after opening relations with them. Are there any further orders?”

Mayorkas looked at Haynes in resignation. An unspoken conversation went between the two. It was almost telepathic. Clearly they had discussed this probability but had hoped that it would not be the case. Finally Alex turned back to Sekal.

“Very well,” the head of security finally said. “We understand Luma’s reluctance, but hoped that the potential of preventing or defeating the Xenolithe might have been the needed incentive for her. However, it is her choice, and we did say that any who did not want to go would be accommodated.”

“That offer included Luma,” Haynes added. “We can find a way to squirrel away the Mystique. She’s been out of service for a while, so it would look... odd if it suddenly came to life. Temas Laredo is a civilian and is free to come and go as he pleases...if you know what I mean.”

“Will Luma need anyone else from your crew?” Mayorkas asked.

“Negative.” Had they refused to allow Luma to leave the ship he would have likewise refused to take on the mission, Luma would not be forced to participate. “Her mind bondmate is all that is required and StarFleet maintains the skin as sworn by command.” There was only one other he would not be taking on the mission.

"The ship is currently undergoing maintenance and will depart in forty eight hours." He gave a dip of his chin. "Good day, I have preparations to make."

He turned on his heel and left the chamber, this had not been a convivial gathering and he had no reason to remain.

Jack sighed as the door closed behind him and pushed the chair back as Saleke arose from his, the Vulcan would be paying the Illuminar a visit in two hours, after he had arranged for transportation of the scans and charts. Sekal would normally have made those arrangements before leaving the briefing but today his absorption in events had been obvious.

"It should be noted," Saleke's eyes fixed those of the Admiral chosen to head the security division, "... as per the agreement with StarFleet Command, Luma's ability to use the Mystique when she desires is not to be abridged. She takes the ship out on occasion when the Illuminar is laid over and if you attempt to seize the ship or hamper its movement I will fulfill the promise I made to command when I rejoined the fleet."

Having spoken, he left the chamber as well.

Jack had frozen in place during Saleke's address and now turned his head to Mayorkas. "Don't push that one Alex, Vulcans as you know don't bluff. Are you aware of the promise he spoke of?"

Alex shook his head with a frown, realizing how far behind the eight ball he was with this whole Luma of the Lenai thing. "No, but I pretty much caught the gist there. Maybe you could clarify."

Jack's voice was grim. "That if Command went back on their pledge to Luma he would leave the fleet and take her with him. She would go willingly and he will carry out his promise without fail."

Alex nodded, feeling ever the junior Admiral here, "There is no intention of changing any agreements with the Lenai at this moment. And now I would argue against any proposal to do so. And that would not be because of any threat of anyone leaving the fleet. Starfleet has spent the last years repairing the damage done by our predecessors. I would never agree to anything that might even be an inkle of that mindset returning. Rest assured, Admiral Haynes," he looked at each of them, "it is the job of security to keep EVERY member of the Federation safe. That would include Luma."

"Good man." Jack nodded. "We have rebuilt the fleet from the ashes of the civil war, the Andorian purge and decades of neglect wrought by isolationist *policies, the last thing we want to do is start retreading old ground. I have an open schedule for the next few days and will hang around, maybe even escort our local Lenai back to Mars and see that she gets comfortable. As close as Sekal is to her I have no doubt she'll do exactly as he said.*"

He stretched his arms a bit before expelling a breath. "But for now it's time to write some reports and check on Alpha quadrant events, drop me a hail if you need anything."

Jericho (Jack) Haynes then gave the two a quick grin and nod of his head before leaving.

Alex returned the gesture then turned to look at Director Haines. The two had come to get to know each other over the past weeks, since the discovery. Alex gave a weak smile. "Well that didn't go as I expected."

Haines smile was bigger, "To be honest, it went better than expected for me. At least Sekal didn't apply a Vulcan Death Grip on me," She chuckled at her own joke, knowing there was no such thing.

Alex nodded, "Considering the reputation of SFI from the past, I guess so."

Haines held out her hand and shook Mayorkas', "It's been a pleasure, Admiral. I have a meeting with my operative out here and then back to the safety of Mars. Good luck with your operation, Alex."

"Thanks Avril," Ale returned the grip. "Stay safe."

AS they exited the room they each turned a different direction to their separate duties.

(reply none)

(posted by Al Muir and Charles Gatling)

[illegible]

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Security Suites - Security Conference Room - CO - Captain Casian Dahr - 1210)

"I will retain T'Ken as counsel," Trei said, "but I request Quinna to be my guide through the next part of the defense. There is a device that will show the emotion of that day in my memories. It will be my emotions and of those in the promenade but I need her to guide me through it because I will have little control in that state. You can do your scan at that time if you wish."

Dahr's eyes narrowed. This was not the answer he had expected. He would have thought that Trei held Solice in higher esteem and worthy of her fealty. He couldn't help but be slightly disappointed.

At the moment of Trei's request Solice had reentered the courtroom, and called out, "No."

Dahr wasn't exactly sure what she was saying no to. There were so many options.

She turned towards Dahr and continued, “Captain, I request a recess until I can figure out what just happened.”

Dahr cocked his head to the side and replied, ‘I’m pretty sure we all know what happened, Commander. You were moved out of the way so that the Klingons could take over her defenses.’ He indicated to Trei. “And she just accepted.”

Solace turned back to Trei in disbelief. "This buffoon of an ..." She stopped herself and brought her emotions in check before she said anything worse, then continued. Dahr was impressed by her self control. He wasn't sure he had that in himself. "...Just had me beamed off this station and you want him to represent you now, Ariel...Er..Lt. Trei."

Casian sat back, intrigued as to how Trei was going to explain her position. To be honest she looked like she had no idea what to say.

Suddenly T'Ken responded. "You dishonor your crewmate with your defense and you dishonor this court steaming back in here the way that you did. If this were a Klingon trial, you would be executed. You are nothing but a mere bug in the swamp."

Quinna looked Jar'el, who sat back watching the drama unfold before him, his eyebrow in a near permanent state of cocked. "Isn't there something you want to say about this?"

He shrugged, “I’m afraid that this is a little out of my purview,” the Vulcan said calmly. “This is mater of defendant representation. But I would agree to recess to clear this up. At best I might be able to ask for a retrial, but I do not believe the decision would be altered.”

Turning back to Dahr she pleaded, “Captain? Kenny here has made this hearing a joke. Can we please take a recess to get things settled here?”

Dahr leaned forward for the first time. "I believe that to be an excellent suggestion. We Will recess until 1500 hours. At that time I want the question of who is representing you, Ms. Trei, to be clarified. As for this 'procedure' you want to undergo, I want it explained why it is necessary, what are the risks, and why you believe it will influence the panel in your favor."

He rang the bell by his desk three times. "Court is in recess."

With that Dahr escorted the panel out of the room, with several of the security detail. The remainder of the detail, along with Samuels, remained on alert.

Jar'el stood up and turned to look at Solice. He put an uncharacteristic comforting hand on her shoulder but said nothing. He left the room leaving Michael and Taylor watching carefully.

(reply Trei)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Security Suites - Security Conference Room SPA LT Ariel
Trei - 1211)

Captain Dahr agreed to a recess until 15.00. Ariel was glad for that for she didn't know what to do with T'Ken and Quinna. She would rather have Quinna continue with her defense but didn't know how to do that with all the confusion. She left the courtroom with Quinna and hoped the situation can be resolved.

(Reply Any)

(posted by Edward)

[illegible]

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Private Security Suites - Private Security Office - CMO - Commander Quinna Solice - 1215)

Quinna and Ariel were offered a quiet room to talk. T'Ken joined them.

“There is no question here. Trei deserves a Klingon representative.” T’Ken started.

Quinna had enough, “Sit down and shut up, Kenny. Right now Ariel is the one in charge.” T’Ken started to protest but Quinna held up a finger. “Don’t you think Lt. Trei may have something to say?”

Quinna turned to Ariel, "Ariel, are you ready for T'Ken to defend your actions?"

(Reply Trei)

T'Ken spoke up again, "You need to hear my point of view before you decide. This is about what this woman is suggesting." T'Ken tried to hold his disdain back while mentioning Quinna, "Do you want the universe to believe that the best part of you, your Klingon part, is a disease? That Klingon is a blight and not a race. That dishonors, not only you and your house, but your father, and the rest of the Klingon race."

Quinna then spoke up, “Ariel, this is not about the fact that you killed an assassin who was unarmed at the time, but how you killed her. It was ritualistic, primal. It was so over the top. That was not your way.”

T'Ken then spoke, "It actually is your way. You are Klingon and have proven yourself worthy of being Klingon."

(Reply Trei)

(Posted by Kris B)

[illegible]

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Private Security Suites - Private Security Office - SPA LT Ariel Trei - 1216)

"Quinna will resume my defense. How do we proceed from here?"

(Posted by Edward)

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Private Security Suites - Private Security Office - CMO Commander Quinna Solice and Klingon T'Ken - 1225)

Quinna let out a sigh of relief. For a moment, she thought her friend believed what T'Ken was saying and that Quinna was trying to dishonor the Klingon race, but T'Ken also had his thoughts.

T'Ken refused to accept defeat, he turned to Ariel, "You cannot allow this defense to continue. I beg you to reconsider your decision. Think of those in your house."

(Posted by Kris B)

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Private Security Suites - Private Security Office SPA LT Ariel Trei - 1227)

Ariel listened to both arguments to what direction she should continue with The Klingon Empire or Starfleet. It will be better for a continuity standpoint to stay with her Starfleet friends until another option is offered to her while keeping the connection to the House of Mogh open. She believed she could do that as an Envoy to Qo'Nos on Starbase Freedom.

"For the sake of continuity, I will stay with starfleet for now while keeping the House of Mogh connection open. I can be a Klingon representative to Starbase Freedom and maintain my connection as head of the House of Mogh from Starbase Freedom. Is that acceptable for you?"

(Reply T'Ken, Any)

(Posted by Edward)

[illegible]

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Security Suites - Security Conference Room 3 - JAG -Lt.

Commander Jar'el - 1230)

Jar'el had been mediating on the logic, or lack there of, of this trial. He'd been impressed with the case that Commander Solice had been attempting to mount, but the bottom line was that it did not discount the actions of Trei. In a manner, this was a Kobayashi Maru case for the doctor. And considering her background was not the on law she was a formidable opponent.

In an effort to be respectful of her efforts the JAG had given him permission to end this trial early with a deal, if possible. He could see that Trei, if not misguided, was being driven by a desire for the safety of others. If she could simply admit that she had made an error in the execution of the assassin, Khamal, he could see about some semblance of leniency.

But first he had to know who was actually defending Trei. He might not give the same offer to T'Ken.

Tapping his comm badge he said, “Jar’el to Commander Solice, are you still the representative for Ariel Trei’s defense?”

(reply Solice)

"I would like to discuss a matter with you," he continued. "Could we have a private meeting?"

(reply Solice)

"Please meet me in Security conference room 3. Jar'el out."

(reply Solice)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Private Security Suites - Private Security Office - CMO

Commander Quinna Solice - 1231)

Quinna stood there and listened to T'Ken appeal to Trei, using her house. Quinna felt strong with Dr. Fraizer's testimony. T'Ken has already offended not only Quinna but the Doctor as well. Her Communicator went off.

=Λ= Jar'el to Commander Solice, are you still the representative for Ariel Trei's defense? =Λ=

“Yes,” Quinna said as T’Ken snared, “Lt. Trei expressed her desire to retain me.”

=^=I would like to discuss a matter with you, ^= he continued. ^=Could we have a private meeting? ^=

“Sure,” Quinna answered, “I am on my way”

Quinna managed to get the location and left the room, but she made sure that a couple of security officers were in the room with Ariel and T'Ken.

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Security Suites - Security Conference Room 3 - CMO
Commander Quinna Solice - 1235)

Quinna entered the Conference Room. She calmed herself and even managed to give Jar'el a normal and not angry look. "Commander Jar'el, What do you have for me?"

(Reply Jar'el)

(Posted by Kris B)

[illegible]

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Security Suites - Security Conference Room 3 - JAG - Lt. Commander Jar'el - 1237)

Jar'el nodded to Solice when she entered the room. She had an almost Vulcan-like serenity to her. He could only imagine the emotions broiling underneath that calm exterior, after all, she was only human. Still, he was impressed.

“Commander Jar’el, what do you have for me?” Solice asked.

Jar'el moved to the table and motioned for her to take a seat, then he sat down. "Commander, let's be honest. You have done an admirable job with this case, but Lt. Trei is guilty of killing that woman in the manner in which she did. The result of the sentence that Captain Dahr is most logically going to give is in a penal rehabilitation center, at best. At worst a psychiatric ward."

(reply Solice)

“The motivation of Trei’s actions and her previous service to the fleet taken into consideration we would like to offer her a deal,” the Vulcan said. “Conduct unbecoming of an officer and a dishonorable discharge. No internment.”

(reply Solice)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Security Suites - Security Conference Room 3 - CMO
Commander Quinna Solice- 1238)

Jar'el moved to the table and motioned for her to take a seat, then he sat down. "Commander, let's be honest. You have done an admirable job with this case, but Lt. Trei is guilty of killing that woman in the manner in which she did. The result of the sentence that Captain Dahr is most logically going to give is in a penal rehabilitation center, at best. At worst a psychiatric ward."

Quinna thought about his words. She thought that maybe they had a chance but with T'Ken's appearance put a hole in her defense. And at the end, Jar'el would petition to call a new witness, T'Ken, to testify it was the Klingon way, jeopardizing Quinna's main defense. "What are you proposing?"

“The motivation of Trei’s actions and her previous service to the fleet taken into consideration we would like to offer her a deal,” the Vulcan said. “Conduct unbecoming of an officer and a dishonorable discharge. No internment.”

“I think that is harsh, and I am sure she will not go for a dishonorable discharge.” Quinna thought, “I am willing to submit an offer to Lt. Trei that would include, Conduct unbecoming an Officer and general discharge where she retains all her rights as a federation citizen and a former member of Starfleet.” Quinna Countered.

(Reply Jar'el)

(Posted by Kris B)

[illegible]

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Security Suites - Security Conference Room 3 - JAG - Lt. Commander Jar'el - 1239)

Jar'el raised his eyebrow at the word harsh. After all, what would she call Trei's actions with the assassin Kharmal? That was... even harsher. Still, he had anticipated this move from Solice. She was playing from an emotional point of view, hoping to play with the panel's feelings for fairness. But he could see their hardening eyes every time he mentioned that she had already defeated the assassin, and her death was unnecessary.

"I am willing to submit an offer to Lt. Trei that would include, Solice said easily, "conduct unbecoming an officer and general discharge where she retains all her rights as a federation citizen and a former member of Starfleet."

However, the Vulcan had already anticipated such a course of action. He put his hands flat on the table.

“You ask a great deal, Commander,” Jar’el said softly. And if she had plead guilty at the beginning of the trial that would have been an easier deal to strike. However the Judge

(Reply Trei)

Quinna came back into the room "Oh pipe it off, Kenny. Lt. Trei made her decision."

Quinna cut him off, “Whatever...” Quinna approached Ariel and sat at the table, “I have a matter to discuss with you. A proposal, but I need to know now, do you want T’Ken here?”

(Posted by Kris B)

(Starbase Freedom - Main Docking Concourse- CO - Captain Cassian Dahr - 1253)

“By all means, Ambassador, let’s not delay you any more than necessary. If you follow me I’ll take you to her.”

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Security Suites - Security Conference Room 2 - CO - Captain Cassian Dahr - 1258)

“Commander Solice, Lt. Trei, you have another representative from the Klingon Empire,” Dahr said and stepped back.waiting for the drama to unfold.

(posted by Al Muir)

The two burly Klingons weren't so much out of place as the clothing they wore, the Ambassador had no armor and the fringe of his jerkin was dark green, mottled with yellow and brown. About his neck were beryllion chains bedecked with medallions won through numerous victories. He carried a thick baton of burled wood with a head of duranium alloy shaped like the head of a targ.

What wasn't out of place, however was the scowls they wore as station security stepped in front of them, the ranking officer a step ahead of them.

Keketh snorted and nodded grimly as K'shan snarled. "The keth of office is not a weapon and I will carry it openly. If you do not wish an issue with the empire you will not speak your demand again!"

K'shan lowered the rod until the heavy head was grounded on the deck. "An imperial noble stands accused of charges, hence why I have been sent to represent her. You will take me to her now!" The last sentence came out in a snarl.

"Please allow me to announce your arrival properly to my superiors."

(Reply: Dahr)

"Acknowledged sir."

He looked up as the communication ended. "Ambassador, the Captain sends his apologies and requests you wait a moment for him to arrive and greet you personally."

K'shan growled but nodded his head. "Very well, we will fulfill the diplomatic niceties but my patience will not last long!"

The officer nodded and stepped back as he allowed his gaze to sweep the area, they had acquired a number of onlookers. He turned. "All right everyone, move along." He motioned for one of the guards to clear the area. There were mutters as the group broke up and began filtering away, his duty now was to see to the diplomatic contingent's safety until his superior officer arrived.

(Reply: Dahr)

(Posted by Charles Gatling)

[illegible]

(Starbase Freedom - Level 1 – Main Ops - CO's Office - CO - Captain Casian Dahr - 1245)

Dahr sat in the relative quiet of his office in main Ops. The office had a wall compartment that when open faced the work stations of the level. It was relaxing for him to watch the daily activity of the station going on in front of him. Gave him a sense of normalcy, which he really needed at this time.

The arrival of this Klingon, T'Ken, and his ensuing actions, had removed much of his calm. And the fact that he had no idea who this Klingon really was bothered him. His first action once he got to his office was to send a message to Qo'nos to get any information that they'd be willing to part with on him. Hopefully his name still had a little pull in the empire. However, as of yet, he'd gotten no response.

The officer at the security station called out, “Captain, another Klingon warbird has decloaked. This one is a Vor’cha class.”

Dahr stopped chewing and swallowed with a heavy sigh. "Hail them," Dahr ordered.

The image of a Klingon wear ambassadorial clothing appeared demanding to dock and come on the station. Dahr nodded. He turned to the security officer.

“Have them berth in the nearest empty docking station. Send a security detail to...greet the Ambassador.”

Moments later his comm badge chirped. =^=Captain Dahr, the Klingon Ambassador says he is here to represent Lieutenant Trei and demands to see her. Your orders sir? =^=

Dahr sighed again. Why was he not surprised? He was suddenly no longer hungry. “Keep him there. I’ll be down shortly.”

=^Acknowledged sir.=^=

Dahr closed the door facing Main Ops and put his lunch in a refrigerated unit. Hopefully he'd be given a chance but he was starting to doubt it. Then he headed for the turbolift muttering. "It's a damned convention."

(Starbase Freedom - Main Docking Concourse- CO - Captain Cassian Dahr - 1250)

Dahr entered the docking concourse. It was pretty easy to spot his target. Everyone was giving them a wide berth, but all eyes were turned to the pair of Klingons surrounded by a security detail. Clearly Hank had cleared everyone to a respectable viewing distance.

Casian took a breath and moved towards the group. Neither of the Klingons looked particularly pleased, but in Casian's experience that was simply par for the course with Klingons. As he closed the distance he nodded to Samuels.

"Hank?" he left the question open to whatever he wanted to report.

"They've been quite accommodating," Samuels replied, "as far as Klingons go. All in the name of detente."

Dahr nodded and stood in front of the Klingon ambassador, “Ambassador K’Shan, welcome to Starbase Freedom. If we had known of your arrival we could have given you a better welcome.”

(reply K'Shan)

“My chief of security tells me that you wish to represent Lt. Trei,” he said. “You do realize that she already has Federation representation, and another member of your government, one T’Ken, already vying for that role.”

(reply K'Shan)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

(Starbase Freedom - Main Docking Concourse- Klingon Ambassador K'Shan- 1252)

The Klingon watched the arrival of the station commander with thinly disguised impatience, he first stopped to speak with the officer who had greeted them before stepping forward.

“Ambassador K’Shan, welcome to Starbase Freedom. If we had known of your arrival we could have given you a better welcome.”

"Or delayed my arrival." K'Shan snorted. "Diplomacy is not unlike war and the one who gains surprise has the advantage." He waved off any protest before it could start and gain traction. "I'm here now and that is all that matters, my time is valuable."

"My chief of security tells me that you wish to represent Lt. Trei. You do realize that she already has Federation representation, and another member of your government, one K'ten, already vying for that role?"

K'Shan snorted. "I have no confidence that a Federation member can represent a Klingon warrior properly and I was sent due to a recent change in Imperial stance toward this particular, highly placed member of one of our ruling houses, a fact that K'Ten has no knowledge of. We can stand here debating the reasons for my arrival which will result in a scathing report from myself to the council or you can facilitate my purpose. What is your choice?"

(Reply: Dahr)

(Posted by Charles Gatling)

[illegible]

Hammons noticed that the CO had entered and stood to his feet. "What can the security department do for you sir?"

They were on baby sitting duty currently with the ship in a holding position near the starbase. Those that weren't aboard were chilling on Freedom and making use of its entertainment, mostly the bars and were rotating in and out on an eight hour schedule like the rest of the ship. A third of the crew got in rec while the remainder were on or off duty. It was a delicate juggling act which no one had taken unnecessary advantage of yet... Steven knew there was the likelihood someone would have to be hunted down and pulled back who was drunk as a skunk. Hammons' money was on Boyles who was on Freedom currently and no doubt attempting to drink the station dry.

And then there was the CMO and Lieutenant Trei, the former trying to pull the latters' butt out of the pot of hot water she had gotten herself into. Hammons sympathized, if Boyles hadn't been there when he had taken down an assassin on Mars Steven would have been facing the same charges. That fight had been an adrenaline induced blur.

"Summon Lieutenant Galk, I will be waiting for him in the CSec office."

Steven gave a low whistle as the door slid shut. Lieutenant Commander T'Mur had popped in just a few minutes ago and gone to her office, waiting undoubtedly for Sekal to arrive. He smelled something big in store for Galk and it wasn't a pleasant odor.

Once the Klingon arrived Hammons motioned him through, Carol Lannis was also on Freedom and Steven was minding her chair. Galk gave him a questioning glance and the human shrugged in reply.

He was muttering as he stepped to the door and through.

(USS Illuminar - Deck 14 - Security Control Center - CSec office - Captain Sekal- 1310)

Sekal was seated as Galk entered and he motioned him to a third chair that had been brought in for this very meeting.

"Please be seated, Mister Galk."

"Yes sir." Galk rumbled, also nodding to the security chief before folding himself into the seat.

Sekal waited for him to settle in before beginning so Galk was able to speak first.

"Is this concerning Lieutenant Trei?"

Sekal shook his head. "No, it is an entirely unrelated matter."

"And what is that matter?"

Sekal shifted in his chair. "Our last conversation was about your future plans and how the fleet fit into them. That will no longer be on the Illuminar."

Galk's face showed the shock he was feeling as he grabbed the arms of his chair and squeezed tightly. His voice, when it came was a growl. "And why is that?"

Sekal noted the aggressive body language, common for a Klingon thrown into an unfamiliar situation.

"Your commission will still be active if you choose to be transferred to another ship or station, if this is unpalatable, due to your status within the Empire you may choose to return there."

Galk shot to his feet. "I am being kicked off the ship? For what reason? I demand an answer!"

"Return to your seat Lieutenant and I will explain." The order was crisp and clear.

Such behavior could easily have brought about disciplinary action at another time but this wasn't then and Galk wasn't quite himself yet.

Galk sucked in a deep breath, realizing he was out of order and complied.

"Lieutenant, your actions and loyalty to this ship and crew have been exemplary and there is none other I would prefer to entrust my life to. Had there been an opportunity to promote you further on this ship I would not have hesitated to do so; however a change in the Illuminar's commission has made your presence here no longer viable."

"I don't understand.." The Vulcan's face was unreadable as always, he might have been discussing the weather or the breeding habits of a Regular eel bird.

"Quite understandable. Simply put, while I cannot divulge my orders I can tell you that we will be exploring a new region for an extended period without immediate access to the Federation. Should something happen within the Empire that requires your attention you will be unavailable. And while I would prefer your presence it creates many issues, not only for yourself personally but also for Federation/Klingon relations."

Galk seemed to wilt in the chair at the Vulcan's logic.

(Reply: T'Mur iyw)

(Posted by Charles Gatling)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar - Deck 14- Security Control Center - 20/CSec/Tac - Lt. Commander T'Mur - 1315)

T'Mur had been surprised to see Sekal enter her office. Typically he would have informed her of his intentions, but clearly he wanted to avoid questions. He had asked for a third chair to be brought in and he sat down as he waited for compliance. The chair appeared and Galk entered her office. The security chief's eyebrow raised and she sat down beside him. Galk sat in the seat across from them.

She watched Galk's reaction as the captain informed him of his intention to leave the Klingon behind as the Illuminar left for their next mission. She was as surprised as Galk, but looked on as if it was the news she'd expected. The Klingon, on the other hand, was, to say the least, emotional.

As Sekal listened to the Klingon's protests she could tell that even he was showing minute signs of how difficult this conversation was for him. His voice could have been reading a shopping list, but T'Mur's keen eyes noted movement in the tiny hairs at the base of his neck, and a minor increase in his heart rate.

They had served together a long time and Galk had been Sekal's personal bodyguard, which created a familiarity that could not be overlooked. She knew that he would have preferred, even felt safer, if Galk could stay. But the Klingon now had other responsibilities that could not be shirked.

As the Klingon sank into the chair she stood up, “Mr. Galk, are you willing to give up your role in the Klingon Empire to come with us?”

(reply Galk)

She had no idea where the Illuminar was heading but the logic of the argument didn't matter. Logic was logic. "If that is the case then you must accept the situation as it is. The question seems to be, to me, whether you wish to maintain your connection to the fleet and transfer to another post, or resign your position for your duties to your house, and the Empire?"

(reply Galk)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

Quinna was relieved to be done with Ariel's hearing and everyone seemed satisfied with the outcome. She hoped she would never have to do that again. As Quinna made it to her quarters she noticed a Starfleet crew of movers packing her belongings.

“What is going on here?” Quinna asked.

“Ma’am, we were told to pack up these quarters. Here are my orders.” the nondescript NCO said as he directed the workmen to finish up. “We have some questions about how to classify some boxes like the one on the table.”

Quinna moved, "It is personal. Where are you taking my stuff?"

“Your stuff is being put in station storage until your reassignment.” The crew then left. Quinna saw a message on her console. She had been so busy that she had not looked until now.

“OMG, Are you serious?” Quinna said to herself. She wondered who authorized this. She knew she noted that a select few were chosen to go. Quinna was chosen to stay behind. She wanted to protest but she decided against that. What she needed to do was to find out Michael’s status.

“Computer, send a message to Michael Weston.” Quinna took a deep breath. “We need to talk. Sooner more than later.”

Quinna then left to make sure her office was cleaned out. She sent a few personal messages and then made a personal comment to Luma to take care of the Illuminar and all that remains onboard.

(Starbase Freedom -- promenade -- Cheesecake Cafe -- Commander Quinna Solice -- 1620)

Quinna managed to find an out-of-the-way place that served her favorite self-soothing dessert. She had already polished off a traditional Cheesecake and now she was on a thick slice of chocolate cheesecake.

(Reply Any)

(posted by Kris B)

[illegible]

(Starbase Freedom - Level 13 – Guest Quarters - SFI - Lt. Michael Weston - 1515)

Michael lay back on the bed in the guest quarters he'd been accommodated with when he'd arrived at the Starbase. It wasn't as large as his quarters on the Illuminar but he really didn't need a great deal of space. He just needed some thinking time. And he wasn't quite ready to go back home just yet.

He had a lot to think about. The mystery of the Tholian Brief had been solved. They had managed to create connections between the brief and the incidents on Altair. In essence he had managed to clear his name from whatever had gone wrong and sent him into exile. At least from his point of view.

The question was, was it enough for Haines and the others at SFI command? And if it was, what did that mean to him? Where did his future lead? Did the Illuminar really need and intelligence an operative stationed on the ship on a permanent basis? Would Sekal even want him there if he were no longer... disreputable?

And then there was Quinna. Where was she going to fit into this equation? Intellectually he knew that at some point there was going to be a fork in the road. He knew that he was no good at long distance relationships. He was never sure how Sekal managed. But he enjoyed being with Quinna too damn much. And his feelings for her were real. He loved her. And she loved him. That was the heaviest variable in the equation.

As if on cue the computer announced, [Incoming message from Commander Quinna Solice.]

Michael sat up, feeling his heart beat a little faster. “Play it.”

=^=We need to talk. The sooner the better.^=

Well that didn't sound very good. He rolled out of the bed and went to his computer station. Tapping the keys he sent a message back. "Reply to Dr. Solace. Sure, tell me where and when."

He sighed and went into his bathroom to shower and dress.

(Starbase Freedom - promenade - Cheesecake Cafe - Commander Quinna Solice - 1625)

Quinna had told him about a cafe she had seen, on the starbase's map, that apparently specialized in desserts, especially cheesecake. Who was Michael to argue. Although he was not a huge sweet person he had been known to indulge with Quinna.

He stepped inside and quickly found Quinna. He looked at the table and noted that there was already a crumb laden plate sitting there and she had another in front of her, with a fork digging into it with purpose.

He took a deep breath and walked over to her. "And what did that cheesecake ever do to you?"

(reply Quinna)

He smiled as he sat down. "Are we sharing or should I order my own?"

(reply Quinna)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

He took a deep breath and walked over to her. “And what did that cheesecake ever do to you?”

Quinna looked up at Michael and smiled. She needed to know what was happening with him but he needed to know about her. Could this be their last night together?

He smiled as he sat down. "Are we sharing or should I order my own?"

Quinna produced a fork and handed it to Michael. “I already gave a White chocolate orange swirl slice coming.”

(Reply Weston)

"I am upset, and I needed to talk to you. The Illuminar is going on an extended mission. Going to be gone for a very long time." Quinna started.

(reply Weston)

"I received new orders. I have been relieved of my position on the Illuminar. I need to wait at the station for a new assignment. They kicked me off the ship. Packed up my belongings and casted me off."

(reply Weston)

“I started my career on that ship. And no one bothered to come and see me off, so I guess they were too busy preparing for departure. I am curious about you. Are you going with them?” Quinna felt she sounded a bit clingy at this point, but in actuality, she had just been left at the station with no one that she knows.

(reply Weston)

(posted by Kris B)

[illegible]

(Starbase Freedom - promenade - Cheesecake Cafe - Commander Quinna Solice - 1629)

"I already gave a White chocolate orange swirl slice coming."

Michael chuckled, "I should have known." Then he for a sense of her vibe and asked, "Is everything alright?"

"I am upset, and I needed to talk to you," Quinna said. "The Illuminar is going on an extended mission. Going to be gone for a very long time."

"I heard something to that extent," Michael admitted. "But I get the feeling that there's more."

"I received new orders," said Quinna. "I have been relieved of my position on the Illuminar. I need to wait at the station for a new assignment. They kicked me off the ship. Packed up my belongings and casted me off."

Michael was stunned. That did not sound like Sekal at all. “There must be something more behind that sweetie,” he said reaching for her hands. “T’Muir and Sy are both your friends. And Sekal respects you, not only as a doctor but as a command officer.”

"I started my career on that ship. And no one bothered to come and see me off, so I guess they were too busy preparing for departure. I am curious about you. Are you going with them?"

Michael sat back in his chair and almost laughed. “Oddly enough I was wondering the same thing. If I’m reinstated will I still even be welcome on the Illuminar. We’re at a crossroads in our careers and in our personal lives. To be honest I have no idea where my career is about to take me. I do know that I want you in my life. But how can I do my job as an active field operative? Do I even still want to do that job? I just don’t know.”

(reply Quinna)

“Director Haines is on her way out here,” he told her. “We have a meeting tomorrow. I think I’ll know more about my options at that time. Sooooo....” he looked at Quinna, “At the very least, we have a night to put our head in the sand and ignore the universe for the rest of tonight.”

(reply Quinna)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

(Earth -- Diplomatic Corp Headquarters -- Harry S Truman Building -- Washington DC -- Zandrea Reed -- 1730)

Zane sat at her desk looking at the pile of diplomatic packages awaiting her. She had just come back from helping out the Ambassador on Betazed. She had longed to be an ambassador herself but right now she was the best temporary diplomatic cleaner there was. Her day to be an ambassador was coming sooner than she thought.

“Hey, Zane. Wow, travel suits you well. ” An older man’s voice came from the doorway. He was carrying coffee and bagels.”

“Peter,” Zane stated, “And I have not even had time to go through the first item on my desk.”

“Hey, maybe I am just glad you are back,” Peter said.

“Because there are also flowers on my cabinet next to the door.” Zane smiled. “Where is the fire?”

Peter shrugged. He put the plate of bagels down, handed Zane her coffee, and took a deep breath. "It is an inferno." He started. "I need my best firefighter." Peter handed Zane a PADD.

“But you have to settle for me. Here I thought you were wooing me for another reason.” Zane was reading the bullets of the document.

“You know, Work Wifey, If you were male and I didn’t have a husband already, I would be all over you.” Peter smiled, “This is the big time, Dear. This is your step into the big leagues. These opportunities do not come around every day, Madam Ambassador.”

“It’s a Spacestation.”

"It's Starfleet and the premier seat to the delegations."

Zane took a big bite out of her bagel, “I guess all of this will have to be ‘to-go’”

“Zane, I am going to miss you in my department.” Peter started. “You are going to be stellar.”

Zane and Peter went over the logistics of what was to come. The diplomatic Corp was to take Ren into custody, another group would be packing and moving her office to the Spacestation, and Zane was already deep into reading the Tholian Brief knowing that there was already a diplomatic mess about to happen even deeper than what was already happening.

(Reply None)

(posted by Kris B)

[illegible][illegible]

End Compile