

Mission: Murder on the Exeter Express, Day 2, 3

[illegible]

(USS Exeter – observation Lounge –CFO – Lieutenant – Ire Williams– 2342)

Erin looked at them both and nodded. This was her space, her department and still she felt ill at ease. Something that would both answer some questions and provide a bucket load more.

"Thank you both for answering my request so quickly." Keira said, and took out a tricorder, and scanned the room for listening devices. She only needed to be concerned with listening devices in the room, as the lab itself was sound proofed, any words that were going to be said in this room would stay in this room barring anything inside to transmit them out. Satisfied there were no such devices she deactivated and closed her tricorder.

Erin watched as her friend scanned the room, ~understandable but really? You think that whoever started this whole thing would bug this room and i wouldn't know about it?~

Sleeford watched as Merek scanned the room, raising his eyebrows slightly the security officer in him frowned, ~Okay, so what the frack is going on, you don't scan a room, unless you're expecting to find something, today could not get any weirder if the Captain ran naked round the corridors ~

"Before we proceed," Keira started, "there are some issues that need to be addressed."

Erin tilted her head a little, "For example?"

Sleeford looked at the commander and raised his chin slightly, the fact that at least two of the trio were implicated in the death of a senior officer wasn't lost on him.

"What we are about to discuss in this room is classified "Need to Know", and as such is to be discussed only with the people in this room, the Captain, First Officer and Chief Tactical Officer, is that understood? Anyone not willing to do so, will be ordered to leave and will be so noted in my official report."

"Understood and i am not leaving. So, what about you, Ensign?" Erin turned towards Sleeford as she spoke, "You in or out?"

Laughing slightly Sleeford turned to each of the women in turn "How quickly people forget, until two weeks ago, I was a security officer, I knew that something was wrong and as for the need for security and the need to know, that's fine, I'm in. I want answers the same as everyone else. So commander why all the cloak and dagger"

Happy everyone was on board, Keira resumed speaking. "The reason for all the secrecy is we have been entrusted with selections of audio files of two of the accomplices of Tyko's murder. I'm not going to go into details of how the files specifically were obtained, because at this point the important part is

that we have them. So we are going to analyze them to determine who they belong to and if we narrow it down enough to identify specific people we will act on this knowledge."

Erin sighed as she looked at them both, "Analyse them for any clues I suspect.... There's things we can use the scanners here for.."

Sleeford waited for the Chief Science officer to start the analysis of the sound files, the information he'd gathered from Zot and his own investigations into the recent arrivals into the Operations department..

"The third one was smart enough to disguise their voice, another team has been tasked with that analysis." Keira answered.

A thought struck her, a thought she hadn't expected to get and it shook her. Closing her eyes, Erin sat down at a nearby console and took a deep breath.

"Something wrong?" Keira asked, noticing her friend's change in demeanor but not knowing the reason.

"Are any of these logs.... Were they taken or recorded at the time of.... his death?"

"Yes, they were. We have been given files that are cut from the actual recording of the events, but nothing so macabre as a recording of his actual death. Voice samples from around the events only." Keira answered. Then knowing that this was a man that Erin had been intimate with, she put the two together. Keira had never been that intimate with anyone, even Ravok, but she could still empathize on how Erin might feel. She felt foolish for not thinking of it. "Oh, sorry, I hadn't thought of that."

Erin looked at her and offered a slight smile, "You'd be one of the only ones that wouldn't." Sighing, she stood and looked at her friend and then glanced at Sleeford, "I'll deal with it. Let's just get on."

Smiling down at Cortez, Sleeford spoke, "if it helps there's a list of names I've gathered recently. Ensign Zot came to see me earlier, someone hacked the ops system yesterday. Between us we've narrowed it down to six members of the department"

Placing the folded piece of paper on the counter he stepped back, "these are the recent arrivals. Ensigns Henderson, Zella, Setrewy, Thom and Petty officers Zettra, Cummings and Hosk. I spoke to all six of them when they came on board, the usual welcome to the department and so forth."

"Hmm, none of those names I know. Perhaps we should listen to the files first. Lieutenant?"

"It's certainly a place to start." Keira admitted.

"I assume there is more than one. And that they are different people?"

"Two separate, yes." Keira answered.

"Mister Sleeford, pull up the files on your short list. I'll pull up the audio files." Keira said sitting down at the second station.

Shaking his head Sleeford placed the paper on the counter, "I didn't put the names on the computer, once I found out that the Ops system and Security system had been compromised I thought it better not to tip off our murderer or murderers. "

"Computer access investigation audio files. Authorization Merek Sigma-Gamma-Three." Keira ordered.

[Access Granted]

"These words aren't in any particular order, but were selected to be fairly common in conversation." Keira asked the pair. "Ready?"

"As i will ever be." Erin replied

Nodding Sleeford concentrated on filtering out the background noises and solely on the voices

"First selection." Keira said and keyed up the file.

=^= Quick.... Sensors..... Down.....=^= The disconnected words issued from the audio emitters one by one. The words seemed to have a sense of urgency attached to them without the reason why.

Listening to the words they seemed like a jumble of nothing to Sleeford, there was something there that tickled his mind, he'd heard the voice before, but where, which of the 400 plus officers and crew did it belong, had he heard recently or was it on Mars.

"Second selection." Keira said, starting the second file.

=^= Nine..... Two.... Ship.... ^= A different set of disconnected words played through the speakers, still masculine, but without the urgency of the first one the tone was more derogatory.

(Reply None)

(USS Exeter – Science Labs, Lab 7 – 20/CEO – Lt. Cmdr. Keira Merek, CSO - Lt. JG Erin Cortez, COO - Ensign SG - Paul Sleeford - 2036)

Shaking his head Sleeford frowned, now this voice he did know, it was one of the new intake of Ops officers, the name escaped him at the moment but he'd spoken to them yesterday about their tardiness.

A smile crept over Erin's face as she listened to the two recordings. A smile that said something had clicked within her and had given her an avenue with which to help the investigation rather than be a subject of it.

"Okay, look. Voices are like fingerprints, right? They're unique to each individual. The tone, the cadence, the rhythm of the speech, the accent, every part is different for each individual and each race within the federation and beyond."

Nodding Sleeford, "That's why voice recognition is used for security doors and sensitive areas, you can't fake a voice print"

"Example, if you took a typical Vulcan voice and put it against a recording of, let's say the borg, you would be able to tell the difference especially if they are speaking the same words."

"True, the Borg are more mechanical in their voice print, Vulcuns are.. Oh I don;t know, monotone and boring"

Keira raised her eyebrow at the comment but said nothing.

"So, with these recordings, we don't listen to the words, we listen to the manner they are said. Can you play the first one again, Lieutenant?"

Nodding Sleeford waited.

Erin's eyes crinkled as she listened, "Sounds human to me. Thoughts?"

"I know the voice, I just don't know where from. Is it from one of the newer officers or is it an original from Mars. "

"And the second one?"

Sleeford eyes lit up, "I know that voice, thats Ensign Thom, I had to take him to task about his lateness for duty yesterday morning, If it helps he spends a lot of time with Ensign Zella, both came on board and into Ops from Starbase Freedom. "

"How sure are you? I know that second voice. I know it from somewhere and I can't place it.." Erin replied.

"I'm sure Lieutenant, he has a slight nasal twang, edged with a large dose of arrogance. Thats Thom."

Erin replayed the second voice. Listening, she could tell that was a voice or at least a manner of speaking that she had heard before. As she racked her brain trying to place it, the sense of frustration was building in her. "I know this.... Why do i know this....." she mumbled under her breath.

"We need to be as close to one hundred percent sure as we can be. Playing it by ear is not going to be good enough." Keira said. "We'll need to do a voice print verification with the computer. I will have to bring up the files."

She heard their responses but it didn't register with her. The frustration at being so close to a clue to Nix's death and, yet, having it far enough away that she couldn't reach it boiled over within her and she slapped her hand down on the console. "Damn it all."

"Thoughts, Erin?" Keira asked.

"Thoughts? I'm frustrated. But with regards to the voices. Voice print verification is the way to go."

"Computer voice print verify both samples against Ops Officer Ensign Thom." Keira ordered.

[First Sample 73% Match]

"Not even the same species?" Keira offered.

"Doesn't look like it. Something with the first one isn't right. In my opinion, i don't think it's a human voice. The Cadence is all wrong."

Sleeford opened his eyes and smiled slightly, "The first voice could be Ensign Vella, his fathers a Bolean, his mother though I don't think he mentioned her, from what he said she's from the Gamma quadrant, other then that I don;t know much"

[Second Sample 93% Match]

"Close, the same section of the choir, definitely." Keira said.

"Is it good enough to pass on the name to security though?" Erin postulated.

Keira shook her head in response. "You'd need over ninety-five percent, anything less than ninety-eight would prompt a secondary phrase for verification. Are there any differences in the atmosphere between standard and what one would have found in Tyko's quarters? Temperature variations? Humidity?" Keira asked.

Pulling up the reading that had been taken by security when they had attended, Erin began to read. "Not that I can see. Nothing that would affect the voice anyway." Erin paused as she looked down the details of the scans and her heart skipped a beat as she saw the beginning of the description of the body.

Standing up, she walked to the other side of the lab, desperate for a moment alone to collect her thoughts. Taking a glass of water from the replicator, she stood, taking a sip leaning on the cool wall of her lab.

Keira noticed the movement of her friend and she looked away from her work half expecting Erin to be on the floor in some kind of medical emergency. ~That's just what this day needs, isn't it?~ Keira was relieved to only see her leaning on the wall, not collapsed on the floor.

Sleeford looked across at Cortez, frowning slightly "Are you okay Lieutenant?"

Erin looked at him, a tired look on her face and sighed, "No, I am not. I've, quite frankly, had enough." She replied a little sharply.

"Something you want to talk about?" Keira asked.

Taking a sip of her water, Erin turned to them both and said, "I'd rather not talk about it right now if it's all the same. I just... need a minute." She replied, closing her eyes. Thinking to herself that all she really wanted to do was run and hide but she knew her duties. Whispering under her breath, "just a minute...please..."

"OK, take your time. I'm right here, if you need me. I'm going to set the computer up to check against the rest of the OPS Chief's short list." Keira said.

Nodding, Erin took a breath and sat down on a stool nearby the replicator, fighting down the images flying through her mind.

"Computer set up voice comparison and analysis with the investigation files against the following list." Keira ordered. "What were those names again?"

"The names are - Ensigns Henderson, Zella, Setrewy, Thom and Petty officers Zettra, Cummings and Hosk."

"Ensign Henderson," Keira said.

[Negative.]

"Ensign Zella," Keira offered.

[Negative.]

“Ensign Setrewy,” Keira tried.

[Negative]

“Ensign Thom has been ruled out already,” Keira said. “Petty Officers Zettra, Cummings and Hosk, computer analyze these three as well.”

[All Negative.]

“Well we have managed to rule some out. Maybe the two culprits aren’t new additions? Scary thought but what if they’ve been here since the beginning?” Keira said.

Sleeford looked at Keira with a worried look, “Oh god that’s a scary thought. I’d had thoughts it might be but pushed them from my mind as being too outlandish to contemplate.

“You were pretty sure about Thom, and you remembered an intricate detail about his performance...” Keira started.

“It was nothing to be honest, he was late for shift, by 30 minutes, he claimed he overslept, I found it hard to believe as he’s on Beta shift. “

“That’s right he was late for a duty shift. What if he thought it was someone else’s whose name looks like his, but isn’t? Are there any such people in the OPS rosters?” Keira offered.

Reaching over Keira's shoulder, Sleeford called up the duty roster for Ops, running the names each shift side by side, stopping he shook his head. “Well I’ll be damned, Ensign Thorn, Gamma shift. Starting the same day, I even spoke to him the morning after his first shift.. That would rule out Thom completely. Can we check for a voice print match for Thorn?”

Erin listened to the words again, but the only thing in her mind were the words that she had read. Fighting back the anger, sadness and tears, she took a sip of her water and noticed that her hands were shaking slightly.

"Pulling the file up now," Keira said, "Ensign Malachi Thorn... this him?"

"Yes thats him, Joined from Freedom station, apparently transferred from the USS Destiny, some tale about not getting on with his supervising officer"

Nodding Keira keyed up the relevant voice file. "Computer please compare both investigation files with voice print, Thorn, Malachi Ensign OPS officer."

[First sample 71% match, Second Sample 99% match.]

"Then Thorns our man." Shaking his head, "He seemed like a likable young man"

"I believe you are right. We need to send a security team over to his quarters now." Keira said and turned to Sleaford, "You just came out of security, to accept your lateral promotion, are you familiar enough with their roster to recommend a team?"

Laughing Sleaford and smiled, "Oh yes. Normally i'd pick, More, Brenton, Borenson and myself. Send Borensonn and Brenton, their the two largest security guards we have, they can handle Thorn."

"Are they on Beta shift?" Keira asked.

"Unless Lieutenant Ravok has made changes to the Rosta their on Gamma shift. They should be in the office now drinking their coffee and moaning about the amount of work they have to do."

"Let's try," Keira said, tapping her combadge. "Merek to Security; Brenton and Borensonn, please respond."

=^= Security, Brenton here. ^=

"This is Commander Merek, is Borensonn there as well? What is your location?" Keira asked.

=^= Main Security Office, and yes he's here, why? ^=

"Computer secure this channel, code Merek Seven-One-Nine." Keira said quickly.

[Voice authorization required.]

"Merek, Faehht-fve-hwi-lhi, " the blonde woman responded.

[Code accepted, channel secure.]

=^= Whoah, what the.... ^=

"Listen to me very carefully. I've just secured the channel, I need you two to go to deck 11 section 12, and apprehend an Ensign Malachi Thorn. Then you need to lock him in the brig." Keira explained.

=^=Who's authority? ^=

Her facial expression betrayed that she was a little surprised that he would question her, "Mine. I'm the Second Officer, third incharge of this ship."

=^=We should tell Lieutenant Ravok.... ^=

"Negative. Time is paramount here, I'll let Ravok know, by the time you get there, your boss will be all up to speed. When you are done, report to him." Keira corrected him.

=^= \*Sigh\* OK, I will ensure that my log reflects this is your order, and I did not do so of my own volition. ^=

Listening to the exchange Sleaford bit his lip to avoid laughing out loud, as Merek finished he shook his head.

"Fine, but log it after you come back. Merek out." Keira said, "Computer, using the same active channel, Merek to Ravok."

(Reply Ravok)

"This line is secure, are you in a place where you can talk?" Keira asked.

(Reply Ravok)

"We've come up with some paydirt. I'm sending two of your guys Brenton and Borensonn to apprehend one Ensign Thorn we've got one match on one of the undisguised voice prints." Keira explained.

(Reply Ravok)

Sleeford waited until the commander had finished talking to the COSec "Remind me commander when this is over, to tell you the easiest way to deal with the lunk heads down on deck eight"

Erin stood and looked at the pair, "So, we have one?"

Sleeford turned, "yes Ensign Thorn"

"One of them that did...." she closed her eyes.

Keira only nodded.

"I'm..... do either of you mind if i go... i just need to get some air."

Sleeford looked between Merek and Cortez, something was going on here that he wasn't privileged too, something that could have implications on the case.

"Of course. Maybe we should take this opportunity for a break." Keira offered.

Holding in a yawn Sleeford nodded, "sounds good to me commander, I don't think we're going to get much more here. "

"I'm sure Ravok and the rest of security will get more information from the captive than we will from some recordings." Keira said with confidence.

(Reply Any)

(USS Exeter – Ensign Rylee's Personal Quarters – SPC ACOO Comp Ops Ensign Sg Zot & Ops officer Ensign Rylee Page - 2302)

Ensign Zot arrived at her door rather expectantly. In his hand was a red velvet bag with a bottle of wine inside. He chimed the alert button.

Looking at the door, she sighed, "Who is it?"

" Hello it is me, Ensign Zot." He answered.

Smiling widely, Rylee stood and replied, "come on in."

The doors opened and he stepped inside. He looked at her attire.

" I am sorry for my unannounced visit. I just wanted to give you something."

"Unannounced visits are fun."

He walked over to her couch and handed her the bag.

Blushing slightly, Rylee took the bag, " You didn't need to do this." Opening the bag, she gasped slightly, "Zot.... Is this genuine?"

" It's a genuine bottle of real wine from the Yen'te'et Estate located in Gatlin valley on Trill, it's a blush wine. Dated to the year 2431, the year my people joined the federation. " Zot explained as she looked at the bottle.

"This.... How.... I don't deserve this."

He sat down next to, but angled himself to face her.

" It's to commemorate the day we met which was exactly 77 days ago. That is 21.1 percent of the current year , 6,652,800 seconds ..." He stopped rambling and looked at her.

" I have known you for not even a quarter of the year ,yet you have profoundly impacted my life in ways I can not explain."

Rylee reached forward and took his hand, "Zot... there's things I want to say to you but, to be honest, I'm scared."

" I too share a feeling of fear. Fear of uncertainty , yet I find myself with clarity of mind. I know what I should do and I know what I want." He looked down at her hands and grabbed them in his

" I should return to my people, when it's time, but I do not want to. I want to stay here with you. " Zot said gripping her hands slightly.

Sighing, Rylee looked at him, "Zot, as much as I don't want you to leave, you can't stay here just for me.... If I remember rightly, you said that your people would die if they didn't return... I don't... I'm not that special. I mean I love..." Rylee stopped, blushed furiously and turned her gaze away, realising what she had almost said.

" You love me. I don't need you to vocalize your feelings to be aware of it. I see your pupils change when you see me. I see your skin become flushed. " He reached out and gently touched the side of her neck.

" I see your pulse rate increase. You will never know how my eyes see this reality, but put trust in me when I say that when I look at you I see many things , a beautiful woman, the sum of an equation that in my eyes is flawlessly designed with the complexity of the unique and I love you"

Rylee smiled softly, "So.... Now that's out in the open.." Rylee grinned, "... what now?"

He withdrew his hand. " I do not know. Based on novels I have read pertaining to the subject of romance such unveiling of one's feelings of love the individuals sometimes lose themselves in the moment and...do things, but we are ...different "

"We are. I know we can't.... Lose ourselves and that's fine. It's not about that for me. " She smiled.

" That's good to hear." He responded.

"Can I ask you something?"

" Yes " Zot said optimistically

"I was about to head to bed. Would you stay?"

He looked toward her bedroom.

" Yes I will. I just hope you don't mind having someone watch you sleep." He laughed subtly

Smiling, she shook her head, "Zot, if it's you then that's fine. Some of us need to sleep and with this murderer still at large,I would feel safer having someone watch over me."

" Even though I wouldn't be able to physically defend you. If it brings you comfort I shall remain."

Standing, Rylee took his hand and walked into the bedroom. Letting go for a second, she climbed into the bed and smiled at him, "Come on, I don't bite."

" I didn't think you would resort to humanoid cannibalism. I just don't have much experience with beds. They are oversized furniture." He responded and walked to the side of bed and sat down.

Smiling at him, Rylee covered herself with the blanket that lay on top of the bed, "See, not that bad is it?"

" It's comfortable." He looked at her.

" You have nice pillows."

Raising an eyebrow, she blushed a little, "Well, thankyou. I didn't think you had...." She paused, realising he hadn't meant what she had thought, "...what did you mean by pillows?"

" These" Zot said, reaching for a pillow.

Laughing a little, she nudged him playfully, "and here was me thinking you were talking about something else."

" What would I? Oh I see. " He said nervously. He tilted his head and looked at her.

Blushing a little more, she looked away for a second and then back at him, "Doesn't matter. Do you mind if I... get closer?"

" No, your proximity brings me comfort. " He sat back on the bed propping the pillow behind his back and raised his arm , allowing her to lay her head on him.

Moving closer, Rylee lay her head on his chest and draped an arm over him. "See, this is... I like this."

"I hope my muscular augmentation undergarment doesn't make you uncomfortable. It helps me move around without fatigue in the higher gravity that seems to be pretty standard on federation starships." He said with concern.

"It's different, but it's you. So I don't mind. You could be wearing a suit made from the same metal they make battle armor from and it wouldn't bother me." She replied, taking a slow deep breath in as she began to feel comfortable.

Whilst she knew what would normally happen at these moments, the fact that he was willing to stay there with her, with no ulterior motive other than to make her feel safe... that meant more than any physical comfort.

As she laid on him his thoughts that typically consisted of dozens of things were suddenly calmed. No longer was he thinking about his job, his people, the murder. Those thoughts were replaced with her. Thoughts of what her hair smells like. He took a deep breath knowing he would never be able to smell her hair but he hoped anyways. He found at no surprise at all there was nothing. No smell. In this moment he would have traded anything to experience the sense so many took for granted.

"Thank you." Zot said happily.

"What for?" Rylee asked, slightly dreamily as she nestled in to him.

"For wanting me here. Here is good." He answered. He said closing his eyes imagining what it would be like to fall asleep holding the person you love.

"Here is where you are always welcome. I... is it wrong to say that this feels right?" She asked, her eyes closing slightly as the rhythm of his breathing became almost melodic.

He shook his head. "I certainly hope not because if this is wrong one of us is in serious trouble." He said jokingly.

A small, soft laugh escaped her lips as she closed her eyes, "I'm so grateful for you... being here, being you." She replied as she began to slowly fall asleep.

He felt her breathing slow as he kept his eyes closed knowing if he were able to sleep he'd be sleeping like a baby.

" Zhil hya Rylee" He said softly to her. Saying good night in his language as he held her tighter.

( reply None)

(USS Exeter – Science Labs – CO, Captain Trip Williams – 2314)

“Not much exactly, however, the other accomplices will find out very quickly what happened here. However, we now know one of them. The others may slip up by the sudden change of their plans, that may drive them out, or into hiding. Find out who his friends were, if he suddenly was hooking up with someone new. Check communications, his partners in crime won’t be amongst the most popular, but may be conspicuous by just being out of place somehow.” She paused, drawing breath. “Keep safe, we now know what lengths he, she or they will go to.”

"That we do. We can't expect the other two to be as reckless."

“When Forensics run their sweeps, have them do a full composition and residue analysis on the deceased. Have them send it me as soon as it’s done, I want to read it straight away.” Ailynn said, rubbing her eyes.

"You doing ok Commander? If you need sleep, we can apprise you of stuff in the morning. As much as it is important for you to be involved at this stage in the game, it's also important that you stay healthy and in tip top shape."

(reply Ailynn)

"Look, the moment you feel like you physically can't handle anymore, I want you to clock out, is that understood."

(reply Ailynn)

"In the meantime, why don't you and commander Ravok oversee the forensics team."

(reply Ailynn)

Trip then nodded at Ailynn and then walked over to Ensign Hammerfield, "How we holding up Ensign?"

(Reply Hammerfield)

"I don't plan on holding you too long, and afterwards if you need it, I'm sure there is someone on call at the counseling offices. If you, you know, think you'd like to talk to someone about what happened."

(reply Hammerfield)

"Ok, so what were you working on when you were attacked? What was so important that the assailant decided to come out of the shadows to stop you?"

(reply Hammerfield)

(USS Exeter - Science Labs – Tac / Sec Ens.( Sg ) 23:16 )

Stan was not sure whether the Captain had heard him. But on later contemplation it was probably best. Ravok had stepped in when he had.

" Ensign More, Now isn't the time. You have your orders." Ravok said rather sternly.

" Aye sir." Stan said. Although he felt flustered at that. Ravok could of been a little less stern with him. More was doing his best here. He did placed the bagged clue for forensics to investigate. Then after giving Ravok a curt nod. Left the room with the others.

( USS Exeter - Sickbay - Tac/Sec Ens. (Sg ) Stan More - 23:22 )

As they entered Stan went over in his head snippets of what had been said.

~ Ensign Thorn I thought he was in security? Then again ops have the same coloured shirts as us. But why did they think he was in ops? Then there this thing he said about ' she made us ' she she she.....~ he thought

“Ensign More. I think that Dr Methor is on call. He should be in sickbay. Would you mind if getting him or grabbing a nurse to find him please?”

“Aye.” He said. But stopped himself.

~ She ~ He thought. Looking around he saw plenty of female personnel. Feeling that he should not take his eyes off K'Tel. He asked a male nurse to find the Doctor.

“thank you.”

He helped T'Kel onto the bio-bed.

“Ensign T'kel just rest here. If you could remain still as I start the scan, please.”

(Reply T'Kel)

He tapped a command into the bio-bed and the sensors began to hum.

“I am sorry if you are in pain Ensign. As soon as the doctor comes we can get some medication prescribed.”

(Reply T'Kel)

Although he was standing guard near the bio bed. Stan's eyes scanned around him. The problem was collateral damage. If anyone tried to attack T'Kel. More could not use his phaser even on stun. There were some sick people here. Who could be hit in the cross fire. Luckily he had a non lethal weapon in his pocket. That could be used without innocent people being hurt. An old fashioned cosh.

“ I have a few wee questions I would like to ask T'Kel. Any idea when that would be possible?” Stan asked

(Reply T'Kel, More, Methor , McDonald,any )

(USS Exeter – Science Labs – Ensign Janice Hammerfield – 2318)

"How we holding up Ensign?"

"Much better now sir," she lied and took a final sip from the tea and sat it down on a counter beside her before tugging her uniform down and standing tall.

"I don't plan on holding you too long, and afterwards if you need it, I'm sure there is someone on call at the counseling offices. If you, you know, think you'd like to talk to someone about what happened."

"Thank you. Its just the adrenaline come down. It can make me a bit over emotional. I might stop by for a chat..." she considered the offer.

[Show original message](#)

"I was working on finishing up my plan for finding the missing chemicals. I enlisted T'kel as part of that plan thinking that someone might indeed try to stop me beforehand. We were going to start tomorrow morning to find them," she looked down in thought for a moment, "I'm not sure if he was trying to stop me?"

(reply Trip)

"Well... he had a gap to..." she took a gulp of air and shook her head one as her eyes teared up a little, "...to vaporise me – but he aimed at T'kel instead. He could have vaporised what I was working on? I don't get it? Maybe T'kel was more of a threat at that point. Maybe he didn't like Vulcans? Whatever it was, its the only reason im still standing here to talk to you. "

(reply Trip)

(USS Exeter – Science Labs – CO, Captain Trip Williams– 2320)

"I was working on finishing up my plan for finding the missing chemicals. I enlisted T'kel as part of that plan thinking that someone might indeed try to stop me beforehand. We were going to start tomorrow morning to find them," she looked down in thought for a moment, "I'm not sure if he was trying to stop me?"

"I mean that is very much a possibility. And so he decided to fire at you?"

"Well... he had a gap to..." she took a gulp of air and shook her head one as her eyes teared up a little, "...to vaporise me – but he aimed at T'kel instead. He could have vaporised what I was working on? I don't get it? Maybe T'kel was more of a threat at that point. Maybe he didn't like Vulcans? Whatever it was, its the only reason im still standing here to talk to you. "

While Trip was normally one who tried his best to shield others emotions, the fact that Hammerfield was unsettled was obvious, to empaths and non empaths alike. Reaching into his pocket he grabbed a

handkerchief and handed it to her. "There really is no telling what was going through his mind. Unfortunately, it looks like now we will never know."

(reply Hammerfield)

"How well known was it that you were going to scan for the chemicals?"

(reply Hammerfield)

Trip sighed and the smiled. "On second thought ensign, as much as I would like to enquire more about your plan and strategy and employ it later, I think it best you get a change of scenery. Why don't you head and meet with Lieutenant Corsica in the counseling offices. At least to help calm the adrenaline a bit. It's not an order, just a suggestion."

(reply Hammerfield)

(USS Exeter – Science Labs – Ensign Janice Hammerfield – 2321)

Reaching into his pocket he grabbed a handkerchief and handed it to her. "There really is no telling what was going through his mind. Unfortunately, it looks like now we will never know."

~I do - The last thing going through it was a phaser set to maximum~ Taking the handkerchief she used a corner and carefully dabbed her eyes one by one before handing it back, "Apparently not..."

"How well known was it that you were going to scan for the chemicals?"

“Everyone who read the latest news broadcast. We wanted everyone to know about it. Also why I had T’kel here with me,” She looked at the table and her tools resisting the urge to tidy them up she looked back, “We are still good to proceed with it,”

[Show original message](#)

(reply Trip)

“Understood sir,” she gave a nod knowing that it was probably better she did, “If you don’t need me for anything else ill head there now – maybe let them know im on the way.”

(reply Trip)

(USS Exeter – Sickbay – ACOMO – Ensign Dural Methor DrPH – 2325)

Dural heard a bustle in the main room, and assumed McDonald had some guests, but once he heard the biobed start to hum, he grabbed his tricorder and went out to see what was the matter.

“What seems to be going on here? Is someone hurt?” Dural said with concern in his voice.

(Reply McDonald)

“I see. We’ll pull up Mr. T’Kel’s file. I see no allergies.” Dural stated. “How are you feeling Mr. T’Kel? Any pain?”

(Reply T’Kel)

“Mr. McDonald, prepare Triptacoderine he can have that if he wants it.”

Dural wrote a short message to McDonald and sent it to his PADD: [Triptacederine 20mcg q 6hrs PRN for pain]

(Reply McDonald)

"Now, lets have a look at these injuries, shall we?" Dural said.

(Reply T'Kel, McDonald, More)

(USS Exeter – observation Lounge – CSO LT JG Erin Cortez – 2326)

"Okay thank you all for coming, I know it's late, I know we've all had a shitty day. Trust me I know that full well. I also know that we're probably breaking several rules, by meeting, but to be honest I think we need to."

"Okay."

"Therein lies the question. Why do we need to meet?"

"Okay I'm going to ask what might seem like a stupid question, please bear with me if you could. Have any of you been asked what seemed like stupid, daft question today, something personal to you?"

She watched as Ire nodded, "Dare I ask why that matters? But yes."

"Okay thank you. I've been wondering all day, how the killer got in to a locked room. It hit me during the alarm less then a hour ago. We've all be asked personal questions that are relevant to us and us only. Now this is just speculation, but please hear me out."

Erin sighed deeply. Knowing that this was going somewhere but not where was frustrating her. "Please get to the point quickly, Ensign."

"We've recently left the Gamma quadrant, we've had a stop over at DS9, what to say we didn't pick something up, something nasty. Tyko comes onboard on Station Freedom, within 24 hours he's dead. The only common thread is us. So unless one of us is a very good liar, then I think there's a changeling on board, it would explain how they got in the room."

"I have a question? Why are you talking to us and not the Skipper or XO or Ravok about this?"

"A changeling? Really? And yet all our security protocols some how magically failed to pick up a changeling..." Erin paused, looked at the other three and sighed, "I am sorry for being so prickly but this has been a very bad day and, forgive me for saying so but none of you three could have had as worse a day as I have."

(Reply Any)

(USS Exeter – Sickbay – SPC Sec/tac Ensign Sg T'kel – 2326)

T'Kel was helped onto a bio-bed. The pain he felt was immense.

"Ensign T'kel just rest here. If you could remain still as I start the scan, please." The nurse said.

"Of course."

He tapped a command into the bio-bed and the sensors began to hum.

"I am sorry if you are in pain Ensign. As soon as the doctor comes we can get some medication prescribed." McDonald informed him.

" I will be fine." T'kel said.

"What seems to be going on here? Is someone hurt?" Dural said with concern in his voice.

(Reply McDonald)

"I see. We'll pull up Mr. T'Kel's file. I see no allergies." Dural stated. "How are you feeling Mr. T'Kel? Any pain?"

T'kel looked at the cardassian doctor.

" I'm alive Doctor, in pain but alive. The pain is located here and in my head." He said touching his ribs and motioning toward the back of his head.

"Mr. McDonald, prepare Triptacederine he can have that if he wants it." Dural said.

" I have no reservations when it comes too medical treatment doctor, proceed as you wish."  
T'kel

"Now, lets have a look at these injuries, shall we?" Dural said.

T'kel laid back and let the doctor check him out. " Proceed."

( reply Dural. McDonald)

(USS Exeter – observation Lounge – Caity DuBois – 2328)

As she sat quietly listening to the others talk, a thought entered her mind. ~they are all talking about being asked personal questions but no-one has asked me anything. Should I say anything?~

As she thought about this, she glanced over at the chief science officer sat nearby her. The trained eyes of the bar manager could see in an instant what the others potentially could not.

This was someone who had been dragged through it. Someone who was close to an edge and it worried her. Knowing that they were friends but not close, Caity sat back quietly and listened to the talk of a changeling.

"Excuse me, forgive the silly question but surely the CSO is right. How would one of these things get past security? I mean surely they know us by now, the transporter staff, security teams etc."

(Reply any)

(USS Exeter – Sickbay –Nurse – Ewan McDonald – 2328)

Dural heard a bustle in the main room, and assumed McDonald had some guests, but once he heard the biobed start to hum, he grabbed his tricorder and went out to see what was the matter.

“What seems to be going on here? Is someone hurt?” Dural said with concern in his voice.

“Well Doctor. Ensign T’Kel sustained a couple of fractured ribs and a partial dislocated shoulder and has been mobilised without the need for mediation.”

“I see. We’ll pull up Mr. T’Kel’s file. I see no allergies.”

Ewan nodded.

“How are you feeling Mr. T’Kel? Any pain?”

" I'm alive Doctor, in pain but alive. The pain is located here and in my head."

“Mr. McDonald, prepare Triptacederine he can have that if he wants it.”

“Yes Doctor.”

Ewan looked at his PADD as the prescription for the Triptacederine appeared. He double checked the prescription as he headed for the drugs cabonate.

~Triptacederine 20mcg q 6hrs PRN for pain~

He imputed the drug and the dosage and a vile appeared. He scanned the small identification icon on the vile to make sure that the drug it contained was what he had requested. He slid it into the hyposray with a soft click as he turned and headed back to T’Kel and Methor.

(Reply T’Kel, Mehtor, More, Wakemen, any)

(USS Exeter – Sickbay – SPC Sec/tac Ensign Sg T'kel – 2328)

As the cardassian doctor worked on him he looked over at Ensign More who was patiently waiting. " Ensign More , you may ask me any question you wish and I will give you any answer that I can."

T'kel did not know Ensign More personally. Ensign More seemed eager to serve. A trait that T'kel found plentiful aboard the Exeter

( reply More )

(USS Exeter – Sickbay - Tac/Sec Ens.(Sg ) Stan More - 23:29 )

With keeping one eye on the doctors tending to T'Kel and the other watching everyone else. Stan felt like the crazy eyed. Toy poodle his childhood friend wee Bill's grandmother had. She carried it with her everywhere. It was always growling at everyone. Plus Stan was sure he had seen those eyes. Turn in two separate directions the left clockwise the right anti clockwise. It then went on a biting frenzy.

Stan wondered if he ran around biting anyone here. Would they notice. His question about whether he could question T'Kel seemed to go on deaf ears.

As the doctor worked on T'Kel he looked over at More who was patiently waiting. " Ensign More , you may ask me any question you wish and I will give you any answer that I can."

Stan blinked and nodded.

“ Very well. Tell me exactly what happened please.” Stan said

( Reply , Rob )

(USS Exeter - Observation Lounge - COO - Ensign (sg) Paul Sleeford 23:30)

Sleeford sat at the table and looked round the room, he could see the doubt in the eyes of the others, the look on Cortez's face said she thought he was a mad man and in truth she was probably right, all day this idea had been bouncing around his head, now he'd vocalised it he, himself was beginning to doubt his sanity.

“I have a question? Why are you talking to us and not the Skipper or XO or Ravok about this?”

Looking down the table at Lieutenant Williams, Sleeford smiled slightly, "To be honest it only occurred to me about twenty minutes ago. Just after those alarm's went off"

Sleeford looked round as Cortez spoke next, he knew like the rest of them that she'd been through the wringer over the death of Tyko, had the crew look at her with

disgust, whispers in corners and the like, but her attitude was beginning to grate on his nerves.

"A changeling? Really? And yet all our security protocols some how magically failed to pick up a changeling..." Erin paused, looked at the other three and sighed, "I am sorry for being so prickly but this has been a very bad day and, forgive me for saying so but none of you three could have had as worse a day as I have."

"With all due respect, I think we have, We've all been accused of killing the most obnoxious man in Starfleet, been glared at, had whispers and insinuations, in some cases just plain accused of killing the man, So yea we all know what kind of day you've had, because we've all had it. " Sleeford took a deep breath to calm down slightly, "As for security protocols, we docked at two stations, hard docked, the guards on the bay look for anything suspicious, anything that could damage the ship , not crew members coming and going, drunk or otherwise or just out for a good time, during both visits there was up to four hundred people coming and going, the only things beamed onto the ship was cargo and equipment and as you know cargo transporters don't come with a bio filter"

"Excuse me, forgive the silly question but surely the CSO is right. How would one of these things get past security? I mean surely they know us by now, the transporter staff, security teams etc."

Sighing Sleeford turned to look at Dubois, "Can I ask do you know all the crew by sight, because I know that none of the security detail does, like i said there are four hundred personal on board the Exeter, one of whom killed Commander Tyko Nix. I had thought we could put of collective heads together and work out who, but I clearly was mistaken. I'm sorry I dragged you all here, forgive my presumptive arrogance."

(Reply any)

Standing Sleeford walked to the door, waiting as it seemed to slowly open, walking out onto the short corridor that ran up to the bridge and down to deck two, shaking his head he headed down the ramp and onto the lower deck, walking to the closest turbo lift he closed his eyes as the doors closed.

(Reply any)

USS Exeter – Sickbay – ACOMO – Ensign Dural Methor DrPH – 2330)

T'kel laid back and let the doctor check him out. " Proceed."

Dural looked at the biobed monitor. "Vital signs, stable.... though your respirations are a tad high, hurt to breathe?"

(Reply T'Kel)

"The pain won't allow you to open your lungs all the way, so your body compensates by breathing faster." Dural snapped open his tricorder with a flick of his wrist and began a skeletal integrity scan. The information began flooding in through the small screen. "Mister McDonald was correct. Three unilateral rib fractures."

(Reply McDonald)

"Mister McDonald, please pass the osteogenic stimulator and give our Vulcan friend his first dose of medication." Dural requested. He placed his tricorder at the foot of the biobed.

(Reply McDonald)

Dural held his hand out palm up to accept the requested instrument. It was placed squarely in the palm of his outstretched hand.

"Excellent technique, you've had some experience in an operating room, haven't you?" Dural said complimenting him.

(Reply McDonald)

As Dural adjusted the instrument going through a quick functions check, "We shall have to remedy that." He turned his attention to their patient. "You may feel some itching, perhaps some discomfort. The medication he gave you should be minimizing the pain very quickly."

(Reply T'Kel)

Dural began turning on the instrument hummed and issued a wide magenta colored beam along the Vulcan's thorax where the Cardassian pointed it. He made slow even passes, moving the beam along the selected rib. "How is that?"

(Reply T'Kel)

"Very well." Dural said stopped, adjusted the instrument, and then continued. "Mister McDonald, you are rated for an osteogenic stimulator, are you not?"

(Reply McDonald, T'Kel)

(USS Exeter – observation Lounge – CSO LT JG Erin Cortez – 2332)

"Can I ask do you know all the crew by sight, because I know that none of the security detail does, like i said there are four hundred personal on board the Exeter, one of whom killed Commander Tyko Nix. I had thought we could put of collective heads together and work out who, but I clearly was mistaken. I'm sorry I dragged you all here, forgive my presumptive arrogance." Sleeford said.

As the young Ensign stood and walked out, Erin rested her head in her hands. This had been the last straw. Breathing deeply, she knew that she shouldn't have reacted the way she did but neither should he.

He had not known her relation to Nix nor did a number of the crew despite the crew's propensity for gossip.

(Reply any)

"I'm fine. Long day." She said quietly. In all honesty, she was done and she knew it. Mentally, there was only so much one person could take and Erin had almost reached her limit.

Standing, she walked to the window and gazed out.

(Reply any at the meeting)

(USS Exeter – Sickbay – Nurse – CPO - Ewan McDonald– 2334)

"Mister McDonald was correct. Three unilateral rib fractures."

"Yes, Doctor Mathor."

"Mister McDonald, please pass the osteogenic stimulator and give our Vulcan friend his first dose of medication."

"Yes Doctor."

Out of instinct and automatic reflex with his time working as an operating theatre nurse he placed the hypospray squarely in the palm of Methor's outstretched hand.

"Excellent technique, you've had some experience in an operating room, haven't you?"

"Yes Doctor. I have ben a scrub nurse for a long time, but I have not had much opportunity since coming on board."

"We shall have to remedy that."

Ewan nodded.

~It will be nice to get back into the theatre again but maybe not for the patient~

"You may feel some itching, perhaps some discomfort. The medication he gave you should be minimizing the pain very quickly."

(Reply T'Kel)

He watched as Methor began working on T'Kel.

"How is that?"

(Reply T'Kel)

"Very well."

Ewan stayed nearby as Methor worked on the console and talked to the patient.

"Mister McDonald, you are rated for an osteogenic stimulator, are you not?"

He paused for a moment before answering then nodded.

"Yes Doctor. Do you want me to start?"

(Reply Methor)

He nodded, picked up the stimulator and turned to K'Tel with a pleasant smile.

"If you could lye still and try to relax. This should not hurt but I am sorry if it does."

(Reply K'Tel)

Ewan activated the stimulator and began to work.

(Reply Methor, T'Kel, any in sickbay)

(USS Exeter – Sickbay - Sec/tac Ensign Sg T'kel- 23:34 )

T'kel explained in detail to Ensign more what happened in the science lab. The pain was becoming more bearable as the cardassian doctor worked on him.

He kept his head straight and forward as the doctor had directed him and after a few minutes the doctor said.

"T'Kel, just about done with your exam, scans came out as good as could be expected. Your ribs are being mended as we speak. You likely have a mild concussion, nothing some rest and that analgesic couldn't fix. Bed rest until your next scheduled duty, and light duty on that shift. Then you are cleared for full unrestricted duty. If you have any more severe symptoms, nausea, vomiting, vertigo, blurred vision, lights start to bother you or loss of consciousness, head on back to sick bay. Any questions?"

T'kel shook his head. " No Doctor, you have my gratitude for providing me with expedited and thorough care."

T'kel noticed Ensign more was currently occupied with another member of the medical team.

( reply any ,but not needed )

(USS Exeter – observation Lounge –CFO – LT – Ire Williams – 2335)

Ire watched as Sleaford left the room and sighed feeling the tiredness sitting heavily on his shoulder. He looked over at the other two women in the room.

~What the hell~

“You both Okay?”

(Reply DuBois)

"I'm fine. Long day."

He watched as Erin stood and moved over to the windows. He ground the palms of his hands into his eyes as he pushed away the tiredness.

“I am sorry about Ensign Sleaford departure. It has been an awfully long and tiring day. Thank you both for coming if you have places to be, please don't let me stop you.”

(Reply Cortez, DuBois)

(USS Exeter – Sickbay – MedIntern aEns Lana Wakeman – 2335)

Lana walked around sickbay on quiet feet. Feet that had spent the last couple of years on late shifts during her nursing days. Now, a few months short of moving on to the next phase of her life, she spent her time finishing her assignments, occasionally right on the deadline, but finishing them nonetheless, and working shifts in here. She was currently checking on each of the patients, checking their charts and generally doing what she was supposed to be doing; learning all she could. Her time with the Exeter was not infinite, and she was making sure to make the most of every moment she had remaining to finish up here before moving on to SFMHQ and the Academy.

Reaching the bed where it appeared that Ensign T'Kel was being treated, a look of confusion on her face as Doctor Methor and Ewan Macdonald were treating him. As Dural investigated T'Kel's injuries, she stood close by, learning, watching, and generally being around if she was needed.

Quietly, she stepped over to Ensign More, her face a picture of worry, and confusion, she fiddled with her pony tail, straightening and tightening it.

“Forgive my intrusion Sir. A moment of your precious time; if possible?”

(Reply More)

"I know I'm just being a silly girl, but something happened, that I can't make sense of. It's probably nothing, I...you know...I really shouldn't waste your time." Her voice demurely quiet as she split her attention between talking to Ensign More, and listening to T'Kel's treatment.

(Reply More)

(USS Exeter – Counselling Offices – Ensign Janice Hammerfield – 2335)

Janice had taken a little bit longer to get to the offices than it would normally take her as she planned her route to take paths that weren't too busy. She didn't feel like being around particular busy areas. Walking down the corridors she covered her blood stained uniform as best she could so not to draw any questions from anyone. She opened the doors to the offices and looked for the nearest person, "Im here to see Lieutenant Corsica."

(reply Corsica)

(USS Exeter – Sickbay – ACOMO – Ensign – Dural Methor DrPH – 2336)

The human paused for a moment before answering then nodded. "Yes Doctor. Do you want me to start?"

Dural nodded. "Correct." He said handing the instrument back to McDonald.

"If you could lye still and try to relax. This should not hurt but I am sorry if it does."

Ewan explained to the patient.

"This is one of the things I enjoy about the Federation Medicine." Dural stated.

(Reply McDonald)

"In the Cardassian Hospitals everyone was so concerned about personal glory to make a name for themselves, many of the nurses and technicians didn't get the practice in that they really needed. Instead of standing there waiting for me to instruct you, you can put your hands to work healing. We can work better as a team this way, don't you think?"

(Reply McDonald)

"While you are knitting bones back together, I will finish the examination." Dural said.

(Reply McDonald)

" Ensign More , you may ask me any question you wish and I will give you any answer that I can."

“ Very well. Tell me exactly what happened please.” Stan said

~His questioning falls well with in what I would need to ask. Teamwork!~ Dural thought.

“Computer reduce illumination by thirty percent, Mister T’Kel, head and eyes straight forward please.” Dural instructed, and the light dimmed by almost one third.

(Reply T’Kel, More)

As Stan asked his questions and T’Kel answered, Dural shined a pen light briefly in T’Kel’s eyes, first in one eye, then the other, checking pupillary responses. He knew he could just scan it and he certainly would go the quicker route if his patient seemed in any distress, but it was good to keep up the skills to do things with out technology, sometimes it failed.

Dural then switched off the light portion. “Computer resume normal illumination.” As commanded the lights returned to the previous illumination.

“Head forward,” Dural reminded him, “now follow the instrument with your eyes only.” Dural then moved the penlight in such a manner to check all of the Vulcan’s oculomotor nerves.

(Reply T'Kel, More)

"Sorry to interrupt Mr. More." Dural apologized.

(Reply More)

"T'Kel, just about done with your exam, scans came out as good as could be expected. Your ribs are being mended as we speak. You likely have a mild concussion, nothing some rest and that analgesic couldn't fix." Dural explained. "Bed rest until your next scheduled duty, and light duty on that shift. Then you are cleared for full unrestricted duty. If you have any more severe symptoms, nausea, vomiting, vertigo, blurred vision, lights start to bother you or loss of consciousness, head on back to sick bay. Any questions?" the Doctor said.

(Reply T'Kel )

(USS Exeter – observation Lounge – CSO LT JG Erin Cortez & Caity DuBois – 2337)

"You both Okay?"

Caity looked at him and smiled softly, "As much as i can be after today." She glanced at Lieutenant Cortez, still standing by the window and then leant towards Lieutenant Williams and lowered her voice,

"I'm more concerned about Lieutenant Cortez. She's.... Had a rough day...."

Pausing for a moment, Caity sat back and said, "How are you doing Lieutenant Williams?"

"I'm fine. Long day."

Erin, sighing heavily, muttered under her breath, "Well, it certainly has. Long and draining."

"I am sorry about Ensign Sleaford departure. It has been an awfully long and tiring day. Thank you both for coming if you have places to be, please don't let me stop you."

Caity opened her mouth to reply but the sound of others walking into the Observation Lounge interrupted her.

Erin heard the footsteps and the voices but didn't turn to see who had walked in. Wanting nothing more than to curl up in bed and try to process what had happened so far this day, she kept her gaze looking out into the stars.

"Yeah it was. Come on Jorash, you've been around humans long enough. Sometimes you park your car in a garage and sometimes you park your car in a....Oh sorry didn't see you guys there."

There had been a voice... something in Erin went cold almost as she heard the voice. ~It's.... Oh.... oh no.~ she thought to herself as she tightened her fist a little. ~But there were three.... Definitely three voices then. Billy, i know but the other two... one of them... ~

Fixing a calm look on her face, she turned and smiled at Billy, "Good evening, Lieutenant. Gentlemen."

Caity glanced at her a moment and then turned back to the men that had walked in,

"In my line of work, Lieutenant, i have heard much worse than i just heard now." she winked.

(reply Ire, any)

"You guys are up late. Anyways, don't mind us. Usually right at the tail end of Beta shift, but right before Gamma, some of us Gamma shifters get together with the first Beta shifters to get off and have some coffee and donuts. Something of a bit of a tradition." Billy said with a smile. "Reno and I are coming on, Jorash, Ken, and Ryu are going off." The other men nodded.

"Its ok, Billy," Reno said with a chuckle, "The alpha shifters wouldn't understand."

"Yeah, a few others might be walking in, well in theory, they might skip due to the lock down. But if you guys are doing anything confidential, you might want to find another location. If you check the log, I've got the observation lounge signed out officially at 2345."

Erin nodded, "I did check, this was just a quick catch up. Haven't had a lot of chance to see friends today." ~I need to find Ensign Sleeford.. ~

Caity, raising a slight eyebrow, nodded, "Yes, we've all had a long day."

(reply Ire, any)

"You're free to stay for donuts if you want. Jorash, who is bringing the donuts tonight?"

"Ummm, I think its Rigo Teres. He usually has good taste. I hope he brings a lot of the creme filled kind. Those are my favorite."

"Anyways, sorry again for the interruption. So what were you guys working on? I saw Sleeford storm off in a huff, you weren't teasing the poor guy were you?"

Erin looked at him, "Teasing him? No. Long day like i said. Everyone is a bit on edge at the moment." Turning to Ire, Erin smiled,

"Lieutenant, if you don't mind, i might have to impose on your generosity a little longer."

(Reply Ire)

Moving towards the table at which Ire and Caity were sitting, "Would it be too much of an imposition to ask if you wouldn't mind walking with us to our quarters? I'm sure Miss Dubois would appreciate it."

~Okay, i'll go with this for now.~ Caity thought as she looked at Ire and then, Erin. "If that's okay?"

(Reply Ire)

Erin smiled at the men stood with Billy, "Sorry to chat and run but we're all tired. Nice to meet you.... I'm sorry, I forgot your names, Not yours, Billy." she added with a wink.

(Reply Billy and others)

Heading to the door of the observation lounge, she smiled at Ire and Caity, "Don't know about you two but my bed is calling me right now."

(Reply Ire)

Caity stood and walked over to Erin, "I have to agree, bed sounds good right about now."

"Enjoy the donuts, gentlemen." Erin said and headed out of the door, followed closely by Caity.

(Reply Ire, Billy and the others)

(USS Exeter – Sickbay - Tac/Sec Ens.(Sg) Stan More - 23:37)

~ **She made us** ~ The words seemed to dance in his head. Why did it have to be a she? With all his personal problems concerning his ex fiancé. Could Stan still be professional and fair? Was it right for someone with female trust issues to be involved in the case? If he could should he step down? Why did it have to be.....

Then he noticed her. Stan had seen Wakeman around by had not really spoken with them. She seemed worried about something.

"Forgive my intrusion Sir. A moment of your precious time; if possible?"

Stan really did not want to leave the area. But it could be something important.

"How can I help ye today ma'am?" He asked

"I know I'm just being a silly girl, but something happened, that I can't make sense of. It's probably nothing, I...you know...I really shouldn't waste your time." Her voice demurely quiet as she split her attention between talking to Ensign More, and listening to T'Kel's treatment.

"No please go on," Stan said

( Reply , Wakeman )

(USS Exeter – Sickbay - MedIntern aEns Lana Wakeman - 23:38)

“ No please go on,” Stan said

Lana drew a gentle breath. “It was really strange now I think about it, and dead suspicious.” smiling gently, Lana continued. “You know Ensign Green? The one with the boyfriend back on mars that she misses, got a cat back home too. One of the legs is shorter than the other. The cat, not the boyfriend. Where was I?” Lana’s face was a picture of vapid confusion.

(Reply More)

“Sorry, you must stop distracting me. Now, she was in here a short while ago. Ensign Green I mean, not her cat. Now, I don’t know Maxine all that well, but she has an odd way about her sometimes.” Lana said, her full attention on Ensign More.

(Reply More)

“No, there was nothing wrong with her, not exactly it was just that she came in asking for Ensign T’Kel.”

(Reply More)

“That was just the thing. It was before he came in. She came in, asked about him. I told Ensign Green that he wasn’t in. She then just shook her head, mumbled something and left. Oh dear, I hope she isn’t involved in any way, how terrifying.”

( Reply More)

(USS Exeter – Sickbay - Tac/Sec Ens.(Sg) Stan More - 23:39 )

Even though he was in sickbay. Stan was still investigating Nix’s death. He had already collected troubling information on Thorn. Now he had been pulled to one side by Wakeman. Who seemed concerned over something.

Lana drew a gentle breath. “It was really strange now I think about it, and dead suspicious.” smiling gently, Lana continued. “You know Ensign Green? The one with the boyfriend back on mars that she misses, got a cat back home too. One of the legs is shorter than the other. The cat, not the boyfriend. Where was I?” Lana’s face was a picture of vapid confusion.

Stan had been trained in interviewing techniques , interviewee types and reading body language. It was clear Lana was concerned about Ensign Green. He needed to use restraint and patience. To find out what was concerning her.

“ Yer concern for yer friend Ensign Green?” Stan said gently.

“Sorry, you must stop distracting me. Now, she was in here a short while ago. Ensign Green I mean, not her cat. Now, I don’t know Maxine all that well, but she has an odd way about her sometimes.” Lana said, her full attention on Ensign More.

“ Did she come in here because of illness?” Stan asked. Sometimes when someone was ill. They could seem to behave strangely. Like a great aunt of Stan's. Who lost her Scottish accent. It turned out she’d had a stroke.

“No, there was nothing wrong with her, not exactly it was just that she came in asking for Ensign T’Kel.”

Wakeman now had Stan’s full attention.

“ When was this?” He asked

"That was just the thing. It was before he came in. She came in, asked about him. I told Ensign Green that he wasn't in. She then just shook her head, mumbled something and left. Oh dear, I hope she isn't involved in any way, how terrifying."

Stan was suddenly very alert.

"This is very important. Please try and remember what Ensign Green was mumbling about..." He said slowly.

( Reply , Wakeman )

(USS Exeter – observation Lounge –SOPS. Lt. JG Billy Alexander – 2340)

"And yeah, then later on that summer, I fixed her pothole." Billy said as he walked into the observation lounge with four other officers.

"Is that an earth Euphemism?" A cardassian conn officer, Reno Derk said to him with an inquisitive smirk.

"No," Billy said chuckling, "Her property had a centuries old asphalt road leading up to it. I fixed it for her. She kept falling into it while jogging. She did let me sample her milk and cookies though." Billy smirked and raised his eyebrows.

"Milk and cookies, what an odd payment." A bolian ops officer, Jorash Bolt, opined.

"Jorash, I'm pretty sure that was an Earth euphemism." Reno added.

"Yeah it was. Come on Jorash, you've been around humans long enough. Sometimes you park your car in a garage and sometimes you park your car in a...." Billy paused, he hadn't realized that the observation lounge was being used. "Oh sorry didn't see you guys there."

(reply Ire, Erin, Caity)

"You guys are up late. Anyways, don't mind us. Usually right at the tail end of Beta shift, but right before Gamma, some of us Gamma shifters get together with the first Beta shifters to get off and have some coffee and donuts. Something of a bit of a tradition." Billy said with a smile. "Reno and I are coming on, Jorash, Ken, and Ryu are going off." The two science officers with Billy, Kenneth Coleman and Ryu Takayama both nodded.

"Its ok, Billy," Reno said with a chuckle, "The alpha shifters wouldn't understand."

"Yeah, a few others might be walking in, well in theory, they might skip do to the lock down. But if you guys are doing anything confidential, you might want to find another location. If you check the log, I've got the observation lounge signed out officially at 2345."

(reply Ire, Erin, Caity)

"You're free to stay for donuts if you want. Jorash, who is bringing the donuts tonight?"

"Ummm, I think its Rigo Teres. He usually has good taste. I hope he brings a lot of the creme filled kind. Those are my favorite."

"Anyways, sorry again for the interruption. So what were you guys working on. I saw Sleeford storm off in a huff, you weren't teasing the poor guy were you?"

(reply Ire, Erin, Caity)

(USS Exeter – observation Lounge –CFO – Lieutenant – Ire Williams– 2342)

"In my line of work,Lieutenant, i have heard much worse than i just heard now."

Ire nodded. "I am sure that you have."

"You guys are up late. Anyways, don't mind us. Usually right at the tail end of Beta shift, but right before Gamma, some of us Gamma shifters get together with the first Beta shifters to get off and have some coffee and donuts. Something of a bit of a tradition."

Ire looked over at Billy

"Reno and I are coming on, Jorash, Ken, and Ryu are going off." The other men nodded.

"Its ok, Billy,"

"The alpha shifters wouldn't understand."

"Yeah, a few others might be walking in, well in theory, they might skip due to the lock down. But if you guys are doing anything confidential, you might want to find another location. If you check the log, I've got the observation lounge signed out officially at 2345."

Ire was about to speak but Erin spoke first.

"I did check, this was just a quick catch up. Haven't had a lot of chance to see friends today."

"Yes, we've all had a long day."

"Yes we have."

"You're free to stay for donuts if you want. Jorash, who is bringing the donuts tonight?"

"Ummm, I think its Rigo Teres. He usually has good taste. I hope he brings a lot of the creme filled kind. Those are my favorite."

"Anyways, sorry again for the interruption. So what were you guys working on? I saw Sleeford storm off in a huff, you weren't teasing the poor guy were you?"

"Teasing him? No. Long day like i said. Everyone is a bit on edge at the moment."

He saw Erin turn towards him and smiled,

"Lieutenant, if you don't mind, i might have to impose on your generosity a little longer."

"Of course, Erin."

"Would it be too much of an imposition to ask if you wouldn't mind walking with us to our quarters? I'm sure Miss Dubois would appreciate it."

"If that's okay?"

"Not a problem."

He saw Erin smiled at the men stood with Billy,

"Sorry to chat and run but we're all tired. Nice to meet you.... I'm sorry, I forgot your names, Not yours, Billy." she added with a wink.

(Reply Billy and others)

"Don't know about you two but my bed is calling me right now."

"That would be nice. I am still on shift and should be getting back to the bridge."

"I have to agree, bed sounds good right about now."

"Enjoy the donuts, gentlemen."

He gave the other a nod and followed DuBois and Cortez out of the observation lounge.

(Reply Cortez, Billy and the others)

(Uss Exeter- Operations office - COO Ensign (sg) Paul Sleeford 23:45)

Walking into Ops Sleeford slammed the door to the inner office closed and dropped heavily into the chair, closing his eyes he ran his hand over his face.

The day had started badly and ended up even worse the bad. Sighing he stood and walked over to the door opening it he glanced out into the outer office, seeing the three crewmen with their heads buried in pretend work.

Smiling Sleeford walked back to the office and sat at he desk, picking up a PADD he started to try catching up with his work.

(Posted by Alistair)

(USS Exeter – hallway – CSO LT JG Erin Cortez – 2349)

As the door to Caity's quarters closed, Erin turned to Ire with a look of something close to determination and worry on her face.

"Ire, I need to ask you something. "

(Reply ire)

"I need to see Ensign Sleeford. Would you mind walking with me? "

(Reply Ire)

Smiling, Erin nodded and tapped her combadge. "Cortez to Sleeford."

(Reply Sleeford)

"Where are you, Ensign?"

(Reply Sleeford)

"Okay, myself and Lieutenant Williams are on our way. Could you get Commander Merek to meet us at your office as soon of not immediately?"

(Reply Sleeford)

"I'll explain all when we get there. Cortez out." Taking a breath, she looked at Ire and sighed,

"I know you want to get home to your fiancé. I am sorry for dragging you into this but I need you to verify what I am going to say to them."

(Reply Ire)

"Thankyou Lieutenant. "

(USS Exeter – hallway –CFO – Lieutenant – Ire Williams– 2351)

"Ire, I need to ask you something. "

Ire looked over a her as they carried on down the corridor. He was about to make a joke remark but the look on her face stopped him.

"Sure, go for it."

"I need to see Ensign Sleeford. Would you mind walking with me? "

~He was just here you could have talked to him then~

"Of course. It will be good for crewman Anderson to have more helm time."

"Cortez to Sleeford."

(Reply Sleeford)

"Where are you, Ensign?"

(Reply Sleeford)

"Okay, myself and Lieutenant Williams are on our way. Could you get Commander Merek to meet us at your office as soon of not immediately?"

(Reply Sleeford)

"I'll explain all when we get there. Cortez out."

"I know you want to get home to your fiancé. I am sorry for dragging you into this, but I need you to verify what I am going to say to them."

He nodded.

"No problem. I understand."

"Thank you, Lieutenant. "

(USS Exeter – Ops Office– CSO LT JG Erin Cortez – 2352)

Walking into the office, Erin looked at Ensign Sleeford and nodded, "Ire's here to back me up on something so please speak freely."

(Reply any)

"I need to run a voice analysis on three individuals against the two voice prints from earlier and Ire is here to verify that these three were the ones in the room at the time."

(Reply any)

(USS Exeter - OPs Office - COO -Ensign (sg) Paul Sleeford 23:53)

Sleeford yawned, it had been a long day and he knew it wasn't going to be over anytime soon, this wouldn't be his first all nighter and it probably wouldn't be his last. Picking up the PADD with the latest shift rota Sleeford read through the names, making a few changes he signed off the rota and picked up the next PADD

"Cortez to Sleeford."

Hearing the voice of the Chief Science officer Sleeford cringed, he knew the rocket was coming but he had hoped it was going to be in the morning

"Sleeford here"

"Where are you, Ensign?"

"In the Ops office"

"Okay, myself and Lieutenant Williams are on our way. Could you get Commander Merek to meet us at your office as soon of not immediately?"

"Understood Lieutenant, Can I ask why ?"

~So we're dragging the second officer into this mess, ah well it was a fun ride while it lasted, maybe the janitorial staff will have a vacancy for a busted ensign~

"I'll explain all when we get there. Cortez out."

As the link closed Sleeford began to tidy his desk, the next COO would want it tidy. making sure that all the PADDs where neatly stacked and square to the corner he sat back and waited for the explosion that was incoming.

Tapping his badge he called the 2nd officer, "Sleeford to Commander Merek"

(Reply Merek)

"Sorry to disturb you ma'am, Lieutenant Cortez want your presence in Ops office ASAP"

(Reply Merek)

The doors to Ops opened to allow Williams and Cortez to enter the outer office, as they walked in

"Ire's here to back me up on something so please speak freely."

Looking between the pair Sleeford, nodded and waited for the hammer to fall.

Sighing he spoke, "Can I why?"

"I need to run a voice analysis on three individuals against the two voice prints from earlier and Ire is here to verify that these three were the ones in the room at the time."

Looking between the pair of them, something had happened after he's left the conference lounge, "Okay can we start from the top, what three and which room?"

(Reply Cortez / Williams)

"This sounds like something similar that me and Commander Bracken have been working on. I'll just speak to her."

As the FCO called the first Officer, Sleeford called up the deck plans for the bridge and deck two, running his fore finger around the area of the lounge he nodded.

"Okay there's two doors into the Observation lounge, if you want to keep those people in there I can arrange a small power failure to the doors, maybe long enough for security to get there"

( Reply Cortez)

"Lieutenant Williams to Commander Bracken."

(Reply Braken)

"Sorry to disturb you Ma'am. I am here with Lieutenant commander Merek, Lieutenant Cortez and Ensign Sleeford. We seem to be going down that same lines as us earlier. Do you want to join us or for us to keep you updated?"

(Reply Braken)

(Reply Cortez / Williams)

(USS Exeter – Ops Office– CFO – Lieutenant – Ire Williams – 2355)

Ire followed Cortez into the Ops Office and nodded to the others who were there.

"Ire's here to back me up on something so please speak freely."

Ire nodded as the others spoke.

(Reply any)

"I need to run a voice analysis on three individuals against the two voice prints from earlier and Ire is here to verify that these three were the ones in the room at the time."

~Hang on a minute better speak to Ailynn~

"This sounds like something similar that me and Commander Bracken have been working on. I'll just speak to her."

He tapped his comm badge.

"Lieutenant Williams to Commander Bracken."

(Reply Braken)

"Sorry to disturb you Ma'am. I am here with Lieutenant commander Merek, Lieutenant Cortez and Ensign Sleaford. We seem to be going down that same lines as us earlier. Do you want to join us or for us to keep you updated?"

(Reply Braken)

(Reply Merek, Caortex, Sleeford, Braken, any)

(USS Exeter – Deck 3, Merek/Shara Family Quarters – 2O/CEO – Lt.Cmdr. Keira Merek – 2355)

Keira had just finished cleaning up after supper that she ate by herself. Rayna was already in bed by the time Keira got back home. Venus was even tired enough she wasn't begging like she usually does at the table. She was getting ready to relax a little before turning in. She had her uniform top draped over a dining room chair, with Ravok doing over time for the investigation, he wasn't around to be bothered by it. She moved over to the replicator.

“Aldebaran whiskey, neat, one serving.” Keira ordered.

A small square based tumbler appeared containing a green translucent liquid. She picked the glass and a PADD up, and headed toward the couch, to catch up on reading and relax before turning in. She keyed up what she was going to read, brought the tumbler up to her lips to take a sip.

=^= Sleeford to Commander Merek ^=

~Damnit. Timing.~

She placed the PADD next to her and yanked her jacket off of the chair back causing the chair to hit the ground with a dull thud. She lay the jacket on her lap and tapped the combadge.

“Merek here, send it,” she responded.

=^= Sorry to disturb you ma'am, Lieutenant Cortez want your presence in Ops office ASAP.  
=^=

“I’m sure you two have a really awesome reason why. I’ll be there shortly. Merek out.” She said closing the channel. She picked up her jacket as she got up, leaving the PADD where it was. She placed the still undrunk beverage in the replicator slot, and pushed the button for recycling. ~Damn shame.~

“Computer activate Nanny program.” Keira said near the door.

The nanny hologram appeared, silently waiting for instruction so as not to be too loud and wake the child.

“Sorry to have to call on you again. Something has come up and Ravok is still busy. Please watch Rayna until we return.” Keira said.

“It is as always my pleasure.” The holographic construct said softly.

“Thanks.” Keira said as she walked out the door.

(Reply none)

(USS Exeter - OPS Office – 2O/CEO – Lt. Cmdr. Keira Merek – 2358)

Keira walked into the OPS office just in time to come in to a weird part of the conversation.

"Okay there's two doors into the Observation lounge, if you want to keep those people in there I can arrange a small power failure to the doors, maybe long enough for security to get there" Sleaford said.

( Reply Cortez)

"Lieutenant Williams to Commander Bracken."

Keira nodded at Williams as he saw her walk in.

(Reply Braken)

"Sorry to disturb you Ma'am. I am here with Lieutenant Commander Merek, Lieutenant Cortez and Ensign Sleaford. We seem to be going down that same lines as us earlier. Do you want to join us or for us to keep you updated?"

(Reply Braken)

Keira bided her time to see what just exactly was going on.

(Reply any)

(USS Exeter – Ops Office– FO Cmdr Ailynn Bracken – 2359)

Ailynn had all but given up hope of sleep, she was tired, but every time she started toward the door, something else happened. Finally everything that needed her attention was dealt with, she bade a goodnight to those around her and moved toward the door, eager just to get back to her bed.

=/\=Lieutenant Williams to Commander Bracken.=/\=

Her brain supplying many many other replies, but her mouth managed to ignore them all.

“I’ll come down. If our paths are crossing, then it makes sense that we’re all there. Give me a couple of minutes. Bracken out.”

She picked up her cup, and sighed again after finding it empty. Shaking her head she left the room.

(Reply any in OPs Office)

[illegible]



Turning to her friend and realising this was the first conversation they had had since this whole debacle had started, she smiled softly and then began,

"Sorry to bring you all here. About 15 minutes ago, Lieutenant Williams, Ensign Sleeford, Miss Dubois and I were in the observation Lounge.

After Ensign Sleeford left, three people came in. One of them, I am sure matches the voice that Commander Merek, Ensign Sleeford and myself were trying to identify."

(Reply any in OPs Office)

"The problem is, you have only my word for it. As I was saying to Ensign Sleeford, we can't do anything without proof. So, Commander Merek, would you unlock the files again and we can run the analysis. "

(Reply any in OPs Office)

Turning to Commander Bracken, Erin continued, "Lieutenant Williams was also present and can serve as a backup once I name the three we need to check."

(Reply any in OPs Office)

"Are we ready, Commander Merek?"

(Reply Merek)

(USS Exeter - OPS Office – 2O/CEO – Lt. Cmdr. Keira Merek – 0003)

“Okay, so lets bring each other up to speed; what do we have?” the commander asked.

"Sorry to bring you all here. About 15 minutes ago, Lieutenant Williams, Ensign Sleeford, Miss Dubois and I were in the observation Lounge.

After Ensign Sleeford left, three people came in. One of them, I am sure matches the voice that Commander Merek, Ensign Sleeford and myself were trying to identify."

(Reply any in OPs Office)

"The problem is, you have only my word for it. As I was saying to Ensign Sleeford, we can't do anything without proof. So, Commander Merek, would you unlock the files again and we can run the analysis. "

"Certainly. Computer, access investigation audio files. Authorization Merek Sigma-Gamma-Three." Keira ordered, and sat at the station.

Turning to Commander Bracken, Erin continued, "Lieutenant Williams was also present and can serve as a backup once I name the three we need to check."

(Reply Bracken)

"Are we ready, Commander Merek?" Erin asked.

"File is all cued up." Keira stated.

(Reply any)

=^= Quick.... Sensors..... Down.....=^= The disconnected words issued from the audio emitters one by one, with a sense of urgency just like the times it was played for Merek, Cortez and Sleeford.

(Reply any at meeting)

[illegible]

End Compile

[illegible]