

Episode 4.04

Dissidia

In the centre of a huge alien city, the USS Enterprise sat on its struts on top of a huge shopping centre roof. The skies above were filled with rough purple clouds. They began to clear up and change colour, letting the light from the large star shine onto the skyscrapers.

Astrometrics:

The doors swung open letting Lena walk in. "The Game's finally gone," she sighed, brushing back her stubborn hair.

The large viewscreen zoomed in one small system, on one planet there was a mini picture of the Enterprise flashing on it.

"So do you want to fortify, or move five spaces?" Tom joked.

Lena glanced at him, "what are you talking about?"

"You know, this version of the Astrometrics program looks like Civilization," Tom replied. Lena continued to stare blankly at him. "Um or Alpha Centauri, that has space ships in it."

Lena glanced back at the viewscreen, "I say we just wait until we get another defence unit before leaving this spot."

Tom pulled a disgusted face, "you can't do it, for the love of god." Lena turned to glare at him instead. "Um ok, this is a nice system."

"It doesn't give us any idea where we are in the universe, we could be anywhere. Can we zoom out?" Lena said.

Tom looked worried as he looked at the many buttons, "I've never used that before, we really need an Astrometrics worker."

An unknown crewmember cleared his throat, Lena and Tom glanced over at him.

"All right, where are we Mr uh... Un-named Extra?" Lena asked.

"My name is Arso," the crewmember replied.

"Ok so Mr Arsehole..." Tom said.

Arso interrupted him, "it's Arso you dunce head, there is no E, there is no H, there is no L and there is no another E!"

Lena tried not to laugh while Tom looked like he was going to wet his trousers, "um I'm sorry."

"Where are we then Mr Arso," Lena asked while still trying not to laugh.

"It's not good I'm afraid, we're still in that galaxy but we are closer to our home galaxy than we were before," Arso politely replied.

Tom looked up at the viewscreen, "it does look like we're slap bang in the middle of someone's territory."

"You're once again forgetting the *games only land on or near people* fact," Lena muttered.

Tom tried to ignore her, "the homeworld is the closest planet to the sun, there are several colonies on this planet and the one neighbouring the homeworld."

"Well then get your butt to the bridge, order your kid to take us up carefully and leave this system. Oh and tell him not to bump the warp drive on a tower again," Lena commanded.

"That wasn't his fault Lena, nobody can balance the ship, it was either that warp drive or the other one," Tom muttered, he stopped when he saw Lena staring at him. "I'll be off." He rushed out of the room.

The Enterprise Conference Room:

Wesley pointed at the starchart on the wall panel, "the next game will land on this planet, in four hours."

"Is it populated?" Tom questioned.

Wesley sighed, "why would the Softmicron send a cube to an uninhabited planet?"

Lena walked over to stand nearby Wesley, "this could be a problem. We need to find a landing site and get permission off the natives quickly."

Bryan climbed out of his chair, "I'll set a course." He walked out of the room.

"There is another matter to discuss, right Daniel?" Wesley said directed in Daniel's direction.

Daniel rolled his eyes, "no moron."

"Fine," Wesley groaned.

"Everyone dismissed," Lena said. Everybody headed for their nearest doors.

The Enterprise, Security Office:

"Ok any questions?" James asked as he finished talking about something else. Naomi put her hand up. "No for the last time, I don't know where the beauty parlour room is."

"It's ok I found it," Naomi laughed. "I was just wondering what dye do you use, cos I can see your dark roots."

"I don't dye my hair. Right moving on, any security related questions?" James muttered.

Craig tried to keep a straight face, "yeah you've got to sort that hair out."

"Ok shut up or I'll give you red hair," James grumbled.

Craig looked confused, "what?" Then it hit him, "oh right."

"Can we go now?" Zare moaned.

"No we still have to decide who is going to be the Security Chief," Craig said.

"Hail to the chief," Naomi giggled.

Everyone decided to ignore the last comment. "Lena has already made up her mind, both us will be the Chief unfortunately," James said.

"Oh crap. Well at least you can't boss me around," Craig muttered.

Daniel walked into the room with Wesley behind him. "Ok listen up, Daniel has an announcement," Wesley announced to the entire room.

Daniel pulled a face, "why are you making me do this?"

"Because it's your message, not mine," Wesley replied.

"Fine," Daniel groaned. He cleared his throat, "ok James, Wesley wants to tell you something."

Everybody else groaned, they all headed out of the door.

"I should have known you'd say that," Wesley muttered.

"Ahem, tell me what?" James questioned.

Daniel glared at Wesley, "ok you know your kids are well Slayers, well something has happened or is going to happen that um..." Wesley nudged him, he growled and punched him, knocking him to the ground. "Your kids aren't Chosens or won't be anyway."

James just stared blankly at him, "if that's the case, why was Sasha from the future a Chosen then?"

"From the future exactly, that's probably what did it," Wesley commented.

"Excuse me?" James raised his eyebrow.

"Well when she brought her mum back from the dead, she changed the timeline in a big way," Wesley replied.

"How would that effect anything?" James asked.

Daniel nodded his head, he turned to face Wesley, "yeah how would that effect that?"

Wesley groaned, "think about it. That timeline there were demon attacks all the time. For defence there was probably only Lena. That Voyager and Enterprise needed an extra pair of Chosens."

James and Daniel looked like they understood. "Makes sense, it's kind of a relief actually. They'll be safer this way."

"They're still Slayers though. Well Duncan is, Sasha isn't. Naturals are a lot less safe than a Chosen since they're weaker and..." Wesley stopped when he noticed James glaring at him, "yes he'll be safer like this."

"Yeah um, I still don't get it," Daniel commented. James whispered something in his ear. "Oh I get it. Gee Wes, you're so boring I must have fell asleep and not realised it."

Wesley groaned and walked back out of the room.

Earth, Starfleet Headquarters:

The court was in session once again. Harry was being questioned by the defence lawyer, while everyone in the 'audience' watched, life support machines were on standby.

"Captain Janeway acted selflessly, everything she did she did it for the crew," Harry responded, looking pleased with himself.

The defence lawyer nodded his head, "no further questions Mr Kim."

Arnold, if you remember is the prosecution's lawyer, stood up. "What about all those times she risked the crew to get coffee?" He turned to the rest of the court. "I'd like to call to the stand, Mrs Scott-Richards."

Danny nervously stood up, "I should have known this would happen." She sat down in the witness box.

"You remember a certain mission from eight years ago, Mrs Richards?" Arnold questioned.

"Yeah kinda," Danny replied.

Arnold nodded his head, "what was the mission?"

"We had to go to some alien colony to get um supplies, and it didn't go well," Danny replied.

"I see, what supplies were you after?" Arnold asked.

Danny glanced down at her hands, "coffee." One life support machine down, forty nine to go.

"You knew the mission was going to be dangerous but you still went on it to get an unimportant substance," Arnold said.

"I was ordered to," Danny meekly said. Kathryn coughed. "I mean everyone likes coffee, it wakes you up, it makes you um bitt... I mean sharp."

"It was not food though. The creature you captured had to be given away because it broke free, put two people into comas, one of them being you," Arnold said.

The defence lawyer jumped out of his seat, "objection! The other person in the coma was just Justin Timberlake, he's not important!"

"Objection noted," the judge said.

"Look life in space is dangerous, and unpredictable," Danny muttered.

"Hmm yes whatever," Arnold grumbled. "You may sit down."

Captains Log Stardate 58164.3, ok I'm just guessing there. We're going to leave this area with a little help from another Game Cube, well that was the plan, we've been waiting for ages for it.

The Bridge:

Everyone were on standby or in some cases sitby. Lena drummed her fingers on the side of her chair, obviously this was annoying Tom but he didn't have the guts to complain about it.

"Triah, how long?" Lena groaned.

"Minus twenty minutes," Triah replied.

"Let's face it, we're screwed," Bryan commented. "That Game Cube guessing machine sucks."

Triah looked confused, "didn't we get told about this by that Wesley guy?"

Bryan laughed nervously, "oh I know that, I was just messing with you."

Tom pressed a button on his chair panel, "Paris to Wesley, why is that game not here?"

In: "It should be here by now, I don't understand it."

"Maybe the game crashed," Tom laughed. Everyone stared at him with raised eyebrows. "Or maybe it just refused to load, I'll shut up."

Triah's console went crazy, she glanced back at the command area, "incoming, incoming!"

"It's warning, incoming game, silly," Tom muttered.

Triah looked annoyed, "that's rich coming from the guy who makes lame computer crashing jokes."

Tom pouted, "I didn't even make any blue screen jokes, get it blue sky or screen, get it?"

"Um the planet has a red sky," Jessie pointed out.

Tom groaned, "oh no fair."

"Ten seconds until landing," Triah announced.

"Gee this thing ain't no Tetris game, unless it's a really advanced 3D version," Tom said.

"Somebody punch him," Jessie groaned.

Lena smacked Tom across the head, she glanced over at Jessie, "happy?"

"Yeah thanks," Jessie replied.

The entire crew found themselves standing or sitting in a large open area. There seemed to be no other scenery or landmarks in sight.

James walked over to join the bridge crew, who were looking around with lost expressions on their faces.

"A waiting room, without a way to get into the actual game itself. This is worrying," Lena said in his direction.

Tom's eyes widened, his finger pointed to the centre of the crowd. Everyone else turned to see what he was staring at. Only a foot above a few crewmembers heads stood what looked like a hologram of a human woman. Her long blonde hair blew in a non-existent wind.

"Welcome to the thirteenth cycle," she said in a breathy voice. This left a few of the men a little flushed.

"What?" Lena questioned the rest of the group. Nobody answered.

"Thirteen, how lucky for us to catch a break for once," Tom muttered to himself.

"He or she who wishes to end the cycle, please step up and take the challenge," the hologram explained. She disappeared as quickly as she appeared.

A large computer emerged from the ground underneath where she floated previously. Ten floating windows appeared out of nowhere in the air, surrounding the computer in a circle. Five of the windows were black, while the other five were white with figures blacked out on them.

James passed a knowing glance in Lena's direction, she gave him a groan in return. "This better not be that same Game again," he said to her.

The crewmembers near the computer dispersed to keep away from it. Lena and James instead went towards it, with some of the bridge crew following. Zare, then Craig got to the computer before them.

"This feels like one of those battle games," Craig commented as Lena reached him. Her glare just made him smirk at her.

"I hope you mean fighting type battles," she said.

Zare looked at the screen while typing in a few things. Craig looked over her shoulder to see what the screen said.

"It's a tournament style fighting game between gods, mortals and demons," she said.

"Where have I heard that one before?" Tom asked the others.

"Aaaw damn it," Lena groaned into a hand. She looked towards James expecting him to have a similar reaction, instead he looked pleased. "Are you kidding me?"

"What? Revenge time," James said with a smile.

Lena shook her head, "well I already knew you were nuts."

Craig and Zare turned away from the computer, both looking confused. "Ok not a real tournament it seems, just the fighting style is One on One like them," Zare explained.

"Then how do you win?" James asked her.

"Deathmatch style?" Lena added on.

Duncan ran over to the group, "oh can I play?"

"No!" both James and Jessie replied without even looking at him. He pouted to himself.

Craig shrugged his shoulders, then looked at Zare hoping she would answer the question. She looked just as clueless. "Who knows?" he replied.

"What?" everyone else said.

"The description's really vague, it's like telling a story," Zare said.

"Ugh," Lena groaned. "Let's see it." She walked up to the computer to read what they did. "The battle has raged for many cycles. The side of good battles valiantly, but evil always triumphs. A heroic sacrifice was made, but it did nothing to quell the fighting. Another cycle begins anew."

"Sounds more like a RPG than a fighter," Jessie muttered to herself. The others looked at her with wide eyes, "I don't think it's Pokémon, don't worry."

Lena smirked to herself, "well it sounds cheesy enough to be." Eyes got even wider than normal. "Each player gets to pick a weapon and their gimmick, so definitely not." Everyone looked relieved.

James stood closer so he could look as well. "There's only five slots out of ten left." He looked up at the windows surrounding them. "Makes sense now."

Lena looked a little impatient, "no it doesn't. We're the only ones here, the city was evacuated hours ago. Who the hell logged in before us?"

"We'll do a head count, you Slayers better get logged in ey," Tom sighed.

"Me too?" Duncan asked him.

James covered his face with his hand, "not till you're sixteen, we've been over this."

Jessie passed him a glare, "sixteen!?"

"Oops, better get logged in," James said, avoiding looking her in the face. Jessie quickly moved so he'd almost walk into her. "Ok, that's cheating."

"Mmm hmm," she scolded.

Lena moved her right hand down so it would cover one of Duncan's ears. "We have five slots which have to be filled, and three Slayers. Who else is going in?"

"We don't know what kind of game this is, we need to be careful," James said.

"I'll go," Jessie said.

Daniel shrugged, "yeah I wouldn't mind a go in."

"Hey wait a minute," Craig butted in.

Lena giggled into her hand, "sorry Craig, but it does say fighting game."

Craig tried not to look hurt, but it was obvious. "Oh come on, you and Zare only guessed that from the description. You don't know for sure."

"Actually," Zare cringed, pointing at the screen. "It says so in the character log on screen. One on One fighting."

"No offense but in a One on One fighter with weapons, Jess is just going to get stabbed and it's Game Over," Craig blurted out, earning a Jessie death glare.

"What will you do exactly Craig, run away from the enemy to death?" she grumbled.

"Ok, it's me, James, Zare, Jess and Daniel. Unless anyone has any better ideas," Lena quickly said, looking towards James.

"What?" he asked, raising an eyebrow.

"I figured you'd be all like *no Jessie stays here* or something," Lena replied. James tried not to laugh as Jessie moved her glare back over. "What about Duncan and Sasha?"

The smile left his face as he looked down at Duncan, "where is Sasha?"

"With the other brats," Duncan replied.

"You should go back to join them," Jessie said to him. She looked back up. "I don't want to miss out on the fun."

"How do you work this thing?" Daniel muttered from the computer. Everyone looked over with their eyes wide. Craig, who was standing next to him at the controls, got a shock as a red light shone from the screen and onto him. Seconds later he was gone. "Oops."

"Daniel, what did you do!" Lena snapped.

Daniel looked at where Craig was standing earlier, he then spotted a red circle on the bottom right of the interface. "Oh, maybe if I move a little to the left." He took two steps to his left and turned back to type again.

"Oh no you don't!" Zare grumbled. She pulled him backwards, knocking him to the ground. "You're out." She keyed in a few things. The same thing that happened to Craig happened to her.

"I'm next," Lena groaned into her hand. On the screen were a list of weapons, she mulled over dual wield daggers and a pair of sharp metal claws. She settled on the dual wield, then looked at the second list. "Gimmick? Oh who cares." She selected something at random, then pressed OK. Seconds later she was scanned in and gone.

"Oh well, ladies first?" James said as he looked at Jessie. She smirked at him.

"Craig?"

"Yeah, what's your point?" he said.

"How insulting to women you are," she said, passing him a wink. She messed about with the controls, then disappeared as well.

"Oh neat," Tom commented, looking up at the windows above. James did as well. Only one of the windows was now just black, the four that were before had very distinct shadow figures on them. "Good luck," Tom said as he looked back over to the computer area. James just nodded before turning to log himself in.

The five appeared, lying face down. However every one of them were in completely different places. As they sat up or stood up they saw the holographic woman floating in front of them.

"Each one of you are the key to breaking the cycle. You must journey, allied or alone to find a piece of yourself. Only then you'll be ready. Good luck." She disappeared again.

Lena shook her head to get her bearings back. Only then she noticed her surroundings, her eyes filled with confusion as she stood up. "What the..." Standing in the dead centre of a Borg corridor, Lena's whole body shook with dread. "What kind of sick game is this?"

Meanwhile Zare was having a similar reaction as she looked around. Buildings were falling to bits, the sky was really just a metal wall with water dripping from it. The town around her was so quiet she could hear her own heart beat faster. "Oh my god," she said as the familiar place made her nauseous.

The place James had appeared in was also familiar, but not in anyway haunting for him. Birds chirped in the trees nearby, people walked or ran passed him like he wasn't there. The sun peeped out from behind the clouds every few minutes, and then would hide away again. He turned around to take in the rest of the scenery, unsure of what to make of it.

"Home. Why?" he said to himself. A few kids ran toward him. He didn't have much time to get out of the way, but it didn't matter. They ran right through him like he was a ghost.

Jessie walked alongside a miserable looking forest, she stopped as she reached what looked like an archway. Her eyes followed the ground down the second branch of the walkway she was on, it lead to another arch with a red barrier inside it.

"This place is so freaking weird," a voice startled her. She turned around to see Craig walking behind her, not looking where he was going.

"Wait!" she stopped him. He jumped out of his skin as he nearly bumped into her.

"Woah! Didn't see you there, I thought this place was well... lifeless," he stuttered.

Jessie shook her head, turning towards the arch. "I came out of one of those."

"Hmm, me too," Craig replied, nodding his head. "So er... seen anyone else?"

"No, just the woman," Jessie replied. She turned back around, but kept her eye level to the ground. "Telling us what to do."

"Yeah I didn't get it," Craig sighed. "And you are?"

Jessie finally looked up at him, "it's not just me then?"

"If you mean you have no clue what's going on, or anything for that matter. Yup," Craig replied. He rubbed the back of his head, his face filled with anxiety. "All I know is my name and that I have..." he pulled an old gun out from behind his back, "this."

"I don't even have that," Jessie muttered, looking away.

Craig smiled, handing it over to her. She stared blankly at it. "You'll need it more than me if we run into anything."

"Why, cos I'm a girl?" she said, glaring back at him.

"Oh..." Craig stuttered nervously. "Thought I was being nice. Never mind." He walked down the second path to the blocked archway.

Jessie followed him with her eyes. "So you don't remember who you are, or where we are?"

He turned back around, spinning the gun in both of his hands. "Nope." He accidentally hit himself in the face with it, his cheeks went beetroot red. "Or what I'm doing with this, apparently."

Jessie laughed behind her hand, holding out her right one. "Maybe I should take that after all."

"You should have something. I thought I'd probably need a weapon, and it appeared," Craig said, holding out the gun again. It disappeared in a blue glow, then reappeared again.

Jessie frowned, she did the same. A long sharp spear like weapon appeared in her hands. "Oh, neat."

Craig smiled at her as he continued on his way. "Looks good on you."

"I beg your..." Jessie grumbled. She quickly turned and rushed after him. "Hey!" He stopped, looking very amused. "You don't even know who you are, and you're hitting on me?"

"Wow, you really don't take compliments well," Craig said. "We could still swap, if you want. I have a feeling my aim isn't going to be very good with amnesia."

"Hell no," Jessie snapped. She sighed, trying to compose herself. "Hitting people with this sounds like a lot more fun than shooting."

Craig backed off a bit, raising one of his hands up in a surrender pose. "Ok ok, just don't get any ideas." He looked around, noticing the archway he was heading to was blocked with the red barrier. "So, only one way to go?"

"Mmm hmm," Jessie nodded in agreement.

The pair turned to head towards the only clear archway, with Craig in the lead. They didn't notice a oddly coloured figure running up behind them. It looked more like a glitched hologram than a person, its colours all distorted and shiny. As soon as he or she caught up with them, the area flashed white.

A man's voice echoed around the area, out of nowhere. "Daniel Lavine Versus Shadowed Knight."

Craig and Jessie looked at each other as the light started to fade. "Who?" they both said.

"Is that you?" she asked him. He shook his head.

The voice however wasn't done. "Choose your assist character from your party."

"Oh jeeze," Craig muttered, glancing at Jessie. "So this Daniel guy is supposed to be in our party. Who should help him?"

"I dunno..." Jessie began to reply.

The voice cut in, "one party member selected."

"Ok. That's annoying, who's picking these things?" Jessie grumbled. She turned to Craig to get a response, but she discovered she was now alone. "What the?"

Meanwhile Craig appeared in a vast desert, in the middle of some familiar ancient structures. Standing opposite him was the oddly coloured hologram.

"This gets weirder and weirder," he mumbled to himself.

"Fight commence," the voice bellowed.

Craig's opponent pulled out a sword and shield, then charged for him. He quickly raised his gun. In a blind panic he fired a few shots at it. Every single one was dodged as it leapt into the air, and flew towards him.

"Oh damn it, that's cheating!" he stuttered. He decided to run for it instead.

It caught up to him, and swatted him away with the sword. Craig looked at where he was hit, very surprised that the sword didn't even hurt him. Another swing came for him, he decided to dodge to the side and run for it again.

The hologram instead decided to chuck his shield away like a Frisbee. Craig looked back, saw how close he was to getting hit again and jumped to avoid it smacking him in the legs. To his dismay he jumped a lot higher than he normally would. All he could do was fall back down to the ground.

In no time at all his opponent saved him the trouble, and charged mid air to him again. With another sword swing, Craig was sent flying towards one of the buildings.

Instead of smacking straight into it, he went right through it, smashing it to bits. His landing on the ground didn't feel as bad as it should have been, but it did sting him a bit.

Dazed he pulled himself up, and got ready to try firing again. As the opponent was for some reason attempting to do his Frisbee shield move from too far away, he managed to get a few shots in. Like the sword, the bullets didn't do any damage but it stalled his enemy.

"Assist metre charged," the man's voice bellowed across the battlefield.

"Um, what?" Craig stuttered to himself. He decided to ignore that, and tried to fire again. This time the enemy was not distracted, and did a few barrel rolls to avoid them.

Meanwhile Jessie was standing alone in a white room, looking a tad impatient. A large screen was nearby, showing the battle. A metre sized window like the other one appeared. On the screen it simply said "Assist?"

"Huh?" she muttered. "Fine," she said with a shrug. Her hand reached out to press on the Assist word. In a flash she was gone.

The opponent leapt into the air, aiming the sword at Craig. The sword itself was glowing, the opponent seemed to be chanting into its handle. Craig looked desperately around for cover, but found none close enough. He raised his gun, hoping it would be too distracted to dodge him.

A purple flash distracted him for a second, from right beside him. It cleared up to reveal Jessie kneeling on the ground, looking like she was saying something quietly. When she stopped the ground around her hands started brimming with water. Quick as a flash she jumped back onto her feet, the

water seemingly following her hands. To Craig's surprise she flipped backwards, and floated in mid air. The opponent screeched as it was hit by a pillar of water, right into its face.

"Defeated," the voice said, as everything slowed down.

"Wow," Craig could only say, his mouth unable to close itself.

Jessie landed back on her feet looking just as surprised. "Wow, that was cool." The purple flash appeared to take her away again. Craig soon followed in a white flash.

The pair of them appeared right where they started before the fight. Craig still looked shell shocked.

"That was quite fun actually," Jessie said with a smile.

"How did you... what did you do?" he finally asked.

"I don't know," she replied honestly. "A screen appeared asking if I wanted to assist. I pressed that I would. Then bam! I was there next to you, like I knew what I was doing. I didn't intend to do it, I just did it."

"That's not fair, I was tossed into that fight without any clues on how to use this," Craig muttered, looking disappointed. "This is all very weird."

"I can't even remember what I said when doing that spell," Jessie said in mid thought. "Maybe we should have a look in that archway. We may find something or somebody there."

"Yeah, I'm not doing that again," Craig said with a sigh. "You should probably take the lead."

Lena ran out of one of the archways, with her eyes wide and face paler than usual. Next thing she knew she had ran onto a beach, ankle deep in water. She stopped dead, then looked around in confusion. "Ok, this game is a pain in the ass."

"Oh Lena, don't think you can escape me!" a familiar voice called in a sing song voice, from the archway.

"Oh for fu..." Lena mumbled to herself. Glancing around, there was nowhere nearby to run and hide in. All she could see was the beach, and miles and miles of sea. In the far distance was another archway, but the journey there was too open to run to. "How did she get in, and why... why...?"

A figure stumbled out from the archway, like she tripped up over an invisible rock. Lena stared at her with both her eyebrow and the corner of her mouth raised.

"Pfft, rocks are soooo irrelevant," the figure said to herself. She jumped to her feet, brushing the dirt off her pink catsuit. "Now, where were we?"

"Um, you were over there and I was here," Lena replied, pointing at the archway. "And now, I'm going far, far from here."

"Ohno, silly. You were there and so was I, if you go so do I," Annika said.

Lena's eyes narrowed, her face twisted, "what? I speak English, you know."

"Don't you get it?" Annika asked like she was talking to a child. "You're me." Lena burst out laughing, this made Annika pout like she was the kid now. "Wherever I go, you go. You were meant to be me, stop laughing!"

"What..." Lena tried to say but her laughing got in the way. "Are you." Annika huffed, and folded her arms. "Talking about?" she finally finished.

"This series only exists cos of it, don't pretend you don't know," Annika grumbled.

"I think you're getting confused. This series exists cos of me and Kiara, not me and you," Lena said, barely managing to contain her laughter. "I really gotta go, need to finish this Game. Thanks for the laugh though." She turned around to start her long walk to the second archway.

"You'll never win it until you accept it," Annika sang badly.

Lena stopped again, she turned around. "What do you know about this Game?"

"More than you," Annika said, showing off that toothy grin of hers.

"Why did you log in? I didn't even think you..." Lena asked her. "Wait, James was last to... did you push in front of him?"

"No, I logged in with you cos I am..." Annika replied.

"No don't, I've laughed enough," Lena butted in.

Annika sighed, smiling away at the unfortunate teen. "You have to accept me, or you'll be stuck here forever like everyone else."

"Stuck here? This is a Game. Win or lose, it's gone," Lena muttered.

"That's what you think," Annika smiled.

Meanwhile the Enterprise crewmembers were still stuck in the area from the beginning of the game. Only now they were sharing it with hundreds of other people. The remaining Senior Staff were in the middle of discussing something with a mixture of aliens.

"Wait, that's not how Games work," Tom said, shaking his head.

"It's how this Game works," a woman snapped at him.

"So this doesn't lead to that Matrix thing, we just stay here till it's won?" Daniel questioned the group. The aliens nodded.

"The only thing wrong with that is that this game is unwinnable," a male alien said.

"How long have you been here?" Kiara asked.

The group looked around at each other, nobody had the answer.

"It's really hard to know, all we know is that we've had two cycles so far," the man replied.

"We can watch the Game from the computer," the woman said, pointing at the centre computer. "I've seen three cycles, and it always ends up the same way."

"Why is this Game so hard then?" Tom asked.

"Anybody who logs in loses their memories, at least that's what it looks like," another woman replied. "The problem is from what I've gathered about this Game, you need those memories to win."

Daniel reached to his back pocket to get his cigarette box, he got angry as he couldn't find it. "Those bloody cheaters!"

"I know, exactly," the second woman agreed.

Tom smirked at him, "that's not what he means, I think. But he's sort of right, the Softmicron don't care if we win or not."

Wesley chose that moment to push passed Tom, he jumped a mile. "That's not exactly true. No matter how cruel they are, they've never made an unfair Game."

"What about Game Spheres, those aren't really fair," Kiara said.

"Yes but they're a completely different beast, aren't they?" Wesley said, smiling at her. She shuddered at the creepiness of it.

"Surely if three cycles have passed..." Triah said.

A woman quickly interrupted her, "actually could be more. There's some people that were here before us."

"Ok, but not much time must have passed or we'd have a few people dying of starvation," Triah finished off. "Right?"

"The previous cycle," the man said thoughtfully. Everyone turned to him. "The people who were here before us were dying. A few of our group decided to join the Game not to win it, but to find a way to destroy it at the source."

"What's that gotta do with food?" Tom questioned.

"Like the others our group lost their memories, but they still did some damage before they were..." the man replied.

"Purified," the first woman muttered.

"If they couldn't remember, how did they know to do something?" Kiara asked.

"And what's that got to do with food?" Tom grumbled. Kiara gave him a quick slap across the back of the head. "Ow, god... like mother like daughter."

"That we don't know. All of it I mean," the man replied. "I assume their desire to destroy the game survived over their memory loss."

"Plus it seems like older players in the Game are remembering bits and pieces of their past cycles," the second woman said. "There was a lot more team work going on in that cycle. Before you ask, we can see the Game but we can't hear it. Maybe the Game doesn't want us to jump into the following cycle..."

"With foreknowledge, yeah that would be a problem if they didn't amnesia you," the first woman snapped at her.

Daniel groaned, flopping his arms down at his sides. "For god's sake, what did happen then?"

"We didn't see where they went. Next thing we knew the Game was over, our entire party who went in there were *purified*, and we got food supplies transported in. I assume whoever these Softmicron are, they want to keep us here for a while," the man said.

"Purified, that doesn't make me feel any better," Tom said.

"At the end of the other cycles, the Game announces the stats of the game. No one's won yet, as far as I've been here anyway," the first woman said. "The last time though they announced five losses, and five purified. As you know, there's ten players everytime."

"So just fancy word for dead then?" Daniel pointed out.

"Before you got here there was a cycle with a few purifies," another man piped up. "They lost just like the others, I have no idea why it happened. Why else were a group of five able to log in the last time?"

"I hope the Game doesn't just decide to off five people to make room for newbies, cos that's what it looks like," Tom said.

"No. Despite what you think, Cubes are consistent in their rules. Five people lost differently, the five that replaced them tried to defeat the game differently. Our five would have to do the same," Wesley said a little too cheerfully.

"But how differently, and what does memories have to do with winning?" Tom questioned.

"It's just a theory, something the woman said during the previous cycle. She was oddly non vocal about it this time," the second woman said.

Kiara looked a little uneasy. "So erm, everyone who's played in this game are either still stuck in there or dead. Right? None are here?" The alien group nodded.

"No worries little one, we've got three Slayers in there this time," Wesley said with a smile.

Kiara shuddered again, "stop smiling at me like that, it's creepy."

"Yeah but it's likely they don't know they're Slayers, they'll be as lost as the rest of them," Tom said.

"Thanks for that Tom," Kiara said in a fake cheerful voice. Tom didn't know what to make of it until he got slapped again. "You wonder why everyone hits you."

"Ok fine, I'm going to stand out of hand reach," Tom muttered to himself, he quickly walked away from the others.

"Well, I hope your Slayers are immune," the first woman said. "We have no idea if we'll get food supplies a second time."

In the middle of a dense forest a group of three men were chatting amongst themselves. They didn't see James appear out of nowhere, they just continued chatting. He meanwhile looked around, looking very confused.

"What the, what now?" he asked himself. This got the other men's attention, they turned to face him.

"Friend or foe?" one asked the others.

"He doesn't seem used to the place, so I'll say another player," another replied.

"Could be a trick, I'm sure I've seen that before," the third man said.

"How?" the first one asked with a raised eyebrow.

The third one looked confused, "you're right, that was odd."

"Um, I don't mean to be rude for once but... what the hell are you talking about?" James asked.

"For once?" man two said with a smirk.

The first man walked up to him. "You must be new. It is a bit disorienting at first, losing your memory is a big thing."

"My memory is fine, but thanks," James said.

The other men's eyes widened, they exchanged a few quick glances then turned back to him.

"We've all lost ours," man three said. "I told you he was the enemy." He held out his hand and a sword appeared out of nowhere, as well as a shield on his other arm.

"Um I don't think that's a good idea," man two said uneasily.

James couldn't help but laugh, "a shield, really? What do you do with that?"

"An enemy and a fool, I'll take care of him," man three said boldly, raising the sword. Before James could say or do anything, a bright flash blinded the four briefly.

The voice from before bellowed, "Fionell Roser Versus James Stuart. Choose your assist character from your party."

The third man turned to his party members, he quickly did a dip. Both of them disappeared once he picked. The voice cut in, "one party member selected."

The bright light cleared up to reveal that they were still in the forest, only this time the land they were standing in was a bit clearer of trees.

"Prepare to die demon," Fionell growled, while waving his sword around.

"I'll get right on it," James said with a shrug.

"Fight commence," the voice bellowed.

Fionell charged for him, while James just stood still like he didn't give a damn. At the last second Fionell jumped high into the air, James watched him looking a little impressed. Fionell made his descent, aiming his sword directly at his opponent. Just as he was about to hit, James took a large step to the right. The man made a loud thud as his sword then him crashed right into the ground.

"What the... what kind of trickery is this?" he groaned. Embarrassed, Fionell stumbled back up whilst trying to pull his sword out of the ground. However it would not even budge.

James watched him for a few minutes. Eventually he turned away to walk away, shaking his head. An invisible barrier seemed to stop him. "You're kidding, right?"

Fionell looked up and waved his spare left arm. Multiple weapons flew out from his back, they flew directly towards James. He looked over his shoulder. The weapons surrounded him, then stopped leaving only a few centimetres breathing room.

"What!?" Fionell grunted through his heavy breathing.

James seemed surprised himself. He watched as the weapons dropped to the floor, his eyes then focused on his opponent. Fionell remained on his knees, exhausted and still attached to the handle of the sword. James shook his head again as he made his way over.

One light punch to the face ended the match. "Defeated," the computer voice said.

The white light took the pair away, they reappeared in the denser part of the forest. Fionell was still on his knees, the sword missing. His two friends stood behind him, unsure of what to do. They backed

away when James stepped closer. He held his hand out for Fionell, who eventually took it and climbed to his feet.

"Careful, it's a trick," one of the men stuttered.

Fionell shook his head. "The enemy would have purified me."

"Purified?" James questioned.

Fionell looked back at his wary friends. "You're definitely new here. I apologise for the battle. I am Fionell, and these two are Sesil and Teadus."

"James, and it's ok. So, what do you know about the Game?" James said.

"Is that what you call it?" Sesil sighed. "I suppose you could. We were told just to find a piece of ourselves, but there's people here that try to attack us. Most of them look strange."

"Yeah I was told the same thing, but you guys are the only ones that have picked a fight," James said.

Teadus laughed, slapping Fionell on the shoulder. "I'm not surprised, you gave our Fio a hard time."

"Please don't call me that, Tea," Fio laughed back at him. "That attack you did, I just had you down as a fighter class, didn't expect magic."

James frowned, "magic? No, that's more my wife's style."

"When you stopped my weapons from hitting you," Fionell explained.

"Wait, class? Is that the gimmick the computer was talking about?" James said to himself.

The other men looked confused. "Computer?" Teadus mumbled.

"This could give us the advantage. We don't remember anything that happened to us before we got here," Sesil said. "What can you tell us?"

"Well that we're in something called a Game Cube, we basically have to win the game or we die. It just said it was a one on one fighter, but it looks like it has some dumb item collecting story," James replied, not looking too sure.

"Item collecting? Hmm I suppose, a piece of ourselves," Fionell thought out loud. He brought a flower out of his pocket, which Teadus immediately snatched off him.

"Oh not that again. Who'd want to live in a world full of just flowers? Men who are not interested in the ladies, ey?" Teadus winked.

Fionell snatched it back, "I didn't say that I wanted it, I just had a feeling."

Sesil sighed, "yes, no memories and only feelings of deja vu of our own lives."

"So, amnesia?" James sighed.

Teadus nodded, "yeah, it is strange that you don't have it. We only know our names, that we can summon our weapons by thinking it, and what we were told here."

"And our battle moves come naturally while in battle," Sesil added on.

"I have an idea why I don't have it," James said. "What did you say about the weapons?"

"Just think about it," Fionell answered. "I have multiple it would seem, so I'm likely a weapons master class. Or a freelance."

"This is an RPG Game isn't it, I need to play one," James muttered, looking a little confused. He held his hand out, a bulky sword appeared in it. He pressed a button on it, a piece of the blade separated off to make a second smaller sword. "Better than I thought."

"You don't need it," Teadus laughed.

James shrugged, "we still had to pick one. This one's more my style, I didn't want to go in with knives. Though my sister took that."

"So, how do you win this Game, so we don't die?" Teadus asked.

"I wish I could tell you," James replied with a sigh.

Earth, Starfleet Headquarters:

All of the seats in the 'audience' were clear, instead all of the life support machines were being used. Several security people were guiding the main cast out of the court room.

Chakotay and a security guard headed down one corridor, while having an uninteresting conversation.

"So how did you escape from the Cardassian prison?" Chakotay asked.

"Long story Commander," the security guy replied.

Further down the corridor Admiral Paris was talking to Picard. "Yes they're going to lose," Paris was saying.

"Are you going to tell him?" Picard asked.

Damien appeared from around the corner. "It's ok, don't fight old grannies, I heard quite well."

Chakotay stopped in his tracks, "who... oh crap, who is he?"

The security guy glanced at him, "he's a captain or something, it's weird I've never seen him before this week. I guess there's a lot of captains. He's creepy isn't he?"

Chakotay nodded his head, "yes, he is."

Meanwhile:

"Here little girl!" Seven's singing voice echoed.

Hiding behind a tree, Lena shived her nose in disgust. Metres ahead of her there was another gate.

"Helloooooo?" The voice seemed a lot closer now.

"Sod it!" Lena grumbled. Taking a chance she made a run for it.

Once she was safely through the gate, the scenery changed around her. She shielded her eyes from the blinding sun, which took over most of the sky and even reflected off the sand at her feet.

"Oh crap. This is..." In the corner of her eye, a dark figure seemed to be running towards her. At the last second she swung around and kicked the attacker right in the face. This sent him into a painful sleep a few metres away.

"This is Thairo, no thanks," she continued like nothing happened.

Craig and Jessie were now walking through the first area James was in, going down a wide path surrounded by a mixture of old and modern buildings.

"I must say, I like this area a lot better," Craig said with a smile.

"Anything beats the abandoned theme park," Jessie commented with a shudder.

"You didn't even see it, you big wuss. I told you about it," Craig laughed.

Jessie stopped, placing a hand on her hip. "I bet you ran from it like a little girl, just like you did in that fight of yours."

"Don't be daft. I ran like a man," Craig said.

"I wonder why this feels so, familiar," Jessie mumbled.

Craig gave her a quick glance back as he stopped too. He backtracked a little to re-join her. "Lucky you." She passed him a puzzled glance. "The theme park was the familiar one for me."

Jessie couldn't help but develop a small half smile.

"Well helooo my pretty!" a shrill woman's voice echoed through the buildings.

Jessie looked towards Craig, he looked a little freaked. "That can't be for you."

"Charming," he said.

"Well, are you a pretty girl?" Jessie asked him with a half smile.

Craig frowned, "oooh point."

A figure appeared behind them, as if she was hidden in the shadows. They didn't notice this.

"Am I?" Jessie asked herself.

"I think so," the new arrival said.

The pair jumped simultaneously, then turned around.

"Ohno another battle?" Jessie mumbled.

"It's your turn this time," Craig said plainly.

The woman stepped forward so the light could reach her face. Craig's eyes widened as they recognised her, Jessie not so much.

"You're quite right. Though, you could keep me going for a while."

"No he can't," Jessie laughed, while Craig still looked horrified.

"You... you don't seem shocked," he blurted out.

"No, why would I?" Jessie obviously didn't understand the problem.

Craig pointed towards the familiar woman. "She's you." He looked at Jessie, then the other woman. The only differences he could see were the clothes, and the new arrival's straighter hair. He hadn't yet noticed the darker eyes.

"Not quite," the woman said casually. She pushed him away like he was nothing, closing the gap between her and Jessie. "You don't remember? This should be easy." A hand gesture made Craig disappear in a flash of white.

"Hmm, the woman did say face something of yourself, ok," Jessie said in mid thought. Coming out of it she noticed the lack of Craig. "What did you do to him?"

"Oh nothing. Probably." The woman winked, then smiled deviously.

"He's harmless, what was the point?" Jessie snapped.

The woman giggled, "aaaw, getting a little smitten with him, are you?"

Jessie raised her eyebrow while her shoulders shuddered. "Speak for yourself, you were the one who whisked him away."

The woman growled, "the only way you'll win this game is if you defeat me."

"Oh, so you're the first boss of the game then? They're always easy," Jessie commented.

"Not the way you are now, sweet thing," the woman giggled. "I'll tell you what. As we're one and the same, I'll give you a little *level up*, so to speak." Her hand raised, sparks radiated from her finger tips.

"Wha..." Jessie only had time to say before she was suddenly enveloped by a black mist.

Meanwhile:

Craig appeared in the middle of the desert. At least unlike Lena he was alone.

"What? Like this whole situation wasn't weird enough," he muttered to himself. Quickly he headed towards the hazy part where he figured the archway must be.

The black mist appeared from out of nowhere in front of him. As it got denser a figure appeared in the deep centre of it.

His eyes widened as his whole body trembled in fear, he had no choice but to run.

Zare couldn't believe her eyes, and she had already seen some odd sights today. Standing nearby, just barely, was the legs of a mild rollercoaster. Its train was half sitting on the track, and half dangling over a chasm between the tracks. To her the track didn't look damaged where the missing part was, it seemed that the ride was built to be a death trap.

She was surrounded by more rides like this. It managed to give her more anxiety than the area she was first in.

"A Slayer? This could be the thorn in our sides."

Zare swung around, fully on guard. At first she could not see where the voice came from. Then she realised it came from the direction of the merry go round with demonic looking horses. Movement caught her eye from right on top of it. Then she saw her. A woman in a long, tight dress, sporting a ridiculous M shaped hair style, jumped down to stand in front of her.

"What the hell are you supposed to be?" Zare asked.

"Oh Slayer smack talk, how droll," the woman said in a smooth voice.

"Great, can a villain talk like a normal person for once," Zare grumbled. She raised her fists, metal claws shimmered into existence around them. Without wasting anymore time she leapt forward.

The new arrival waved her hand, she disappeared just as Zare was about to hit her. Within the same second she reappeared close behind her. Zare's eyes shifted to the right like she sensed it anyway.

"Enough!" a rough male voice grunted from above. The woman gasped as she was hurled to the ground with some force.

Zare turned around to see a man wearing old fashioned armour, standing over her attacker. She got up with no resistance from the armour clad man. "Oh thanks, I guess."

"You're thanking the traitor to your cause. Hilarious, don't you agree?" She disappeared before Zare could complain again.

"God. This Game's giving me an aneurysm. Are you another player?" The man pushed a spear almost into her neck. "Obviously not."

"Nothing personal," he said without any passion. Zare grabbed a hold of the tip of the spear, snapping it clean. The whole weapon dissolved in his hands.

"No? This will be," she grumbled.

The white light shone in their eyes. As usual the voice rang out, "Zare Versus Cane. No assist characters available."

"Yeah yeah, I got all this from the last fights," Zare complained. She and Cane appeared in the Borg area, only it seemed a lot more boxed in.

Cane swung the spear in his hands. "This is for the greater good. You understand."

"Defeated."

Craig lay on the ground, badly trying to get his breath back. He tried to look up, but his vision was hazy. He tried to fight his eyelids from falling.

He heard Jessie's voice ring over the haziness, "ohno. Are you ok?" He just saw a blurry figure run up to him before his eyes forced themselves shut.

She knelt down next to him, her hand was shaking as she went to check his pulse.

"Still alive, ok ok, good. What happened?"

"You did it, and you enjoyed every minute of it."

"What, no!" Jessie stuttered. "You did this to him, you made him disappear and then attacked him. Didn't you!?"

A malicious laugh rang around her, she shivered at the sound of it. *"Close. I told you I was going to help, didn't I? You and I make a great team, don't you think. Why don't you just accept it and join me. I'm right here."*

Jessie looked around at the vast desert. Her head shook. "Go to hell!"

"Touchy. For that, I'm going to make you work for it."

Craig disappeared in a flash, leaving Jessie all alone in the desert.

Earth, inside a large brig:

The entire Voyager main cast, and the guest stars were all having a meeting, while receiving some uneasy looks from the guards.

"I'm telling you Damien is here, and he seems to be in charge or something," Chakotay was busy saying.

Harry groaned, "that's what's going on, Damien just replaced the Admirals with his brainwashed versions."

"Well what are we going to do about it then? No one will believe us, and Damien's probably brainwashed the jury to go against us," Kathryn said.

"She's right," Lilly commented.

"I have a suggestion," Annika blurted out.

"Shut up Annika!" everyone moaned. Then it finally hit them, they all looked at her.

"Annika? How did you get here?" Kathryn asked.

"I was caught stealing the flowers off Paris' desk," Annika sheepishly replied.

Chakotay smiled deviously, "here's an idea."

"Maybe you should let our killer here do all the fights, we can't afford to lose," Fionell scolded.

Teadus brushed him off with a chirpy grin, "no way. Why should he have all the fun?"

"It is rather reckless to go chasing after these *dolls*, or copies," Sesil agreed with Fionell.

"It's Slayer not killer," James muttered, but no one listened to him.

"We're in a fighting game aren't we? Our man Fionell here says we can only lose against the enemy," Teadus said.

Fionell scoffed, folding his arms. "You don't think copies of us or other players and foes aren't enemies? The more I see them, the more I believe they were our downfall the last time."

"Who am I kidding?" James remarked, his patience running out. He decided to stand a few metres away from the arguing men, and ignore them.

"I do remember facing the predicament of fighting somebody close to me," Sesil mused. The others stared at him, looking surprised. "I wonder where that came from?"

Two large men appeared out of an archway. "I do wonder that, son," the smaller of the two remarked.

James turned, he quickly went back to the group and stood in front. Teadus seemed to see this as a hint to move forward as well, James put his arm out to tell him he was wrong.

"There you are brother. I shall repay you for your treachery in the last cycle," the large man said in a booming voice, directed towards Teadus.

"I see nobody speaks directly around here," James said with a roll of his eyes. "What do you want?"

"Hmph," the shorter man scoffed. "Stay out of this, freak. This has nothing to do with you."

"Dead wrong. He's a Game Smacker, or something," Teadus blurted out.

James groaned into his hand, he did it again as Teadus gave him a shoulder slap.

The larger man laughed, "an imbecile to the very end."

"You're not kidding," the shorter man agreed.

James shook his head and stepped forward. "Let's get this over with." Both of the men laughed at him.
"What?"

"We don't want to win like that," the larger man laughed.

"What makes you think you'll win, cos I don't," James questioned.

"Typical of a Slayer, they're all about the kill," the larger man commented. "That's what makes these Games so effective."

"You're saying too much Boldaz," the smaller man growled.

"Indeed, but that is of no use to it," the larger man retorted. With a laugh he raised a small staff into the air, then let go of it. It spun around on its own. James moved forward to stop whatever he was doing. He was too late as the two new arrivals disappeared in a purple light.

"What!?" Fionell roared.

James looked back at him, his eyes widened as he noticed Teadus and Sesil had gone too.

"No, not again," Fionell commented. "I remember."

James walked back over to him. "Remember what?"

"This happened in the last cycle. It seemed so familiar," Fionell replied.

"We need to find them then, stop them from losing again," James said.

Fionell sighed, "that portal. The answer is in there, I know it." He ran for the portal the enemies had entered the area in. James gave chase, he tackled him to the ground before he could reach it.

"No wonder this Game is in a thirteenth cycle. Even I am being less impulsive than you idiots are!"

"Ugh, ow..." Fionell groaned. He tried to get up but couldn't. "A hovercar running into me would, ugh... hurt less than this."

James rolled his eyes. "You're right, you'd be dead. You all will be too, if you keep running blindly into danger."

Fionell could only manage sitting, he rested against one of his hands. "Of course, you're right. I just feel like that portal is where we should go."

"You're only remembering stuff you did in the last cycle, you know where you lost," James said.

"That is why I'm suggesting it. I remember those two men, the others vanishing. I must have thought they wouldn't have teleported if they were just going back in. I don't remember much more. It's not exact, I know. It's like a feeling that certain things have happened before, going in there isn't familiar."

"Great we're relying on real *deja vu* then," James muttered. "All right, but we stick together. Ok?"

Fionell nodded, "of course."

Meanwhile on Earth, Starfleet Headquarters:

The trial was continuing again, now there were new people in the audience, also two of the main cast were missing.

Chakotay whispered something into the defence's ear. He smiled as he stood up, "your honour, I would like to question Miss Annika Hansen."

"Uhoh, we're screwed," Picard said into his communicator.

In: "Crap, I'd better get a disguise and get in there."

"Yes sir," Picard whispered.

Some armed guards guided Annika to the witness stand. "Hey I only took flowers, why should I get armed guards?" she moaned.

"Oh you know why," the judge said calmly.

Annika pouted. The defence lawyer walked up to her. "Now Annika, is it true that you betrayed the crew several times during your stay on Voyager?"

"Uh... no," Annika lied.

"Annika you have saved the crew several times, do this just one more time and tell the truth," the defence lawyer said.

"Fine, I did but it was just once... twice, ok three times," Annika muttered.

"On one occasion you were on Voyager's most regular attacker's side, a Mister Damien, is that right?" the defence lawyer asked.

Annika looked down at her feet, "yes but he betrayed me too, he used a device to control my every move."

"I see," the defence lawyer muttered. He started pacing, "now as you probably do not know, Mr Damien has access to many different realities and has the ability to brainwash anyone."

Arnold stood up, "what's this got to do with case?"

"We have reason to believe that the accusers have been brainwashed by this Damien," the defence lawyer replied. The audience gasped.

"That is stupid, I am too great to be brainwashed," Picard commented.

"Do you have any proof of this, Mr Wendel?" the judge questioned.

"In fact we do," the defence lawyer replied.

Just then a guy with a coat over his head rushed inside, he took a seat nearby Picard and Paris who were both sweating like crazy.

"Damien is also dead, but he manages to possess anybody he wants," Wendel said.

"Oh crap," the guy with the coat grumbled.

"That is not proof," Wendel said.

Chakotay leaned in closer to Kathryn, she whispered, "yeesh how long do we have to stall before Sandi and Lilly find anything?"

"I don't know, they should have found Damien's ship by now," Chakotay replied.

Meanwhile, aboard the Pegasus C:

"I thought you were sweet all the time," Lilly was saying as she and Sandi walked down a corridor.

Sandi peeped her head through one door, "not when it comes to Slayer stuff."

"That wasn't Slayer stuff, plus you electrocuted them with the forcefield," Lilly muttered.

"Yeah well, that was never high enough to kill anyone," Sandi said.

Lilly shook her head, she looked inside another room, "bingo."

She and Sandi walked into the room, they found Paris, Picard and two other Admirals tied up in the brig. "Let's just untie Paris and Picard," Sandi said.

"Why, there's four guys here," Lilly questioned.

"Who do you think I am, Miss Stretchy Arms.. I can't carry four old geezers at the same time!" Sandi snapped.

"They look fine, I think they can walk, right guys," Lilly said.

"My leg is broken actually," one admiral moaned.

"You're getting left behind then," Sandi muttered. Lilly nudged her. "Oh fine."

"Yeesh, you used to be nice, whatever happened," Lilly commented.

Sandi sighed, "sorry, bad month."

Cane knelt on the ground, his breathing ragged. "You're good."

"Naturally," Zare shrugged.

"How am I still here?" Cane asked.

"Cos I didn't kill you. What is it with this stupid game?" Zare groaned.

Cane brought himself to his feet. "I should have been withdrawn from the cycle when I lost. I remember this happening to the others. That is why..."

"Who cares, it doesn't explain why you're wearing... that," Zare said, eying the armour the man was wearing.

"It is a lot more suited for battle than what you're wearing," Cane retorted.

Zare shook her head. "I don't care. You're not part of the Game, why did you attack me?"

"It is difficult to explain. Now that I have lost to you, my idea is worthless," Cane said.

"You still attacked me, after saving me. You'll have to do better than a *poor me* comment," Zare grumbled.

Cane turned half away from her, folding his arms. "I believe I have been in this, what do you call it, game for a while now."

"Believe?" Zare interrupted

"Yes. It started as a feeling, now it is truth," Cane said. Zare rolled her eyes to the side. "I cannot keep count on what I cannot remember. All that I do remember is that my previous inclusion in this game, I remembered my defeat from a previous time. Then it occurred to me. If I and the others defeat each other in a few more cycles, then we should be able to remember enough about why we're here to win."

"What?" Zare could only say to all of that.

"It is useless to repeat an obviously flawed theory," Cane replied.

"Good, cos it sounded a lot like crap to me. People have died while you've tried to recover your memory," Zare snapped.

"I know," Cane sighed in a ragged tone.

"Really? I was just guessing," Zare said. "Considering what I've seen so far, and the fact that five slots were used up before I could even join the game."

"You joined of your own will, this is fascinating," Cane commented.

Zare slammed her fist into his face, knocking him back to the ground. "Is that all this is? At least five people have died, and you've admitted to attacking other people. Did you do it?"

"No!" Cane protested. His eyes cast downward. "You were the first. I do not blame you for your wrath though."

"You should come with me," Zare said.

"You do not trust me, that wouldn't be a prudent course of action," Cane said.

Zare looked away, then towards the distorted part of the park she was in. "That's why. I want to make sure you don't muck this up."

"I understand," Cane sighed. He stood back up. "I can be of some use. I know that woman who attacked you is of this game, and I know more of them."

"Good. You can tell me stuff you haven't thought up, and lose the fruity speech," Zare said. She headed for the distortion, dragging him along with her. They disappeared as they hit it, then reappeared in the dreary landscape in front of an archway.

"Fruity?" Cane mumbled.

Meanwhile in a similar area, James and Fionell were walking along a coastal path. They were only a few metres away from an archway.

"Seems like an odd idea for a weapon," Fionell was saying. He frowned, "and transport. Surely there are simpler ways."

"Yeah if I only want my great grandchildren to get home, just to wonder what the fuss was about," James commented.

Fionell frowned, "you're that far from your home? I couldn't imagine."

"Unfortunately you might have to. The Game has already taken you away from yours," James said, a frown formed on his face.

"I see," Fionell looked down to watch his own feet as they walked.

"This has happened to us before, we beat the odds and one of our ships made it home. You will too. What's important now is to stop this Game from doing the same to anymore people," James said.

They both reached the gate, but kept going passed it.

Fionell looked up, a determined smile was planted on his face. "That does sound like something worth fighting for. I'm in." A pair of hands appeared from the archway, grabbed him and yanked him through it.

"Yes you are," a voice taunted him from inside it.

A red barrier appeared in the arch as James tried to follow him. No matter how hard he tried to force himself through, it wouldn't budge. Then he heard a familiar laugh coming from a nearby hill. A tall figure stood, watching him.

"Good to see you, son."

To the man's surprise, James looked down with an annoyed sigh. "Had to be, didn't it?"

"Why do you not run like a girl? Are you going to fight for once?" Peter jumped down and stood in a battle ready way. "Of course, you have no memories of me. Maybe I'll get a decent fight out of you."

James ignored him, thinking aloud. "I see. Sesil and his dad, Teadus and brother. A piece of yourself. It'd be easier to fight your own enemy if you could remember them."

"Not for you it wouldn't," Peter smirked. "Now..."

"You're not my dad, so don't bother. This is just a game."

"Then fight me. Win it."

"No." Peter scowled at him. "I won't do it your way."

"You never did," Peter sighed. "So much for the amnesia. Maybe this will make you change your mind." He pulled a flower from behind his back. "Recognise this?"

"Definitely just a game," James thought out loud again.

Peter continued like he never said anything. "Your friend Fionell had a little accident. You do know what happens to the fools who pick fights with just anyone?!"

"You steal their flowers?" James asked. He pulled a face immediately when he realised what he just said.

Peter's face hardened, he tossed the flower aside. "As usual, your smart mouth gets you into even more trouble." He stepped closer, the usual white light blinded them both briefly.

"James Stuart Versus Peter Taylor. No assist characters available. Fight commence!"

The pair appeared in the first area James was in, only this time they appeared to be boxed in by buildings.

"I'd hardly call it a fight, would you?" Peter sneered, as he cracked his knuckles.

James breathed in deeply as he summoned his sword into his hand. He expected to hear a degrading comment or an angry insult from his opponent, but all he heard was the sound of another weapon being summoned. He looked up to see the image of his dad holding a smaller sword than him.

"Shall I give you a second head start?" Peter taunted.

To his surprise, James smiled confidently. "A second's all I need."

Earth, The Court Room:

"What was Damien's last host when you last saw him, do you remember?" Wendel asked.

"Um, he had Gareth Gates," Annika replied.

"I see," Wendel said.

Chakotay stood up, "it was Justin Timberlake the last time we saw him."

Everyone in the audience panicked. The judge used his hammer to try and settle them down, in other word he threw it at them. "Settle down, he isn't in the court now!"

The guy in the coat fell out of his seat, the coat fell off to reveal who he was; Damien with a bump on his head.

"Your honour, Damien would not be here unless he was up to something," Wendel said.

"We have no proof that he's Damien, and that he's brainwashed the two Admirals," Arnold sneered.

"Damn, what else can we do?" Kathryn asked. Chakotay looked worried.

The two swords clashed, forming a X shape. The larger one pushed further forward, gouging a crack into the smaller sword. Peter narrowed his furious eyes. "You're not afraid of me."

"You're pissed about that," James said as a statement, not a question.

Peter tutted, letting go of the sword with only one of his hands, he threw a hard punch at his opponents face. As the swords separated, he aimed a kick at his chest. James grabbed his foot mid strike, then pushed it. Peter himself flew backwards into one of the buildings, destroying the wall as he went through.

James ran up to join him as he managed to get back up. A fist soon knocked him back down.

"So what now, huh?" Peter spat. He forced himself half way up. "Will you kill me, again? Or do you have to be evil to do it?"

He smiled as James turned a little paler, and his confidence had fallen from his face. Peter climbed to his feet, with a smug look on his own.

"No, not really," James then answered. Peter's smug smile left as quickly as it formed. The last thing he saw was James raise his fist.

"Defeated."

Earth, Starfleet Headquarters:

Lilly and Sandi burst into the room, Paris and Picard were behind them. "Ok stop the madness!" Sandi yelled out.

Everyone stared at them. "Great way to get attention Sandi," Lilly commented.

"Oh my god, there's two Picard and Paris's!" some guy screeched as he pointed at the admirals.

"Oh my, imposters," the fake Picard gasped.

"Like I'd say *oh my*," Picard grumbled.

"There's only one way we can settle this," Chakotay said as he stood up.

Ian tried not to laugh, "being the dumbass he is, he'll probably suggest DNA tests."

Everyone decided to turn their attention on him instead. "Idiot," most of them muttered.

Straight ahead of her she could see a small park, circular in shape. Her eyes darted around whilst taking in what felt like familiar sights. Slowly she walked into it, admiring the beautiful scenery.

Everything around her gradually slowed to a stop. A familiar voice then rung in her ears.

"You and me, we are more alike than you think." Jessie frowned as she tried to figure out the source. *"We both are capable of extreme violence. Beautiful no?"*

"What are you saying?" she asked nothing.

"You have no memory of this, it's a shame."

The brown in her eyes dimmed to an eery black, after a few seconds they changed back. A hand flew up to her head as it happened again, the last hint of the green in them darkened.

Amongst the still crowd, one person seemed unaffected.

"What's happening?" Jessie stuttered through her hand. In between the cracks in her fingers she could see the lone figure walk up to her. "Who are you?" The figure seemed to hesitate at her question. He summoned a weapon anyway. "What are you doing?" Her spare hand glowed, sparks radiating from her fingertips. "No, you have to leave!" The figure stepped closer.

"No!" The darkness took over.

Craig wandered down a path surrounded by small hills. In the distance he could see another figure walking towards him. He tried to wave at him or her to get their attention, but he got no response.

Once he was closer, Craig could see it was an alien man with a huge frown planted on his face. He seemed not to have noticed him, even though they were so close they were about to bump into each other.

"Hello, excuse me."

The man walked passed him without batting an eyelid.

Craig backtracked to stand in front of him, this got the man's attention. A weird shaped sword appeared in his hand. Craig quickly raised his hands up in a surrender pose.

"No, no wait! I was just trying to get your attention."

"Why?" the man spat.

"I figured you'd need help as well," Craig answered.

"Hmph, I need nobody!" the man grumbled. He tried to move around him, Craig kept stopping him by stepping to the side.

"Please, I just need to know. What is this place, what's going on and do you have amnesia?"

The man's frown disappeared, he laughed in his face. "Well if I had amnesia I wouldn't know the answer to the first two."

"Ok, what's going on OR do you have amnesia?" Craig said while going a little red in the cheeks.

"You're new here, obviously," the man said. "I don't work with the others anymore, not after last time."

"Last time?" Craig said.

The man shrugged, his weapon disappeared. "A so called ally decided to attack me. He thought that by beating me, I'd wake up in the next cycle with more memories. The fool." He smirked to himself, "if I see him again I'll have to ask if that worked out well for him."

"Yeah, this cycle stuff... you may as well be explaining physics or fractions to me," Craig muttered.

"That's what the woman at the start calls these battles. I don't know much more than that. We fight, lose no matter what, and start again with memories wiped. I wouldn't hold me to that as my so called ally told me this," the man said.

"If this was the last cycle, how do you remember that?" Craig asked.

The man smiled, "finally, a good question. I keep getting random memories back, seeing you prompted that one."

"Why, you just said I was new," Craig sounded confused.

"You are. I didn't even know we had lost anyone in the last cycle. You must be a replacement," the man said with a heavy sigh. "My name is Ashe Tribbel, what's yours?"

"Craig Anderson," he replied. "I wasn't the only one. There was a girl, but she changed and attacked me."

"Really?" Ashe said.

Craig nodded, "I feel like I know her from before. I don't think it was her, her."

"Wait, attacked you? Did you enter battle mode?" Ashe stuttered.

"Yes," Craig sighed.

"Then she's gone," Ashe muttered.

Craig's eyes widened, "gone? Why would she go when she defeated me?"

Ashe looked suspicious, he backed away slightly. "Yet you're still here. How about that?"

"She wasn't one of those funny coloured people, she was real!" Craig snapped. "Real people don't disappear after a battle, me being here is proof of that."

Ashe didn't seem convinced, "in here they do. You win, you stay. You lose, you disappear. There is no middle ground."

With even the white in her eyes as dark as space, Jessie raised one arm up. A small fireball shot from her hand straight towards her opponent. He leapt out of the way, just in time for it to explode.

Putting her palms out in front of her, a spear appeared in her hands. Holding it with one hand, she spun around. She pointed both the spear and her other hand in his direction. Just in case he ran out of the way. The area she pointed at seemed to freeze and distort.

Suddenly she was right next to him, floating a foot into the air. She spun around twice, surrounding herself with a blue mist.

Once again he dodged, this time by rolling to the side. He jumped backwards onto a three foot wall.

Her arm swung to the right, four bolts of what looked like icicles from different parts of it. They seemed to follow him even when he jumped back down, on the other side. Summoning a sword quickly, he used it to deflect the attack.

If Craig were around, he'd recognise the next spell as she knelt on the ground. Jessie leapt back onto her feet with water flowing from her hands. One backflip sent a huge column of water into her opponent. This sent him flying back into one of the trees in the centre of the park. Like everything else, it broke in half on impact.

While he was down, Jessie raised the spear up to her waist, spinning herself around in the air as she did it. She raised it higher to above her head. It then floated above her, spinning on its own. White orbs surrounded her as she bowed her head, chanting something. The spear returned to her, it was soon lowered by her side as she continued her spell.

Her opponent got back up. He soon noticed what she was doing, but he didn't make any attempt to stop her.

The white orbs started to fade, the black in her eyes faded. She gasped, then fell to the ground. Her opponent ran over to her side.

"Oh my god, what am I doing?" she stuttered.

When she saw how close he'd gotten, she panicked. He raised his hands up, "it's ok. It's ok. I'm not going to hurt you."

Jessie looked around, "we're in a battle..."

"Yeah. I don't know how we get out of them," he said.

"Battle Cancelled."

"That was easy," Jessie mumbled.

"I suppose it was a match between allies, why not," James shrugged.

Jessie cringed a little as she tried to get up. Her opponent held his hand out for her. Reluctantly she took it and helped herself up. "Why didn't you run, or fight back?"

"I couldn't just leave you like that," James replied. He smiled, "it worked didn't it?"

"You mean you took all that, just to wear me out?" Jessie stuttered, her eyes widening. "Who would be that stupid, I was firing firebolts at one point. I dunno what that last one was."

"Pretty badass," James said in a serious tone.

Jessie stared at him like he was insane. "What?" He shrugged again. "Really?" she said with a smile. "Aren't you going to tell me who you are? I missed the battle intro, I can't remember most of the battle actually."

James' smile faded, he looked down briefly then back up at her. "James."

"James what? You're human, I really doubt that's it," Jessie said.

"It's not important. What is, is how did you get so magic-ed up in the first place?" James questioned.

"That's the thing, I have no idea. Maybe you should stay away just in case it happens again," Jessie replied.

James shook his head, "that doesn't sound like something I'd do."

"Wait, you remember who you are?" Jessie sounded surprised. James only nodded. "Maybe you can help fill in the gaps then. What is this place?"

Craig and Ashe continued to argue while they walked through an empty Borg corridor. They were so engrossed in this argument that they had obviously not noticed where they were. They also didn't notice Annika had stepped through an archway, and walked over to them.

"I'm telling you already. I lost a fight and I'm still here."

Ashe scoffed loudly. "Why can't I remember anything after my fight then?"

"You don't remember much anyway," Craig retorted.

"More than you," Ashe threw back at him.

"Hello boys," Annika cooed in a seductive tone.

Both men turned their attention to her. The sight made them both jump out of their skin.

"Eeew," Ashe could only say.

"You've been a naughty, naughty boy," Annika purred.

Ashe widened his eyes, he pointed at Craig. "I... no, him?"

"You're my girl's sweetheart, and sweet you are." Annika's eyes checked out poor Craig, who still had the same look on his face like he was frozen.

"I'll leave you to it," Ashe nervously said. Craig grabbed his arm before he could leave.

Annika brushed her hair, trying badly to look seductive. "I'll take you down, that'll bring her out of hiding. This should be fun."

"Wha... what are you talking about?" Craig whimpered.

Ashe rolled his eyes, "she's going to attack you."

"I got that, but why?" Craig squeaked.

Annika raised her Borg hand, her playful eyes beckoning him. This was having the opposite effect.

"You probably should avoid it."

"Probably!?"

It didn't matter. Annika charged forward. Craig's eyes widened even further before he ran for his life. Somebody jumped down from a raised alcove after him, stopping the crazy drone in her tracks. Before she could react further than that, a fist greeted her face, sending her flying backwards.

Hearing the commotion, Craig stopped and turned back.

"Don't get too close," Ashe warned. "Fight her, lose and you're out."

Lena turned to look at him. "You know about this game?"

"Game?" was her reply.

She scoffed, "obviously not."

Annika held her bruised face. "Owie. My beautiful face!" she cried. "Shall I return the favour?"

"This is a fighting game. You can try," Lena grumbled. She raised her hands slightly, a pair of large daggers appeared.

"Wait!" Craig yelled. It was too late, the area flashed white.

"Lena Janeway Versus Seven of Nine. Choose your assist character from your party."

Lena looked between Ashe and Craig. "Assists?" Ashe shrugged.

"Assists appear in the battle to do some skill or spell, which they claim they can't actually control. It's pretty cool," Craig answered.

Lena smirked at him, "ok." She turned to Ashe. "You fight?" Craig pouted a little as he nodded in acknowledgment. Then she noticed Craig. "What?"

"I did win a battle, he loses a lot apparently," he said.

"Oh brother," Ashe groaned. "She's way out of your league."

"Who cares, I won't need it anyway," Lena shrugged. "How do I pick anyway..." she pointed at Ashe as she said this.

"One party member selected."

"Oh," she managed to utter before the two men disappeared.

Annika rubbed her Borg hand. Both hands went to her hips, then she leaned forward and shook her chest like she was taunting her. "We will add your distinctiveness to our own, sweetie."

Lena almost gagged at the sight. "What... is that your battle stance? Yeah, you weren't added to Voyager for fanservice," she said, the sarcasm dripping from her voice.

"Fight commence!"

"What? I requested this game be upgraded with realistic jiggle physics. You're just jealous," Annika taunted.

"No," Lena groaned. She swung both of the daggers in her hands. "I'm much cooler than that."

Annika clasped her hands behind her back, stretching her arms. Lena cringed again as for some reason her chest, um moved then too. "That just makes me the hot one."

"Gross," Lena could only say. She charged forward to start the battle.

Annika swung her Borg hand across her chest. "Resistance is futile!" Her hand swung back out and her tubules shot out. Above Lena's head a cloud of green appeared.

Lena dodged forward, the cringe now permanently on her face. "I'll make this quick, I'm going to puke." Annika raised another arm to attack, but her opponent was too fast for her. One of the daggers sliced across her, but like the other fights it sadly didn't damage her. Ignoring this, Lena swung her other hand at her. Her attack continued like this, with Annika badly trying to dodge her. After a few of these, the attack ended with a back flip right in the face.

"Defeated!"

Craig and Ashe stared with their mouths gaping open. Meanwhile Lena made her weapons disappear. Her eyes closed briefly as a light shone in front of her. A crystal formed within the light, then the light faded.

The computer voice spoke again, startling them all. *"Lost in time and space, this young warrior is pursued by the embodiment of what she's afraid to become. Whilst trying to escape it, her hand is yet forced, not for her but another. This is where her strength truly lies, encased in crystal."*

"Hmm, that's good right?" Ashe commented.

Craig by now had a mesmerised look on his face, "yeah, she was." Ashe noticed this, and smirked to himself.

"What? I was avoiding Annika not... what?" Lena grumbled.

"So, we just need to beat someone in a fight," Ashe pondered. "Didn't you get a crystal and message after your fight?"

"No," Craig mumbled. "The Jessie girl beat me later and I didn't hear anything."

"Jessie?" Lena sounded surprised. "Why did you two fight?"

"I dunno. A twin of hers arrived, I appeared somewhere else, then Jessie appeared with creepy eyes. She went nuts," Craig replied.

"Oh god," Lena gasped. "You should know what that means by now."

"No," Craig mumbled, blushing madly.

Lena walked over to the pair. "Why are you... She's going to kill... Stop that!"

Ashe elbowed Craig in the arm, "you're making the lady uncomfortable."

"Ugh," Lena groaned, pulling her disgusted face again. "You said *the Jessie girl*. Do you even know who I am?"

"That's a leap," Ashe commented.

"No," Lena and Craig both said at once.

Her face fell. "A Game that wipes players memories, except probably Slayers. Then it rewards you for killing or beating people you hate." Ashe made a leaping gesture with his hand. "That's a cheap move."

"What is?" Craig asked.

Lena frowned, "I got the item for beating *her*. I remember her unfortunately, but you two, you won't remember who you hate."

"She's right. That is cheap. We can never win," Ashe said.

"If it were a game yeah. Wouldn't we know if we were in a Holodeck or..." Craig muttered.

"Memory loss," Ashe butted in.

"You two better stick with me. If I'm right..." Lena said.

"We could just fight whoever until we get the crystals, right?" Craig questioned.

Lena looked behind her where Annika was before. Now there was no sign she was ever there. "What you just said, I think I know why people kept losing this Game."

Meanwhile:

"So somebody fights and wins, making the enemy disappear. The person he/she was meant to beat them can't win anymore," Jessie tried to sum up all the information.

James nodded his head, "and all ten need to win."

"Game over," Jessie quietly said to herself. "The other guy, he lost to me. I didn't..."

"No. I fought an ally, he was ok after," James replied. "He's Craig by the way. Him being in the Game was an accident."

Jessie sighed in relief, "good. So what happens if you lose against an enemy?"

"I'd imagine Game Over, like you said. I assume the Game would end if somebody screwed up, so we must be ok," James replied.

"Ok, suppose you're right. Who am I supposed to fight, I can't remember anybody?" Jessie asked.

James started pacing, "mine was somebody I am afraid of."

"That must have been tough," Jessie sympathetically said. "I wonder who I'm afraid of."

James stopped and looked at her. "You really can't remember anything, at all?" She shook her head. "Have you seen anybody here that gave you the creeps at least?"

"Yes," Jessie answered. "She was taunting me when I changed."

"She," James thought aloud. "We have to find her then."

Jessie shifted her shoulder uncomfortably. "What if I lose it again?" Her face paled. "Who... no, what am I?"

James took a few steps closer to her. By instinct she took one back, then so did he. "You're Jessie, you're my friend..."

"Oh," Jessie sighed. A part of her told her to believe him, she sighed. "But what am I? You saw it. I nearly killed you and this Craig. I'm obviously a monster..."

"No," James interrupted her quickly. "You're Human. You just have a lot of magic in you, it's a lot to keep under control."

"So you're saying I'm a witch?" Jessie asked, a small smile appeared on her face. "Huh, do I fly a broomstick?"

James smirked back at her, "that I'd like to see. Though no black cats."

Jessie giggled into her hand, "and why not? They're cute, I remember that."

"You remember that, but not..." James mused to himself.

Jessie's smile grew a little, "I also remember how to walk, talk, and what planet we're from." She lifted her left hand, then just her ring finger. "I know what this is for."

"No, that's the middle finger and that's rude," James commented, not seriously.

"Are you always like this?" Jessie asked him, almost grinning by now.

"Pretty much," James replied with a shrug.

Jessie nodded, "yeah, I thought so. Laughing with you is a little familiar."

"At?" James smiled.

"Probably," Jessie said. "You shouldn't be offended that this stupid Game has made me forget you. I don't even know what my favourite food is, or what I even look like."

"I'm not, you'll get it back. I was just surprised you'd remember what cats are," James said.

Jessie laughed, "you're awful at lying. So, should we go? You probably know who I need to fight."

"I'm not sure right now, but yeah I should recognise her," James answered.

"Can I ask one favour?" Jessie mumbled.

James frowned, "am I going to like it?"

"I think so," Jessie shrugged. "Until we find my enemy, can you do all the fighting?"

"Wow," James could only say.

"I don't like asking it, and judging by your reaction it's out of character?" Jessie mumbled.

"Very, but I get it. You don't want to turn again," James nodded. "That I can do."

"I hope you don't mean turn," Jessie commented, with a small smirk. "Warn me before you do."

James looked a little worried, he tried to shrug it off. "I shouldn't. We should go."

"That makes me feel much better," Jessie mumbled to herself. "How do I know you're trustworthy then?"

"You were ok with Craig, right?" James said.

"Yeah but, I could handle him. He's harmless," Jessie said, looking down. "I mean as far as I know, you're the opponent I'm supposed to fight."

"Maybe, but that wouldn't be very fair would it?" James commented.

Jessie's eyebrow raised, she gave him a little smirk. "Oh, somebody's a little too confident."

"I meant for me," James smiled.

Meanwhile:

Zare ran up and tackled a large demon with claws. It fell to the ground, taking her with it. With the claws on her hands, she pummeled it with her fists.

"Defeated."

Her face showed disappointment as her opponent disappeared, and she was back with Cane.

"Ok, now what. If that was the wrong..." Cane muttered.

"Still tortured by the loss of her brother, this young warrior steels herself against challenges that awaits her."

"Um, excuse me, what!?" Zare growled. Cane shrugged.

"Faced with uncertainty, she soldiers on to find herself amongst the chaos. Encased in crystal, her resolve."

"What is this claptrap?" Zare asked just before being blinded by light. Her crystal formed within the light, which then faded.

"I think I get it. We need to fight our own personal demons, interesting," Cane said thoughtfully.

Zare frowned, "no, that thing is not inside me. It's real and it kill..." Cane raised both of his eyebrows.
"You didn't mean that literally."

"No," Cane shook his head.

Zare sighed, "this could be a problem with anyone who isn't like me. They won't remember."

"Yes, it certainly makes sense that this game has been going on as long as it has," Cane said.

"We'd better find the others, we'll figure something out then," Zare said.

"Good plan," Lena's voice called from an archway. She as well as Craig, Ashe and Fionell emerged from it. "We're counting four crystals over here."

"Impressive," Cane nodded.

Lena pulled a face as she noticed his armour, the others she was with smirked to themselves. "So that'll be at least five, and I assume James figured it out too. I'll say six."

"That doesn't leave us with many foes to vanquish," Cane said.

Zare raised her hand, "shhh fruity! What did I tell you?"

"He's right though. Our priority is to find Jessie. Apparently her foe is either Unu or her sister. Whoever it is, keeps pulling some magic whammy on her, turning her evil," Lena said.

"Evil what?" Zare sniggered. "What's she going to do, follow James around to death?"

Lena pulled a disgusted face. "What, oh never mind. Evil Witch ok. That's worse than Evil us."

"Witch is close to what I thought," Zare commented. "Just change a letter around."

Lena groaned, "tell King Arthur here to not kill anything, unless he's really really sure that he knows them."

"King what?" both Zare and Cane muttered.

"Ugh god, everything's wasted on them!" Lena complained.

"I got it," Craig piped up.

"No you haven't," Ashe remarked with a smirk.

Fionell stepped forward, "may I interrupt? Teadus and Sesil were confronted by relatives, so..."

"So they're ok then," Craig said.

"That's the thing. We encountered them the last time, I remember that much. How come they lost?" Fionell said.

"I assume all ten need to do the same thing," Lena answered.

"They lost because the others did? This game sucks," Craig commented.

Zare shrugged, "thanks for the awesome contribution Craig." He shook his head and pouted. "Ok, let's look for Jessie, and maybe Cane's opponent. At least we'll know whose his is now."

Meanwhile:

Back at the desert area, a part of the air started to distort. James and Jessie appeared through it, her eyes widened. "Not here again."

"This is Thairo, I think," James said, eyeing the desert city in the distance.

"There's no one here, we should go," Jessie stuttered. She turned to leave, but the distortion had gone. "Um... we can't."

James looked back, just then the woman who looked like Jessie appeared a few metres behind him. Jessie herself looked back around, her eyes managed to go wider. James saw this and turned around as well. His eyes narrowed.

"Unu."

"Oh, another treat for me? You shouldn't have!" Unu taunted, passing James a little wink. He lurched forward, but Jessie quickly put an arm in front of him. "It's ok Jessie, he just likes me a lot better."

"Hardly," James muttered with a lot of anger in his voice.

Jessie looked at him with some worry on her face. "Um, I thought this was my enemy."

"Too bad," James said, clenching his fists.

Jessie stepped forward, this made James very tense, he stayed close behind her. "What did you do to me? Why did you make me attack Craig?"

"That little whelp? You deserved better," Unu replied sweetly. "We both do."

"I'm nothing like you," Jessie grumbled.

"You don't know anything. You don't even remember your bodyguard here," Unu teased. She passed a malicious look to James, "you didn't do a good job with that last time, did you baby?"

Jessie quickly stood in front of him before he did anything reckless. "Stop! You're trying to get him instead of me to fight you, we're not going to fall for it. We'll win this."

Unu smiled, "clever girl is also stupid girl." She took a few steps closer. "Without my little boost, you don't stand a chance. That's what your Slayer boyfriend is for, use him."

"What?" Jessie looked behind her, James looked a little uncomfortable.

"Oh he didn't tell you that? What a gentleman," Unu cooed. "That's what you married him for, right? Protection." She laughed, "why am I asking an amnesic girl? I'll ask him, deep down, he knows."

James moved so he could stand by Jessie's side instead of behind her. "As usual, you don't know what the hell you're blabbering about."

"Ok he doesn't," Unu giggled. "Poor little Jessie. So weak and harmless, she has to befriend someone like him, just to keep her safe. She then starts to delude herself into thinking she's as, or more tough than him. Yet if that were true, she'd not cling to him so much. Pathetic."

Jessie marched forward quickly until she was almost nose to nose with Unu. "Why don't we test your theory, huh?"

Unu smiled, she swayed her head to look over Jessie's shoulder. "Looks like she's getting another stabby, stabby. Sure you want to just stand and watch?"

Jessie quickly turned around as James stepped forward again. "No." She turned back, "I'll prove I'm not some pushover."

"Suit yourself. I'll let you choose where you want to be stabbed this time, fair's fair," Unu said. The area flashed white.

"Jessie Stuart Versus Unu. Choose your assist character from your party."

"Just press assist if it comes up, you can do what you want then," Jessie said, smiling reassuringly. James nodded. "Don't worry, I can do this. Remember, pretty badass?"

He smirked back at her, "I know. Beat her to a pulp."

"Ok, I just don't know how to pick assists," Jessie mumbled.

"Apparently you just point," James replied.

Jessie shook her head, "that's dumb. Ok." She pointed at him, he disappeared afterwards.

The desert area then changed to the desert city, Unu and Jessie reappeared opposite each other.

"Fight commence."

"I told you, without me, you can't use any spells," Unu said. "Not without turning black eyed anyway."

A spear appeared in Jessie's hands, she gave it a quick spin. "I don't need it."

Unu smiled, she raised both of her arms with sparks flying from her hands. Jessie ducked, then rolled to the side. Unu re-aimed, this time Jessie used a fallen statue as cover.

"I thought you didn't need it," Unu taunted her.

Crouched down behind the statue, Jessie edged as close as she could without losing her cover.

"Come on Jessie, just admit it. Without your Slayer, you're a helpless little girl."

The grip on her spear tightened. She could hear Unu walking closer to where she was.

"Stop trying to be something you're not. You are a damsel in distress, why do you think you appeal to him?"

She couldn't handle it any longer. Jessie swung herself over the statue, kicking Unu right in the ribs. She stumbled back, angrily chanting something.

"Too slow," Jessie muttered. She swung her spear like a bat, smacking the other woman right in the face.

"What are you doing? You were registered as a mage, this is cheating!" Unu screeched. She got another smack in the face.

Jessie pouted her lips and shrugged, "why is the game letting me then?" This time she used the spear properly, and poked her roughly in the chest. This made the witch fall backwards to the ground.

"Assist metre charged."

Jessie looked around, nothing happened. She smiled to herself. "So much for being the damsel he wants to rescue."

Unu rolled to her side as she tried to get up. She raised a hand, Jessie quickly kicked her but a purple blast still shot from her hand, knocking her flying backwards. She landed roughly on the ground, rolling on to her front.

"You think he's just going to let you die again, I don't think so," Unu muttered as she got back up.

Jessie tried to push herself up using her hands. Unu by this time was aiming another hand at her, whilst standing on the spear she had dropped.

"Any minute now, hmm?" Unu giggled as her hand glowed.

"No!" Still crouched, Jessie scrambled to her left to dodge another lightning bolt. She leapt forward, grabbing Unu by the waist. The two women fell into the sand. "You're wrong!" Jessie held her down with one hand, then punched her with the other. "He believes in me, I remember that much!" Unu received another punch.

To her surprise, Unu just laughed. "Do you though?"

"I..." Jessie didn't have an answer. Unu used this to her advantage, and went to grab the spear. She noticed this, grabbing it as well at the same time. Unu raised her knees, then kicked her back. She growled as Jessie managed to keep a hold of the weapon and not her.

Another chant sent a bolt Jessie's way. She quickly raised the spear, and swung it around in front of her. This managed to deflect the attack, but the power of it forced her to the ground. Unu felt she had time, so she began to power up a different spell. Her arms crossed over her chest, eyes closed.

Jessie's eyes widened as the woman's body was surrounded by black mist. "I can do this." She raised the spear up so it was level with her waist, then she began to twirl around like the last time. As she expected the spear didn't float in the air like it did then. Spinning it herself she continued anyway. Both of them were too busy to notice a purple light appear between them.

"Poor helpless girl," Unu sneered. She opened her new black eyes, and got a shock.

"You're running out of material," James said. He punched her hard in the face. The black mist disappeared, her eyes returned to normal. He looked back at Jessie before the purple took him away again.

Unu's smirk soon grew back as she noticed Jessie trying to do her own big spell, but nothing was happening. She walked closer, waiting for her to finish.

Jessie lifted her head, then while holding the spear with her right she outstretched her arms.

"That didn't work, what did you expect?" Unu sneered.

"I'm not finished," Jessie muttered. She kneed her in the stomach, then swung the spear across her head.

"Defeated."

Both James and Jessie reappeared in the vast desert.

"You were right, I am a badass," Jessie said with a proud smile.

"Damn right," James commented.

"Yeah." She raised her hand into the air. James took the hint, and gave her a light hi-five.

"Game Over."

Captains Log Stardate, hey none of your business! We've finally dropped off the last our passengers from the Cube, so now we're now on our way to yet another Game Cube site. Sensors show that we've managed to skip five thousand lightyears thanks to the last one, and that the area we're travelling through isn't inhabited. I expect we'll get attacked after I finish this log, it seems a lot more likely.

The Pegasus C:

"This is getting really annoying. Lots of brilliant plans go to waste," Damien moaned.

"You should have stayed away from court room, we might have been fine," Paris said.

Damien groaned, "no we wouldn't, they found them. It wouldn't have made a difference if I was not there."

"So what do we do now?" Paris asked.

"Oh I don't know, how about we bug the Enterprise," Damien replied.

Picard groaned, "oh yeah, pick on my ship."

"Don't mind if I do Picy, I already have an idea so this'll be fun," Damien said evilly. He started laughing maniacally.

"And it's not going to work," Paris whispered. Picard nodded. Damien stopped laughing long enough to shoot the two with a phaser.

***** THE END *****