

## Episode 5.10

### Sin Deep

"He's looking at you, what a creep."

I didn't want to know, but my eyes glided to my right anyway. Sure enough, there were a pair of eyes directed at me. I dared to turn my head slightly to get a better look. A cold shiver ran through my whole body as the gaze I was faced with made me feel like my life was at risk. His eyes were the oddest part, I've never seen that colour before.

Instinct told me to turn my head back to my best friend instead.

"I told you. Men are such weirdos," she grumbled.

My hand rushed to the side of my chin. The stupid blonde hair I hate insisted on tickling my cheek, but it wasn't hiding my face enough. I could still feel his eyes drilling holes into my nerves.

"Do you want me to throw something?"

"No."

"Fine. Hit him?"

A smile tugged at my lips. "You know I could do that myself."

"Save some of the fun for me," my friend said.

The bell rang, it was finally time to escape. We collected our things and made a break for it. Something stopped us from reaching the door.

"Hello," a soft timid voice said at us. "I'm new here. I wondered if you could show me around."

"Huh!" my friend snorted in disgust. "Go sniff around somewhere else, creep." Clutching my arm, she charged for the door.

I didn't recognise him during that first class, but alone at home I remembered him from the previous P.E lesson. Our eyes met for a moment as I looked around at who to pass the ball to. He looked like he was sick, and ran out to the changing rooms moments later. I remembered thinking that he must have had the same hatred for P.E as I did, and was a very good actor.

Something was very off about him, I knew that much.

It's been a few weeks, and I honestly can't remember if any of those days had been free of that boy. Everywhere I looked, he was there, watching me. He had even guest starred in some of my dreams. Good or bad, he'd appear standing at my window, leering at me.

One night I made the mistake of telling dad about one of them. My head shook at the memory of him standing guard outside the house, and then a smile formed when I remembered the part when mum dragged him back in.

"It's interesting. You're the only girl around here I can't figure out."

His voice startled me so much I dropped my bag onto the floor. It was as if he had appeared out of nowhere. *How did he do that?* At least in the other times I had sensed his presence.

The boy smiled as he knelt down to pick up my bag for me. Still startled, I snatched it away from him. He continued to smile anyway.

"I didn't mean to frighten you."

*Right, and you don't mean to stalk me around every corner.* Instead I said, "it's ok." I hate my shyness sometimes.

"Your friend is interesting. She'd be more the type."

This got my alarm bells ringing very loudly. "What does that mean?"

"You're so timid, and fragile. No one would ever guess," the boy continued.

I felt the blood drain from my face. This boy was more than just a creepy stalker. I clutched my bag protectively. I reached inside, hoping that I didn't forget it.

The boy chuckled. "Here? In broad daylight? You've got the wrong idea."

My head turned to the window nearby. The sunlight beamed through the glass and into my eyes. My head turned again. The boy had stood just in front of the light, it shined on him. That can't be right.

"See."

My eyes widened in shock. That's definitely not right. I felt my lips curling a little.

"Don't be afraid." He made a couple of steps backwards to get back in the shade. "I only want to get to know you."

It was hard to take him seriously, but my instincts were screaming at me to do so. Everything was wrong with this boy. Something needs to be done, but what?

The sun rose over the crimson horizon, covering the hills with an ashy haze. The warm breeze blew through the dried out grass and dying crops, carrying some of it across the fields. One particular stalk blew into the face of a man, who briskly batted it away so he could continue what he was doing. A small shuttle flew over his head, blowing it straight back into his face. He ignored the few chuckles from nearby as he flicked it away again.

They all needed cheering up as they had a huge, long task ahead of them, it was hard to know where to start. With the help of several shuttles and the Leda, Voyager was standing on its own feet instead of lying nose down in the ground. However they couldn't really go anywhere as the warp drives had taken a beating, impulse was out too. Even if they were working, the ship had suffered a few hull breaches on its way down.

The crewmembers outside didn't even want to think about the interior damage due to rifts and battle damage. That wasn't all either. Deck Ten and Eleven suffered serious damage. Everyone tried to tell themselves that it could have been much worse. At least Voyager could be salvaged, other ships haven't been so lucky.

A childlike shriek got some of the repair crew's attention. "Look, look at me!" Everyone who recognised the voice groaned, then got back to what they were doing. The ones who didn't looked around for the source, wondering why the child wasn't on the Leda. Only it wasn't a child.

B'Elanna shook her head, keeping her full attention on the two metre gash she was sealing up. "She really needs to get back into therapy. She still doesn't realise she's not in original Voyager anymore."

"That's her only problem?" her teammate mumbled, raising his eyebrow.

A pink blur flew past them. The engineer's eyes widened. Quickly she looked around to see a catsuited figure slide down the saucer in a sitting position. A poor crewmember jumped out of her path, just in time to avoid getting hit. He almost lost his balance as the part he was on was obviously sloped.

Finally the slider reached the end, which now left a drop of about seven decks. She slid off and fell down to the field below. Everyone who saw this groaned in disappointment as thanks to all the dead grass her fall was cushioned. She rubbed her butt and stood up.

"That was fun!" Annika squealed.

A crewmember nearby widened his eyes in horror as she spotted him. He was just about to be raised up to the saucer on a lifting platform. Despite her heels she skipped over to join him. There wasn't really room for both of them, and he'd already pressed the button to ascend. Both of them wobbled a bit as it lifted them up. Next thing he knew she had grabbed a hold of him to avoid falling off.

This didn't work though as he shrieked and pushed her anyway. Unfortunately for the spectators she only fell to the tip of the saucer, and didn't fall again. They were rewarded though as for the next ten minutes she tried to crawl on her hands and knees up. She gave up and decided to make a run for it instead. Not realising how high the top of the ship was, she grew tired and stopped. Her eyes widened once she started skidding back down, somehow keeping her balance while doing so.

Crouching over, she tried to grab a part of the hull to stop her sliding. It worked long enough for her to get her footing back. This time she ran again, but jumped up to reach the top. This didn't work either, and she slid back down on her front, slowly as she wasn't exactly flat there. The ex-drone managed to stop her fall by trying to lift one of her knees up, her heel caught one of the windows.

Satisfied that she had stopped, Annika pushed herself up a little, but the very thin heel had managed to crack the window. Everyone snickered as she disappeared into the crevice.

They all heard screaming from a man. "Oh my eyes!"

"Well, hello handsome. You don't mind that I dropped in?" the nearby people managed to hear her say.

"My ears!"

"Yes, they're very nice."

B'Elanna sighed, "that's another hull breach to sort."

"Oh god, get out. You're scaring my new rabbit wallpaper!" the man screamed.

"Then again, maybe not," B'Elanna smiled.

Meanwhile on the bridge of the downed ship, everyone but Tom was hard at work fixing something. He sat in his chair fiddling around with the computer at the side.

Chakotay squeezed his way through the half open, broken Ready Room doors. He headed over to the command centre.

"Did I just see Annika slide down the ship?"

Tom only nodded without looking up. "Yep."

"Uh huh. I expected more than..." Chakotay said.

"Don't worry, I got it all recorded," Tom said.

Chakotay sighed. "Hard at work, as usual."

Tom finally looked up to see him standing in front of him. "Isn't it time for the first trip?"

"I'd much prefer to look after Voyager, considering the mess you made the last time you were in charge," Chakotay replied hastily.

"If it wasn't for me, it could have been a lot worse," Tom pointed out as he climbed to his feet.

"I like the way you're specific on the why's," Chakotay muttered.

Tom shrugged, "we've got hundreds of aliens to evacuate, I didn't want to waste time listing all the reasons why I rock."

Most of the bridge crew snickered to themselves, Chakotay managed to just smirk. "Is that so? Why don't you take the lead on that then?"

"What?" Tom's eyes widened. "You're blaming all of this on me, and you want me to be responsible for hundreds of people on the Leda?"

"Everything that happens to a starship is the Captain's responsibility. That's the price," Chakotay remarked. "Though you are right. I'll leave Voyager in your irresponsible hands. It's not like you'll crash it again." He headed for the turbolift.

Tom shuddered a little, then sat back down in his chair. He reached out to press a few buttons. "Voyager to Leda."

*"Kim here."*

"I just thought I'd call to say sorry."

*"Chakotay wouldn't back out, huh?"*

Tom looked around the bridge, nobody he really knew was around to blab anything. "Yep, he was adamant, stubborn. I said *Chakotay, Harry can totally handle the Leda himself. He's awesome like that.* He just said, *I know, but I'm still in my badass mood, so I'll do what I want.*"

He heard laughter from a few people on the other end of the comm. *"Oh Tom, I always said you'd make a great comedy writer."*

"Thanks, but what..." Tom said, he then pouted. "Oh come on, that is what happened."

*"Sure Tom. We'll do the last lot of crew transfers and then we'll beam the first alien evacuees aboard. We should be under way to the aliens' other planet within an hour."*

"Did your Astrometrics make sure that their other planet was tower-less?" Tom questioned.

*"No, only you would think of doing that."*

Tom laughed but the abuse was starting to annoy him. "How long should it take to get there and back?"

*"At Warp Nine, two hours. Even with the many people we need to evacuate, I think you'll still be fixing Voyager when we're finished."*

"Probably. We'll have that meeting when you get back. Unfortunately we've been too busy over here," Tom sighed.

*"I'm looking forward to it. I'll let you know when we're ready to leave. Leda out."*

Tom sighed again, covering his face with his hand.

"Busy, is that what we're calling it now?" a voice behind him said. He jumped out of his skin, then looked up.

"James? Are you capable of making any noise while entering a room?"

"I guess, but there's no fun in that," James answered him.

Tom climbed to his feet, sighing once again. "The Leda's leaving, so we can't have that meeting yet."

James raised an eyebrow. "Were you going to tell anyone?"

Tom's eyes shifted side to side. "Um, I want to say yes."

"Fine, I'll see you in a few hours," James said as he turned to leave.

"Wait!" Tom yelled as he jumped to his feet. Both men turned to face each other. "I thought we agreed, each ship has to have a Chosen onboard at all times, we only have two. Ylara's off on the Leda already."

James frowned, "why? Last time I checked she didn't have kids on it, or at all."

"Yes but she's biologically got one on Voyager who can't know she exists," Tom stuttered.

"Ok, I'll bite. What's Kiara doing on Voyager?" James asked him.

Tom started sweating, "um because Chakotay told her to come here, to avoid Ylara on the Leda."

James narrowed his eyes, shaking his head slowly. "I'm sensing a made up paradox here."

Tom now was drowning in his own forehead sweat. "It's just bad timing and luck. It doesn't matter, all the kids are at school or nursery anyway, and they will be when the Leda returns."

"The Leda doesn't even have a nursery or school," James said.

"Oh for god's sake," Tom groaned angrily. He soon regretted it though as he was faced with a Janeway like glare. "I didn't mean literally, they're using the Mess Hall there. Please, get off my back. You can go on the next evacuee trip."

"Fine," James finally agreed.

Tom sighed in relief, "good." James turned to leave again. Tom waited till he was in the turbolift before he said anything else. "As long as you find a way to get Ylara and Kiara swapped without them knowing why."

The door tried to close, but James' hand stopped it. Tom jumped at the noise that made.

"You expect me to lie to my niece?"

"Why not, you've done worse," Tom said but soon regretted that too. Luckily James didn't glare at him this time, he just walked back onto the Bridge. "I hate to be the one to tell you this as I like living, you know." James tried not to smirk at that comment. "With Chakotay being out of character, obviously a certain mum out of the picture, and well... nobody else to, it'll probably come to you to tell them both anyway."

"The thought had come to me too," James quietly said, his smirk long gone.

"I really doubt Yasmin knows what tact is, so she's out," Tom shrugged.

"I haven't a clue either," James tried to smirk again, but it was a bit harder to pull off now.

"Don't worry too much about it right now. Though if Kiara's going to go all out of control Q again, it'll probably be best to do it before we finish repairing the ship," Tom said.

James shook his head as he headed back for the turbolift. "I'm still not coming up with an excuse to swap them."

"Uh, yes you are. Captain's orders," Tom stuttered.

James tried not to laugh, but not hard enough. The door closed on him.

"Damn, this is way too hard," Tom complained.

A random crewmember walked over to pass him a padd. "You could just tell the Ylara chick the truth, you said one Chosen on each ship. As for the kid, family reunion?"

Tom stared blankly at the man, blinking a few times. "That's a ridiculous plan, get back to work." He wandered off, pouting. Tom then smiled and tapped his commbadge, "Paris to Janeway. Can you come to the Bridge, we need to have a chat."

"We do? Can it wait, I'm very busy."

Nathan raised his eyebrow quizzically. "Yes I can see that."

Jessie continued to fold a cardigan, then put it to one side. She turned back to the huge pile of clothes, half buried under a collapsed, broken wardrobe.

"I take it that fell over during the crash, huh," Nathan said as he reached over to help her. She slapped his hand away. "Ow, why?"

Jessie scowled at him, but only half seriously. "I don't want my clothes all folded badly and chucked any old place."

"Ohno can't have a pair of trousers next to a jumper, can we?" Nathan teased her.

"I'm glad you get it," Jessie said, totally missing the sarcasm. She continued with a pair of jeans.

Nathan tried not to smirk. "Maybe I could help you build up the new one," he said as he gestured to the broken side. "If I'm allowed to."

Jessie turned back to him. "If you want. We usually go through a few dozen before we get a finished one, this'll save some time and rations."

"This sounds a bit sexist but, that's what husbands are for, right?" Nathan commented with a sly smile.

Jessie stared at him like he had just admitted to liking Annika. "James is the one that breaks them, not me."

"Oh," Nathan went bright red. "Of course he is."

"I eventually convince him to let me have a go, and then I usually call somebody else," Jessie said with a smirk on her face. "I'm way too little to be holding up huge bits of metal straight."

"Uh huh, you just don't want to get your clothes dirty or something," Nathan teased. He turned towards the pieces of the new wardrobe, then grabbed the padd to look at the instructions.

Jessie narrowed her eyes as she folded a little top. "What did you want to talk about?"

Nathan's good mood faded away. "Oh yeah. Well, him actually."

"Look, if you two just argue I don't care. If he hits you, then maybe I'll interfere," Jessie muttered.

"Ouch," Nathan winced at the thought. He turned around to face her, "no, we got along fine, it's not that. Wait, maybe?"

"Well you did say you wanted to get all *big brother* on him," Jessie smiled.

Nathan shook his head, "I wasn't really serious. I'm definitely not going to do that now."

"Why, what happened?" Jessie asked while she tried to nudge the wardrobe out of her path. Nathan went over to help her, but she didn't need it. "Don't get me wrong, I'm ok with that."

"Yeah well. I didn't fancy picking a fight with a guy who could throw super strong aliens around, while I struggled to deal with one, well half of one," Nathan explained.

Jessie frowned as she put down what she was folding without finishing. "What?"

"It was one of them versus me and Craig, so half," Nathan shrugged.

Jessie shook her head, "that wasn't what I was *what'ing* about."

Nathan sighed as he walked over to stand beside her. "Why didn't you tell me your hubby was a Slayer?"

She didn't answer right away, she rolled her eyes and gave the wardrobe a little smack. Nathan didn't budge but he looked a bit worried. Jessie then turned around to face him directly. "Why does it even matter?" she angrily asked.

"Um because..." Nathan stuttered.

"Let's just forget the fact that you met him, and me when you were being recruited into a Slayer trainee group," Jessie shook her head.

Nathan sighed, he covered his face with his hand. "I know, I feel very stupid about that now."

"Yeah you should," Jessie groaned. "So again I ask, what's the big deal?"

"Maybe I should ask you same thing," Nathan dared to say.

Jessie's eyebrow raised, the fire in her eyes made Nathan back off a step. "Maybe because it would be like you asking somebody *why didn't you tell me you married an alien*, or heck, even somebody from another Earth country. It's offensive and there's no reason for it."

"That's not what I meant, and no it's not," Nathan sighed. He tried to ignore Jessie's stare getting more deadly. "You had a few times to tell me, why didn't you?"

"I'm sorry. I didn't realise you were an idiot, my mistake," Jessie rolled her eyes. "Besides, it doesn't matter. James is James, super strength or not, it doesn't matter to me."

Nathan closed his eyes, he felt terrible. "I know, you're right." He sighed as he turned to the side, towards the window. "I didn't mean it like that. I just thought that..."

"You didn't think," Jessie quietly said. "Was this supposed to be the first thing I should have told you, or could names be exchanged first?"

"I met him before I met you," Nathan also spoke quietly.

"I was just making a point," Jessie shook her head.

Nathan sighed, "I got it. That's not why I said it."

"Then why did you?" Jessie questioned, folding her arms.

"I'm not mad that you didn't tell me. I guess I'm just mad that I didn't figure it out myself," Nathan replied. "Or maybe I did, and I was in denial."

Jessie sighed and rolled her eyes, "fine, you don't want me to be married to a Slayer. If it bugs you so much, maybe you should get out of my life. I'm sure as hell not picking the brother I've only known for five minutes, over my best friend of nearly thirty years. It's your stupid issue, not mine!"

Nathan stared at her in shock, "no, no. You've got me all wrong. I have no problem with it at all. In fact, it's the opposite."

Now she was confused, her head shook. "Huh?"

### **Voyager's Conference Room**

The senior staff stared blankly in the direction of the wall computer, Tom meanwhile had his back to them while he worked on one side of it. He kept pointing at different things to his left. Eventually he moved out of its way, revealing what looked like a kid's drawing on a large piece of paper. "Any questions?" Everyone raised their hands. Tom dared to glare in James' direction before looking at everyone in dismay. "Oh come on! It can't get any clearer than that."

"I was just going to ask if that little blob is supposed to be Voyager," James said.

Tom looked behind him at the work of art he had drawn, then back again with an angry look on his face. "No, that's the planet."

B'Elanna tried not to laugh, "maybe I should get that computer working."

"It's easy, look. This is the planet, notice the little towers I drew on it. Not to scale," Tom kept gesturing at the blob James mentioned. He stopped when everyone started laughing. "Ok ok, fine." He collapsed into his chair, shaking his head.

"Maybe we should just simplify it," Harry suggested. He smiled as he leaned forward to rest his arms on the desk. "Ok, so we know that the Softmicron attacked us and kidnapped people to keep us away from the planet. We know that the towers had the same function as a Game Sphere tower. Also that they're doing something new by making super-duper strong people, for whatever reason. What else?"

"That they used Deck Thirteen's little inter-dimensional issue to open up rifts," Jones said.

"Yes, and what else?" Harry agreed.

B'Elanna shrugged, she was about to speak but Neelix cut in. "We're evacuating people from the city the towers were next to, as the land there is dead."

Chakotay rolled his eyes, "why don't we actually start with things we don't already know."

"We're evacuating a little more than that, but ok," Harry sighed.

Jodie chucked her hand up, "oh oh, I know..."



B'Elanna quickly said something to interrupt her, "there's two issues we still don't have answers to, and for me they're the most worrying ones. One is where the attacking ships came from, we got a familiar signature from it."

Tom glanced over, "oh yeah, I forgot about that."

"What else?" Chakotay frowned.

"The Game Sphere towers without the Game Sphere," B'Elanna replied.

"This is why we're having the meeting. We didn't call it to marvel at Tom's talent," James said. Tom sulked at him.

"What, the tower part? I assume you found something when you were in it," Harry said.

"That and the signature part actually," James answered.

Tom climbed back to his feet, then paced to the window. "We were going to ease into that, but never mind." His attention went to outside to watch one of those platforms raise up with a crewmember on. He turned around just in time for said person to reach their deck. Everyone's eyes widened in shock or horror, whatever you prefer, as the crewmember started to scrub the window with just a soapy sponge.

"Um yeah, but I think everyone needs to know what's happening," James stuttered, averting his eyes. Everyone else tried to do the same.

Tom frowned as he had no idea what was happening behind him.

Chakotay looked like he was going to be sick. "Maybe we should cut to the chase before there's a mass suicide pact."

Tom was about to speak, but he was rudely interrupted by a horrendous noise.

"My milkshake brings all the boys to the Voyager, and they're like, it's better than yours!" The window cleaner scrubbed even harder, something awful jiggled along with her. If that wasn't bad enough, she began to swish her hair from side to side. If THAT wasn't bad enough, the woman turned around, then bent over to get more water from the bucket. Everyone got an eye full. Tom stupidly chose that moment to turn around to see what was happening.

"Damn right, it's better than yours. I can teach you, but I'd have to charge!" Her butt wiggled a little before she straightened back up.

"Maybe we should have this meeting on the Leda before we tear out our eyes, guys," Tom stuttered. He was surprised when nobody spoke up. "Guys?" Eventually he tore his damaged eyes away from the window cleaning, which was amazingly not cracked, and turned around. He was alone. "Oh come on!"

Meanwhile on the Bridge, everyone was standing around wishing they could unsee that or wipe their memories of it.

"I really should ask Doctor, what the hell did you do to her in that holographic nut house?" Chakotay demanded.

Jones looked nervous. He was about to reply but Harry quickly butted in, "no time. I want to hear the news, then get to my quarters for a two hour long eye shower." Mostly everybody agreed with him.

"Ok, so the towers..." James started to say.

"Hey!" Tom snapped from the Conference Room door. Everyone groaned. "That was uncool, not cool!"

"Well you saw less of it than we did, spread the horror," Chakotay commented.

"Ahem, the towers?" Jones butted in.

Tom cleared his throat, "maybe we should start with the Death Corridor like signatures. First we see the Enterprise, or a ship like it fly into it. Then we do. It disappears after that."

Chakotay sighed. "Yes yes, then an energy ball appears with the same signature. Obviously Death Corridor was just some wonky wormhole which reappeared."

"That travels at warp?" B'Elanna raised her left eyebrow.

"In case we're forgetting, the Corridor and Game towers were linked," Harry butted in.

B'Elanna's eyes widened, "Game... yes, that's why the energy signature was so familiar to me."

"Ok great, the ships came from the Games Matrix, we passed through it on the way here, and the Softmicron have invented non Game sphere towers. I'm glad that's solved. Now I can go and cut out my eyes and ears in peace," Chakotay grumbled as he marched into the turbolift.

"That one's broken," Tom sighed. He ignored the obscenities as the ex Commander swapped turbolifts.

Neelix's face lit up, "oh, I figured it out. The Enterprise, at the last moment, chucked out their core. It went boom, which then created the corridor. Enterprise floated into it as they had no propulsion. They fixed it and came back to warn us about these tower things, and then flew back in..."

By this time everyone had a migraine, which was still a welcome relief from Annika's dancing.

"No, no. The Corridor and that energy ball shared signatures with other Game Spheres we scanned, how does your theory fit in with that?" B'Elanna snapped at him.

Tom leaned to the side to whisper in James' direction. "They're never going to get it. It's crazy. You are sure about this?"

"Unfortunately. I'm just not sure how we're supposed to explain it," he answered.

The working turbolift doors opened again, Jessie stepped out. She looked a little relieved at the sight of everyone. "Oh, I missed the meeting? That's a shame. So, how did they take the giant Game Sphere news?" Everyone turned their attention on her, which she found a little unnerving. "Not well I see."

"What giant Game Sphere?" Harry asked.

James sighed. "The one we're stuck inside."

Tom groaned into his hand as everyone stared at them both bewilderedly. "It's just a theory."

"No it's not," James quietly snapped at him. Tom waved his hand as a hint to stay quiet, he didn't listen. "We think we've been here ever since Death Corridor. Those energy rifts were likely the Softmicron ships entering the sphere. As for the towers well, since we destroyed them I'm going to say there's probably more of them. A lot more. I mean, we don't know how big this thing is."

"How did you come up with a ridiculous theory like that? It makes less sense than Neelix's Enterprise theory," Harry stuttered.

"It isn't just a theory. That resistance wanted me to see the tower's schematics for a reason, and I did," James said.

B'Elanna looked around at everyone before settling on Tom and James. "The sphere and towers drains a planet's life force until it dies. I wonder how many planets this sphere has already destroyed."

"And how will we know if a planet we encounter is real, and not just simulated to capture and/or kill us," Jones wondered outloud.

The Bridge turned silent as they pondered that for a while. Neelix pouted, then broke the silence. "We still don't know what happened to the Enterprise E. My theory was much nicer."

"Considering what it lured us into, some of it could be right," Harry said, surprising everyone.

"Neelix, with a valid theory? Now I know for certain that this isn't reality," Tom commented.

### **The Leda Bridge:**

"Are we still going through with the evacuation? Where we're taking them isn't exactly safe haven, nowhere is," Harry said as he paced.

*"I think you've just answered your question," Tom's voice answered him.*

Harry watched as his temporary helmsman and tactical officer entered the Bridge. He made his way over to them. "Are you sure you're not needed with Voyager's repairs?"

Nathan shrugged his shoulders, "I hear you're a pilot down. I'm pretty awesome."

Craig rolled his eyes, "he means no."

Harry's attention turned to him instead, "I'm surprised Jessie didn't join us instead of you. Her kids are here."

"I didn't realise that was a requirement," Craig commented as he went to take his station.

"Yeah that's sorta my fault," Nathan whispered to Harry.

"Oh god no, he's been touchy for a year," he shook his head.

"Not Craig, Jessie. That's all I'll say though," Nathan smiled.

"Typical sibling rivalry, huh?" Harry questioned.

Nathan headed over to the helm. He sighed as he sat down. "You have no idea."

*"The next batch of transfers will be going over shortly, once we sort out the last member."*

Harry frowned, "why don't I like the sound of that?"

Tom smiled, almost evilly. His attention went back to the Ready Room window. There he could see Annika hanging on to the hull, near the windows to the Mess Hall.

People in the Mess Hall meanwhile had a great view of her legs kicking against the hull. Also they could see the three unfortunate crewmembers who were tasked with helping the Borg cleaning lady down to a flatter part of the ship.

"She'll be with you as soon as she's erm, free," Tom grinned.

*"Oh god, you wouldn't! You couldn't give me a worse crewmember."*

*"Genius reporting in for opps, or captaining if you prefer," a familiar voice announced.*

*"Tom, why!?"*

Tom looked a little confused, "ok, that wasn't me."

### **The Leda:**

Harry clenched his fists as the ex-villain helped himself to his big chair, then put his feet up on the first officer's chair.

"While you're on your feet, get me a pineapple yoghurt. That's a good no backbone boy."

"No. This is my ship, you follow my orders. Nobody tells me what to do," Harry growled.

Chakotay stepped out of the turbolift, "that's the last of them Harry. Helm, take us out of orbit."

"It's my ship," Harry squeaked, his resolve reduced to nothing.

The helm chair spun around so the occupant could face everyone. "Don't worry, I've got your back Kimmy."

Chakotay pulled a face in his direction, then glanced over to Harry. "Who is this prick again?"

"Jessie's brother," Harry muttered. "Ok Nathan, take us out of orbit then take us to Warp Nine."

"I see the annoying resemblance," Chakotay sighed as Nathan turned back around. "What was the point in the mutiny then, you just told him to do the same thing."

"Warp Nine," Nathan reported back to Harry.

"Warp Nine," Harry said in Chakotay's face. He narrowed his eyes, resulting in the younger man backing off.

"Good lord," Chakotay groaned to himself. "I make fun of Tom, but this is the real joke."

Damien yawned while re-aligning the seat back. Harry's eyes widened at this, so he rushed over.

"For god's sake, Opps, Opps. Don't touch that. I just got that how I like it."

"Oops," Damien laughed, he raised the seat an inch.

While this was happening, the empty Opps station made a couple of beeps as an internal scan ran on its own.

Meanwhile on a lower deck a bright light shot through a straight corridor. The light converged almost immediately into a metre wide orb of white. A humanoid shaped shadow emerged from it slowly. Once it reached the surface, a young man could be seen clearly. His eyes widened as they explored the corridor.

"Well?" a woman's voice echoed out from the rift.

"It's Voyager," the man's surprise was clear in his voice. "I think." His attention went towards a computer panel on the wall showing the Leda's schematics. "USS Leda?"

"Leda?" the same woman's voice stuttered. Another shadow appeared in the white portal.

"Don't!" the man held his hand flat in its direction.

Another woman's voice sighed from the light. The figure became a lot clearer, making the man roll his blue eyes. He turned around to face the newcomer.

"Just once can you listen to me?" the man groaned.

The young girl smiled, her brown eyes sparkled mischievously. "She's the good one, remember." Her hand pushed her brown curly hair back behind her ear.

"I wouldn't go that far," the man smirked. He stepped around her to walk closer to the light. "If they came here then..."

"We're in trouble," the first girl's voice said from the light.

"Yeah, maybe you should stay behind and tell..." the man said as he took a device from his pocket. A second girl ran through the light, the pair stared at her bewilderedly.

"Close it, quick," she stammered. "They're coming."

The man quickly turned to point the device at the light. It closed as quickly as it appeared.

"I did warn you," the new girl sighed.

"I thought you were commenting on what I said," the man groaned. He turned to the other girl who had turned to the computer panel instead. As her back was to him, he couldn't see the worried look on her face. "So much for reinforcements."

"I don't think that'll be a problem," the brunette girl quietly said. The others turned to see what she was looking at. Their faces fell as they noticed the same thing she did.

"We're going to have a hell of a time blending in," the man said.

Damien laughed deviously at his station, everyone ignored him.

"I don't care, I'd rather have that blonde bimbo at opps," Chakotay snarled in Harry's direction. He looked confused but pained as well.

"Who are you talking about?"

Chakotay sighed, "nobody in particular. Any of our blonde bimbos would be better than Damien manning opps. Look at him, he could be doing anything."

Damien meanwhile wiped tears from his eyes as his laughter faded. "Oh priceless."

Harry looked over, rolling his eyes at the sight of him. "Craig, you said you'd..."

"I am, he's not doing anything," Craig shrugged. A realisation washed over him, "oh, never mind. We're getting a distress call."

"That's hilarious," Chakotay grunted, sending a glare over to the ex-villain at Opps.

"What's their status?" Harry asked as he climbed out of his chair.

"They're adrift, fort..." Damien started to report seriously, but he snorted back into laughter.

"Forty two lifesigns aboard, no signs of battle damage," Craig shook his head. "We could be there in ten minutes."

"I recommend we stay on alert when we go to help them. This could easily be another trick courtesy of our friends," Harry said.

Chakotay paced in front of him. "I doubt it. They've proven that they don't really need to be sneaky to get to us."

"They were nothing but sneaky," Harry disagreed.

"Tell that to Voyager. I'm pretty sure that was brute force," Chakotay argued.

Harry sighed, "Nathan, take us there slowly. Craig keep our shields at max." Chakotay sighed, shaking his head. "You just want to get back to Voyager."

"No, I'm OK with helping these people."

"Then why are we even arguing?" Harry complained.

Chakotay shrugged his shoulders, "it's too hard not to."

Harry cleared his throat. "Wait a minute. I'm the Captain of this ship, you can't keep..."

"Last time I checked you were only the Lieutenant of this ship," Chakotay said.

"Yet you're the Commander of a ship that's out of action, which you've already abandoned. Keep this up and you'll be thrown back in the brig," Harry snapped. Everyone but Damien stared in surprise at the oddly brave ex-Ensign, he just yawned at it all.

"Am I the only one bored of this Bad Chakotay storyline?" Damien continued to yawn.

"Thankfully not all episodes are like the last one," Harry sighed, not noticing that Chakotay had closed the gap between them.

"How do you plan on throwing me out of here?" Harry then noticed and jumped out of his skin.

"Er, I'm sure our Security Chief will be more than happy to do some more throwing... of you," he badly improvised.

"I see. If James is aboard, I assume Kiara is too," Chakotay said in a calmer tone.

Harry seemed a little relieved when he backed off as well. "Yes, but how will that..."

"If I'm not needed here, and the first batch of evacuees are gone, I think it's time I talk to her," Chakotay said.

Harry's face drained as the man headed for the turbolift, he quickly followed him despite his better judgement. "Oh god. Are you really sick enough to be using your granddaughter's power and the news of her mum to blackmail me into doing what you want?"

"Ok, that I could get on board with," Damien commented, complete with some popcorn in hand.

Chakotay flashed him an angry stare, but it didn't compare to the one he gave Harry. "I was just going to apologise for my behaviour when she first came back. Good god, I'm not a monster." He continued his journey to the turbolift with his fists clenched.

Harry looked around at his bridge crew with his face slightly red, hoping one of them would back him up. All he got was popcorn crunching, a smirking Craig, and then even Nathan shaking his head at him.

### **Meanwhile:**

The three newcomers stepped out of turbolift, now wearing Starfleet uniforms. The second girl's face sulked as she kept clawing at it.

"You wanted the red," the man muttered.

"The red one didn't have to have a Crewman rank on," the second girl complained. After she finished messing about with her uniform, she fixated on her long blonde hair as it kept getting in her face.

"We're trying to blend in, not take charge of the ship," the first girl said with a smile. She quietly shushed them both before they could say another word while a pair of crewmembers passed them. One of them glanced back at the trio, but carried on anyway.

"She is a bit too young for a uniform anyway," the man said.

All three of them stopped when they were alone. "We should split up. We'll get the job done faster," the brunette said. The blonde girl agreed with a nod as she tied up her hair into a ponytail.

The man didn't seem to like the idea, he glanced at the blonde girl. "If something happens to her they'll kill me."

The brunette frowned, while the blonde threw her hands on her hips and scowled at him. "I'm just as strong as you, you jerk. I don't need you to over protect me too." The brunette looked a little uncomfortable, however the other two's attention was on each other at this point.

"You're just a brat still," the man said. "If we're going to split up, she should stay with one of us."

"Good idea," the brunette agreed.

The blonde girl didn't agree at all. "I don't need a babysitter. You said we'd do this together."

The man shook his head. "So remember, aliases and avoid contact. Nobody can know we're here."

"Sure, ignore me," the blonde girl complained.

The man smiled as he gently poked her in the arm. "Come on shrimp, save the tantrum for later." He walked away leaving her to sulk. She looked for help from the other girl. She just smiled sympathetically before turning to walk in the other direction.

"Please don't do anything reckless," she said once she was out of earshot.

"I'm Harry Kim of the USS Leda. What is the nature of your emergency?" Harry asked.

The woman on the screen glanced behind her as the lights went down. "That's the problem," her head turned back. "Our systems are fine, but they keep powering down anyway."

A man entered the screen, his eyes sparkled as he looked dead ahead. "Wait, USS. Are you Human by any chance?"

"Mostly," Harry was taken aback. "How have you heard of us?"

"Our people have encountered yours before. The Voyager I believe," the man answered.

The woman's mouth dropped open, "how is this possible? They told us they were decades away from their home. Did this happen to you as well?"

Chakotay's face grew suspicious, Harry felt it even with his back on him. He decided to ignore it for the time being. "Voyager is, or was with us, and yes it did. It's a long story. We should worry about you first."

"Yes, well we were concerned our life support would be next. We hoped somebody would hear us before then."

"We'd be happy to take a look, but..." Harry said.

Chakotay waved to Opps to cut the audio. "What are you doing?"

"I said but..." Harry sighed, he turned to face the stubborn Commander. "I'm suspicious too but we can't ignore people in this situation."

"Maybe before we rescue these aliens we should ask what they are, when they saw us, before jumping the gun," Craig suggested. "Then I dunno, DNA test. A *Softie* may disagree to one."

Harry nodded while Chakotay remained unconvinced. Ignoring that again, he waved at opps but all he got for it was a snigger. The Lieutenant's eyes closed as his whole body cringed. "Not muting is what you're reduced to, Damien?"

Damien stopped sniggering long enough to answer, "I take what I can get."

The woman meanwhile glanced at the man, both of them seemed confused. "I don't understand, Leda."

Harry tried to relax his tense shoulders. "I'm afraid we've recently been attacked by shapeshifters. Commander Chakotay wanted to talk about it but didn't want you to hear, just in case."

Damien rolled his eyes, "sure, be honest. Boring."

Both aliens seemed to understand. "Oh well, perhaps Jolten can answer those questions your other crewmember mentioned," the woman said.

The man nodded. "It was nine years ago, perhaps ten. Your Voyager rescued a survivor from a devastated planet with two of our colonies on, and returned him to our homeworld. We're the Krralef."

"Yes, I remember that. I'm surprised you remember us just from the USS mention," Harry said.

"Yes, funny that," Chakotay muttered suspiciously.

The woman's eyes cast downward. "I don't blame you Commander. We've heard rumours of shapeshifters in another system. Strange things started happening six months ago as well."

"For example?"

"Meeting you would be one of them," the woman answered. "The strangest one was finding that the neighbouring system to ours had changed completely. Instead of populated by gas giants and an ice world, there's a habited M-class planet amongst desert and baron worlds."

"You wouldn't believe us if we tried to explain that," Harry said with a cringe.

Chakotay shook his head, "it was just a stupid theory from a stupid man."

Harry also shook his head, then turned it towards him. "I dunno, if they're telling the truth it's another bit of proof for that theory." He turned back to the viewscreen. "Perhaps we should begin by evacuating your crew." He could feel Chakotay's glare burning the back of his head. "Until we've helped you repair your ship." That didn't help. "Right, DNA test first. If I remember correctly some of your people were beamed to Voyager last time. We can have them transfer those scans to us."

"If it would gain your help, we'd be more than happy to co-operate," the woman smiled. "All I suggest is to leave a few of our engineers behind to find the issue. We have enough life-suits only for ten people if the life support goes down."

"All right. In the mean time, relay your planet's co-ordinates to us. If you can't fix it, we can at least tractor you home," Harry said.

"We're grateful," the woman bowed her head slightly. She turned to Jolten. "Can you transport over first and arrange that DNA scan?"

"Of course." The viewscreen changed back to the alien ship.



"Great, once we have that we should be able to check everyone who beams aboard," Harry said. He turned to Craig, "greet our guest."

"Me?" Craig frowned.

Chakotay groaned, "not him."

"Really? Which Security Chief would you prefer, you hate both," Harry complained.

"If they remember Voyager, they'll remember making a big fuss over James the last time. Plus if they're Softmicrons, they'll not be happy about meeting him," Chakotay explained.

Harry rolled his eyes, "you're right. Bridge to Stuart, report to Transporter Room Two."

### **Transporter Room Two:**

James arrived just as the chief was taking a glance at his watch. "Yeah yeah, I don't know this ship. Energise." The chief nodded.

One figure rematerialised on the pad, his eyes immediately widened. "You?"

"Me?" James looked suspicious. His hand quickly went for a weapon, just in case.

"No no," Jolten stuttered, raising his hands up. "I understand, but I'm not... I'm not a demon."

"Right. So what's the *you* about?" James questioned.

Jolten stepped down from the pad, his hands still in his surrender pose. "You did the death ritual on H'Taria, nine years ago."

James quietly groaned as he moved his hand back to his side. "Great. Please tell me you people are done with the hero worship crap."

Jolten seemed surprised at his remark. "Oh, you don't know? No matter, yes we are."

"Good, so Sickbay," James said as he gestured to the door.

"Of course."

### **Sickbay:**

"They match," Jones smiled. With that he turned to go back to the tiny office.

"Ah, I knew it. I wasn't feeling very shape shifty lately," Jolten smiled back at him.

James shook his head as he rolled his eyes. "It was touch and go for a while."

"Yes, the *you* part didn't help, did it?" Jolten commented.

"No, but I get that a lot," James said as he turned away to tap his commbadge. "Stuart to Bridge."

*"Bridge here. Well?" Harry's voice replied.*

"He's definitely the same species as the last lot," James said.

*"Good. All of the lifesigns on the ship have the same readings so I doubt any Soft are lurking," Harry's voice said. "Craig, you and James work on the evacuation. Keep them on minor decks only. I want all Security officers on duty. Better to be safe than sorry."*

*"This is a terrible idea. You know what happens when we encounter aliens in distress, it happens to us too," Chakotay's voice butted in.*

"Then lets hope their whiny ex first officer dies horribly. It's all worth it then," James said with a smile. Jolten looked over with his eyes wide. "Oh, you're the first officer? I said ex."

*"Is it too much to ask for Slayers to die while they're still young?" Chakotay's voice groaned.*

*"Your daughter already fit that requirement Chakky," Damien's voice sniggered.*

James shook his head while he heard everyone over the comm gasp in horror. He quickly tapped his commbadge before it got ugly. He spotted Jolten still staring at him in dismay. "He likes grave robbing, it's no big loss."

"Um, I see... I think," Jolten stuttered.

"Forget it, I was just teasing him," James sighed. He gestured for the door. Jolten understood, he stood up and walked to follow him out. "So are you finally going to tell me why your people were so obsessed, especially with Jessie?"

Jolten let out a big sigh. "Since we were wrong, there's probably no harm in that. We have a legend that says after a huge disaster, two aliens would perform the ritual and their resulting child would save us from a later disaster." James stopped in his tracks, with a frown on his face he looked away. Jolten had to stop as well, he remained where he was. "I know it's years late, but I'm sorry for what did happen. It was a tragedy."

"Save you from what?" James asked without looking back at him.

"We're not sure of that exactly. They assumed it would be your child because of your circumstances, so they overlooked that your partner already was with child. That should have been enough proof of being wrong," Jolten explained.

James finally looked back to face him. "Not to mention we wouldn't return to your planet, or at least we shouldn't have normally."

Jolten's interest was piqued. "Yet this is your second visit..."

"Easy! There's no *resulting child*, remember," James butted in. "Besides this'll be our third visit."

"What?" Jolten stuttered.

"We were close three or so years ago. We didn't stop by though," James replied.

Jolten closed his eyes, grimacing slightly. "I wouldn't mention any of this to my crew. A few probably still believe it, and they'll think your third visit to our space would be fate."

"How do you know? Is this all you guys talk about?" James shook his head.

Jolten couldn't help but smile, but grimly. "Since things started changing six months ago, yes. A lot think this is it. If or rather since it's not you, it appears our people will have to endure another mass loss of life and two more aliens willing to help before our saviour arrives."

"These prophecies like to keep you waiting," James commented.

"Yes, and everyone is fearing the worst. It would be worse than what happened on the planet you helped," Jolten sighed.

"How so?" James frowned.

"The prophecy said it would be the worst loss of life in our history. Two colonies were obliterated in seconds. Our people are terrified of the idea that another disaster is possible," Jolten explained.

"You think so, why?" Harry asked.

James paced in front of the Lieutenant as he sat in the first officer's chair. "Any planet in this sphere with people on is at risk."

"True, but it doesn't mean all of them. Why these guys?" Harry questioned.

Nathan shrugged, "it wouldn't hurt to ask every M-Class planet if they have any strange towers."

Chakotay rolled his eyes as he climbed out of the Captain's chair. Harry eyed it immediately. "Yes, advertise that we're here to any Softmicron that may be posing as government officials."

"Ok, scan from afar then, sheesh," Nathan groaned.

"These people know something is wrong already. They know something is about to happen. I just want to rule out Sphere Towers, that's all," James said.

Harry slowly climbed to his feet, his eyes firmly locked onto the Captain's chair.

"When we're in sensor range, we can scan for them. If you're so worried about it, ask them," Chakotay muttered.

"I'm going to," James said.

Nathan swung his chair around to face the others. "How do they know their planet is in danger anyway?"

"Long story. I just want to be sure before we drop them off," James replied.

Harry quickly side stepped in front of the Captain's chair, he got ready to sit down. "Fine, it'll do no harm to scan. In fact it'll help." He finally reclaimed his seat. "The last thing we need is to arrive there to get attacked again. The Leda would not last as long as Voyager did."

"Maybe we should make it a habit," Nathan suggested.

"Agreed," Chakotay nodded. Without looking he went to sit back down again. Harry's eyes widened in horror.

### **Meanwhile:**

The alien ship was now mostly deserted. The only signs of life were in the Engineering room, each of them wearing environmental suits.

Two figures in alien space suits slowly walked over to another figure, this one in a Starfleet space suit.

"It's like it has a mind of its own," alien one said.

Alien two agreed with a slight nod, "yes, it doesn't fit."

The Starfleet figure rubbed the chest area, then tried to pull at it. "These things are made for men." The aliens silently faced her.

After five minutes of her suit pulling, alien one decided to speak up. "We mean the ship."

"Oh of course. I just can't breathe in this thing," Annika huffed.

The two aliens looked at each other then back at her. "You're the second opinion? We've looked all over, we can't find anything wrong."

"Yes. The power just drops, no circuits are broken, no interference," alien two said.

Annika smiled in the way that shows off her huge teeth, luckily the aliens were spared a little with the helmet blocking some of it. "Don't worry. We always sort things out." She pulled at her suit again, this time she seemed to fixate on her back.

"Uh sure," alien two sighed.

A second Starfleet space suit wandered over towards Annika. He took one look at her before shoving her to the side. Despite wearing a suit, he wiped the glove he used on his leg. "Your ship was attacked. Maybe you should have started with that," Damien's smug voice said.

"Yes, but we repaired the damage. It wasn't really a problem," alien one replied.

Damien scoffed as Annika regained her balance. "Wow, how did you manage to run this ship this long?"

"Excuse me?" alien two was clearly offended.

"Your problems started after the attack. Clearly you missed something," Damien obnoxiously explained.

Both aliens looked at each other. "But..." one tried to interrupt

"I know, not everyone can be a genius so I should apologise. I won't though..." Damien continued.

"I can't breathe in this," Annika interrupted him by complaining. She tried to pull the chest part of the suit out further.

The first alien understood where Damien was going, and smiled smugly. "It started before the attack. Also the attacked area wasn't even close to the first affected areas."

This silenced Damien only for a moment. "Oh," was all he could say.

Annika giggled, "genius huh?" Damien turned to her as she continued trying to fix her suit. He grabbed at her helmet and pulled it off. She gasped for breath and held her throat. After a minute she realised there was still air in the room.

"Where did the problems start then?" Damien huffed, disappointed the life support hadn't gone off yet.

"The bottom level. I'll show you," alien two answered. His arm gestured to the left, then he walked away. Damien followed, he groaned loudly as Annika followed him. He turned around to glower at her.

"Harry told me not to leave you alone," she said. He blankly stared. "With the aliens," she laughed.

"Great. This bottom level better have an airlock or something," Damien grumbled.

The Leda's small Mess Hall was filled to the brim with tables of aliens from all ages. Neelix was in his element fussing over them.

"This is the real hub of the Leda; the Mess Hall," he announced. "Though it is not as nice and homely as mine on Voyager. Feel free though to have a look around while I whip you up a quick snack."

The teacher Jacqueline glanced over with horror on her face. "Oh god." A pair of aliens happened to head in her direction, stopping at the viewport to watch the stars. "Don't let him feed you, seriously."

"It's all right, Mr Neelix is legendary after our last encounter with Voyager."

Jacqueline smiled and nodded, then returned her attention to the kids tables. The horror on her face only grew. "Scott, what are you doing?" Scott's grinning face greeted her, as well as a now bright blue and purple face of one of the blonde girls. Scott's hand held a brush full of orange paint right above the girl's ponytail. Both of them laughed as panic rose in the teacher. "No!"

"Pretty," the girl giggled.

Jacqueline rushed forward to lift Scott away from the colourful girl. He huffed as loud as he could.

Duncan shoved one of his own art pieces aside, luckily it wasn't living. He leaned over to Amy's side. She was busy trying to draw something with crayons, but the ones she was using just crumbled into mulch. It didn't stop her spreading it all over her paper.

"Did Neelix sneak some of his own sausage rolls onto our plate? I feel a bit gross."

Amy's eyes widened as she faced her brother. Sasha meanwhile on her other side kept drawing. "Me too, uhoh."

"They tasted OK, weird. Did Sass eat them too?"

"I never get a chance to," Sasha huffed. "I don't like Sass."

"I got one," Amy said to her.

Sasha pouted, "you can reach."

Duncan shrugged his shoulders, "Sass suits you." Sasha's eyes narrowed as they went in his direction. He responded with a smile.

Meanwhile two members of the alien group stood at the replicators, trying badly to watch the children discreetly.

"Just keep *normal*, and we'll get off this ship with the others. Don't mess this up," one said. He pushed a pair of glasses closer to his head.

The second one, whose golden eyes stood out along with his badly gelled hair, snorted in disgust. "What do you think I'm going to do? I haven't been down with humanoids for years."

"Yes, so save it. The temptation may be too great, especially with these people's superstitions with the Humans."

Gelled boy's head turned his head slightly in the kids direction. "Hmm, maybe we could nip that in the bud right now."

"Please, the aliens were wrong but we still have two of the real deal who will ruin our plans if you make the wrong move."

"I'm not wrong. Maybe we could keep the others away from them or they will start believing."

The glasses one glanced directly at the kids only briefly, then back at his partner. "How do you propose we do that? That funny rodent man will keep them here a while."

Both of them glanced to the furthest away door at the same time, catching Craig, Harry and James entering. They slowly made their way to a different exit.

Craig spotted Neelix trying to torture a family with two alien kids with a tray of snacks. "I thought we were supposed to be saving them from a grisly death."

"I switched the stove off before he came aboard. He only has the replicator," Harry proudly explained. James and Craig sighed in relief as the two kids happily munched on what they were offered without dying horribly.

The alien Captain squeezed passed a few tables so she could greet the trio. "Captain Kim. I'm very grateful for your help."

"Captain?" both Security Chiefs said in a bemused tone. Harry ignored them.

"It's only a few hours out of the way. Rescuing aliens is our thing," he said.

The alien Captain seemed impressed. "I see, very noble of you. I forgot we weren't properly introduced. I'm Tira."

Harry smiled at her. "I see. These are the fleet's Security Chiefs; Craig Anderson and I believe you already know James."

"Yes, Jolten briefed me," Tira nodded. "I hope we won't keep you too long from rescuing other people, Captain."

"I wouldn't worry, that's my issue. Leave everything to us," Harry boldly said.

James rolled his eyes while Craig pulled a disgusted face. "Oh god, he isn't," James groaned.

"He is," Craig muttered. "That's not the part I'm thinking of throwing up over."

Unaware of this conversation, Tira continued chatting to Harry with a warm smile on her face. "You're very kind, Captain."

James then noticed what Craig did and pulled the same face as him. "We should er, get to tower asking," Craig quickly said. He rushed away. James followed him just as quickly.

When they both found a safe place to stop, they did with wide eyes. "No," James gasped.

"I know!" Craig stuttered, he couldn't believe it.

"That's just wrong," James stuttered.

Craig nodded, "you're right, that's suspicious as hell. What is she after?"

"She may be nuts but..." James said.

Craig quickly butted in, "why would even an insane woman flirt with him?"

"True, but it's Harry. What would any bad guy want with him?" James questioned.

Craig shrugged his shoulders. "Unfortunately he's still the guy with the command codes."

"That's easily amended," James smiled.

Craig smiled back and nodded.

Harry strolled down the corridor with a confident smile on his face. All he could think about was the alien Captain Tira, and her grateful smile. He finally had some respect, and it felt a little good. He tried not to think about the fact that she'd be back home in a few hours. He turned a corner.

Walking in the opposite direction towards him was the two visitors in the uniforms. The man's eyes widened slightly, he turned to walk in the nearest door he could find. The girl glanced briefly at the door, her face flushed as she read what the door led to. Harry luckily was too busy thinking about asking out Tira to notice all this, and walked right passed her.

Once he had turned the corner, she rushed back to open the door. The man almost bumped into her as he dashed out, his face much redder than hers.

"Women's toilets. What are the odds?" the girl said, her relief turning to laughter.

The man closed his eyes tightly. "Tell anyone and..."

"And what? You have nothing," the girl teased him.

"Oh yeah, well I'll tell..." the man grumbled.

"Excuse me," Craig's voice interrupted him. The pair jumped slightly, they slowly turned their heads to face him. "Have you seen Harry and some alien who's obviously crazy?"

"He just went around the corner," the man replied nervously.

Craig sighed, "great, I lost her. Fine." He was about to continue on, but his face grew suspicious. "Wait, you're a Security officer but I don't think we've met."

The girl shook her head while the man fidgeted nervously. "Um, I'm Engineering actually," he said.

"I don't think so. The Leda Engineering staff actually do look as stupid as they are," Craig said.

The girl smirked slightly, "and?"

The man's eyes narrowed slightly, Craig's also did as he spotted it. "What's your name?"

"Um, Dan. Where is Engineering anyway?" the man replied. The girl shook her head.

"Right, now you're stupid enough. Nice try. Maybe you should come with me," Craig said.

The girl sighed as she turned to walk away, "oh well, catch you later *Dan*."

She was halfway down the corridor when Craig spoke up again, "wait."

"Damn," she whispered. She continued down the corridor anyway, bumping straight into a group of three aliens. Each of them stared at her with their eyes wide as she pushed through them and rushed off.

Craig went to follow her but Dan stepped into his way every time he tried. "I'm serious, where is Engineering? I transferred from Voyager."

This just made Craig even more suspicious. "Nobody was transferred from Voyager's Engineering. The other way around maybe as they need all the help they can get, but..."

Dan closed his eyes tightly, one of his fists clenched behind his back. He tried his best to think of something. Craig however took a hold of his arm.

"Don't you think you Softie's have done enough damage," he grumbled. "You're coming with me."

The aliens reached them both, each of them stared at Dan the same way they did the girl. Before Craig could try to drag Dan away they stopped to confront them both.

"You, you're that boy," one of them said in Dan's direction. He looked just as confused as Craig was.

"It's true, the prophecy is true," another alien stammered.

Dan shook his head. This wasn't helping, at all, though he had no clue what they were talking about. "You're mistaking me for someone else. I'm Dan, not the messiah."

"We must tell the others," the third alien ignored him.

Craig coughed and cleared his throat to get their attention. Strangely it worked. "He's not supposed to be here, he's not who he says he is. I'd stay away from him and his little girlfriend."

Dan's face scrunched up in disgust. He mouthed *eeew*. However this was probably his only chance to escape.

"We're sorry, but you can't arrest him," alien two said. All the aliens spoke at Craig all at once, he kept looking between them but couldn't make sense of it all. Dan stepped backwards a few times before running off.

Craig raised his hands, "stop it, shut up!" The aliens did just that. "All I got was that you're a bunch of raving loonies. You'd think I'd be used to dealing with that, but I'm not. One at a time but first..." He turned to where Dan stood earlier. His face dropped, his fists clenched.

"We should tell Tira first, she will definitely believe now," alien one said to the others.

Craig's attention went back to them but they failed to notice the angry look on his face. They unintentionally made that worse by walking away talking excitedly between themselves.

Meanwhile the girl had reached a turbolift, she dashed straight inside. "How do you work these things again?" she asked herself. Her whole body froze when she felt somebody was sharing the lift with her without even looking. The doors shut before she could make her escape.

"I shouldn't have thought I could out run you. I was right, you are special." She recognised that voice anywhere. Her head slowly turned to confirm her fears.

*He knew I would be alone. He waited for this, didn't he?*

As if he could read her mind, the man with the strange yellow eyes smiled darkly. Though by this point she was convinced that was his regular smile.

"Don't be afraid. I feel very..." he paused as if he was trying to find the right word. "Protective... of you." That word sent a chill up her spine. She hated that word anyway, but the way he said it... the meaning suggested something else to him. Like he was just some shy little boy he looked at his feet, then back at her. "You didn't need to bring *him* into this."

*Yes I did.*

"Why are you telling me this?" my older brother asked me. His words made him seem annoyed, but his face showed his true feelings. That mischievous smile told me one thing.

*I should have told dad.*

"Because I don't know what he really is. If I told him, and he was just some crazy boy who fancied me, well..." My voice trailed off as I realised I was saying way too much. My brother's smirk now made me want to slap him. "I'm still about 90% sure though."

"You're probably 100% right," he teased.



I pulled a childish face at him. "Fine. You tell dad that a possibly dead guy's been following me around."

"You're too good to me," he said seriously. His smirking was starting to get old. As if he sensed that it was replaced by a sympathetic smile. "Don't worry, dad doesn't hear about this. Though I don't know why you'd want him out of the loop if you're being stalked. I'd really like to see his reaction to it." That smirk was already back. *I really don't know what mum's thinking. He and dad are not alike! He's such a pain.*

Unfortunately I promised to stay out of danger until I was older. Don't get me wrong, I want to be useful, but...

"Let me guess, dad won't let you off the leash," he said. This time he wasn't making fun of me, he sounded almost normal. Almost. "It's ok, we can sort this creep out together. He never has to know."

"What if he is just a weird stalker boy?" I dared to ask.

He smiled that smile, the one thing that I was definitely sure he got from dad. Maybe I should have left the stalking part out.

"I dunno. I came to you to avoid the boy being mutilated," I half joked, well maybe quarter.

My brother seemed offended for once in his life. That quickly faded away into a small smile. "You don't know me very well."

I rolled my eyes. *I knew he would play the big brother role. Yeah he could be a jerk and tease me a lot, but he was always looking out for me when we were growing up. I just figured he'd be a lot less protective than...*

"So you said there was stuff that made you 90% sure. What kind of stuff?" he interrupted my thoughts again.

*Where do I start? Those hideous eyes, the fact that he was enrolled in school. The biggest one was what happened when the sun hit him.* I tell my brother this, and his smile gets bigger.

"What happened?" he asked.

"You won't believe me. You have to see it yourself," I replied to avoid embarrassing myself.

"Well, not bursting into flames doesn't mean he isn't one. You won't remember those creeps that kidnapped us once," he told me. Before I could mention that the strangest part wasn't that he survived the sun, he continued. "You go to school as normal, I'll do my own stalking." I gave him my best gagging face, he just laughed at it. "I may not be as good as your new boyfriend, but..."

*Eew.* I shoved him in the shoulder with my fist, just lightly. It was enough to push him a step backwards. He laughed but I could tell it hurt a little.

"Since we don't know what he is, mind if I bring a little help?" he asked.

*Definitely not. You can't invite him.* I meant to say that out loud. *God, I'm even shy around my own family.*

I didn't need to say anything. "Not him. I know someone else who can help with a dead guy. If he's not dead, she can help with that too."

I was confused only for a moment. I was distracted by the she part. I couldn't help but smirk at him. Although I did wonder why he wanted to bring what I think is a girlfriend with him on a mission, as he calls it. How can she help?

The girl with the brown hair quickly checked to see what was around the corner before she walked around it. The way was clear so she continued. Before she could do the same thing with the next corner, a man turned the same corner as her. Instinctively she raised her fists in a battle pose before her brain could tell her to stop. She lowered them quicker than she raised them.

"I'm sorry," she blurted out. "I wasn't thinking."

James stared at her with a frown planted on his face. Something seemed very familiar about her but he'd never seen her before in his life. Even though her first instinct was to fight, he didn't feel anything demonic about her. He sighed and tried to hide his frown, "it's OK. We're all a little on edge lately."

The girl forced a smile, but avoided looking up at him again. Without moving her lips he heard her voice panic, "please don't recognise me. Please don't reco... don't be silly, of course he won't. Just go!"

"Excuse me," her lips said this time. Still not looking at his face, she moved around him to continue around the corner.

James turned as well to stare after her until she was out of sight.

Once she was, she stopped to lean against a wall. Her sigh was louder than she wanted it to be, her eyes closed and shook her head. Once she reopened them they saw the alien with the glasses glance at her briefly as he turned another corner. Anger stirred inside her, she didn't waste any time in following him.

#### **Meanwhile:**

"No, no! It was refuted to be the Slayer's progeny when that child died. You're making stuff up."

The three aliens from before, as well as ten more had gathered around Jolten and Tira. Jolten tried his best to calm them all, while Tira stood behind him deep in thought.

"It never was proved that it had to be that one kid," one of the three aliens stated.

Jolten shook his head, "the prophecy said that it would be the resulting child from the ritual."

"Which would mean the child who died didn't even count," another alien spoke up.

"Exactly!" Jolten snapped. "We were wrong. We just assumed that the saviour would be born from him because it made the most sense. It didn't match the prophecy."

"They are rarely right. It could be the child born after the ceremony..." the first alien said.

"Which was the one that died," Jolten sighed.

"Or conceived after, which would be the eldest that still lives," the first alien continued.

Jolten again shook his head. "Pure conjecture." This comment angered some of the aliens, they talked amongst themselves.

"Forgive me Jolten," the first alien said. "But that's what prophecies are."

"You're just creating false hope again. Do you know how dangerous that is? Our people suffered from that the last time!" Jolten snapped.

Another alien spoke up, "you said it made sense, you're right. The strange stuff over six months. Meeting the Humans for a second time despite how far their home is. A Slayer even having children. Doesn't that seem more realistic than some 2000 year old guess about a cryptic disaster." The rest of the aliens agreed.

"Fine. If you are correct and one of the Slayer's children is the One, how is a child going to help us right now?" Jolten demanded. This silenced most of the group, the three from before waited for their

chance to speak. "The eldest looked to be eight, while the youngest was a toddler. Disaster is soon. Your theory would make sense if the Slayer's parents were the ones that did the ritual, not him."

"He's right. This is why we discounted him years ago," one of the group said. "Voyager were from another quadrant. We knew any of his children would grow up and never meet us."

"If we haven't met this saviour's parents yet, then we're in for a long wait," another alien said, the despair in his voice obvious.

"We have to face the possibility that *this* is the disaster the ceremony will be performed for. The disaster we are saved from could be decades away," Jolten said.

One of the trio shook their heads. "You're wrong Jolten. Do you think we came to you with theories and wishful thinking?"

"Look, I too for a moment thought the Humans helping us was fate. But only for a moment," Jolten said calmly.

The second member of the trio stepped forward. "We have more than that. We met him."

"So did I, so what?" Jolten groaned.

"Not James, his son," the second alien said.

Tira finally chose that moment to speak up, "of course you did. Mr Neelix showed us to the Mess Hall first, the children were all being looked after there."

"We've covered the fact that he had children, and I covered the age issue," Jolten added on.

The trio smiled amongst themselves. "The age issue is no longer a problem," the first alien said.

### **The Mess Hall:**

With no aliens around, the children there were free to play around the whole room, except the kitchen. Both of the teachers were a little preoccupied with one of the boys crying loudly while he clutched his arm. Unknown to them Miral was nearby giggling to herself while crawling away.

The doors swiftly opened revealing the yellow eyed, gelled hair alien. His eyes scanned the room for his target. It didn't take long for them to find it.

Most of the kids had somebody else to play with, only Amy was alone. She seemed happy enough building a lego wall around herself on the floor. At first she seemed oblivious to the man staring at her. Once his footsteps loomed closer and closer to her, her eyes darted to her left to see what or who he was. Her body shook as she climbed over her tiny lego wall, and crawled away to the nearest table.

The man smiled as she hid underneath it. Without a care in the world, he plowed straight through the work she'd done while staring directly at her. Despite the fear she was feeling, the sight of her broken wall made her puff her cheeks in anger.

He thankfully stopped, but his leer was unchanged.

### **Meanwhile:**

Damien, Annika and the second alien they were with stared ahead of them, light reflecting off their faces. Each of them had different expressions on their face. The alien was dismayed, Annika had an *oooh* look on her face, while Damien smiled like he had done something evil.

"This *could* be the problem," the alien slowly said.

"It's beautiful," Damien slipped out. The pair didn't react to it, but he still looked embarrassed and shook his head. "...fully evil. Let's leave Barbie here, she can deal with it."

Annika didn't hear him, her eyes sparkled at the white portal sitting in front of them. "I want to touch it but I can't, can I?"

"Go nuts," Damien replied.

The alien sighed, "we didn't detect this thing at all. It is what's draining the power though. How come nobody saw it?"

The turbolift doors opened, James stepped out whilst looking to his left. A group of aliens seemed to be waiting for him there, they immediately followed him. He stopped abruptly, forcing them all to stop.

"Really? I thought you stopped this stalker crap," he groaned. The aliens all looked at each other, daring each other to say something. He sighed and shook his head before he continued on his way. As he expected the aliens followed him again. Once he had turned the corner he immediately did a 180 turn, they almost bumped into him again. "Keep following me and you get a tour of Sickbay and then the brig."

"But... but..." one alien stuttered.

Another one was a bit braver, she stepped forward. "We were wrong again. I mean, we were right the first time."

"Oh for god's sake," James only had time to groan.

The third alien piped up, "your son, he's just like you, isn't he?"

James' face stiffened, the aliens didn't register this. "What?" he only said in a hard voice.

"I mean, er..." the third alien stuttered. "He's gifted, you know... like..."

"Keep talking like that and I'll upgrade your tour to the morgue," James said. The man's eyes widened, he quickly stepped backwards to hide behind the others.

"What Jashlnar means is he's older than he should be. That can..." the alien woman said. James' stare moved to her, cutting her off abruptly.

"He must be, it makes sense," the first alien managed to squeak.

"My son is not your chosen one. If you try to force him... no, if you even go near him, I'll be the disaster you need rescuing from," James warned while his fists were clenching.

The aliens tried to keep their cool, but most of them were shaking by this point. None of them dared to say anything else.

"I'm glad we understand each other," James said as he turned to walk away again.

Amy looked around desperately as the yellow eyed man continued his approach. All of the children she could see were probably still engrossed in whatever they were playing they didn't see him. Even the teachers attention was elsewhere. Her eyes widened as he reached the table, kneeling down before her.

The smile he gave her was dark and malicious, his eyes seemed to glisten as they met hers.

"What a cute little thing you are," he softly whispered. "I could just eat you up." His hand reached for her.

Amy knew what to do. "Daddy!" she screeched as loud as she could.

Meanwhile James' head swung to the right as he could even hear her where he was. The aliens glanced at one another in surprise, when they looked back James had already gone. They quickly ran down the corridor.

The man cringed, his hands had gone to his ears. In fact most of the room had done the same during her outburst. Amy ran around the man, towards the door. The man swung around to follow her. This time he didn't play around with her, he followed at a normal pace.

She reached the door, but by then he was directly behind her, smiling. It opened, killing his smile dead. A fist swung at his face. To everyone's surprise the man's head broke apart like it was made of stone. His body dropped to the floor immediately, depositing a glittery powder on the floor.

James and everyone else who saw it stared with their mouths open, and their eyebrows raised. They all missed Scott run over to scoop the powder up, but they didn't miss him start to throw it up in the air all over him.

"Sparkly!" he cried in delight.

Amy wasn't scared anymore, she just giggled at him as she clutched her dad's leg.

"Wha... what," he could only say.

Duncan chose that moment to walk into the Mess Hall, immediately widening his eyes when he saw his dad. "Uhoh," he whispered as he turned around to leave. Despite being freaked out James still caught his arm before he ran off. "Damn!"

The teachers both rushed over, their faces still with the same expression on them. "Mr Stuart. How could you kill a demon in front of the children, your children?" the teacher Grace stammered. "Have some restraint next time!"

Duncan's face lit up, but that didn't last long. "Aaw I missed it, when I went to the loo. Yeah that's where I was."

James shook his head, he still couldn't believe what just happened. "I didn't..." The teachers stared at him blankly. "I didn't hit him that hard. That's never happened before." All of the teachers folded their arms, scolding him with their eyes. "In my defence, vamps don't die like that, ever."

Scott ran over to the other kids, the glitter was stuck all over him. "Look, I'm a vampire. Grrr! I'm hungry." He started play chasing some of the others kids around the room.

Sasha meanwhile shook her head, "vampires don't look that stupid."

### **The alien ship:**

*"Leda to awayteam, come in."*

Damien smiled fiendishly, his hand went for the commbadge on his suit. The alien in front of him tightened his grip on his victim's neck. The second alien standing beside the ex villain lunged forward slightly, his eyes widened in horror as Damien's arm flew out to stop him.

"Answer him and I'll make her a meal."

"Make it a slow roasted one," Damien sniggered. He tapped his commbadge. "Yessum?"

The second alien helmet-palmed while Annika gasped in shock.

*"How's it coming over there?" Harry's voice asked.*

"Oooh, your timing couldn't be better," Damien sneered. The alien beside him shook his head.

The first alien's blood red eyes narrowed, his helmet-less head went for Annika's neck.

"Eew," Damien winced.

"Eew?"

Annika squeezed her eyes shut as the man's mouth was at her neck. His teeth were bared. Damien meanwhile looked like he had been to a buffet hosted by Neelix. The man's eyes looked up to stare at him menacingly, his head remained in that position as if taunting him.

"Nothing, Barbie's just doing that Milkshake dance again. The sooner I get off this ship the better," Damien muttered.

*"Ok, take your time," Chakotay's voice said.*

*Harry sighed, "let us know when you've found the problem. Leda out."*

Annika sighed in relief when her attacker straightened back up. "You know, she'd be a powerful ally," the man smiled.

"No, just an annoying one," Damien groaned. "I speak from experience."

The second alien stepped forward. "Hackto, when did this happen?" Damien sniggered to himself, the alien ignored him. "Did the monsters get you while we were here, or..."

"I knew it," Annika gasped, interrupting him. She smiled that toothy grin. "You act like you hate everyone, but deep down you're a good, kind man."

Damien's mouth curled slightly, for once he tried to keep his mouth shut. The alien beside him frowned in confusion while the red-eyed one looked around to see who she was talking about.

"No one has ever saved my life before." Annika sighed, her eyes gazed over. "You're so sweet and heroic."

Damien couldn't take it any more, the laughter inside him was bursting so much it hurt. Soon he was leaning against the wall, clutching his ribs, unable to breathe from the loud laughing he was doing.

Annika didn't seem to notice this, she continued. "This is why you wanted me to work for you years ago, isn't it?" Tears formed in her eyes, "you secretly love me."

This stopped Damien in his laughing tracks. The colour in his cheeks from laughing drained so quickly he even felt a little dizzy, but nausea was his biggest concern.

"Oh Damien, my hero," Annika cooed.

Even the dead alien looked like he was about to throw up.

"Enough of this! People are dead, this isn't a laughing or being sick situation," the living alien stuttered.

"Wrong again," Damien gagged.

"Indeed. You've done your part so the Humans don't discover us, now your reward," dead alien sneered.

Annika smiled, "yes, free me. I must declare and show my love for my knight in shining armour."

Damien covered his mouth with his hand just in case, his other hand reached for his commbadge. Hackto narrowed his eyes. Quick as a flash he tossed Annika aside and ran forward to tackle him.

"Oooh, this is so exciting," she giggled.

"Oh, you shouldn't have done that," Damien groaned as Hackto held him to the ground.

"Pretty foolish to toy with your lover like that," Hackto taunted him.

The nameless alien turned away, his nose shrivelled up. "That's disgusting," he muttered.

Hackto grimaced as well. He jumped to his feet after snatching Damien's commbadge. Quickly he grabbed Annika's arm and ran off, wiping his face as he did.

Damien groaned from the floor just as the alien dared to look his way. He cringed again, quickly turning away.

"They'll kill her," he managed to say.

"Good," Damien groaned as he sat up. His face was deathly pale, and erm, wet in places. "Maybe this time it'll be permanent."

"Oh it will be," the alien pulled a face.

Damien tried to smile but he then remembered why he *saved* her in the first place. He could feel a lump in his throat again. "Ohno."

#### **Meanwhile:**

Three security crewmembers stepped out of a turbolift, armed with phaser rifles and a sharp weapon on their belts. They passed by the blonde girl, who was walking with the gelled haired man that was killed earlier. He kept a close eye on the team as they turned the corner out of sight.

"They know."

"All they'd need to do was find your portal," the girl said. The man tightly grasped her arm as discreetly as he could. "Or run into..." He shook her arm to shut her up, her whole body shivered. With her voice also shaking she spoke again, "you haven't done what we thought you came here to do. Why did you come here, and now?"

More crewmembers passed by them, again the man watched them. Once they were out of sight he forced the girl to stop. "Let's just say we're fulfilling a prophecy."

The girl blinked. "Why?"

"Why not?" he smiled. "It gave us a little tip on what to do, so why disappoint the locals by not showing up?" Roughly he pulled her closer to him. "Why do you think I lead you here?"

The girl's huge brown eyes widened, she couldn't stop her body from shaking still. "What?"

"I told you, you're special. I could smell you for miles." He inhaled the air while closing his eyes. The creepy smile was back on his face. "Right here and now, it's like a double dose. It's..." He opened his eyes again, his smile opened into a slight grin. "Intoxicating."

He leaned his head in closer. The girl couldn't help but gasp, her cheeks puffed and her eyes managed to scowl. Before he could even touch her, she touched him first, with her kneecap. She felt something crack against it. It gave her a smile as he doubled over, clutching his favourite area while grimacing in pain.

The Jeffries tube hatch nearby caught her eye. She dashed towards it.

The man meanwhile shook with rage and a lot of pain. His attention turned to the path she had chosen.

Harry entered the bridge with his own pained expression. He went straight for Tira in the centre of the room. "We need to talk, privately." Her face drained at the seriousness of his voice. She only nodded.

"The fool, he doesn't understand the concept of lying low. First he lured the girl to us, now he galavants off to do god only knows what," the man wearing the glasses scowled. He had since removed them from his nose, they sat on the top of his head.

A second man also sporting the same yellow eyes, stood next to him. "It does not matter. It's time to leave before the Humans and their *pets* discover us."

"The boy has the Opener."

"Then I'll remove it from his corpse."

He smiled approvingly at his companion. "Once the portal is closed they'll leave without any idea we're there. It won't be long now."

They both heard a whistling sound behind them. The first man felt a sharp object poke into his back, then he heard something clatter to the ground. He swung around, his eyes narrowed. Straight ahead of him on the other side of the room was the brunette girl, pointing a crossbow and a fierce glare his way.

"It was you. This is impossible!" he growled. Without blinking she reloaded the crossbow. His surprise turned into a smile. "Surely you remember, I'm not like ordinary vampires. I cannot die that easily."

The girl stepped forward slowly without saying a word.

"Boss, her being here as well, this could be a problem," the second man stuttered.

The first man's smile grew. "Do not concern yourself. She's just as sheltered as her." She continued to step closer. "Daddy's little angel in both worlds," he sneered. His hand reached for the crossbow to block its arrow's path. "See," he said as she pointed it at his neck.

To his surprise the girl smiled darkly. Before he could really react to that her spare arm flew to his throat, it began to crack at her fingertips.

"My father's dead," she growled. He tried to pull her arm away. She responded with a knee to the ribs, the resulting crack widened his eyes and he hunched forward. Still squeezing his throat, she dragged him to the floor onto his back. Only then she let go. Before he could get back up her foot replaced her hand. "So now you are." With that her whole weight went to her foot, smashing his neck into stone like pieces.

The other man backed away with his eyes inhumanely wide. The girl looked up at him, the look she gave him made him run in the other direction. She went to chase him as he disappeared through a door. He had not gone very far so she was forced to grind to a halt.

"These are vampires right?" James asked her. The escapee struggled as his arm was tightly holding him around the neck. The girl timidly nodded. "Right." A small kick sent him flying into the wall while his head was still firmly in a headlock. The resulting noise sounded like glass shattering against the floor, and it didn't look that much different either. "I'll never get used to that."

The girl glanced away as James approached.

"You wouldn't mind telling me how you got here and why before you run away," he said.

She pointed at the remains of the second man.



"Okay, so how?"

She shook her head, "I can't. If I interfere..."

James sighed, "you're from another time?" The girl's eyes managed to get wider. "So are these porcelain vampires I assume. Is that the last?" The girl still couldn't look him straight in the eye. "Okay, you can't say. Can you at least tell me your name? I don't fancy calling you future girl."

Her eyes shut tightly, "Roxanne."

"Okay Roxanne, are these so called vamps after my kids?" She finally turned to look at him, frowning. "One of them was."

"Which one?" her voice trembled.

"Does it matter?" he avoided answering.

"Yes but I think I already know," Roxanne quietly said towards the floor. "He's why we're here."

"We're?" James frowned.

Roxanne looked up at him, "the vampires and me."

James didn't seem convinced with her answer. "He... Duncan? He wasn't the target."

"No, the he is the one I followed and..." Roxanne stuttered. She stared at the ground again. "We were only after him. There were more. They had opened a portal and..."

"We again?" James said.

She sighed, annoyed with herself. "I followed them here in a new portal, I was alone. Since those two and the one you mentioned are here, then the others should be too."

"Okay, let's see if I got this right. You and somebody else chased that vamp statue to where his friends were. They open a portal and run in. You open it yourself and follow," James tried to understand.

"I need to find the other vampires before they hurt anymore," Roxanne said, her eyes went to the man he killed. "He's definitely new, or at least I never saw him. The other..." Her voice shook, and sounded a little hoarse, "I didn't see him there, but he's definitely not new."

"I checked after the other one fell to bits, all of our crew are alive and accounted for," James said. He looked over to the pieces as well. "They do look like the aliens though, that's not good."

Roxanne shook her head, "they claim to be peaceful vegetarians."

James tried his best not to laugh, "vegetarian vampires?"

"Yeah, they don't eat humanoids or anything sentient. Only animals," Roxanne explained.

"That's not what vegetarian means," James smirked.

Roxanne managed a weak smile only for a second. "Yeah, but them not eating humanoids is, or was true. They're not peaceful though, they tend to manipulate others. I know from experience." Her head turned away, then she turned her body away as well.

"Okay, I'll help you look for these things," James said. Roxanne opened her mouth to speak but he got there first. "Look, they wandered into my time to do some damage. Stopping them from doing that isn't interfering, it's fixing."

Roxanne nodded, "all right, but I think we should split up. If they see more than one of us, they'll probably try to run again."

### **Meanwhile in Engineering:**

Everyone were so busy working at their own stations, they failed to notice that Dan was using a spare one. On his screen was a deck by deck Leda schematic, lots of little dots filled up the entire ship. He looked behind him to check if anyone was watching before he continued.

"Ok, so eighty one registered crew, so that should be eighty four," he mumbled to himself. His attention went to the information below the schematic screen. "One hundred and eleven, what?" His fingers keyed in a few commands. "Okay, computer show me all the unregistered crew." The schematics changed to show about twenty dots. "Okay, now whatever's left, show Human lifesigns." The number was reduced to three, one obviously was where he was.

He looked behind him one more time. "Great, they're okay. Now how do you find dead people?" He sighed, then it hit him. "Who are the other unregistered people?" He turned the schematic off, typed a few things which replaced it with a display of the alien ship. "They're not here." He quickly got up to make his way towards the nearby Jeffries tube. Little did he know Craig had entered the room and was watching his every move.

Dan didn't have to crawl far to reach the panel he was after. His hand reached for it but something inside stopped him. His head edged slightly to his right so he could see without giving his face away. As he felt, a figure had joined him on the other side of the tube where he had just come from.

"I knew you were up to something. Who are you?" Craig demanded. Dan cringed a little. "And don't say Dan. Turn around."

"Look, I'm just running some routine maintenance," Dan improvised.

Craig raised his eyebrow. "On the transporter, in here? Try again."

"Oh, I didn't mean to get that. Thanks for the tip," Dan said.

"No, don't use the dumb Leda engineering crew on me," Craig shook his head. "I was lying to see if you would take the bait, and you did."

Dan frowned and looked straight ahead again. "They seemed stupid to me," he muttered.

"They are, but not as stupid as the teenager in the Starfleet uniform. Get out," Craig demanded.

Dan shook his head, sighing while he did so. Reluctantly he turned around fully to see Craig standing and waiting for him, holding a phaser. Slowly he dragged himself forward to leave the chute.

"Somebody told me you were once a teenager in a uniform," Dan said, immediately regretting it. Craig's eyes narrowed. "I'm older than I look."

"Yeah, I've heard that many times," he groaned. "And we're minus a coffee drunk captain, so that ain't happening again."

"I'm sorry," Dan murmured. Craig kept his phaser trained on him, tighter than ever after that comment. Once Dan had reached the end of the tube, instead of climbing out legs first, he threw them into Craig as lightly as he could. It was enough to knock him backwards into the wall and drop his weapon.

Dan scrambled out of the tube. He quickly checked on Craig before walking back out into Engineering. Just outside to greet him were an armed Security team.

"Damn."

"It cannot be. It's all superstitious nonsense." Harry stared at Tira as she paced the Ready Room nervously. "My crew came to me before, saying they had proof. I didn't believe them, but this..."

"It's genuine," Harry replied for her. "I was skeptical too, but living on Voyager has changed that."

Tira turned on her heel to face him. "Say I do believe you, what do we do?"

"Nothing. James already is looking to see if there are anymore of them."

"You don't understand the real problem, Captain," Tira almost whispered.

"Harry," he corrected her with a smile.

Tira calmed down a little and smiled back at him. "Harry. Our people believe that we'll be wiped out soon."

"I know all about the prophecy including the death ritual. James updated me after the vampire who went after his daughter was killed," Harry said in an understanding voice.

"But you still don't, he doesn't either," Tira sighed. Her pacing lead her to the window, she gazed at the stars. "When war has consumed all that can be, two strangers will appear to release those lives into the next. Strangers soon arrive to ravage the land once again, bringing us death with no escape. A child sired by death, only then we can be saved."

Harry frowned as Tira shook her head in disbelief. "Death for us isn't the end. Our souls move onto the next challenge. If a vampire takes you, that soul cannot move on. They are trapped within, forced to watch for eternity."

"I understand your worry, but that story can mean anything," Harry said.

Tira chuckled to herself. "Yes, I thought the same. I believed the planet could be destroyed one day and no one would be around to send us. But a child couldn't perform said ritual alone, even if it grew up. I always thought the sired by death part was pretty vague. I argued it had nothing to do with the first part, but now..."

"How does any of James' kids count? Sired by death sounds like a hint to a vampire itself," Harry said.

"I don't remember the exact words of the prophecy as I didn't believe it. It just means a child created from the death ritual, at least that's what it is interpreted as," Tira answered.

Harry pulled a bemused face, "what do you guys do in these rituals?"

"All I know is it is a celebration of life," Tira replied.

"I'll bet," Harry smirked. "But no kid arrived after that incident. Kiara did but that's his niece so..." His headache intensified. "I'm thinking way too much about this. What's important now is that the vampires are dealt with. We do have two Slayers left to do that."

"I suppose," Tira sighed, she seemed a little distracted.

Harry grew a little concerned for her, "what?"

"The son is the oldest, correct?" Tira questioned.

Harry nodded, "yeah, so?"

"So, why did that vampire go for the youngest child?" Tira muttered. Harry sighed, he didn't have the answer to that. Tira turned back to face him with a defeated expression on her face. "Perhaps you're right, Harry."

"About which part?"

"A child sired by death, only then we can be saved," she repeated herself. Her eyes cast downward. "You said that sounded more like a hint to a vampire's birth, not a Human."

"Yeah, but I highly doubt a vampire would save you," Harry seemed confused.

"You're correct, but maybe it means something else. Maybe it's just something that has to happen before we're saved," Tira explained.

"I'm sorry, but I still don't get it. A child being sired saves you from vampires, how?" Harry stuttered. His eyes widened as he finally got it, "oh good god. You don't think... Amy, and then James would..." He shuddered violently at the thought. "Yep, I'm not sleeping well tonight," he stammered as he ran out of the Ready Room.

Tira sighed before following him. "Maybe I'm wrong."

"I hope so," Harry squeaked. "Red alert!" Everyone looked at him strangely. "What, am I wearing a dress or something, red alert!" The lights dimmed, the red lights flashed across the bridge.

"What's going on?" Chakotay demanded.

"I was going to keep this hush until it was sorted, but... a very unsettling thought has come up," Harry replied. Chakotay stared blankly. "We have an undead situation, it's being handled."

"So, the point of red alert is to, what?"

"I panicked," Harry groaned into his shaking hand.

Chakotay shook his head in disbelief, though for him it was probably just belief. "So you want everyone to do the same? Cancel."

The red lights were replaced with the regular lights as Tira caught up with Harry. "I apologise, I didn't mean to make things worse. It was just a theory."

"I guess, but why else would these things go after Amy?" Harry stuttered, panic rising again. Chakotay quickly covered his mouth with his hand. "Mmmm ahmmm?"

"Sorry," Tira said sympathetically. "He was trying to calm me down, somehow our roles reversed."

"Don't worry about it, birds chirping makes him panic," Chakotay said in a strangely calmly way. Harry tried to speak again, he only let him go after he finished.

"You made me think that one of James' kids could be sired, what was I supposed to do?" he squeaked.

Nathan's eyes widened briefly, then he turned back to the helm. "Yikes."

Chakotay glanced down at the floor, then back up. "I imagine wetting your pants would have been your next move."

Harry glanced down as well, he sighed in relief. "I wouldn't." He shook his head. "Okay, realistically if vampires had done the thing we'll never mention again, James would be too busy killing everyone to save anybody. That's out, phew."

"But he'd kill all the vampires that would potentially kill us," Tira said. Everyone went to stare at her again, Harry whimpered like a baby. "You suggested that the line sounded vampiric, not I. I have to say, you're not what I expected Captain Kim."

"That's because there's no Captain Kim," Chakotay muttered. "So there are vampires aboard, again, so what? What's this rubbish about the kid that I'm suspecting Jessie cheated on James to make, cos that

girl has no Janeway blood in her." Harry shook his head while everyone else looked on in confusion. "What? I'm just saying what everyone else thinks when that kid does her helpless damsel act."

"She's still a baby," Nathan said in disbelief. He climbed out of his seat, Harry tried to hint at him to sit back down. "Jessie doesn't even do that..." Chakotay tried not to laugh, instead he caught it in his throat.

"Um, I wouldn't go there," Harry tried to interrupt before it got ugly.

Chakotay shrugged, "what, if I didn't know any better I'd say that kid acts more like Harry does. Luckily for humanity, they look nothing alike." Harry pouted.

Meanwhile on the alien ship, Damien had sat down near the portal. He still looked very queasy, but he seemed distracted enough with the tricorder he had taken to bits. The remaining alien stood nearby, keeping watch.

"I hope you're not doing what I think you're doing," the alien said.

"I doubt you could know what I'm doing," Damien muttered. A few pieces were re-attached, the tricorder reactivated even with some bits still missing.

The alien looked on with worry planted on his face. "If you close it, we will be stuck with them."

"You will be maybe," Damien smiled deviously.

"No one's going through," a female voice butted in. Both Damien and the alien looked quickly to the source. "Let him close it, but if he tries to run through, shoot him," the blonde girl said. Before the alien could say anything she tossed him a small phaser.

"Who the hell are you?" Damien demanded. "No, I don't care about that. Why are you here?"

"I'm here to kill vampires," she answered as she walked straight passed them.

Damien glanced at the alien, then back at where she had stood before. "She reminds me of a pain in the ass, but I know so many."

The alien ignored him and chased after her, "wait, are you who I think you are?"

The girl stopped and turned around to face him. "If you think I'm a Slayer, then yes. Let me take care of this." The girl then coolly walked away, not seeing a discarded helmet right in front of her. She stumbled over it. "Damn it!" she angrily whispered to herself. Then she spotted something else nearby that threw her off. "Eew, who's been throwing up?"

The alien quickly pointed at Damien, who pointed straight back at him. "Pfft, villains don't puke. We're resilient and strong."

"Definitely Damien," the girl groaned.

"If you'd heard what I heard, you'll understand that even magnificent villains have their limits," Damien said with disgust in his voice.

The alien shook his head, he looked a little disappointed. "So, you were pretending to be a Slayer..."

This earned a loud sigh from the girl. "No, I am. I'm just, well... this will be my first time."

"Oh god, we're all dead," Damien rolled his eyes. "Though I'm mostly okay with that."

"What? I managed to get over here without anyone knowing. I can do this," the girl stuttered nervously. The two men stared at her blankly. "I don't need to convince you!"

Damien sighed, "now she's reminding me of another pain in the ass. I wish I could remember which one was which."

"Then why were you trying to act... that way?" the alien asked.

"I don't know. Dad usually says something cool," the girl replied. Her eyes widened, "but you know, that's got nothing to do with... anything. Damn. I'm going." She turned to leave again.

"Watch out," the alien stuttered.

Once again the girl nearly bumped into the helmet. "I swear it keeps moving," she whispered as she walked away.

"Weird, and I'm used to weird," Damien muttered.

The alien nodded enthusiastically, "yes I'm aware of that. Despite all that, I think she'll be fine."

### **Leda's Brig:**

"For god's sake, it's not all right. You've made a mistake," Dan protested from behind the forcefield.

Craig stood opposite him, clearly not convinced or impressed. Harry and Chakotay both walked in arguing.

"I wasn't going to leave you on your own, you'd get ideas," Harry was saying.

"Get ideas? If you commanded the ship alone you'd be flying in circles," Chakotay grumbled.

Craig cleared his throat, "ahem, intruder remember?"

"Right," Harry sighed. The pair faced the brig occupant. "So, what are your intentions here?"

"Oh god," Chakotay rolled his eyes.

"This is just a big mistake, not surprising since Craig always mucks things up, right," Dan said, earning a glare from Craig.

Chakotay nodded, "he has a point. Are you sure he's an intruder? He doesn't look dead, and he's Human."

"For god's... he was sneaking around, trying to get aboard that other ship. Plus we have no record of him..." Craig said.

"I told you, Voyager," Dan tried to cut in.

Craig smiled and shook his head, "on either crew."

"He's er, definitely not dead, right?" Harry stuttered.

"Right, he's one of two unregistered lifesigns that aren't alien," Craig replied.

Dan lurched forward, forgetting about the forcefield. It didn't forget him though. "Wait, two?"

"Two," Craig said.

"She didn't, she couldn't..." Dan muttered to himself as he turned his back on them. He rolled his eyes, "of course she could."

"You're not keeping with your regular crewmember lie well, are you?" Chakotay said as he folded his arms.

Dan sighed as he turned back around. "There should be three."

"Oh, and the third is a she then?" Harry questioned.

"I'm only telling you this cos I need you to let me out," Dan said.

"Telling us you're an intruder isn't the way to get let out of the brig," Chakotay snapped.

Craig shrugged, "why not, you're on the wrong side of the forcefield. Don't even get me started on Damien."

Dan slammed his hand against the forcefield, startling them all, Harry more so. "I haven't got time. You have to let me out."

"Why?" Harry quietly asked.

"Because if you don't, a fifteen year old girl's going to get herself killed," Dan explained quickly. "Try explaining that to my parents, cos I won't." The three stared at him, each with different *what the hell* expressions on their faces. "Look, I didn't want to advertise this cos duh, you just don't, but I'm from the future. Far in the future."

"How far?" Chakotay seemed even more suspicious than before.

Dan passed him a quick glare before moving his attention to Craig. "The alien ship's getting power drawn from it, right? I know why. In my time we chased a vampire to its nest, one of them had this." He pulled the device he had before out of his pocket to show them. "It opened a portal here. And since we lost some of them, we assumed they had just gone through a portal they had opened before."

Harry also joined the suspicious club, "a portal? Surely..." He tapped his commbadge. "Kim to Bridge. Scan the alien ships for those power sucking portals we know and love."

*"What, like those ones on Voyager that I didn't see cos I was on a planet at the time?" Nathan's voice questioned.*

Harry shook his head, "never mind, I'll do it myself." He quickly rushed out.

"That's probably why you haven't noticed it then," Dan said.

"Damien was at opps, demonic portals are his speciality," Chakotay said suspiciously. "He's probably long gone now, and that Human lifesign is that girl."

"Well at least it isn't Annika," Craig said plainly.

Dan winced at her name, only Craig noticed though as Chakotay was too busy rolling his eyes.

"Okay, say I believe you. Why do I have to let you out? We have our own Slayers to take care of this. We can transport that girl back," Craig said.

"I have a better question. Why would your sister sneak aboard the alien ship, and even better, how did she pull that off?" Chakotay demanded.

"Wow, it seemed obvious to me. The first one anyway. The first clue was the kick in the gut, second vampires," Craig shook his head in disbelief.

"I know, I want to hear it from *Dan*," Chakotay smiled.

Dan stared at him again, his eyes slightly narrowed. "She's good with computers," he said quietly.

"Hmm, isn't that something," Chakotay said. Craig looked back and forth between them. "Is that a trait that just skipped you?"

"I've never needed it," Dan replied. His fist then flew straight through the wall next to the forcefield, that disappeared instantly. Craig reached for his phaser but not fast enough, Dan grabbed his arm and flung him forward onto the brig's floor. Chakotay tried to grab a hold of him, he got a punch in his face for the trouble. He wasn't done with him, his body flew into the nearest wall, cracking it on impact.

Dan ran out of the room before he could even hit the floor. Craig groaned as he reached for his commbadge, "Anderson to Stuart, I think you're going to want to get in on this."

"Ugh," Chakotay groaned. "I'm going to get my own time portal machine, go back and neuter that blonde bast..."

*"What have I done this time?" James' voice asked.*

Craig pulled himself back to his feet. Chakotay was having a lot more trouble doing the same, so he remained on the floor. "Apparently you did it years ago, I wouldn't worry about it."

Chakotay managed to glare at him from his uncomfortable position on the floor. "Don't you think we should worry about it!"

"If you're right, then he'll just go to the alien ship," Craig shook his head. He turned to leave, "James, maybe you should too."

*"Maybe?"*

"Actually," Craig winced as he left. "Come to think of it, that may not be the best of plans after all."

James sighed over the comm. *"The vampires are there, right? Sounds like a plan to me."*

"No, no... it's just um, Damien causing..." Craig tried to improvise but the comm cut off. "What's the chances of him recognising them?" Chakotay limped out, stopping right behind him. "You're wrong, right? They could be just Slayers from hundreds of years in the future."

Chakotay smiled painfully. "Only a Stuart would want to throw me into a wall."

"I wouldn't count on that," Craig commented as he walked away. Chakotay narrowed his eyes at his back.

### **The alien ship:**

The blonde girl swung around to face her attacker, his fist was already on its way. She fell backwards to the floor, her hand instinctively flew to her nose. Drops of blood splattered onto it.

Her attacker smiled coldly. "Ah, May was it? Where's your big brother to help you now, huh?" He went to kick her, she rolled out of his way just in time then scrambled to her feet. "Better yet, where's daddy?"

"I don't need them," she huffed. "And my name's not May!"

"Does it really matter? You're only a tool, made for only this moment. Too bad I'm going to have to grind you down," Hackto sneered.

"Huh, really?" May said flippantly. She shrugged before swinging the helmet that was in her other hand. It smashed right into his cheek so hard it ripped a chunk of it out, leaving behind a grazed hole in his face. The stone like material glistened under the light. "That's a great idea," she smiled. He growled then lunged for her, she immediately swung her leg into his stomach, throwing him backwards.



Seeing the strange vampire fall to the ground made her smile mostly in relief. This was short lived. A pair of hands grabbed her from behind, one hand squeezed her throat.

"You think you can fight me off?" a familiar voice whispered into her ear. "I can help you with that. You don't have to be weak and plain any longer." She struggled but he held her too tightly for her to move much. His head dove down to her neck but stopped at the last minute, his eyes widened hugely. Suddenly his head jerked violently back, his grip loosened as his whole body was thrown to the floor, neck and head first. As he landed right on his back he could see his attacker clearly now.

"And I thought the sparkling thing was cheesy," James shook his head.

May's eyes also widened as she clutched her sore throat, trying to get her breath back. Hackto meanwhile had recovered, he lunged for them both. "Watch out," she croaked.

James turned around just in time to be tackled hard, the two of them blew straight through the nearby wall. May looked down to where the other vampire was before, he wasn't there anymore. A light cackle got her to turn completely around, he stood leering at her. His malicious smile got even more creepy as his eyes looked her up and down.

"Getting him killed again, tut tut," he taunted. She felt more confused than afraid. *What's he talking about?* "Haven't you learned something about being reckless?"

"I... I've never done that," May stuttered.

The vampire pretended to look surprised. "Oh sorry, my mistake. You smell so alike, it's easy to get mixed up."

*He's insane, he makes no sense. Eew, I hope he isn't thinking I smell the same as my brother.*

He chuckled to himself. "As if I meant him."

*What? He can hear me?*

"Of course," he replied. "Why do you think the little one had a visit from *me*?"

"Why did you say me like that?"

*That's the question I choose to ask out loud? Damn.*

He lunged forward. She raised her fists, and stood back but he stopped dead in front of her. "Somebody had to sire me, hmm?"

"Eew, you sired yourself? How does that even work?" she stuttered, her face filled with disgust.

"You know, I have no idea. That one is dead now," he replied nonchalantly. "I guess it must be another one of those silly time travel equals new dimension thingies." He inhaled the air, smiling again. "Now, where were we before we were rudely interrupted?"

Dan blinked a few more times to see if that would change what he was seeing. It didn't.

Three men and a girl stood in front of them, each wearing silly black cloaks. The apparent leader stepped forward smirking away. "Hehe, what do we owe the pleasure my dear boy?" he said in a really cheesy villain's voice.

Dan couldn't help but laugh in his face, he tried to cover it with his hand. The cloaked figures weren't amused though. "Oh my god, she told me you were from some other dimension. But what kind of

messed up reality are you guys from? It's just... you're so..." he couldn't finish, he was laughing so hard.

"Dafin, use your power on this filth," the leader snorted.

One of the cloaked figures stepped forward. "Of course sire." He squinted at the laughing boy. "He isn't in a relationship, what shall I do?"

"Nothing to exploit, shame," the leader said.

This only made Dan laugh even harder. "That's your *super* power? You..." he tried to calm himself down but he failed. "... Scan for couples. Oh god, I'm trembling."

"Ah good, we won't keep you afraid any longer my boy," the leader sneered. "Your kind are definitely strange, but we'd value your strength on our side."

"I'll bet," Dan wiped the tears from his left eye. His head suddenly started to ache, then he realised the only girl was staring at him. "Migraine attacker? Really?"

The girl smiled evilly, but more like how Damien would. She failed to notice a long dagger fly towards her head from behind. She didn't have it for much longer.

"What!" the leader snarled. The cloaked men looked around behind them. Roxanne armed with her crossbow and a large sword smiled politely at them. "What, another one? This cannot be!"

"Nope, but that's never stopped me before," she said before she swung her sword at the useless vampire. Dan withdrew a weapon of his own to join her.

"Right about there," *May* directed to a pile of rubble.

Quickly she ran to the hole in the wall. She couldn't see anybody there. "It was only one, that'd be no problem for him." She waited for a bit anyway, with a sigh she headed down the corridor.

It didn't take her long to reach the portal again. The alien had a tight hold of Damien's arm as he pointed his modified tricorder at it. It beeped furiously as the portal shrunk into nothing.

"It's okay, I didn't want to go there anyway," Damien huffed. The alien let go of him with a smile.

"Do you know how many vamps there were?" *May* asked them.

The man shook his head. "I really don't. All I know is that Hackto worked down here with three others. I was certain they were evacuated but Hackto stayed behind to help, no wonder."

"If they were, they'd have told someone about that," *May* said.

The man nodded, "very true. They must have been killed before evacuation, and then... All it would take is to attach their communication chips to their outfits. We and the Leda wouldn't have noticed the difference."

"That'll teach Kimmy to beam dead people without checking, ey," Damien sneered.

The man ignored Damien for now. "Thank you," he said in the direction of the girl. She was no longer there, he looked around but couldn't see her anywhere. "Huh?"

"Nothing for her to trip over this time," Damien sniggered.

"Where did she go?"

Damien casually shrugged. "All I care about is I'm stuck here with you people."

"I'm concerned about that too. I imagine your people will bring you back when they return my crew," the alien said.

Damien scoffed, "my people? They wish!" The alien rolled his eyes at this. "I wonder if the brat got them all."

The pair jumped back as a low rumble approached them. The wall blasted apart. All that fell through were shattered pieces of rock and a torn black cloak.

"Maybe now," the alien said.

James stuck his head out first before stepping out of the hole. "I was wrong, I can get used to that." His foot stepped on a large piece that looked like a cheek and nose, crushing it with his heel.

"Since when do blood suckers glitter... and turn to stone?" Damien muttered.

"Beats me. They're easier to kill like this," James said.

The alien's eyes were wider than usual. "For you maybe, they appear to be made out of solid rock." James shrugged his shoulders. The alien continued, "you must be so proud."

"Not really, it's like breaking glass," James said with a raised eyebrow.

The alien shook his head. "I mean of your daughter."

"I don't need some stupid alien prophecy to be proud of her, so cut it out. God," James groaned. He marched off grumbling to himself.

"You people are really Tom-stupid," Damien sniggered. The alien passed him an annoyed stare.

### **The Leda:**

In the centre of a deserted corridor, the white orb like portal had re-opened.

"So I trust you'll be using that to go back, nowish?" Chakotay said. He glanced warily in Dan's direction before turning his head away again.

Dan smirked. "I didn't bruise your evil trip, did I?"

"Hmph."

"Erm, yeah we'll go back right away. Then we'll destroy the device, right?" *May* quietly said, avoiding eye contact.

"Right, yeah," Dan agreed. "Kill joy," he whispered to her. She faked a scowl in his direction.

"I wonder how those strange vampires even got that device," Harry said.

Dan glanced over at his sister briefly then back at him. "A source says they came from another dimension anyway. They probably stole it to get to ours. Believe me, no one that cheesy and dumb could come up with that."

"Damien managed with just a tricorder. How hard can it be?" Chakotay huffed.

Harry winced slightly, "we forget that he's actually pretty smart. Cheesy, that I'll give you." He sighed to himself. "What should we tell Tira about this?"

"Isn't it obvious. You tell her the issue is resolved, and while you're at it tell her to get her eyes checked," Chakotay replied.

Harry was brave enough to glare at him. "Firstly, I'm a catch. Secondly, if we fail to mention their involvement, the aliens will still think they're doomed and wait for their saviour to show up."

"So they killed a group of vampires. You don't know if that was it. Think of it this way, you tell them who helped, they'll think they're safe. What if you're wrong?"

"It's not like they need to do anything, except maybe let tourists do their death rituals once in a while. Telling them will do no harm."

Dan frowned as he turned to his sister. "Do you know what they're yammering about?"

She looked down at the floor, "maybe."

"Look, it doesn't matter what you say. We're not supposed to be here, so keep it hush," Dan said at the two bickerers.

Chakotay shook his head. "You're right, it doesn't matter. One alien sung your sister's praises so it's a little late."

"Great," Dan sighed while *May* turned her head away.

"The aliens will decide for themselves from what they've seen. Either way, what'll happen will happen," Chakotay said.

Harry shrugged, "or not." The previous Commander elbowed him. "Ow, fine. You guys don't need to worry about it, it's already happened on your end. So erm, safe journey."

"Thanks," *May* said, she nudged her brother. He rolled his eyes.

"She wants me to say sorry for the brig incident," he said huffily.

"Good," Chakotay said.

Dan smirked, "say sorry to Craig for me." *May* closed her eyes and shook her head. "Oh right, and to that wall I threw you into."

Harry also smirked as Chakotay clenched his fists. "I think that's all you're going to get. Let's go." He turned to leave. Dan smiled and waved sarcastically at Chakotay before he turned to go as well. He gave him one last scowl before he walked away.

"Like father, like son... or in this case, like little shi..." Harry quickly grabbed his arm and pulled him around the corridor before he could finish.

Once they were gone, Roxanne appeared from another corner to join the other two. "Ready?"

"Yep," Dan nodded. "Question is, is she ready to be grounded for five years?"

*May* scowled, "shut up. Me being late home is far better than big bro bringing me to a vampire nest."

"And here I thought we were doing this without telling..."

Roxanne's gaze cast to the floor as the pair argued. She turned to enter the portal without them. Eventually they decided to follow whilst arguing.

"Well I'll tell that you walked into a girl's bathroom," she countered.

Dan smiled, "sneaking over to fight vamps without me. What, that's not specific on the telling."

May pushed him the rest of the way into the portal. "It counts! You promised." She followed him inside.

"Relax, he'll never know from me," Dan's voice said moments before the portal disappeared from sight.

### **Leda Transporter Room:**

Tira bowed her head, "I must thank you again for your help."

Harry smiled proudly only for a second, he then glanced to his side where James stood. He gave him a strange look back. "What?"

"I mean you too, Captain Kim," Tira smiled. "If it wasn't for you we'd have taken those monsters to our homeworld."

"Helping is what we do best," Harry nodded.

"Cap... Harry, I know you were in the middle of another mission, but you and your crew are more than welcome on our world. In fact I'd insist you returned here once you have completed your mission," Tira said warmly.

Harry smiled nervously, his cheeks were bright red by this point. "Really? I thought you were put off by my... theatrics earlier."

"At first. But I realised that you care about your crew and perfect strangers, that's what I admire."

"Oh..." Harry managed to get even redder.

James quickly backed off towards the door, as soon as he reached it he disappeared out of it. Immediately he ran into Craig, Jolten and some of the aliens, one of which being the one he and Damien met before.

"I wouldn't go in there," he warned.

"Please, we're in a hurry. How bad can it be if you're here," Craig stupidly said. James didn't stop him as he walked around him, then inside the transporter room.

Harry was in the middle of stuttering something, "I er, don't think it'll be too long until we're finished. After that shore leave would..." Tira interrupted him with a kiss on the cheek. Before it could get worse than that, Craig escaped. James and the aliens waited outside, smirking at him.

"I think I can speak for the entire crew when I say, eeew," he complained.

The aliens waited a bit before entering the transporter room. Craig however didn't seem brave enough to try again.

"God, next girls will be after Damien," Craig stuttered.

James pulled a disgusted face, "don't... just don't go there."

Jolten chuckled. "So, do you think we'll run into each other again, or was that the prophecy fulfilled?"

"Are we really counting a vampire trying to go for my daughter, leading me to beaming over to your ship and killing those things?" James questioned.

Craig fidgeted slightly. "Sure, why not? How else would it work? They'd either have to wait years and hope your adult kids find their way here again, or wait for another death ritual to make a kid, then wait even longer for that one to grow up."

"Right," Jolten seemed confused.

James glanced at them both, "am I missing something?"

"No, no," Craig lied badly. "We wouldn't have known about the vampires if that one didn't go for Amy. We couldn't count on Damien saying anything."

"I'd best leave then. Thank you either way," Jolten said. He followed the others into the transporter room.

"I'm not that daft, Craig," James said. "I saw her."

"Oh," Craig quietly said. "Must have been confusing and stuff..."

James nodded. "You have no idea. It doesn't make sense to me at all."

Craig frowned, "well you know, time travel and your family go hand in hand."

"It doesn't matter, as long as she's safe. I still don't get why there were two of the same vampire either. He deserved to get killed twice anyway, so win win," James said before walking away.

Craig looked even more confused, "two of the same... that's just ridiculous. Makes no sense."

"So the brood are definitely gone," Chakotay said. He walked away from one of the minor stations at the back of the bridge. He joined Harry in the centre.

"Well our help has returned, the aliens are home, so why don't we get back to our original job," Harry said with a smile.

"Do you plan on telling a certain someone about said help?" Chakotay whispered to him.

Harry's smile wouldn't budge, "of course not, no harm done this way."

"Oh I don't think so, maybe he could explain the third one," Chakotay whispered.

Harry looked confused, his smile was still plastered on though. "What third one?"

"Don't you remember? There were two extra lifesigns, but he said there should be three," Chakotay answered quietly.

"Oh yeah," that did it. He sighed, "isn't it obvious who it was? He or she was either a friend who got pulled into this whole thing, or it was their other sister. I bet it was the latter. Why do you think she stayed out of sight, we'd recognise her wouldn't we? Yeesh, you had me going as well." He walked away to his Ready Room leaving Chakotay's suspicious face behind.

"I don't think so. He seemed so sure about who had gone to the alien ship. He wasn't concerned in the slightest about the other one," he said.

Harry stopped at the door while everyone else in the bridge looked towards Chakotay with frowns on their faces. Nathan more so.

"Doesn't that prove my point?" Harry groaned.

"Not at all. That third lifesign just happened to disappear from our ship immediately after James did. If they're who you think, or just a buddy of theirs, why did he or she do that?"

"You had to bring that up now?" Harry muttered. He swung around, "why didn't you mention this before?"

"As they're all gone, I didn't think it was important. I was merely curious," Chakotay lied as he sat back down in the Captain's seat. Harry's eyes narrowed at the sight of him relaxing in it. "Just saying, maybe you should ask blond brat if he knows."

"Satisfy your own curiosity, and get out of my seat," Harry scowled. Chakotay looked at him in surprise. "Don't look at me like that. If you want to sit there you have to earn it. That means stop acting like a creep, earning the trust of the crew again and more importantly..." During his rant Chakotay had gotten back up to walk over to him. He steeled his nerves to continue even though he was directly in front of him. "Not keeping important details like that to yourself when it suits you, then lying about it. Got it?"

"Quiet and squeaky, yes," Chakotay replied.

"No, I was loud and clear," Harry said, fighting his urge to tremble. "Now since you brought all of this up, I order you to talk to James about this. Ask him about the third one; if he saw them, any ideas about who it was, why they were on that ship. Whatever you do, don't tell him about the other two being here. If you muck this up or try to kill him again, you'll remain in the brig indefinitely. Got it?"

"Wow, one make out session and his backbone appears," Craig commented.

Nathan's ears perked up, "oh really?"

"Yes *sir*," Chakotay sarcastically said. He headed straight for the nearest turbolift. Harry relaxed once he was out of sight.

"Nice job Harry-Kims," Nathan sniggered.

Craig rolled his eyes but smirked anyway. "How is he going to ask him if the third one is possibly one of his kids, without telling him two were here in the first place? He said he saw his daughter anyway so..."

Harry smiled proudly, "I don't know, not my problem." With that in mind he headed over to sit in his well earned chair. It felt a lot more comfortable now.

"Well I for one am curious. I doubt Jess will be happy that all three of her kids like to get into trouble just like daddy," Nathan said, ending with a sigh.

"No... I always thought Sasha was more level headed than that. It was probably just a friend of theirs being reckless. I mean the two were at that age, right," Harry said. Nathan glanced back at Craig, he nodded. "See. Nothing to worry about. Chakotay wanted to create drama, he can do it on his own."

The steel grip of the men held me against the wall, laughing in my ears.

There were so many of them, and they seemed to just keep coming.

None of them seemed to care when some of their own would disappear into a pile of dust. Most of them just howled with laughter as each one that would disappear, two would take their place.

I tried to tell myself that he would be OK. The yelling and cheering that soon erupted from these wild animals turned my skin ice cold, I felt my heart slow down.

*This is a nightmare. What have I done? No, no, it'll be OK, this... he's good at getting out of these situations. They're just cheering because they're...*

A body fell from the crowd. My thoughts froze as it hit the stone cold ground. The roaring laughter that followed the thud rung in my ears. My throat swelled, my eyes stung.

There was so much blood. He wasn't moving.

The monsters were all laughing in my direction now, but I could barely see them through the tears overwhelming my eyes. I could just make out the muffled laughter as the men who had been holding me must have released their hold on me. I plummeted to the ground, I didn't even try to stop myself. My eyes squeezed shut as if it would make it all stop.

I heard a loud bang. Something had crashed in front of me. Startled, my eyes shot open.

The monsters roared with laughter again as her screams filled the room. She couldn't tear her eyes off the bloodied body in front of her, his blue eyes lifelessly staring directly at her. She scrambled back against the wall, her arms wrapped around her body as if to protect herself. The group converged on her, lead by the man who had lead her there. His dorky glasses hid the malice in his blood-red eyes.

Shakily her hand reached for the body as the pack of wolves surrounded him once again. This time they left an opening in front for her to see. She tried to look away but the man wearing the glasses grabbed the top of her head, tugging viciously at her brown hair. She felt it start to tear when she struggled, she only did it once.

"Daddy!" her screams turned to sobs. This only spurred the monsters on further.

"Daddy!"

Her cries got his attention. As usual he dropped everything to check on her.

He found her standing up in her crib, tears streaming down her face. Quickly he reached out to pick her up.

"What's the matter?"

Amy seemed confused, her tears stopped as she stared up at him. "You're OK?"

James frowned as he gently wiped the tears from her cheeks. "Of course I... did you have a bad dream?"

"I'm sorry daddy," Amy looked down in shame.

James looked around to check if her cries had woken up anyone else. Duncan holding a pillow over his head answered that. He decided to take her into the next room. "No, no. Nightmares can seem so real, it's normal to be scared."

"I killed you. I'm sorry," Amy started to cry again.

"No you didn't, it was just a dream," James said. He sat down, sitting his daughter on his lap. "Don't worry, everything's fine."

The tiny girl moved to her knees so she could turn around and dig her face into his shoulder. "I won't be naughty again, I promise," she cried into it. "I don't want you to die."

"Sweetheart, you've done nothing wrong," James tried to comfort her. "I promise you, the dream's over, it wasn't real."

"It felt real," Amy sobbed.



"I know," James sighed as he stroked her short blonde hair.

He didn't know what to do. Her cries died down, but she still clutched him tightly. For a few minutes she seemed a lot calmer. Eventually she settled for sitting on his lap again and resting her head against him.

**THE END**