

Blazing Guns / Flashing Sword

The fanfiction magazine



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Cover art by Markus Koskimies mkoskim@gmail.com <http://mkoskim.deviantart.com/>

And now, a word from the editor:

Well, I am astonished by the speed some people work at; it was something like two and a half hours Mkoskim delivered a fine piece of cover art.

This was the first time more than one person actually did cover art; it's not the first time more than one person *said* they'd do cover art, but there it is. Many thanks to JeanPaul Robin <http://www.JeanPaulRobin.deviantart.com> , whose fine art will grace the cover of next issue.

Thank you for reading. You got any questions or comments? I'd love to hear them: please send an email to: fanficmag@gmail.com

Or, if you want to reach me personally, you can reach me at hans.mahler@gmail.com, or check out my user page at either <http://jochannon.deviantart.com> or at <http://warhammer4okfanon.wikia.com/wiki/User:Jochannon>

Feel like you've missed something? Just e mail me and I'll send you any of the previous issue s

Jochannon Mahler

We have a wonderful selection of stories from a bunch of great writers here, so without further ado let's get to them.

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New Age of Wonder

Chapter 1; Created From Clay

By Miguel A. Reyes

Wonder Woman fan fiction



Years before the crisis came to be, many knew that day would come. In Themyscira, the Amazons created their perfect warrior. She was destined to be beautiful as Aphrodite, wise as Athena, stronger than Hercules, and swifter than Mercury. This woman was Diana, princess of Themyscira. But when she grew older to the world she became Wonder Woman. But what the world didn't know was that there was another.

After the success of creating the flawless woman, the Amazons decided to create another, a sister, another warrior to defend Paradise Island from the forces of men. Forged from the fires of creation and clay from Themyscira's soil, a new Wonder of the world was created.

The clay vessel was sculpted to perfection. The Amazons entrusted the gods to finish their creation and deliver it safely back to Paradise Island. When the body and soul were fused together the work was complete and a child was born.

Hermes the messenger god, delivered the infant to Themyscira, where it was then placed in a golden crib, the same crib where their first warrior slept. The entire island was buzzing with rumors of the new baby delivered by the gods. The Amazons believed this child would be smarter and stronger than the original.

The queen accepted the child as her own just as she did before and vowed to raise it as such. When the job was done six Greek goddesses then came to Themyscira to bestow their gifts on the child, all of the warrior women attended the ceremony.

The goddess of the Earth, Demeter, went first. She bowed her head to the sleeping infant covered in silk blankets. She kissed her fingertips and placed them on the child's small forehead.

"I bless this child with strength drawn from the Earth spirit Gaea" Demeter said,

"May you always find the strength to overcome even the most difficult of obstacles" The same gift she bestowed upon Diana, the first Amazon woman made from clay. There was applause when the gift was given. Demeter stepped back and allowed Aphrodite stepped forward and she presented her gift.

"I bless the child with great beauty and a loving heart" the goddess of beauty said, "May love and caring flow forever through your heart" she said. She leaned in and planted a kiss on the baby's head. The Amazons cheered.

Aphrodite stepped back allowing Athena to come forward. Out of all of the goddesses, Athena was the most respected. She is the goddess of Wisdom and Warfare. Her intelligence knows no equal. Athena stood over the sleeping baby.

"I bless this child with Wisdom and Intelligence" Athena said, "May the power of the mind be your greatest weapon" the Amazons cheered even louder. Hippolyta, the Amazon Queen smiled and raised her head in pride. She was now the mother of another perfect child.

Artemis stepped forward. Of all of the Greek Goddesses, she was the one who the Amazons felt loyalty to. She lived among them on Paradise Island as their sister. Placing her ram's horn bow behind her Artemis stood over the crib and smiled down upon the sleeping baby.

"I bless this child with the eyes of a hunter and unity of beasts" Artemis said smiling. Oh how she longed to help raise another sister. "May nothing be too wild for you to overcome" Hestia then advanced, after her it would be Hestia's turn. Hestia would go last as a sign of respect to the Queen of the Gods.

"I bless this child with the fires of truth" Hestia said, "May the truth never be kept

from you” everyone clapped then paused. It was Hear’s turn. She moved forward and as she was about to speak a cold presence stopped her words.

All of the women looked over to the back of the nursery where the crib was. A dark shadowy figure crept into the room. It was Eris, the goddess of Discord.

“Forgive my intrusion” Eris said as she walked closer to the crib. “But I do believe this christening is for all Goddesses to attend”

“That is it Eris, what do you want?” Athena asked in a calm tone. She crossed her arms and stood in between Eris and the sleeping child.

“Well nothing more than to give my gift...dear sister” Eris said. Athena and the other goddesses raised an eyebrow. “It is my right as a goddess to give a gift, is it not?” Eris asked.

“It is” Artemis said stepping next to Athena.

“Well then why is it I was not given a proper invitation to this ceremony of the precious baby?” Eris said hovering over the ground. She stood over the baby and the other goddesses back way to give her the respect of space as she bestowed her gift.

“Well following in Aphrodite’s footsteps, I too bless this child with beauty” Eris said. A few in the room smiled. “May this be one of the most handsome men to ever walk the Earth!” Eris said. There was a gasp in the crowd of women.

Eris grabbed a hold of the silk blanket and tore it off of the sleeping baby. The

Goddesses and Amazons both gasped as a light illuminated on the child. When the light went away Eris’ gift appeared. In the crib was an innocent sleeping baby boy.

“Monster!” Hippolyta shouted, “What have you done?!” Eris chuckled and twirled in the air.

“Created chaos, darling” Eris said, “How can a nation set against living with men actually raise one, hmm?” she asked. She twirled her body one more time and disappeared in black smoke. Her chuckle echoed through the room after she vanished.

There was a large uproar of angry women. Eris just cursed them all and destroyed their perfect creation of the next Wonder Warrior. The Goddesses stood in shock. Immediately the Amazons urged their Queen to destroy the infant. To the Amazon, men are pigs and should be slaughtered as such.

“Silence!” Hear shouted, but the noise continued. She repeated herself again, “Silence!” she roared this time everyone stopped all forms of movement. Hear walked up to the sleeping baby boy and took him in her arms. She cradled him.

“I bless this child with the unity of a family” Hear said. She kissed the boy’s head, “May family always be there for you...” she kissed the infant once more.

The baby boy would never be raised on Paradise Island. The amazons wanted to kill him and Hear couldn’t let that come to pass. She is the Goddess of Family. She couldn’t bear to think of what the Amazons would do to the small boy, so she hid him away.

Artist Comments

I'm a HUGE superhero fan as well as Greek Mythology nerd. And of all of the superheroes the one with the most solid Greek ties is Wonder Woman. Now I could've just gone and wrote a fan fic of her, but that'll be no fun. So I created a new character in the DC world. Hope you all enjoy!☐ :D

Siblings in the Dark Pt. 3

By Christian Vedsø

Subject: World of Darkness.

She sent me a stern gaze, her eyes telling me her intentions without a sound; she wanted to show me something. She wanted me to follow a total stranger somewhere, long after the sun had set. After all, my clock said 23:38 last I looked at it. I wanted to object, wanted to ask her to leave, but before I knew it, I was sitting next to her on the back seat of a car with tinted windows like the kind used for celebrities, staring at the dark streets as they rushed by. I sighed, figuring that I might as well find out what she knew.

“When was the last time you saw him?” she asked silently. I spun around, looking at her.

“...saw who?” I asked. I made sure my tone and expression made it seem that I was clueless, even though I knew exactly who she meant.

“Your brother” she sighed, as if it was obvious. Well, had I not recently talked to Adam, I would probably have assumed that she meant Jacob... but as things were, what with the mood she set and all, I knew she meant my oldest brother, the deceased Adam.

“A few days ago... he’s been very busy recently. Why do you ask?”

“Adam Henderson” she said, confirming what I had guessed to be true. She knew something about ‘Areus’. I knew that I had to make sure, though. She had said nothing about him being alive, and I wasn’t going to tell her on my own initiative.

“Adam? Excuse me when I say this, but why do you have to bring him up? You surely know that he has been dead for just about a year... and it still hurts me” I mumbled. I had not been on stage as an actress since high school, but I knew I was a natural. If she really knew nothing about Areus, she would have stopped asking questions then and there. She didn’t.

A moment went by with complete silence. She looked at me, searching for any sign of falsity in my statement. I’m not sure if she found one or not, but she decided to confront me.

“We both know he’s alive” she stated as she looked away, turning to look out her own window.

“I’ve been tracking him for a while now... monitoring his activities. You see, the head editor wanted a sensational story, and I was already looking into the strange disappearances happening all over the place. New York is a big city, Ms. Henderson... a lot of people disappear, leaving no traces behind. Thanks to the editor, I now have quite a bit of funding to use in my search. If I’m not mistaken, you already have an idea as to how your brother fits into all of this.”

I stared at her. Simply put, she was accusing my brother, who was assumed dead, to be a mass murderer... or mass kidnapper, at the very least. I had no idea what she wanted from me, but I had the feeling that I didn’t want to go where we were going.

“Where are you taking me?” I asked with a voice a lot less calm than before. Much to my dismay, I felt myself tremble slightly, the stress of the situation finally hitting me. After all, I was in a car, heading somewhere only she and the driver knew where was, and with no knowledge of what kind of person she was.

“Jenks Asylum” she replied curtly. Whatever she wanted to show me in there, I was sure I didn’t want to see it.

“I’m not going there.” My voice was only a whisper by then as my breaths grew shorter. I tugged at the door handle next to me, but it was locked. Thanks to the dark surroundings and the silent engine, I had

no idea if I would survive jumping out in the first place, but I knew for a fact that I didn't feel entirely safe with Ms. Harper, either.

"Stop the car." I said firmly, only then looking up at the dark glass sheet

separating us from the driver.

"Stop the car!"

Strangely enough, he did. Then I realized why. We were already there.

Editor's note: I print the author's comment under protest, and I give warning that I do not believe one word.

Author's comment:

Yet another chapter in the story of Celene Marie Henderson. For anyone following this magazine, I guess I'm a stable, yet trite, writer among the good ones here. At present, no more chapters of this story is done, but, who knows? I might have one ready for the next magazine, as well! By now, I'm simply doing this in an effort to bring the story to an end and stop taking up space in the magazine, thus allowing more talented writers to get the limelight they deserve.

To metaphorically hit him over the head and tell him to stop being so insecure and/or stupid, please contact the author at christian.vedsoe@naanet.dk, or visit his homepage at: www.christianev.deviantart.com.

TOMORROW LINGERS

Chapter 5: this is a continuation of a story that began in issue #1

By A. Reynolds

Subject: Star Trek: The Original Series

Spock pressed the buzzer at Nurse Chapel's door feeling just a little self-conscious. There were not many people passing in the corridor, but he did not visit this section of crew quarters often, and certainly was rarely found calling at an individual's quarters in his off duty time. Too many people on the ship knew of the nurse's feelings for him, and more than one gave him a curious look as they passed.

The door slid open, and Christine invited him in with a look that was half pleased, half guilty. She was wearing a long dress, almost ankle length, of a deep, vibrant red almost the colour of human blood. She had obviously not made an effort to dress up her feet were bare, her makeup had been removed and her hair was loose and untidy but the dress itself was stunning, and Spock found that her slightly tired, dishevelled state only seemed to enhance its effect.

'Oh, I didn't wear this on purpose,' she said quickly, noticing his gaze hovering on the dress. 'It's just it's loose, and comfortable, and my uniform is starting to become just a little too tight...'

'There is maternity clothing available from the uniform department,' Spock pointed out, rigidly keeping his gaze from slipping to the scoop neck of the dress, where the beginnings of the fabric clung to the contours of her breasts.

She smiled a brief, self-conscious smile. 'Yes, but I don't really want to advertise to ship's stores that I'm pregnant.'

Spock's eyebrow rose minutely, but he said nothing. Instead, he walked over to the computer console and held his hand suspended over the button.

'If you will permit me?' he asked.

'Of course,' she nodded, bemused, but trusting that he wished to do something of import.

Spock turned the computer on and sat in the chair behind the desk in one fluid motion, and as soon as the screen flickered into life he began to input data at a fabulous speed. There was a low hum from the replicator in the corner, and Spock's hands ceased to move. He looked over at the replicator, and nodded toward it.

'That should be satisfactory,' he said.

She went quickly to the replicator, opening the sliding hatch and taking out two neatly folded, slightly warm blue uniforms. She shook them out, seeing that they were almost identical to her regular uniform just a little more generous about the waist, and very slightly longer in the skirt.

'They look perfect!' she said in astonishment. 'Mr Spock, that replicator's only programmed for food. How on Earth?'

Spock's eyebrow rose again. 'I do hold an A 7 computer expert classification, Miss Chapel. The replicator is essentially a small but very sophisticated transporter. Ship's supplies use precisely the same network to create new uniforms and unique outfits as the regular replicators for comestibles. I simply accessed the required programming, selected maternity clothing in your size and for your point of gestation, and transferred the output to your replicator. Stores will not be aware of the transaction it will be listed in records as two helpings of sausage and mashed potato with onion gravy, since the base elements and amounts are virtually identical. If you require I can request more comfortable uniform boots, and larger sizes at a later date.'

She stared at him in astonishment, then had the presence of mind to ask, 'And you knew my size *how*, Mr Spock?'

Spock regarded her emotionlessly. 'Miss Chapel, I can estimate the clothes size of

any woman by assessing her figure. It is not difficult.'

'Didn't you agree to call me Christine?' she asked him, partly to change a subject that seemed to be causing Spock to cast an intense gaze at her figure.

'Did you not agree to call me Spock?' Spock countered, rising to allow her to take his seat.

He went to the replicator as she sat, inputting data and returning with a steaming cup.

'Technically, neither of us agreed to anything,' she pointed out. She sniffed at the cup as he held it out to her. 'Mr Spock, how did you know my favourite blend of coffee?'

'I have never observed you to drink coffee in the recreation room and fail to choose this blend,' he said. 'This is decaffeinated, of course.'

'Of course,' she said with a smile. There was something reassuring in this something pleasing about the fact that he had been observing her closely enough to know both her favourite type of coffee and her dress size even before he had known about the pregnancy. 'Won't you have a drink?'

Spock shook his head briefly, a seriousness coming over his face again.

'Christine, we have a lot to discuss,' he said quietly. 'This situation is quite unprecedented. It is far beyond the considerations of an ordinary relationship.'

'Then have you been considering an ordinary relationship?' she asked tentatively.

Spock tilted his head, suddenly looking unusually self-conscious.

'I had not given it serious consideration until now,' he admitted truthfully. 'But I would be lying if I said I had never thought of it. It's just... It is just that, in my situation, a relationship always seemed untenable. I am the First Officer of a starship. I am often placed in physical

danger, and my commitment to duty must be a priority. Up until recently I was also bonded to a Vulcan woman, and expected to become her consort. But... He took a deep breath, then continued, 'One's priorities change in circumstances such as this. Starfleet is not the master of my life. I have been assuming, of course, that you are not averse to a relationship.'

She smiled a small smile. 'I wouldn't be,' she said carefully, 'but I would have to be certain of your reasons. I am not in a believer of *staying together for the children*. It's no way to found a relationship.'

Spock met her eyes, looking unblinkingly at her. 'I cannot pretend that the child has not instigated events. But, if we were to bond, I could not keep such a secret from you. You would *know* whether or not I care for you, and how deeply I do.'

'I can't quite believe I'm saying this,' she said, trying not to let herself be swayed by the idea of another glimpse into that deep, complicated, rich mind, 'but I think we need time. I think *you* need time. You've known about this for less than a day. We've hardly spent time together outside of the line of duty.'

'What do you want from me, Christine?' Spock asked directly. 'How must I proceed?'

'Court me,' she said with a quick, shy smile. 'Get to know me. Decide for yourself whether you want to commit to this. Let *me* decide too. I'm not going anywhere. There's no hurry. You don't, I suppose, object to having children out of wedlock.'

Spock raised an eyebrow. 'It is the Vulcan way to ensure an established bond before children are considered, but a legal contract can make no possible difference to the child. There will be no shame or stigma applied.' He nodded slowly. 'You are right, Christine. I have come here, with very little preparation, and proposed a life long bond to you. To me, the situation is an equation. I have assessed my feelings for you, and found them to be conducive to a relationship. I have always found you attractive, and I have always esteemed you

both as an officer and as a person. The fact that you bear my child is a catalyst motivating me to action rather than the instigator of my feelings. But you are quite correct. I would like to get to know you. We have time.'

'We have all the time in the world, Spock,' she said with a smile.

'Is that true?' Spock asked seriously. 'You have, I suppose, another five months of gestation. Do you plan to remain on the ship for the whole of that time?'

She hesitated, making little circles on the desk with her finger. 'I'd heard that they were going to start introducing allowances for families on Constitution class starships.'

Spock nodded slowly. 'That is true. They have begun the experiment quite successfully on the Lexington, I believe.'

'I don't want to give up my career here,' she said, looking up to meet his eyes. 'And I don't suppose you do either. I think it's important for this child to have the influence of his father, especially the cultural influence.'

Spock nodded silently. 'I would not be content to be so far and so constantly distant from my own child. It is quite vital that he receives Vulcan training. I could attend to that in the early years myself.'

He stopped as he realised how tired she was looking.

'I think we have discussed enough for this evening,' he said smoothly. 'Christine, would you permit me to stay for dinner?'

'Of course,' she said, a smile brightening her face again. 'Just bear in mind what I said, and don't expect me to stay awake late.'

'I will leave as soon as you request it,' Spock nodded. 'Now perhaps we should discuss something that relates to neither relationships nor pregnancy. Dr McCoy has told me in the past that you have an interest in Arkavite literature an interest I share. Have you read The Fall of the Endegon?'

Christine smiled at the Vulcan's oddly self-conscious attempt at social intercourse. It was obvious he was not used to small talk with anyone but a few close friends but she *had* read The Fall of the Endegon, and enjoyed it immensely, and it was wonderful to finally have someone knowledgeable to discuss the book with. Perhaps Spock's methods were not so clumsy after all, she reflected some minutes later. The discussion was intense and stimulating, and she was beginning to forget the awkward situation between them in the joy of talking about a subject divorced from either her job or the ship's current status. Spock had been right each truly knew the other very little, and the longer she spent in his company the more she learnt to value him as a person rather than as a figure of attraction who moved only on the outskirts of her social circle.

Spock left Nurse Chapel's room some hours later, deep in thought. He was troubled, and confused by varying emotions of which he had little experience. He had, he believed, enjoyed himself, once he forced himself to ignore the darker elements of the situation he had been awakened to today. He had found the nurse just as stimulating to speak to as Jim perhaps even more so. The range and depth of subjects in which she was interested overlapped satisfactorily with his own interests, but she also held knowledge on subjects he knew little about. There seemed to be plenty of scope for a lasting and rewarding friendship, and he was sufficiently attracted to her to warrant a relationship in the fullest sense. He had, he had to admit, experienced a certain degree of sexual arousal at the contemplation of that fresh, enticing body under the deep red dress.

And the child... Was he capable of separating the responsibility he felt for the child from his desire to enter a relationship with the mother? He thought he was. The child was, as he had said, the catalyst, but he thought that even without that promise of new life he was still able to feel a proper degree of attraction towards Christine.

It was, he finally decided, good. There

were very few drawbacks to the relationship. It was logical. It was convenient. It would not interfere with his career in the way a bond with a woman resident on Vulcan would. But there was what Henoach had done... Would that always hang between them like a veil?

He found himself, unconsciously, outside Jim's door, and he pressed the buzzer and entered when he was called.

'Spock.' Kirk greeted him with a smile that faded quickly into a look of concern at Spock's look of distraction. 'Are you all right, Spock?'

Spock considered. 'I believe I am, Jim,' he said carefully.

'You've spoken to her?'

Spock nodded.

'Did you work anything out?'

'To an extent,' Spock nodded. 'But we did not discuss Henoach at all. We did not discuss the rape. She was very tired.'

'Then it was rape,' Kirk began, then shook his head, saying, 'I'm sorry, Spock. You don't want to talk about that, do you?'

Spock sighed. 'I am not eager to discuss it, with you or her. But, from what I could glean from Henoach's memory, I don't believe it was as traumatic as it could have been.'

He sank into silence, his fingers clasped before his face, the outstretched tips of his forefingers just touching his lips. Kirk watched him in silence, sensing that when the Vulcan was ready to speak, he would.

Finally he looked up, and said, 'Jim, how can you tell if you will be content with a person for the rest of your life?'

Kirk smiled, inwardly amused at Spock asking *him* about lasting relationships. But he said, 'Just spend time with her, Spock. Like I said before, don't put any pressure on yourself. If you find yourself getting bored or fed up of her company, then perhaps she's not for you but you won't find out without spending time with

her.'

Spock nodded gravely. Then he said solemnly, 'This may mean I have to forego our scheduled chess games.'

Kirk grinned. 'You never know, Spock. She might be a Grand Master herself. Maybe you should go find out.'

'I think she is sleeping,' Spock said seriously.

Kirk smiled again. 'Well then, maybe we should get a game in now, while we still have the chance?'

The next evening found Spock standing outside Nurse Chapel's quarters again, feeling even more self conscious. Thankfully an amateur dramatics show was being put on in one of the rec rooms on another deck, and the corridors were largely empty. Thus far, he had not been passed by a single crewmember. If he had been, he wasn't sure if he could, or should, conceal the neatly arranged bouquet of roses that he had culled from the ship's botanical lab.

Court me, Christine had said. Spock had an idea of what human courtship involved. An hour spent searching the library computers had confirmed his ideas. Flowers were almost always well received. Roses were the favoured choice. Red roses, such as he had procured, were the ideal. But he had not just cut stems with red blossoms. Spock had a well developed appreciation of aesthetics, and he had judged that a medley of reds and varying pinks would be more pleasing than an artlessly gathered bunch of one colour. He had arranged the flowers with care, and had to admit that the result was visually pleasant, especially against the glossy and luxuriant green leaves that he had taken care to leave on the stems.

'Oh!' Christine said on opening the door, a surprised smile spreading over her face. 'Mr Spock, they're beautiful!'

Spock proffered the flowers towards her rather awkwardly, asking, 'Then you find the arrangement pleasing?'

'Oh, very,' she said, going quickly across the room and searching for something she could use as a vase. It was not often that one needed to display fresh flowers on a starship.

'Perhaps this,' Spock said, picking up a tall, angular water jug from a shelf nearby.

She turned and nodded, smiling as he went to fill the jug with water and took the flowers from her to arrange in the tall container.

'Mr Spock, are flowers really a part of Vulcan courtship?' she asked him, watching as he arranged the roses with a look of intense concentration.

He stopped, and turned to look at her. 'The foremost version of Vulcan courtship is for two children to form a preliminary bond at the age of seven,' he said plainly. 'We are, I believe, a little late in that respect.'

She took the jug and put it carefully on the shelf near her desk.

'I'm sorry, Mr Spock,' she said softly. 'I didn't mean to sound ungrateful. I just meant did you bring these because you wanted to, or because you thought it was right?'

'No offence is taken,' Spock said with equanimity. His gaze turned briefly to the flowers, and then back to her. 'I was practising a ritual of traditional human courtship,' he nodded. 'But I also used my own judgement. I believed that you would like roses.'

'I do,' she said with feeling. 'I like them very much. I like them better for the fact that you thought I would like them, rather than just thinking it was correct for me to have them.'

Spock's eyebrow rose a small amount. 'Human women,' he said, 'are incomprehensible.'

She smiled again. 'Well, I'm open for study, Mr Spock. Would you like to sit down?'

Spock nodded. He seated himself in the chair she indicated – an old and well worn wingbacked chair upholstered in dark blue velvet. He sat with some trepidation. He could imagine the chair falling apart with the wrong force exerted.

'Oh, don't worry,' Christine told him, noticing his concern. 'That thing's been around for over three hundred years. It may look fragile, but it's steady as a rock.'

Spock touched the arm of the chair in appreciation. One of the wooden chairs in his quarters was of a similar age. Curious that Christine would also have an old and somewhat sentimentally chosen item of furniture in her quarters.

He looked up at her, meeting her eyes steadily. 'I believe that the giving of flowers in human culture can also accompany an apology,' he said carefully.

'Oh, but you have nothing to apologise for!' she said quickly, sitting down near him. Spock could not help but notice that in the action of sitting she had more completely concealed her expression from his than was necessary.

'I am certain that my behaviour when you informed me of the pregnancy demands an apology,' he pointed out.

'Perhaps,' she nodded. 'But you already apologised for that.'

'There is also Henocho...' Spock said hesitantly.

'Well, I certainly don't expect an apology for that,' she said firmly. 'What Henocho did had nothing to do with you.'

Spock's eyebrow rose. 'In some ways, it had *everything* to do with me,' he said gravely, his eyes falling on her abdomen. 'We need to discuss him,' he said plainly, pushing his reluctance aside. 'His actions will always be an impediment between us, unless we can resolve our views of his actions.'

'You know what he did, then,' she said cautiously, half as a question, her eyes lowered.

'With meditation I can recall a certain amount,' Spock nodded. 'Those things that impressed themselves strongly on his on my mind. Those things that I know to look for in my meditation. But I cannot know everything he did. There are certain evidences of how he used his borrowed body. I know he ordered meat based meals almost every time he used a replicator, for example. I know he drank rather too much alcohol on occasion. I know a certain amount of what he did with you. I cannot know if there were others.'

'Oh, I don't think there were others,' she said quickly. 'In fact, I'm certain of it. He barely associated with the rest of the crew. And he spent so much time with me...'

'Yes,' Spock murmured, his head dropping. 'Christine ' He looked up, his eyes veiled with his reluctance to speak. 'Christine, he forced you, did he not? In fact, he raped you?'

She looked away briefly, then forced herself to meet his gaze again.

'He ' She hesitated, then said, 'Technically, yes, he did. But I don't know... It was your body, at least. I would trust you with my life, Mr Spock. Even if I didn't feel about you the way that I do, I would still trust you with my life. And I did, at least, desire you. And Henoah ' She shook her head. 'I don't suppose this should make it better. It should make it worse, but somehow it doesn't. Henoah was in my mind. Not reading it, I mean, but just there, like a hand behind my back, steering me the way he wanted me to go. Always suggesting... Whispering what he wanted. I could barely tell the difference between what he wanted and what I wanted. He wanted me. Therefore I wanted him. It was the response he needed me to give. I don't know how to explain it...'

'I think you are doing very well,' Spock said softly, his eyes still fixed on hers. 'I can understand why you have a dichotomy in your reaction to the event. I certainly do in mine.'

To be continued. . . .

'In yours,' she began. 'So you've remembered it all?'

Spock nodded. This seemed to be the time for absolute honesty.

'The memory was there in my subconscious. I reviewed it in meditation. I was appalled by Henoah's actions. But I was also aroused,' he admitted quietly. 'I was aroused by you. Henoah had done what I could never allow myself to do. He had let loose his control, and allowed biology to rule.'

'I think ' she began. 'I think that if Henoah were still in existence, I would find it much harder to deal with. But he isn't. He's dead, or scattered through the universe, or well, he's not here any more. The only thing left of it is your body, and I don't dislike your body, Mr Spock,' she said with sudden self consciousness.

Spock's gaze was gentle, but unrelenting. He stared at her for a long few seconds, and then said, 'You are strong, Christine. I have always admired your strength... I think that we both must come to terms with what Henoah did. I do feel great guilt at his actions, illogical as that may be. I feel anger at what he did at his violation of both of us. I will master those feelings through meditation and discipline. Are you capable of mastering yours?'

She smiled briefly. 'Perhaps I have an easier job than you, Mr Spock. I don't seek to rid myself of those emotions. But I will come to terms with them. But for now,' she said, her eyes moving to the red bouquet of roses, 'perhaps we should focus on more pleasant things. Would you like to play chess, Mr Spock?'

Spock's eyebrow quirked upwards. 'Captain Kirk suggested in a moment of levity that you may be a Grand Master. Was he correct?'

She smiled enigmatically.

'You'll just have to play me, and find out.'

Author's comments:

This story follows on from events in the Star Trek: The Original Series episode Return to Tomorrow.

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IN HIS EMPEROR'S SERVICE

Chapter 3; this is a continuation of a story that began in issue #1

By Jonathan Taylor

Subject: Warhammer 40,000

*****ENCODED TRANSMISSION*****
*****TO: INQUISITOR RESTRICTED *****
*****FROM: RESTRICTED *****
SUBJECT: PROCUREMENT OF RESTRICTED
LOCATION: STATION MARAK ROGUE TRADER SPACE
*****MESSAGE BEGINS*****□

"Are you sure you can hit him, Mon keigh?"
Mon keigh? What the hell?

"Quiet, you'll give away our position." I could almost feel the tension in the air as the Ranger seethed behind me. Wait, what? I could... The hell is going on now!?

I looked through the Long las scope, meh I was sill tying to get used to my new eye. It felt, itchy or something. The Xeno shifted slightly behind me, I could feel her breath, hot and wet on the exposed skin of my neck. It was doing heretical things to my libido.

□
At last the Xeno came into view, heh, the other Xeno came into view. Flanked by guards, he was further obscured by the leaves making this shot even more difficult. He and his guards moved with an awkward rolling gait, one I was having difficulty following properly must be their lack of toes the Xeno behind me seemed to be growing impatient. I could hear her reading her own rifle.

□
I found that one advantage of my new eye, is it did not need to blink I never missed a thing. I relaxed my grip, allowing the scope to only just touch the skin around my eye the tip of the Xeno's forehead came into view I fired. The shell struck the Xeno square in the parietal cavity, spraying brains over his guard. I noticed where my shot had passed through a leave nearby, leaving a neat hole. Grabbing the leaf as I raised myself to a mid crouch, I dropped it into an emty cip holster on my chest.

□
"Not bad, Mon keigh. Now lets see if you can keep up."

□
"What was that?" Came an unusually familiar voice.

I felt hot water, bouncing on my head, I tried to open my eyes but felt the sting of soap instead. Ah right.

"Nux?"
"What now its Nux? You just called me, 'Kion Gcheil' or somethin'." Hadn't thought of her in a while...

"No I didn't." The hell? Is that the best I can think of...

"But...?" She paused, "Neva' mind. Best hurry up, all your gonna get all 'pruny'. And miss lunch."

I heard her footsteps as she padded out. Rinsing the soap from my hair I quickly shut off the water before drying myself off with the towel.

Stepping out of the shower, I reached for my clothes. As I was just about finished pulling on my last clean shirt I spied something forgotten on the bench.

□
I picked it up only to then drop it imediately in embarrassment. It seemed Nux had forgotten her underwear. Oh. Dear. Emperor. I ran through my mind just what would happen if I were to bring Nux her forgotten paraphernalia, and decided to leave it alone.

□
Back at the canteen, I was interested to see an open space next to Nux instead of Ohmi. I could feel the others ignoring me. Well, except for Jaegoos. Who was staring at me with those red glowing eyes. I shivered unconsciously, as our gazes locked for a brief moment. Those eyes seemed to

burn into my skull Every. Damn. Time. I moved over to Ohmi, and managed to go as far as opening my mouth to speak before...

"Sit down, Kale. Yer foods gettin' cold." Nux also flashed me a meaningful look. It made her look constipated.

My shoulders sagged, but I went and all but fell into my seat. As I realised Nux had just done me a favour. Now sitting across from Ohmi, she had no choice other than to look at my black eye and bruised jaw. I noticed a fleeting smile as her eyes looked up.

□
Around that moment, my stomach over rode my 'other' feelings and demanded I inspect the plate in front of me. Some obscure mass of string? And odd looking balls of brown meat smelling, 'things'. Covered in red sauce. And something yellow, cheese? O Kay.

I looked around the table, everyone seemed to be eating it differently except for Jaagoos. Who just sat there. Staring at me. Is she a Servitor? Does she even have a face under that mask?

Looshy, had taken her fork and was 'twirling' the string onto it. Then placing the whole thing in her mouth and sucking it off, then chewing and so on.

Lask had cut hers up with a knife and fork, somehow managing to not get a single drop on her immaculate chin.

Nux simply shovelled the whole mass into her mouth, trailing the strings from her mouth to the plate. Ew.

Ohmi, on the other hand seemed uninterested in her food. Choosing instead to push the balls around her plate.

I decided to copy Nux, too hungry to try any other styles. I shut my eyes as I gratefully chewed the meaty mess. Hadn't been eating this well, since well ever. Back on Tartarus I was usually in camps and when I was home Jessica was usually too tired after...

Jessica. Why was she always tired? She damn it stop thinking of her!

□

Ohmi was looking at me again. She had

that same look on her face, as if I was something that warranted further study. Heh, I suppose I was. I smiled at her, she gave me a brief smile before lowering her eyes again. Heh, there were still a few days before we arrived on the planet maybe there was enough time for... For what? Do you plan to seduce her? Fuck her? What then? You stupid bastard, just shut the hell up.

□

The table was unusually silent. Normally the canteen would be aloud with jokes and laughter, silly arguments and embarrassing questions. Normally sent my way, heh. Perhaps they were waiting for me. Yeah. Oh well, time to bite the bullet...

"Ohmi?"

She looked up. Here eyes were wide for some reason. Her mouth was full too. Made her look like a chipmunk.

Anyway, "I'm sorry for being a jerk this morning."

She swallowed, then grinned the effect spoiled by the residue on her teeth. "And I'm sorry for pokin' through yer suff."

□

Well that was easier than I expected.

"YOUR BIONIC IS LEAKING."

Emperor, that voice sent chills up my spine. Wait

Ohmi suddenly gasped, "Hey yer right, Jaagoos! Kale, your eye is bleedin'!"

Suddenly I felt it. I hadn't noticed it before but now my right eye was burning with pain.

"Ah geez, did I do that?"

I reached up to my eye, and drew my hand back my fingers were covered in an oddly dark red fluid. And then I heard the screams.

"Holy Emperor! What the hell is that!" I yelled as I leapt to my feet, gripping my skull in both hands. The pain, it was unreal. I felt my vision go black, only to then reopen in a twisted vortex, ethreal shapes twisted into reality fading away again as I looked at them.

I could feel things, touching me. The pain grew even more intense, the sound grew louder I all but crushed my hands

against my ears but the sound kept coming through. I felt blood pour from my eyes, I felt my hands become slippery with it, my hair matted with the stuff. I gagged as blood filled my nose, my throat become clogged with muck.

□

My fell backwards, but instead of hitting the floor I just kept falling, claws reached

□

for me, tearing my flesh, scratching at my mind. And then he was there, his maddened eyes, his neck at an unnatural angle He flew towards me, blade in hand. Covered in blood and puss, the ghosts of hundreds in his wake...

"Kale!!!"

TRANSMISSION LOST

□

*****MESSAGE ENDS*****

Author's comment:□

This chapter□was inspired by Jaekyu of Deviant Art, Eldar and Humans hunting Tau pic, entitled For The Greater Good.

□

As for further developments it is important to remember that Kale is not what exactly what he appears to be but then again, is anyone?

□

Yes they are. Many people are only skin deep but thats besides the point.

□

Actually I think I just ruined my own point. Darn. I blame you. :

The attached pic is graciously provided by Mr Culexus, <http://mr.culexus.deviantart.com/> and it shows just how Ohmi acts when no one is looking. :3



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