

Fanatical Publishing's

Weekly Review

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AND NOW, a word from the publisher:

Hello folks, Jochannon here; first let me say thank you for reading, and I hope you enjoy, and please feel free to share it with your friends, re-post it to your profile, spread it around; the more people who get to read it, the better!

If you are not subscribed, but you want to be, there's nothing easier: Just e-mail me at fanaticalweekly@gmail.com with 'subscribing' in the subject line.

I've got a website, where you can download old issues:
<http://fanaticalpublishing.weebly.com/wr-archive.html>

If you want to contribute, I'd love to see your work, send it to me at the aforementioned e-mail address with: 'category(prose, fanfic, poetry), STORY TITLE, Author's Name' in the subject line.

You can include the text of your story in the body of the email, attached as an RTF, you can put in a link to your story on some webpage. Please include a cover letter about you, your work, or whatever; include any links you want, and cover art if you have any.

Do you have any questions or comments? If you do, I'd to hear them; write to me at the aforementioned e-mail address.

I'm bad at stopping these things, so I'll just say again: thank you for reading, and I hope you enjoy!

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ORIGINAL LITERATURE

LET'S PLAY DETECTIVE?

CHAPTER 10

FaerieBox
of <http://FaerieBox.deviantart.com>

Cousin really wasn't happy when he met us in the garden.

Alice, on the other hand, was singing inside. Barely she saw him, she smirked broadly and commanded:

"Go on, chuck. Spit it out. Now we have a *deal*."

Maxwell sat down sulkily by our side, on the little wooden bench that we had in the greenhouse. His face was like if he'd eaten a bitter lemon. However, he acceded her request.

And now the explanation of why I think that bipolarity and unexpected changes of humour are some kind of curse running in our family.

Maxwell glanced at us, quickly and almost shyly, then really *looked away* – like, we at the left, looks right – completely avoiding eye-contact. It seemed that he had suddenly found something very interesting on the tender plants growing in colorful pots.

"Grandpa's lawyer will come tomorrow with the will, if the weather doesn't get too bad." he told us, his elbows resting on his knees and hands enlaced.

From the corner of my eye, I exchanged a glance with Sister (lawyer! finally!), but Maxwell couldn't see her face of satisfaction. Lucky, because what he said next...

He breathed in, deeply, and looked like he would never release that breathe. I was staring in astonishment at the slight frown that had appeared in his brow. Our so self-confident and sure cousin... that appeared to be an... inner struggle.

"But that's not what matters." he shook his head. "I think I have to tell you... so you won't think the worst when everybody finds out tomorrow."

A secret! We both were listening very carefully, my nosy Alice stretching her ears.

"It's about my Dad's business." Maxwell explained "They...aren't going that well, in the last one or two years. He got some problems... debts, I mean, and he... we were really short of money. So Mum asked for Grandpa's help. And he *was* helping us." he shrugged "I don't know what will happen now. My parents either, I suppose. They're fighting a lot - Mum and Dad – because of this."

"What?!" Sister exclaimed, perplexed. Not because of Uncle Henry's failure as businessman, nor his owing money to Grandpa, but

because of the 'fight' comment.

"Yeah." Maxwell glared at her, also understanding the reasons of her astonishment "Mum is nervous and angry with Dad, and he is as scared as her, with good reasons. They're both under pressure by this all. I think they're going to divorce. Does it matter to you?"

"No, in fact. Not at all." Sister replied, regaining her self-control "Just...Aunt Daisy...?" she stroked her chin, and shook her head "I would never imagine it..."

Maxwell sprung up from the bench, provoked. He knocked out a little flowerpot by accident, but he didn't seem to notice, his face flushing and his voice raising.

"Why?! Do you think we are what? Some perfect family?"

To tell the truth, it was exactly what we thought before he'd uncovered it to us. But this is of no importance. I quickly crouched down beside the flowerpot, trying to save the poor innocent living thing inside. They couldn't exchange a single word without fighting?

"Please stop being childish." I added in a whisper: "Poor little flower..."

I had good intentions. Sister, however, suddenly stared at me with flames sparkling out of her eyes. I guess she felt that I was thinking about her being a heartless bully.

"It's better that you explain who is childish, Carrie." she threatened.

My eyes widened in fear. I hurriedly pointed at Maxwell.

"He! Sure, he!"

Read: 'don't kill me, Sis!'

Maxwell just rolled his eyes, huffing.

"You know, I don't care about it!" he cried "Now it's your turn, you silly tyrant. This is a two-sided deal. What have *you* discovered?"

My twin glared at him, still angry. She shrugged, folding her arms.

"We saw our Mom arguing with yours, but now we maybe can guess the cause - or because Mom knows, or because Auntie is with a dragon-humour. We found out that no one in our family will tell us anything willingly. You may solve this lack of information for us, since you're older and a boy. But even so we could get some gossips from Zia. I'm sure she heard it from the last maid, that hateful woman who worked here all her life and thought that so she'd right to give us sermons."

She got silent, and I knew she was remembering her past hatred of Old Martha. Maxwell squeezed his eyes, his curiosity aroused.

"What she said?"

"Oh." Sister woke up. "She said we weren't sensitive of arousing some subjects, because Grandpa wasn't really so nice, and we were

making old scars hurt. That... he hadn't been a nice father to his children. I and Carrie thought about this. It's obvious that he'd preferences and maybe was, don't know, mean, sometimes. Our bet is some childhood's traumas. So we may have financial *and* 'vendetta' reasons for murder. And, besides..."

"... we have a psychological-based list of suspects." I concluded for her.

I nodded, with certainty, at the same time that Sister also did the same. A kind of ending-dot gesture.

Maxwell raised his brows. And not of amazement thanks to our perfect simultaneous acting.

"Something wrong, chuck?" Alice asked, in her most impertinent tone. I was sorry for him if he decided to mock her beloved psychology.

Which was, of course, exactly what he did.

"No. Not at all, *sweetheart*." he replied, copying her "Just that I believe that things you can't touch, or aren't born from things you can touch by logical chains of action-reaction are *not* evidence."

Sister gritted her teeth in a tense smile. I'm sure that I heard her... growling?

"Not... logical...? Oh, that's wrong for sure. And I'm going to show you how. Soon." she shook her index finger at him "And there won't be another murder right now only because of Carrie."

"Me?" I blinked, cleaning black earth from my hands.

"Yeah. It's for your sake, Sis. Don't wanna ruin your innocence."

"Anyway." Maxwell spoke again, with a bored attitude "Better than nothing, for two girls. You said a written list? I must see. Now is when you show me it."

"Tomorrow." Sister retorted, her ego already hurt. And she couldn't resist pinching him: "And if you want *logic* in them, it will help if you send us your sister. She's our only witness."

Maxwell's turn to get quiet. He replied, after an instant:

"I will think about it. Tomorrow. Till then..." he got up from the bench again, and ignored Alice purposefully in his good-byes, by giving more attention to me. "Carrie."

I blinked again. I just can't understand these people.

"Yeah. *Till then*." sister muttered when he was already gone "Because I hope I won't see you at dinner-time. It would make me sick."

“WELL, IN THE BOOK IT SAYS...”

Katelyn Rushe

I want to begin by talking about the Peter Jackson Hobbit movies. No surprise there to anyone who knows me, but I promise I have a point this time.

There’s a scene roughly two-thirds of the way through the first Hobbit film where Bilbo (after being dragged along by thirteen dwarves on a dangerous quest to take back their mountain home that was usurped by a dragon) decides to give up and go home. He tries to sneak away from the dwarves while they’re sleeping, but one named Bofur catches him in the act and tries to talk him out of leaving. Bofur says that Bilbo is just homesick and that he understands that feeling, to which Bilbo snaps that none of the dwarves understand because they’re used to “not belonging anywhere.” Bilbo immediately apologizes for this insult, but Bofur sadly admits, “We don’t belong anywhere.” He then wishes the hobbit well and allows him to leave—only for them and the rest of the group to be captured by goblins a second later. It’s a well-done scene and a very nice moment for both characters, and it’s one of my favorite parts in the whole movie. However, there is one little issue that I may or may not have with it. I say “may or may not” because there’s actually another, bigger issue with the film that kind of cancels out the first issue.

According to all of the movie guides, visual companion books, and online character profiles for *The Hobbit*, Bofur and his family aren’t from Erebor, the mountain that the dragon took over. They’re actually from the Blue Mountains, which are on the complete opposite side of Middle Earth from Erebor. With that in mind, the “We don’t belong anywhere” line kind of falls apart coming from Bofur. He’s one of the only dwarves in the whole group that it doesn’t work for, in fact. If the screenwriters had put just about anyone else in that scene with Bilbo, there would be no issue.

With that said, here’s the other, bigger issue that kind of cancels it out: we never learn Bofur’s personal backstory in the movies. The dialogue never explains where he’s from, why he joined the quest, or what sort of relationship he has with any of the other dwarves. This is the case for most of the dwarves in the movies, minus their leader Thorin, and since their backstories don’t exist in any of Tolkien’s works, the supplementary guidebooks for the films are the only places where you can read up on that information. So if you don’t bother with any of those extra materials and just watch the films by themselves, that scene will play out just fine.

This finally leads me to today's topic: required reading for movies. There are entire websites and bookstore shelves filled with literature about characters, locations, chronologies, and so on from popular film franchises. Their purpose is to enrich the films by giving juicy inside information about what's happening onscreen. In some cases, they also divulge a few very important tidbits of information that pertain to the plot, which for some reason aren't spelled out nearly as well in the actual movies. As a result, many of these "enriching" materials become necessary ones that you might not be able to follow the movies without.

Take the Star Wars prequels for instance, the worst offenders of this in my opinion. Virtually no one has ever been able to make sense of the villains' plans in any of those films without first consulting the billions of outside materials that Lucasfilm is happy to sell. I'm not condemning anyone for reading or buying those materials, seeing how I own several myself, but I've come to realize from them just how poorly and lazily written those movies are. You should never have to do research in order to understand a film. If the filmmakers do their jobs well, you won't have any questions by the time the end credits roll, at least not about the plot or the characters' motivations.

The same goes for movies that have been adapted from novels or comic books. Just because the audience for a movie adaptation has most likely read the source material beforehand doesn't mean the screenwriters have an excuse to phone in their script and skimp on the exposition. Movies are meant to be accessible to everyone, not just to one group of people, but you can tell that a lot of popular movie adaptations out there are written under the assumption that the viewers are already familiar with the source material and know what's going on. Try going into these movies cold, and you will be very confused by what you're watching. I know as an aspiring author that I should be encouraging people to read the books in addition to seeing the films, but as an aspiring filmmaker, I'm saying that it shouldn't be necessary to do so. Movies like *The Godfather*, *Jurassic Park*, and even 2013's *The Great Gatsby* prove that a discernible stand-alone adaptation can be made.

So my question after all this ranting is, what makes the supplementary/source material for a movie required reading? At what point does it cross that line and start to do the screenwriters' job for them? Ultimately, I think it comes down to how essential to the story the information in question is. You don't need to know every aspect of how the Galactic Republic in Star Wars operates, but you do need to know why it's having trouble operating and why the Separatists are declaring war on it. You don't need to know how or why Sirius Black and Remus Lupin created the Marauder's Map in Harry Potter, but you do need to know that they created it so you won't be puzzled when

they randomly start explaining how it works.

And then there's *The Hobbit*. As much as some of us may enjoy reading about Bofur the dwarf's personal background, he's a peripheral character, and thus we don't need to know anything about him in order to follow the plot. However, we do need to know a lot about Thorin, the dwarves' leader who sets the whole plot in motion. We need to know that two of the other dwarves in the group are his nephews so we'll understand something that they do for him near the end of the story. We need to know how Gandalf managed to get the key to Erebor from Thorin's presumably dead father so we won't be questioning the logic of it the entire time. If those things are never made clear before the end of the *Hobbit* movie trilogy, then we'll have issues. If they are made clear before the end, then smooth sailing—and as of the second film, his nephews have been identified. And who knows? Maybe the third film or the extended version of the second one will even reveal Bofur's background after all, and it'll turn out that his "We don't belong anywhere" line was just a big sad act to guilt-trip Bilbo. The possibilities are still endless.

So that's my two cents about extra reading materials. They're still a ton of fun to dive into, but they should remain in the shadows of the movies that they're about. Keep collecting them if you like them, and if you don't like them, then hopefully you'll never need to.

And if it's not too much to ask, Peter Jackson, could you please explain why the characters in *The Hobbit* can't just fly those giant eagles to their destination? I know it says why in the book, but you finally have the opportunity again to state it on film and put that issue to rest.

SOULS

A SUPER SMASH BROS. CREEPYPASTA

Onii-chan93
of <http://Onii-chan93.deviantart.com>

I finally returned from college for my winter break. I've been away for a long time and it was really nice seeing everyone, but I found myself alone even when I come back for a little while. As I unloaded my things from my car and carrying them to my room in the basement, I found my old Nintendo 64 console in my closet. Awesome! I haven't played the system in well over 10 years. As I unpacked my things, I quickly started setting the system up and found my old Star Fox, NFL QB Club 2001, NASCAR 1999, Yoshi's Story, and many other games that I grew up on. I was so excited about the long and amazing journey while playing these games. The first game that I grabbed was Star Fox. I blew the bottom of the cartridge and slammed it into the system. I flipped the switch into the on position, but nothing happened. No sponsors, no sounds, just a black screen. I looked down at the system, which had the little light on telling me it was working. I flipped the system off and sat in confusion. "It should work," I thought. "Though it has been sitting for some time..." With that thought, I started checking the console. Controller, cords, and the system itself. All seemed fine until I finally figured out the cord used for the audio and display AND the cord to the controller has given up (mostly because a pet chewed the wires and they were both crudely fixed with electric tape). I took a deep breath and silently cursed at myself for not fixing it back then. In frustration, I tossed the controller on the ground and grabbed my Game Boy and played some Pokemon.

The next day I started driving around and came across a small game shop off the belt of our small town. Curiosity got a hold of me and I parked in front of it. I walked inside and saw it had hundreds of movies and games that went to the newest game consoles to the SNES. I felt like a little kid looking at all the games, but then I came across one of my favorites, Super Smash Bros. I immediately grabbed the game and smiled like an idiot. I'm sure most people near me looked in concern when it came to me. I didn't really care. The game in general was in pretty good condition, with a few scratches here and there, but Mario's eyes blackened out with what seemed like a permanent marker. "Little punk," I thought, as I looked at the game. "I get I'm not the best at taking care of games, but don't mark them

up.” I shrugged it off and placed it on the counter with the cord and controller and paid for them.

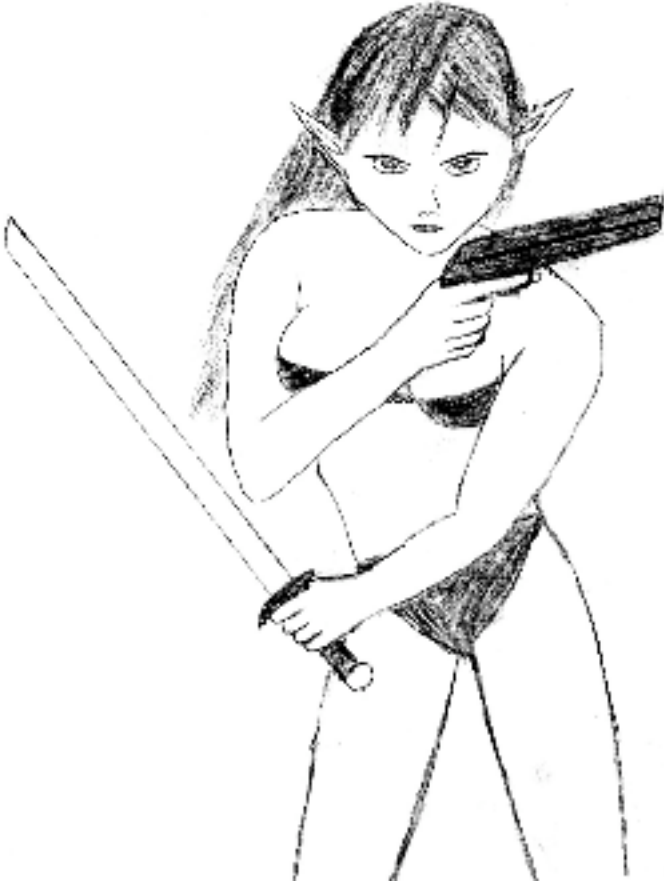
As I made it to my room, I placed the controller and started setting the system up once more. Cords were in the right place and a good controller was plugged in. I picked up Star Fox once more and...Presto! The game started up smoothly and I played for hours. When I finished the game, I grabbed the Super Smash Bros. game and looked at the label again, wondering why Mario’s eyes were drawn over. “Maybe this is a bad game?” I thought. “Well they wouldn’t sell me a bad game, would they?” I took a deep breathe a slid the game in and turn it on. It worked! I was happy to see the Nintendo 64 logo and the opening animation run smoothly, but there was no sound. No music or character sounds as they were introduced. I checked my TV, but it was working fine. I started getting angry until a loud screech from my TV sent shivers down my spine. I’m no fan of loud and high pitch noises because they hurt my ears, but that was one of the worst I heard. I skipped the intro to the main screen and was given all my options, 1 player, vs. mode, etc., but there was no music still. I selected the 1 player mode and was greet by all the regular 8 characters: Mario, Donkey Kong, Link, Samus, Yoshi, Kirby, Fox, and Pikachu, but they all looked different. Their eyes where all black. Some of them were harder to tell, like Pikachu and Kirby, but they had no whites in there eyes and instead of hearing “Choose your character” I heard “Next to die” in a deep, low voice. “Next to die?” I thought. I started to believe the game had been messed with in some way, but I went along with it and selected my favorite character, Pikachu. I wanted to go on an easier level so I can warm up, but there wasn’t any option at all. I only had the stock level, but I could only have one life. “Yeah, this has been messed with...” I mumbled, taking a deep breath and pressing the start button. The voice announced “Pikachu vs. Link”, but it was just the voice and no dramatic sounds that normally happen and their eyes were the same as they were on the character selection. The level loaded up and Hyrule Castle looked fine, but there wasn’t a background or music playing. It didn’t show a mountain and valley, but was just a dark red. As the announcer yelled “GO!” Link and I fought and I quickly defeated him, but as he fell off the map, I heard Link cry out as a bone crunching splat drowned him out, instead of the explosion and the text “FINISHED!” appeared. The splat sounded so real it sent chill down my spine. “Finished? What does that mean?” I thought, as the next level came up. “Pikachu vs. Yoshi team.” Under in the black part of the screen it had a text saying “25 Yoshi Massacre.” I did a double take on that text, but it disappeared as Yoshi’s Island loaded. Again, no music and a dark red background, but with a very faint outline of something else in a lighter

red. The announced "GO!" once again and I started knocking the Yoshi's off the map easily with the same nasty splat every time they died. I gagged half way thru and with the last Yoshi dead; the text "FINISHED!" appeared. I swallowed some spit that formed in my mouth as the next level, Fox, started, but there was a large red text below saying, "Having fun?" Before I could question it, the Sector Z map loaded and both characters entered. No music and the same background but the outline started to become a little clearer through the darker red. After I defeated Fox and heard his death, I was expecting the target bonus round, but it skipped it and went straight to the Mario Brothers. The music was still missing and the red outline started to become more visible. I was given Kirby as a partner but he was quickly defeated. As I beat both the Mario brothers, I sat back and noticed I was shaking slightly. The next person to fight was Pikachu and under "Pikachu vs. Pikachu", a red text said "You're killing them all." "I'm killing them?" I thought as the level loaded. "What does that mean?" The map was still music less and the lighter red was visible. It showed a ghost like face with sharp teeth that curved into a smile. As I moved through the levels, Giant Donkey Kong, the Kirby team, and Samus, the face in the background became clearer and clearer with each fight as text appeared before certain fights ended. After the Kirby fight, the text said, "They tried so hard to live, but you kept them from that." and after the Samus fight it said, "Their souls are mine now." I started to think what this all meant and then the Metal Mario fight came. "The brave hero's will finally gave up to me." Mario gave up? Why did he give up? I started to think about all that's been happening, but the level loaded and the fight was as difficult as it always is. Finally after beating Metal Mario, more text appeared, "Thank you for building my army. They fought hard, but all died by your hand and now they are mine." The Polygon team? What was it talking about? A thought slipped into my mind. What if all the characters that I defeat are turned into the figures that I'm going to face? That would mean they were turned into these polygon figures and forced to fight me again. I was stunned at this idea. The fight started, but the background was different. It wasn't red, but completely black and the music was back but it sounded like it was being played backwards. As I fought, I felt a wave a sadness crash down on me every time a figure fell off the map and a metallic crunch sounded in place of the explosion. I sent every single one of those characters to their deaths and they got turned into those things! It hit me like a bag of bricks but the final boss was approaching. Another text appeared "Now we meet in person." Master Hand. He did all of this. I felt anger build up inside me as the level loaded. It started normally, Pikachu standing alone on the platform, but the background was still completely black and the music was playing backwards.

Master Hand appeared like normal but various parts of him were covered in red. His laugh was lower and more evil and thus started the fight. It seemed to have lasted to what seemed like forever and proved to be as difficult as I remember. The music played louder and faster as Master Hand's health dropped. As I finally landed the last hit, Master Hand started to explode and everything, but Pikachu, went to black. I let out a satisfied sigh and waited for the credits, but they didn't show, but what did show.....will haunt my mind for the rest of my days. It was a picture of all characters, their faces sad or incredibly scared, with Master hand above them, his fingers extended out. A final text appeared below them before it faded to black.

“THANKS FOR MY NEW TOYS.”

FAN FICTION



or: Leanna's Return

Your Fan Fiction is published here for free, but if you want to help keep it free, check out some other things I publish, like

ME₃ THE HELLDIVER SAGA, THE LAST CYCLE:

CHAPTER 3: THIS MEANS WAR

Veyron722skyhook

Ashley was almost immediately rushed to the hospital. Griffin of course stayed with her. Though Austin knew it wasn't Chakwas' fault for taking some time off, he wished it hadn't been now.

"We're not going with?" James asked.

"We need to see the Council." Said Liara.

"Right." Said James. "Looks like they might be coming to see you."

A familiar face suddenly walked up to them.

"Major Shepard. Got word you were arriving."

"Bailey. Good to see you again. So, you're here to bring us to the Council?" said Austin.

Captain Armando Owen Bailey had first met Austin during the battle of the Citadel when Saren and the Terror Geth and his armies invaded the station under leadership of the Reaper vanguard, Sovereign. Since then, he'd become the new Captain of C-sec and had helped Austin a few times during his mission to take down the Collectors by aiding or pointing him and his squad members in the right direction.

"I'm here to tell you the Council is expecting you, but they are dealing with their own... problems. With the war and everything. They apologise for the inconvenience, and blah, blah, blah... Meet them here, at Udina's office. They'll be ready soon enough." Said Bailey.

"All right." Said Austin.

"You might have time to go by the medical centre, if you want to check on progress over there." Bailey suggested.

"Thanks, I might do that." Said Austin.

"You go on ahead. I'll head up to Udina's office." Said Liara.

"One of my men can show you the way." Said Bailey.

Before leaving, Liara quickly planted a kiss on Austin's cheek.

"You?" Bailey asked James.

"I'm just a tourist today. I'll try not to get in any trouble." said James, heading off on his own way.

Bailey also left, leaving just Austin. His first instinct of course was to head to the hospital and check on Ashley. Just before he was about to head into the elevator, he could overhear an argument between one of the Normandy's crew members and a reporter.

The reporter appeared to be trying to question the crew member about him being part of the Normandy. He of course was being very vague on the subject.

Austin didn't want the press harassing his crew, so he felt it best to try and sort this out.

"What's going on here?" he asked.

The reporter's head shot up in surprise she heard the Major's voice.

"Shepard?"

The reporter turned round. To Austin's surprise, the reporter was none other than Emily Wong.

Austin had met Emily not long before the battle of the Citadel when he was still hunting Saren. At that time, she'd been a journalist looking into organised crime. When Austin had taken down Fist, a former agent of the Shadow Broker now turned agent for Saren, he'd collected files that he later gave to her.

Emily later requested his help again in investigating Citadel traffic control. Doing both of these jobs had earned Emily's friendship and she had even interviewed him. And as if that wasn't enough, he and Alpha had rescued her sister from Batarian slavers and Austin had even invited her to his and Liara's wedding.

It was fair to say that he and Emily were pretty good friends. Seeing her here was by no means unwelcome.

"Emily! Good to see you again. It's been a while." said Austin as he and Emily shook hands.

"It's good to see you too, Shepard. And I think you're just the person who can help me." Emily smiled.

"You need my help with another story?" Austin asked in a joking manner.

"Not this time." Emily chuckled. "With all this war going on, my producers would like me on a human ship, I was hoping that ship could be the Normandy."

"Why do you want to be on the Normandy?" Austin asked. "There are many better human ships out there that see even more action than we do."

"You helped me out before; it's about time I returned the favour. I'll be able to show people things as they really are. Not hide the truth as some have been trying to do. Besides, wars can be won or lost in the editing room. A war like this needs to be won." said Emily.

"I'll warn you right now, Emily. Helldivers like me handle very dangerous missions. I can't guarantee you'll be safe all the time. Nor will I be responsible for what happens to you." Austin advised. He had no problem in having Emily aboard. Admittedly, having the press on his side could indeed help the war a lot.

"I understand, Shepard. That's a risk I am willing to take in

order to provide you with the support you are no doubt going to need in the fight ahead." said Emily.

Austin could see that Emily was confident in her decision and that she was sure it was what she wanted. What more convincing did he need?

"Very well then. Welcome aboard, Miss Wong." he said.

"I consider it a privilege, Shepard. How much gear can I bring?" Emily asked.

"One foot locker."

"See you on the ship then, Shepard."

Sure enough, the hospital was fairly busy. Seemed the Reapers were spreading quickly. Still, the patients that were being treated didn't look all that bad. Plus, the hospital seemed very well equipped. They and Ashley were in good hands.

As he looked around for where Ashley was, he suddenly spotted two very familiar faces. Dr Chloe Michel, whom Austin had saved from Fist's thugs about 5 years ago, and none other than the Normandy's medical doctor, and Austin's old friend, Karin Chakwas.

"Here's Shepard now." said Chloe.

"Karin. Nice to see you." Austin smiled.

"You as well, Shepard. I'm starting to regret that I picked now of all times to take a small break. I heard you escaped Earth in the Normandy, and that someone was critically injured. I came as fast I could." said Chakwas.

"We had a run in with Cerberus on Mars. Ashley took the worst of it. How is she doing?" Austin asked.

"Very well, all things considered. I'm impressed with Lieutenant Commander Williams' resilience, as well as Dr Michel's expertise." said Chakwas.

"That's a thought." Austin said to himself quietly as he looked at Dr Michel. Perhaps she was the one he was looking for...

"Anyway, she's in good hands, so I'm not really needed here. I'm fully ready to re-join the Normandy. You say the word, and I'm with you." said Chakwas.

"The Normandy wouldn't be the same without you, Karin. Get your things. Docking Bay D24." Austin smiled.

"Yes, Major. And thank you."

Chakwas left to get her things. Austin meanwhile went over to Dr Michel. He had something to ask her.

"Major Shepard. Good to see you." said the Russian woman.

"Dr Michel, it's been a long time. You've come a long way from that small clinic down in the wards." said Austin.

"Because of you. I don't know where I'd be if you hadn't dealt with Fist and his thugs. Now I'm head physician in a Presidium clinic. You gave me this chance. I assume you're here about Lieutenant-

Commander Williams?" Chloe asked.

"I did come to check on her. But, I was hoping to speak you as well. I have something I'd like to ask you." said Austin.

"Of course, Major. Anything." Michel replied.

"Lately there's been a new custom aboard Helldiver ships requiring them to have at least two medics. Chakwas is one of the best, but I don't like to break protocol." Said Austin. "I was hoping you might like the job as our second medic."

"Me? Surely there must be someone better." Said Michel.

"I don't want a complete stranger, Dr Michel. I want someone I trust. Besides, you could consider this a way of returning the favour." said Austin.

"I... I guess you're right." Said Dr Michel. "Sure. I'd be honoured."

"See you on the Normandy then."

After a tiny of bit of searching, Austin finally found the room were Ashley was being kept. As expected, Griffin was sat at her bedside, holding her hand. To Austin's utter shock however, there was someone else with him.

"She'll be alright, Griff. She's tough." said an N7 marine.

"I know. It's just hard seeing her like this." Griffin sighed.

Austin instantly recognised the N7. He didn't even need to look at her, he'd know that British accented voice blindfolded. His eyes widened as he found himself gazing upon none other than his dear sister, Sarah Jane Shepard.

"Sarah?"

"Austin!"

The two siblings hugged each other tightly. Ever since the attack on Earth, they'd both been so worried about each other. Austin had been right in the line of fire, and Sarah had been out in deep space. It was a great relief for the both of them to see the other alive.

"Thank goodness you're alright! I've been so worried about you." said Austin.

"Same here. When I heard about Earth, I feared the worst." said Sarah, as the two finally gave each other some air.

"How'd you end up here on the Citadel?" Austin asked.

"I knew that if you did escape Earth, this would be the most likely place to find you. I then heard word that an Ashley Williams was in hospital. So, I investigate and to my delight, I find Griffin and get told that you all escaped." said Sarah.

"I trust your little rally mission went well?" Austin asked.

"It did actually. Better than I thought. I've got us several N7 operatives for our cause and I've even been given coordinating command of the N7 special forces." said Sarah, almost proudly.

"Does that mean you'll have to go out on the front lines

though?" Austin asked with concern. He'd hate for Sarah to leave again. Plus, he dreaded to think what impact this would have on his comm specialist, and Sarah's girlfriend, Samantha Traynor.

"No. I can coordinate them from anywhere. What better place than the Normandy?" Sarah smiled.

"That's good to hear. Traynor would also be heartbroken if you didn't come back." said Austin.

"I'm glad she's safe too. You've no idea how badly I've been sleeping because I've been so worried about her." said Sarah, breathing a sigh of relief at merely the mention of her love's name.

"She's felt the same."

Austin then looked at Ashley. Overall, the bruising and injuries looked better than they had done previously. She still looked in bad shape though.

"The docs say she's okay. She just needs time to heal." said Sarah supportingly.

It did still pain Austin to see his childhood friend like this. He gently walked up to the bed and sat gently on the edge of it.

"You got pretty banged up there, Ash. Had me worried." he said. "I just wanted to check in on you, see how you're doing. You hang in there, alright. I need you up and reporting for duty ASAP, you hear me soldier?"

Griffin could sense the support and encouragement in Austin's voice. He knew that the Major simply meant it as motivation for Ashley to get better; he wasn't giving her an order.

Austin then turned to the Doctor who was tending to Ashley.

"If there's anything you need, let me know Doctor." he said.

"Well, some of our supplies are running a bit low, and we don't necessarily have enough money to get more in good amounts." said the doc.

"Give me the list. I'll get them for you. With this war going on, you'll need all you can get." said Austin.

Just as the doctor handed the list to Austin however, Sarah took it instead.

"I'll do it. You've got more important things to do." she said.

"Okay. Here, this should be enough for everything." said Austin, handing Sarah credit chit.

Austin then turned back to Ashley.

"Okay, I better get back to it." he said, gently getting back up. "See you soon. And Griffin, you can stay with her as long as possible, but when we do leave, I need you back in the game."

"Yes sir." Griffin nodded. "Besides, I have a feeling you'll need stuff blown up."

Austin could not deny he was a little nervous on how this was going to play out. The Citadel council never had been the easiest

people to work with. That was one of the reasons why he had quit his position as a Spectre.

As he walked into Udina's office, he was greeted by an Asari.

"Major. Councillor Udina said you'd be coming." she said. "If you'll follow me, the Council's already in session."

"Did you say Councillor Udina? I thought Anderson had that job." Austin asked.

"Councillor Anderson stepped down a few months back. He said he'd found the job too stressful." the Asari explained.

"Hard to argue with that." said Austin. "Bet Udina just couldn't wait for this."

"Councillor, the Reapers are in our space as well. Earth is no more or less important than any Council homeworld."

The Citadel tower was where the Council had their sessions. It was also the same place where Austin had killed Saren and his second in command, the Terror Geth.

It was almost easy to forget the wreckage this place had been in back then due to how well it had been repaired.

Liana was already there. Before her stood the four councillors, Udina, Turian Councillor Sparatus, the Salarian Councillor Valern, and the Asari Councillor Tevos. Alpha was also stood further behind as Austin walked up to join Liana.

"But Earth was the first Council world hit. By our reports, it faces the front of the attack." said Udina.

"By your reports..." Valern objected.

"The reports are accurate, I was on Earth myself." Austin spoke up. "This is just the beginning. We need your help. The galaxy has to unite together if we're to have any hope of winning this war."

The Helldiver then began accessing his omni tool.

"What are you doing?" Udina asked.

"I'm patching the Arkane Council through. It's time you two talked again." said Austin.

There was a momentary pause, and then a small flash as a hologram of the entire Arkane Council was projected to the side of both of them. Austin could only hope this didn't turn into an argument. Ever since his death at the hands of the Collectors four years ago, both Councils had been on very bad terms with one another. Even today, that distrust was still rather fresh.

"Shepard. We're pleased that you managed to escape Earth. We feared the worst." said Councillor Spartan, Councillor of the Spartan system and the head of the Council.

"Council." Austin nodded.

The Arkanes then turned to face the Citadel council. They did their best to look polite. Austin could tell of course that they were hiding their bitter distaste. He just hoped the Citadel council

wouldn't notice it so easily. Then again, they probably felt the same way.

"So, it seems that you'll have to finally make good of the treaties you signed. Shepard is right when he says that we all need to work together on this." said Councillor Tarnack, the second Arkane to have been on the Council the longest, and also the second most respected member.

"Precisely! This means war!" said Kraan encouragingly, banging his fists together.

"I thought it already was war?" Dash asked.

"I hate you." Kraan groaned.

"The treaties are only valid if your homeworld is attacked, and as far as we know, the Reapers seem to be leaving your world alone." said Tevos.

"Is this true? The Reapers haven't attacked Arkadia?" Austin asked in surprise. This came as a big shock. The Arkanes and the Helldivers possessed the biggest military and the most advanced technology in the galaxy. Not to mention that they comprised of some of the best talents of many of the galaxy's races. Austin would've thought that Arkadia would've received the worst of it.

"That is correct, Shepard. Somehow, they're staying out of our territory completely. It doesn't make any sense. We probably present the greatest threat to them. I would've thought we'd be the first to be hit before the other worlds. Not the other way around." said Spartan.

"Unless your world is attacked, we cannot rally under you. Our own militaries are in no strength to help you anyway." said Sparatus.

Austin couldn't help but sigh quietly. He hadn't counted on this. Then plan he'd had relied on the Council honouring the treaties.

When a race joined the Helldivers, they signed a special treaty. A part of the treaty clearly stated that if the Arkanes and the Helldivers were attacked directly, they could call on all the races in the Helldivers to come to their aid. It was that sort of thing that had kept the Batarians from waging war against them since they declared war on the slave trade.

"For once... we need your help. Our worlds don't stand chance against the Reapers without your help. We have no choice but to request Helldiver assistance from you." said Tevos, almost sounding desperate. Something Austin had never thought he'd hear from any of the Council.

Even the Arkanes were taken back by this. They'd never expected the Citadel Council to be this desperate to call on them for help. Usually they'd be a bit to handle these themselves.

"We should lend all our forces to you? You, who ignored Shepard's warning all this time? You, who did nothing to prepare for the Reapers?! Who convinced yourselves the Reapers are a

myth?!" Spartan retorted, the furiousness clear in his voice.

"Spartan is correct. We all find it very difficult to see a good reason why we should help you when you barely made any effort to prepare for this." Tarnack concurred.

"Don't make us beg, Council." said Valern. "You are the only ones who have the strength, numbers, technology and knowledge to stand up to the Reapers. If Shepard and the other Helldivers can help us secure our own borders, then perhaps we will be able to band together under your leadership."

"But what if even that isn't enough? If we throw all we have at the Reapers in a counter attack and lose, what then?" Sparatus asked.

"I don't expect us all to work together without a plan." said Austin.

"Councillors, we have that plan. A blueprint created by the Protheans during their war with the Reapers." said Liara, accessing her omni tool and projecting the plans for the Crucible. Both Council's looked at it with curiosity.

"What is it exactly?" Tevos asked.

"We're still piecing it together, but it appears to be a weapon of some sort." Liara explained.

"And this is capable of destroying the Reapers?" Councillor Avaritia asked.

"So it would seem." Liara replied.

"It's immense, and intricate." said Valern.

"Indeed. Even for us alone, it would take many days for us to build it. If we all worked together though..." said Spartan.

"This is a fool's errand. The Protheans were wiped out by the Reapers. Clearly, the weapon is flawed." Tevos interrupted.

"It was incomplete. There was a missing component. Here, something referred to only as "The Catalyst". But they ran out of time before they could finish building It." said Liara.

Something about the word Catalyst made Austin's head turn. Something about it sounded very familiar, but he couldn't remember exactly what it was. Putting these thoughts aside, he turned back to the situation.

"Do you believe in this, Shepard? After all you've seen of the Reapers?" Sparatus asked.

"It sure as hell beats standing round and arguing about it like we're doing now. And Udina's right. We need to stand together, now more than ever. The Reapers will destroy every organic in the galaxy if we don't find a way to stop them!" said Austin.

"The Council cannot give you the army you need. Not with our own worlds in such critical states." said Tevos.

"The Salarian union is convening a summit amongst our species. If you and the Helldivers can help us at least secure our

homeworlds, then we will lend what armies we have to your cause." said Valern.

Austin could see that the Council had all made their minds up. It did in a way sound like a fair deal. He turned to the Arkane Council, who were still mumbling to each other.

"Council, if you ask me, that's better than nothing. And I'm sure we can spare a few of our soldiers. Especially since the Reapers appear to be leaving us alone, we should at least use that to our advantage." he said.

The Arkanes cast each other a few looks before they eventually reached an agreement.

"Very well." said Spartan. "Our main fleet has to remain in our system to protect our homeworld should the Reapers suddenly attack, but we will dispatch what Helldiver squadrons and battalions we can spare to your homeworlds to aid you."

"Then it is settled." said Tevos.

The Arkanes vanished and the Council left, leaving only Udina.

"Shepard, meet me in my office." he said.

"Well, that went a bit better than I thought it would." said Austin.

"Why would the Reapers not attack Arkadia?" Liara asked.

"I don't know. It's not like the Reapers to leave a species alone. Something's not right." said Austin.

"Well, at least that means we can assist them so they can assist us." said Liara. "Xun and I will work on finding out more about the Crucible."

"They're a bunch of self-concerned jackasses, Shepard! We may have a spot on the Council, but humanity will always be considered second rate." said Udina.

"At least they are willing to rally with us. That's better than nothing, if you ask Me." said Austin, a bit irritated that Udina wasn't being a bit more grateful. At least the Council had agreed to help. Even if that help had to be earned, it was certainly better than nothing. They could've easily just refused altogether and remained separated.

"And what about Earth?! Our own world is the closest to falling to the Reapers and they want us to assist them!" Udina retorted.

"I'm beginning to remember why I picked Anderson over you back then." said Austin, glaring at Udina through his helmet.

"You watch your mouth around me, Shepard." Udina threatened.

"I'm the one who can break a jaw here." Austin retorted.

Before the argument could progress further however, Sparatus suddenly walked in.

"Major." he said. "I can't yet give you what you and the Arkanes need, but I can tell you how to get it."

"I'm listening." said Austin.

"Palaven's Primarch, Fedorian is the one who called the war summit. He's your kind of man. Open to extreme solutions. Trouble is, he didn't get out of Palaven's system in time. We don't know if he's alive." said Sparatus. "He's essential to the summit. If the Normandy could extract him without being detected..."

"I told you this would happen, and you did nothing." said Austin.

"We can argue the past later if you like." said Sparatus. "But the leaders of this summit will be the ones deciding our future. The fate of our fleets, where they fight, and with whom. A grateful Primarch would be a tremendous ally in your bid to unite us. Our latest intelligence says that the Primarch is still on Palaven in a heavily fortified base. I've done all I can to help. The rest is up to you."

As Spartan went to leave, he quickly turned back to Austin.

"There is one other thing." he said. "The Council was hoping to reinstate your spectre status, but we can't get access to your file."

"That's because I put a block on it so you can't reinstate it. I'll say it before, and I'll say it again, I don't want it." said Austin.

"Have it your way, Shepard." Sparatus sighed.

Udina didn't look pleased by this either. Humanity hadn't had another Spectre since Austin. Him constantly refusing reinstatement was a bureaucratic nightmare for him.

"What is it with you, Shepard? What is it about being a Spectre that you..." he said. But Austin suddenly interrupted him as he put his hand to the Councillor's head and it flashed slightly. Udina fell to the floor unconscious.

"Just shut up." Austin groaned.

"Wish Anderson could've seen that."

Now that he had a mission, Austin sent a small message to all members of the Normandy telling them to report back to the ship. They would leave for Palaven tomorrow. As the Major headed up to his quarters, he saw Dr Michel and Dr Chakwas sorting out everything. He decided to just quickly check how the two were getting along. Given that they both worked in the Citadel hospital briefly, he doubted there'd be any problems.

"How are you settling, Dr Michel?" he asked.

"Good. Dr Chakwas and I have been busy restocking supplies and running diagnostics. It's nice working with her in a fresh lab. We've been able to set up everything how we need it." Michel smiled. "So, can I help you with anything?"

"Do you have family?" Austin asked friendlily. He might as well get to know her better since she'd be serving on the ship now.

"My parents are on Earth. Geneva. The news isn't good."
Chloe sighed.

"I'm sorry." said Austin sympathetically.

"But my brother is safe on the Citadel. I'll count my blessings where I can." said Chloe.

"How does working on a military vessel compare to your Citadel clinic?" Austin asked.

"It's a completely different experience. I like that I have fewer patients under my care. I can really focus and get to know each person. But the work day never ends here. I don't get to go home. I'm always on call. But you're making a real difference. So by being here, I'm making a difference too." said Chloe.

"Glad to hear it. Just let me know if you or Karin need anything." said Austin.

"We will."

Austin slowly left his suit detach from him piece by piece until it was all neatly packed together in the form of a small suitcase. A recent upgrade from the Normandy's quartermaster, Dell Arturus, had allowed the Helldivers to no longer have to rely on machines to piece together and remove their suits. Now, through the use of a special implant in their arms, they could remove and put on their armour simply with their minds. Del had also recently refined it so that when removed, the armour pieced itself back together neatly disguised as something that could easily blend-in in a normal environment In Austin's case, a briefcase.

Having been inside his suit nearly all day, Austin was feeling quite tired and was looking forward to some shut eye.

"What a day." he sighed.

"Feeling a little tired, husband?"

Austin looked in the direction of the voice. There, lying on his bed, fully naked, was Liara. The Helldiver instantly felt his shaft start to harden as he gazed upon the sight.

Although they'd only been apart for a week, it had still felt so long for them. It had been very hard to resist their... urges.

"A bit, but I suddenly find I have got some strength left." he smiled slyly. "How I've missed that sexy body of yours. In fact, it's been hard not to masturbate for the last week."

"Same." Liara smiled, kissing Austin full on the lips and helping him out of his suit mesh, his full 10 inch cock standing at full attention and aching to once again embedded itself in Liara's azure, the spot it always loved to be.

"Better make up for lost time then."

As Austin finished peeling the suit mesh completely off, Liara took her husband's cock into her hands and gave it a few stroked before then taking it into her mouth.

"Oh god! I'd almost forgotten how good that feels." Austin sighed.

Sarah had almost finished her shopping. She just a few small things left to get, then she could take them all back to the hospital and finally re-join the Normandy. She was really growing impatient to finally see Samantha again after all this time. At least now she knew her love was safe. That was better than not seeing her and also fearing she might be dead. That was practically nightmare stuff.

As she was leaving the shop, she suddenly felt herself bang into someone, sending quite a few of the objects onto the floor. Sarah noticed she'd bumped into another woman.

"Oh, I'm so sorry. I should've watched where I was going." The woman apologised, frantically trying to pick some of her own stuff up.

"No, it's my fault. I was distracted." Said Sarah.

The two worked on picking their own stuff up. However, they both reached for the same datapad. As both their hands touched, something happened. Sarah felt... strange.

It was a good sort of different though. Sarah felt a feeling she hadn't felt for a while. It was something she hadn't felt ever since she had been parted from her love not long ago. Could it really be...

Richly tanned skin...

British accent...

Sarah slowly looked up.

Right in front of her, staring right back at her and as beautiful as ever, was none other than the one person she wanted to be with more than anything else, Samantha Traynor.

For a moment, the two were completely speechless and they simply stared at each, not willing to dare turn away in case this ended up being just another dream. Several long seconds passed through and nothing happened.

Samantha slowly reached up and touched Sarah's face. She felt a huge rush of happiness as her hand touched the soft skin of her lover.

So soft, so smooth, so warm...

Traynor felt her eyes begin to water with tears of joy as Sarah did the same. This was definitely real. After all the worry they'd been through, they'd finally found each other again. Nothing could separate them, not even this damn war.

"It's really you!" Traynor sobbed as she flung her arms around Sarah and buried her face in the N7 marine's shoulder.

Sarah, doing a slightly better job at holding back her own tears simply hugged Traynor to her tightly, one of her hands gently stroking the comm specialist jet black hair. Just as she remembered, it almost felt like silk.

"It's okay... it's okay..." she whispered softly,

Austin and Liara moaned in union as Austin trust into her, the Union allowing both to feel what the other was experiencing.

"Goddess, I've missed the feeling of you filling me up." Liara groaned as her nails dug gently into Austin's back.

"We complete each other." Austin panted.

As the Helldiver continued constantly connecting with his wife's Asari pussy, the Asari slowly reached down until she could feel her fingers touching a small bit of his cock which wasn't going in. She wanted to try something new.

Austin felt a huge sudden rush of blood into his cock as a small bit of biotic field engulfed it. He couldn't help but smile at this. He always loved it when Liara did this when they made love. Having an already naturally large cock was good enough, but Liara having the ability to make it even larger was really self-confidence boosting. It truly did make him feel like a dominant male of a pack.

What also made it so pleasurable for Liara was that she was enlarging him while he was still inside her. It was an interesting sensation, as she felt him grow larger while inside her azure.

Austin was beginning to note that he and Liara seemed to make love very regularly. Obviously, they didn't do it every night so that it didn't get boring. Any other nights would just be a simple few minute of very intimate kissing or massaging or something more intimate and romantic. Their sex though was pretty much full on hard-core.

Austin had a theory about this. Compared to Sarah and Traynor for example, their love making was very hard core probably because they were both of the opposite sex. Although to be fair, that wasn't necessarily an accurate statement since Asari were monogendered and the term female didn't apply to Liara. However, since Asari had a lot more female features, instincts and nature that women often had, it was fair in a certain way.

Therefore, the result of them being male and female gave them urges that could only be satisfied with regular and exotic love making. Sarah and Traynor on the other hand were both female so it wasn't quite the same for them. They were a lot more passionate. Just a kiss was often good enough for them.

Sometimes with him and Liara though, it did take bit more. Austin suspected that Liara's urges were more his fault since being her bond mate had allowed some try parts of his personality to rub off on her. He had been quite the ladies' man before he'd met her. Being married was also a contributing factor since both their bodies knew they'd be spending the rest of their lives with each other and they'd grown accustomed to each other's presence and company.

Austin made sure to slow his thrust speed down bit so as not to hurt Liara as his shaft approached an enormous side while still inside

her. The last thing he wanted was to hurt her.

As a result of this, and the fact that the enlargement had made his cock more sensitive, he could feel his release was very soon.

Liara, sensing this through their union had an idea for another new thing to try. In fact, this was something that, in 5 years of their relationship, they had never done before.

Liara rolled them over so that she was on top and then gently slid off. She then sat down facing Austin and gently put both her feet around her husband's drumming shaft. At the same time, she also started rubbing her Azure so that she could achieve release at the same time.

"A footjob? We've never tried that before." Austin thought.

"I know. That's why we're doing it." Liara replied back telepathically.

Liara feet were gentle at first, but they then began to speed up. To compensate for the fact that Liara was using her hands to masturbate, Austin slid his hands up and down his wife's smooth legs.

"That feels nice." Liara sighed.

"Thought you might like that. Oh! Careful, careful, I nearly let it loss there."

Liara slid her foot back down away from Austin's cockhead. Now she knew not to use her foot on that bit directly or she'd make him cum too soon. At least he wanted to cum with her at the same time. That was an admirable quality.

As Austin slid one of his hands slightly further up Liara's leg until it touched her behind, he felt he'd reached the point of release. The cum would shoot out any minute.

"Sure you're okay with me cumming on your feet?" he asked, trying his best to hold back a bit until he was sure Liara awaited this.

"Why not? Wouldn't be the first time you've painted my body with your seed." Liara smiled, also about to orgasm.

With that settled, Austin didn't bother holding it in anymore and nor did Liara. The two lovers moaned together as they both relaxed, a damp patch appearing where Liara was sitting and her feet turning white as Austin shot spurt after spurt of cum onto her feet and toes.

After about a minute, they finally too the moment to catch their breath back. They both lay back on the bed with Liara resting on top of Austin's strong chest, her very gently giving his stroke some light strokes so that it stayed flaccid at least. She knew Austin liked it when she gave him some gentle strokes even after he came.

"Goddess, how've I've missed this." she sighed.

"Me too, darling." Austin smiled, gently stroking Liara's face and planting a kiss on her lips.

"Ready to finally rest? We will need our strength for tomorrow."

Liara asked.

"That we will." Austin agreed, pulling the covers up over them and gently dozing off in synch with Liara, both their minds still connected via the Union.

"Sweet dreams..."

Neither of them knew who said it, but it still put a smile on their face.

After what had felt like a while of comforting her lover, Sarah had finally managed to finish her shopping and had dropped everything off at the hospital. Both she and Traynor were now walking back to the Normandy. One of Sarah's hands was holding Samantha's tightly while her other one was wrapped around her. Traynor felt so safe being in her lover's arms again. It was like she'd temporarily let all her defences down, only for them to come back twice as strong.

During the short walk, they'd both talked about what had happened while they'd been away. It started off casually with them discussing some of the things they'd done, how everyone was, that sort of thing. Pretty soon however, it became a lot more personal and they soon began telling each other the torture it had been while they'd been parted, how they had nightmares worrying about each other's safety, how they'd nearly cried themselves to sleep constantly begging the question of whether the other was alive to be answered.

Due to her confidence and hardness, Sarah seemed to be handling this a bit better. Samantha on the other hand was a bit wobbly on her feet and she felt faint. Sarah of course hadn't resisted in scooping the comm specialist up into her arms and carrying her bridal style into their quarters.

Just before she'd left, Sarah had had her quarters, which she now shared with Samantha, refitted slightly. She now had a large shower that easily rivalled the one her brother had, something that the both of them almost couldn't live without, better carpets and even a much better view out into space. Plus, they had added a fair amount of girly stuff to it. They didn't have any sex toys though. Neither of them were really interested in them, and they didn't need those to truly enjoy their love making. It was just as fine and magical without them.

"I see you kept the place tidy while I was away." Sarah smiled as she carried Samantha in.

"The least I could do. Besides, I live here too now and you know I'm allergic to dust." said Traynor. Being back in her quarters with her lover seemed to have made her calm down a bit and. She was no longer crying and she felt a lot more peaceful being in Sarah's strong arms.

"Yeah. You nearly gave me a panic attack when I first found out." said Sarah. "I trust you've taken your medication regularly. Might have to spank you if you've been naughty."

"Don't worry, princess. I wouldn't dream of disobeying you. Although I was a bit naughty last night. I couldn't bare the torture anymore and I haven't had a chance to change the sheets yet." said Traynor innocently.

"Can't say I blame you." Sarah smiled cheekily. "It was hard for me too. Life without you is like a broken pencil."

"Which is?" Samantha asked, not quite seeing what Sarah meant by that.

"Pointless." said Sarah.

Both women couldn't help but laugh at this little joke. Sarah always did have a good sense of humour which she shared with her family.

As Sarah gently set Traynor down on the big double bed, they begun slowly peeling their clothes. Samantha of course was more eager for this than Sarah was. So much so in fact that the N7 marine had to make sure her lover didn't tear her under suit. She'd need it after all.

Pretty soon, only their underwear was separating them from total nakedness.

"Is all the underwear you wear completely red?" Traynor smiled, admiring Sarah's athletic body and bra clad breasts.

"Pretty much." Sarah nodded. "What can I say, I love red."

"Maybe I should try and copy you." said Traynor.

"No don't." said Sarah. "I love you just the way you are."

"I love you too." Samantha sighed. "Please make love to me."

"My pleasure."

Feeling in a teasing mood, Sarah stood up and slowly turned so she had her back to Traynor. She then gently reached around and unclipped her red bra. The comm specialist couldn't help but rub herself gently at the sight of this. Sarah didn't often do stripteases, but when she did, they were so sexy. She'd had a nosebleed one time from one of them.

Sarah gently let the bra fall away and covered both her breasts with one of her arms. She turned back to face Traynor and threw the bra to her. It did amaze the comm specialist that a bra that was easily about the same size as hers could hold such a beautiful and fairly large and shot set of breasts comfortably. Sometime she couldn't believe she was this lucky to have a lover with such a perfect body. In fact, it was common for Traynor to sometimes say that she envied Sarah's gorgeous form.

Sarah then slowly slid her arm away until her gorgeous breasts were finally revealed. She smiled proudly at her lover's expression.

"I know it's just me, but they always seem to look bigger every time." said Traynor.

Unable to help herself, the comm specialist slid her panties off.

Sarah took this as the message to continue and she gently climbed onto the bed. Traynor lay down and Sarah got on top, sliding her own panties off in the process.

As they snuggled into each other's arms again, as if by autopilot, both felt themselves lean in as their lips automatically joined against each other, somewhere that they seemed to belong. Time was lost. Seconds rolled into minutes and for all they knew, they had been sweetly loving the other's lips for hours already. It didn't matter, nothing mattered but the intense, overwhelming feelings that the other's lips teased from her flesh wherever they made contact.

After an hour of bliss, Sarah slowly began to move her lips down Traynor's body, where she once again found how her face seemed to fit so snugly into the young specialist's neck. She smelt gorgeous, like a subtle blend of floral nectar mixed in with the merest hints of peppermint and lavender. Sarah could see the taut muscle just beneath the skin, tendons flexing subtly as Traynor breathed in and out. She couldn't have resisted even if she'd wanted to. Sarah pressed her lips softly to the pulse point, feeling it flutter beneath her as Traynor's heart rate increased. She kissed the offered neck again, letting her lips trail over the exposed flesh. It was intoxicating, knowing that at this moment, the specialist's heart was beating for her.

After some time, Sarah couldn't resist anymore and fished one of Samantha's breasts form out of her black bra and gently kissed it.

Even though Traynor's breasts were smaller than Sarah's, the N7 marine still loved them. In fact, they were just right for her.

Because she had a very big cup size, she was used to being with girls who had smaller tits than her and had therefore developed a liking for them. She found them very cute and it in some way boosted her self-confidence knowing that hers were bigger.

Traynor's meanwhile were just right. Not too small, nice and firm, and still a nice size enough for Sarah to find cute. They were also perky as well, which only added to Sarah finding them perfect for her. Samantha's richly tanned skin only added to it as well, as did the softness and smoothness of it.

After some time of giving Traynor's still bra clad breast a good kiss and lick, Sarah finally reached round and unclipped it, tossing it away without even a glance as she kept her eyes focused slowly on her love.

"You're so beautiful, Sam." she sighed.

"You're gorgeous too, princess." Traynor smiled.

The young comm specialist's gaze soon returned to Sarah's chest. No matter how many times she had laid her eyes on them, she still couldn't help but marvel at how they seemed to always be without a hint of sag. She knew her own were because of their perkiness, but

Sarah's... it wasn't just the size, but how naturally formed they seemed. It was nearly impossible for anyone to be so perfectly shaped AND without sag. Not for the first time, she wondered why Sarah felt she even needed to wear a bra at all.

But yet another detail she especially loved was how they were topped with the most adorable, rosebud-pink nipples that the specialist had ever known. They were rock solid with arousal, and quivered slightly in the dim lighting, as if begging for her touch. Apart from the islands of rosy pink, Sarah's skin was a rich, golden sandstone colour born of time spent planet-side under suns of varying intensity. The fluorescent lighting of the cabin made the N7's flesh glow radiantly, as if that same sunlight shone from her every pore.

As Traynor reached up and pressed her fingers gently into the sides of her love's milky globes, Sarah moaned in delight, unconsciously puffing her chest up in an effort to make greater contact with the specialist's hands. After so long apart from her, Traynor's hands felt scorching against her starved flesh, like twin points of fire that burned the air from her lungs. Extending her thumbs, Traynor gently brushed against her nipples. Her lover half-whimpered, half-cried as she felt the nimble fingers against her. What happened next was something Traynor had seen many times from Sarah, yet she never grew tired of the sight. The rough skin of her nipple stretched even tighter as more blood engorged the tip. She could actually see as light pink was replaced with rich purple. In the centre, her nipple grew even more, now fully erect beneath the feathery strokes that Traynor teased it with. She felt a heady thrill pulse through her body, mingled with passionate love for the woman who now lay against her. No one else had responded this well to her touch before. Then again, Sarah was not your average lover.

Emboldened even by the intoxicating sensations rippling through, Sarah took charge again. The two resumed kissing as Sarah settled comfortably into her favourite position between the comm specialist legs. The times they'd made love had led them to find that they both favoured the position of having one of them grind against the other. It was, after all, the position that brought them so much closer, physically and spiritually.

Their folds caressed only slightly, yet both lovers felt every nerve ending in their bodies catch fire. Neither could suppress the shriek of ecstasy that ripped from their throats like an unbridled beast. Unable to stay upright, Sarah collapsed on top of Traynor, but still continued to unconsciously buck her shapely hips against Traynor. Their shock increased as their breasts were crushed firmly against each other. A synchronized cry of unexpected pleasure came from them at the feeling of tender flesh colliding.

"Yes! Yes!" Samantha groaned in euphoric delight.

"I love it when we do this and you become like this, baby!" Sarah moaned; sweat already starting to drench both her body and her lover's.

Sarah was tingling all over; she could feel nothing but Samantha's body against hers. All she knew was her; all she could comprehend was Samantha. They were both gasping, grinding against each other in a moment of heated passion. Like an unseen magnetic force, Samantha's lips sought out her own. They kissed passionately as they reached their peak. For one rapturous moment, both were frozen as the orgasm seized control of every muscle in their bodies. When it hit, they broke their lips apart as they both released their voices in an ecstatic wail that rose in volume and pitch. The cry that came with it was one of such utter passion, such raw emotion that for several days neither would be able to remember it without feeling weak in the knees.

Traynor's climax opened the metaphorical floodgates and even as great torrents of tears cascaded down her face, she felt Sarah's intimate fluids layering her inner thighs with deliciously warm nectar. As it entered her own folds, the sensation of her love's essence within her core triggered a second, minor orgasm to run through her. She shook against her body, clinging to her like a life preserver.

As quickly as it came, the climax left and Sarah's body collapsed into Traynor's waiting embrace. Tears of absolute relief and content still streaming down her cheeks, she hugged her lover with renewed intensity, whispering nonsense, soothing words into her ear as the aftershocks died away.

"You're amazing Sarah," Traynor said, her voice shaky with sudden, overwhelming happiness. It was dizzying, like being drunk... she didn't know whether to laugh or cry. Instead, she grabbed the still shaking Sarah and kissed her rosy, quivering lips.

Sarah lay back panting. Release with Traynor was even better than she remembered. Now the two were simply resting comfortably under the covers, Samantha in Sarah's arms and her head resting blissfully on Sarah's breasts. Due to how big and soft they were, Samantha would often jokingly call them "her favourite pillows" The softness was heavenly.

"Can't tell you how much I needed that." Sarah sighed.

"That's meant to be what I say." Traynor chuckled.

"I know. That's why I said it."

There was a small silence as they simply lay there before Traynor spoke again.

"Never leave me again, please." she almost begged as she hugged Sarah just a bit tighter.

"I won't, I promise" hissed Sarah with total conviction. "I love you so much."

"I love you too." Samantha sighed blissfully; staring into eyes brimming over with love stared back at her.

"Goodnight, Samantha."

"Goodnight, Sarah."

There was no doubt anymore; as long as they lived, they would always love each other. And as long as they loved each other, nothing would ever break them apart ever again.

POETRY

LOCKED UP

TheMeTheyDontSee
of <http://TheMeTheyDontSee.deviantart.com>

My first night in a mental hospital.

Locked up, but by choice.
Was that really my voice?
This place is so brand new.
Schedules telling me what to do.
Don't know why scrubs I'm wearing.
Can't tell how my mind is fairing.
No laces are on my feet.
At least now I'm starting to eat.
They make me pee in a cup.
They want to know how I'm fucked up.
I can't even tell how I feel.
I'm not sure if this is real.
This is such a huge change.
Even my thoughts seem really strange.
I guess this is the place I'll keep.
Now to try and get some sleep.