

## *Chapter 2*

### *“We Kiss In The Shadows”*

He'd already met with his crew and informed them about this new mission, making them fully aware of a possibility of combat against the warring Satorians and Bendarian. This was not a peaceful mission after all. The ranking officers were men and women with a very high level of intelligence and superb physical fitness making them very combat ready and capable of almost anything. The ones that hadn't already heard about the situation were now absolutely informed. They were perfectly agreeable to the carefully laid-out plans of Lieutenant Addie Stuart.

After a long day, it was suddenly late evening and Sarantos headed to his quarters. He was tired and decided to eat alone in his room tonight, avoiding the crowded Diamond Room. He didn't want to run into Kitara or Addie. He wanted them both. He felt like an insatiable animal sometimes. Better to stay out of trouble tonight, he thought.

His chuckle sounded eerie as it was totally timed with the whoosh of the door as he



slipped into his room unattended. He quickly changed into his favorite lightweight lounging pants and shirt. They were so comfortable! He moved to the replicator. The door bell sounded. “Come in.”

He looked up as the wine was pouring into his glass. Addie stood thoughtfully in the doorway with a loaded push cart piled with an assortment of food and a bucket of ice with champagne protruding from the top. Her smile was glorious. He was suddenly

very glad she was there in his room. She made his head swim with imaginary pleasures.

“Man can’t live on replicator food and drink alone. It’s lonely and doesn’t really taste as good as freshly cooked food. Am I right, Captain?”

He couldn’t answer her, because he was staring in awe at her for what seemed like an hour. She was dressed in a black silky lounge pants and racy top. Her top hung low and exposed her partially scaled breasts. He could easily see obliging flesh around the inside of her bosom with the thin almost see-thru fabric exposing human looking nipples. Her purple hair hung down her spicy body, almost sparkling like a charming waterfall. Not waiting for him to speak, she quickly moved into the room and set up the food on the nearby dining tabletop with a smug look. She placed several ambrosial candles in the middle and delicately lit them. The glass top moved with the flames and came to life.

“I thought you could use a celebratory dinner, this being your first mission for war. I’m quite talented in massage, as well, if you need some stress relieved.”

He hoped she didn’t notice his involuntary and awkward reaction to her presence. “Thanks, Lieutenant, but that’s not necessary. I do appreciate your offer though.”

“Well, it may not be necessary, but it’s definitely needed.” She looked at him with penetrating eyes. Could she read his mind?

He melted. She had him literally unable to catch his breath. She made him weak. He sat down. “Thanks.”

She popped the champagne and poured it out taking a chair across from him. “I hope you don’t mind; I didn’t have dinner yet, either. It’s been a long day. I figured we could enjoy each other’s company over a nice dinner.”

He simply couldn’t refuse this woman. He often wondered what it’d be like making love to her, and smiled while lifting the champagne glass and encouraging a toast. She licked her luscious lips and tapped her glass gently against his creating a surge of energy that moved from her glass to his and surged down his arm inducing electrifying tingles. Wow! This was a feeling he’d never experienced before. Did her race have these kinds of powers? Or, maybe just her?



She slightly lowered her eyes staring right at him from under her long black lashes, all while sipping slowly from her glass. She was drinking him in. The heat rose from his skin. He was an inferno inside as he allowed this gorgeous woman to sink her long gaze into the depths of his eyes and effortlessly pull out lustful thoughts he had purposely buried deep within his soul.

Just when he was about ready to pounce and lose all control, she looked away and calmly

put the food on both of their plates. With that gesture, he somehow regathered his composure. It looked like spaghetti and parmesan would take center stage. The bread was still warm causing steam to float softly between her slender fingers while she pulled a few pieces off a large loaf, one for each of them.

Amazingly, it was exactly what he was about to order. It was like she read his mind. He was famished. The meal really hit the spot. They ate in silence. She smiled and glanced at him occasionally with sultry eyes. Addie knew what she was doing.

“So, Addie...” he pushed away his plate and sipped champagne, “have you had enough?”

She stood up and walked over to him and slipped onto his lap straddling him. “No.”

He felt the heat of her lips as she opened them slightly moving towards his mouth.

He whispered, “Do you think this is a good idea? True it’d be amazing, but I’m your captain and we both have to keep a clean profile. We have to stay focused on the mission!”

She ran her tongue over her lips and with a soft and raspy voice said, “I won’t tell if you don’t. It’ll be our secret. No one is here except us. Only the shadows will know and I’m certain they’ll keep our secret. Captain, it’s a long journey and you’ll find my race can’t function at peak efficiency without partaking in the sensual pleasures of life; it’s bad for our personality and health.” She grinned with a cute smirk.

“What the hell. I’d be lying if I said I haven’t thought about you like this. Why don’t we dare?” He grabbed her and kissed her hard. Very hard.

Their mouths moved together like butter melting on a hot skillet. It was softer, yet fiercer than any other kiss he’d ever experienced in his life. She tasted sweet like strawberries and honey. Her hair smelled alluring; a curious feminine smell he wasn’t familiar with until this exact moment. He pushed her away and stared into her wild violet eyes and for a moment he thought he saw flames, but she pulled him towards her and nibbled on his lips, licking the ever so tiny bites with her delicious

tongue. He was about ready to burst. Great, that wouldn't make for an incredible first night he thought.

"Captain." The sound of the intercom was a shock to his whole body.

Addie leaned back and slipped out of her shirt.

"Captain." The voice sounded irritated.

"Damn," he said lifting the com on his wrist to his mouth while it filled insatiably with saliva. She was so perfect. "*Live*, yes, what is it?"

"Sorry to disturb you, Captain, but Kitara wondered if you wanted to go over anything this evening before you retire?"

His cheeks warmed. "No, Ensign, I'm already retired. Please inform Kitara. Thanks. *Out.*"

Her smile was sensual. In fact, her whole essence was carnal. He thought he could love this woman forever. Not only was she gorgeous, but she had unmatched intelligence. He liked that. He liked that a lot!



He ran his hands through the purple hair that fell teasingly across her breasts. She was incredibly yielding. Her scales glistened and illuminated several different shades of purple, blue and red, as she became more and more excited. It was spellbinding just watching her. He could tell that what he was doing was working.

There was no guessing here. This excited him even more, knowing that he had this effect on her body. He lingered longer in every spot watching the display of colors increase in intensity and movement. Her scales were damp, subtle and sensitive. He didn't think he'd ever find normal lovemaking pleasurable from this point forward.

When the moment came, her scales turned bright red and he knew he'd never be the same again. What she'd done to him was supernatural and he couldn't move anymore but she didn't stop there! The pleasure washed over him with the force of an otherworldly ocean wave. For a moment, he actually couldn't breathe. At that point, he came up for air and then every breath was like a new life that moved through him tingling every part of his body. He smiled when his toes sent impulses crashing into each organ of his body generating a warmth that turned into an explosion everywhere it went. This went on for ten minutes! All he could do was watch her colors, as she kept turning back to her normal color and then red, over and over and over again. She was amazing. This was simply spectacular...

He was somehow still responsive in the chair. She grinned innocently as she lifted him over her shoulder and then threw him playfully down onto the bed. He was utterly exhausted. Addie climbed in and laid down next to him wrapping herself around him and pulled the inviting covers over both of them. He closed his eyes.

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“Captain. Captain, are you there?”

His sleepy eyes were very heavy as he opened them slowly. He was alone, naked under the covers. Trying hard to remember how or when he removed his clothes only gave him a headache. Pulling the covers over his head, he moaned. “Leave me alone.”

“Captain.”

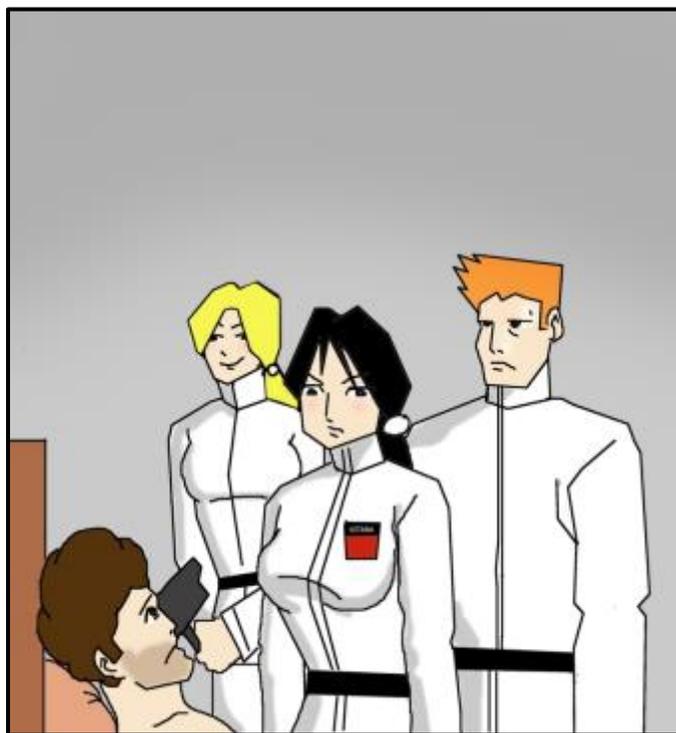
He knew Kitara wouldn't stop until he answered but he still had trouble moving. His body's reaction to last night's rendezvous was one of having run a marathon, and not just any marathon, but an Iron Man competition.

He closed his eyes and ignored the intercom.

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Something disturbed his sleep again. He opened his eyes and found the covers still over his head. Suddenly, they were ripped from his body and the slight chill of the air gave him goose bumps.

“Captain, are you alright?”



There stood Kitara looking stern but cute as a button with a few dark curls swinging from her forehead. Her dark blue eyes pierced into his skull burrowing dissatisfaction into his mind causing him to flinch. That's when he noticed a few of Addie's security patrol officers standing next to her. One attractive female he hadn't met yet had a smile with raised eyebrows. She scanned his body up and down. The other one was a tall human male who had a stern and concerned look just before he started going through his quarters to make sure there were no intruders.

“Yes. Yes, I’m fine. Sorry, I suppose I needed the rest.” He pulled the covers back over his personal attachments and grinned. The female officer appeared disappointed. “Is everything okay, Lieutenant?”

“Yes, sir, are you okay? When you didn’t answer, we were all concerned and I alerted security.”

The door made its typical sound of a breeze whispering through the corridor and there stood Doc Cleary.”

“Well, what have we here? Sorry I’m running a little late, I was in the middle of mixing a delicate chemical when you contacted me, and my assistant hadn’t arrived yet. So, what’s the verdict? Captain, did you have a rough night?”

She walked quickly to his bedside and started taking his vitals.

“That’s not necessary, Doc.”

“I’ll be the judge of that, Captain.”

She was having fun with him, he could tell. Did she know something?

“I think if everyone left I could get myself up and dressed.”

“Hum, his vitals are excellent. He looks quite well, Lieutenant. What’s the story, Captain? You tired, or what? Maybe, I should order blood tests.”

“That’s not necessary, Cleary. I’m fine. Can you all leave now, including you Lieutenant Kitara? We’ll be doing a full run of the ship today. I want to check out my girl and make sure all’s in order. You know, become reacquainted with her again. I’ll meet you in a half hour in the Diamond Room for breakfast. I’m famished.”

“Will do, Captain. Chief Brazier have you checked out the Captain’s quarters thoroughly?”

“Yes, all clear.”

“Fine, let’s go and give the Captain some privacy.”

“Thanks, I’d appreciate that.”

“I’m still thinking about ordering some blood tests. You could have a low blood count, Captain, maybe your thalassemia is acting up again?” said Major Cleary.

“It’s not necessary. Everyone out, including you Doctor.”

Once they all left the room he slowly lifted his body to a sitting position and hung his legs off the bed. He wasn’t sure he could stand. The bell rang. Now, what?

He pulled the covers over his body and said, “Enter.”

Addie came into the room like a siren roaming her playground and smiled. That face of hers lit up his heart and caused other reactions that couldn’t be attended to at this exact moment. He had to be careful. This woman was dangerous but he liked that about her.

“Good morning, Captain.” She walked right over to his bed, flung off the blanket and helped him to his feet all while running her fingers through his wavy hair and kissing him deeply.

He swooned. “I’m not sure I can walk.”

“That’s why I’m here. I waited for them to leave so I could assist you in getting dressed and helping to get some food in you.”

He looked around the room. “You cleaned up from last night?”

“Of course, we can’t allow anyone to know, only the shadows, remember?” She winked at him while moving to the replicator. “Warm toast.”



He teetered like a toddler learning how to walk for the first time, back and forth. Eventually she left him standing on his own and he somehow managed to stay on his own two feet.

“Here, eat this.” She handed him the toast and helped him to a chair. He watched her gather his uniform and smiled as she carefully dressed him for the day. Her touch was gentle and caring which he would’ve never expected before last night. This woman was not an enemy to the federation, at least he

hoped not, because he didn't think he could live without her. She put the cuffs on him last night and he knew he was now her prisoner.

"Thanks, Addie. For the record, last night was out of this world amazing." He leaned forward to kiss her perfect mouth. Every time he kissed her she drank him deeper into her soul. He caught his breath and searched her eyes. He saw something unexpected. Maybe love?

She read his thoughts. He believed her race did that when a person got trapped inside their eyes.

"Yes. The first time I met you I felt it immediately. Captain, we are meant to be together. I don't know why but could it be a soul mate kind of thing? I believe it's love. I hope it's okay?"

"Okay? Of course, it's more than okay Addie, it's perfect! The blameless experience we shared last night was touching, far deeper than anything I ever thought possible. I know you now, as though we'd been together for a lifetime. I don't know how that can be? Is it your race?"

"Partly, but when the Satorians feel a certain attraction for another being we secure it in lovemaking. Typically in that sharing we are then partnered for life, unlike humans that marry; we are married to a faithful commitment with the individual we've shared our essence with for life. Does that concern you?"

She stood him up. He felt stronger.

"Concern me? A little, because of my desire for you conflicting with being Captain of this ship and also the mission we're on. I'd be lying if I said no, though I have no problem being committed to you. We just have to be careful and keep our mission

as our top priority.” He walked slowly to the door and faced her saying, “but Lieutenant, it doesn’t mean we can’t kiss in the shadows.”

The song he’d written with Kitara in mind, was now her song. It belonged now to only Addie Stuart’s smile, the woman of his dreams; dreams that would be hidden within every waking moment they could share.

He steadied himself as they headed to the elevator and breakfast.

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Breakfast had been boring after Addie left him there with Kitara. She tried to pry information out of him about why he couldn’t get out of bed. She was a suspicious sort of woman. Until last night he might have been amused by her jealousy but not now. It was starting to annoy him as she continued the interrogation even as they headed towards engineering.

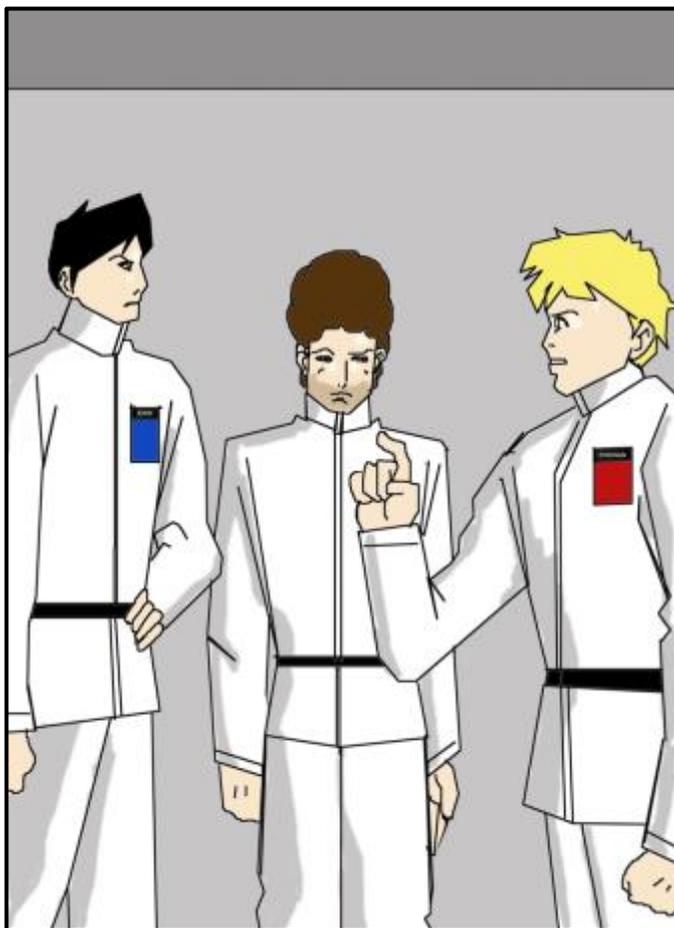
“What’s with you this morning Kitara? Give it up, please. I’m just exhausted. This is a new experience for me going to war and I was up late going over things in my head. After all, my family is not far from the infraction. Please, let me recover in my own way and give it a rest. Our years together doesn’t mean you can pry me open like a can of tuna. I’m still your Captain and you need to respect that. This conversation is officially over.”

“Yes, Captain.”

Her tone was solid and clearly agitated. He didn’t care though. Her energy next to him felt angry and toxic. This day might prove a long one.

Engineering was just as he'd remembered it but with a lot of improvements. He tried to concentrate when Lieutenant John Baker was showing him the new things that made this starship a diamond in the rough, as John so eloquently put it.

He knew John from the academy although he'd graduated several years earlier than him. John was smart with a long line of academic family members making him one of the top people in his field. He was also Okurian, like his step father-in-law, so he was telepathic. They'd had some great times together.



A tall human with shaggy blonde hair approached them. “Captain I’m Ensign Fuller and I’m pleased to be a part of your crew. I wondered if I might ask you a quick question?”

“Sure, Ensign.”

“Well, I noticed they’re no children on board the starship and usually this type of ship has children. Is there a reason they’re not on this mission, Captain?”

Great, the Admiral obviously didn’t consider the crew to have any brains. Typical politicians and now he’d have to bear the brunt of the scrutiny

and uneasiness of the crew.

“You’re right Ensign. This mission doesn’t have any children. Per Admiral Bane, they were omitted from this mission. Is that all Ensign?”

The Ensign knew better than to pry too deeply. “Yes, Captain thank you for your time, sir.”

He nodded.

John told Ensign Fuller to take Kitara to the core and show some her some of the newer communication devices. Kitara looked at John with some reservation, but went anyway.

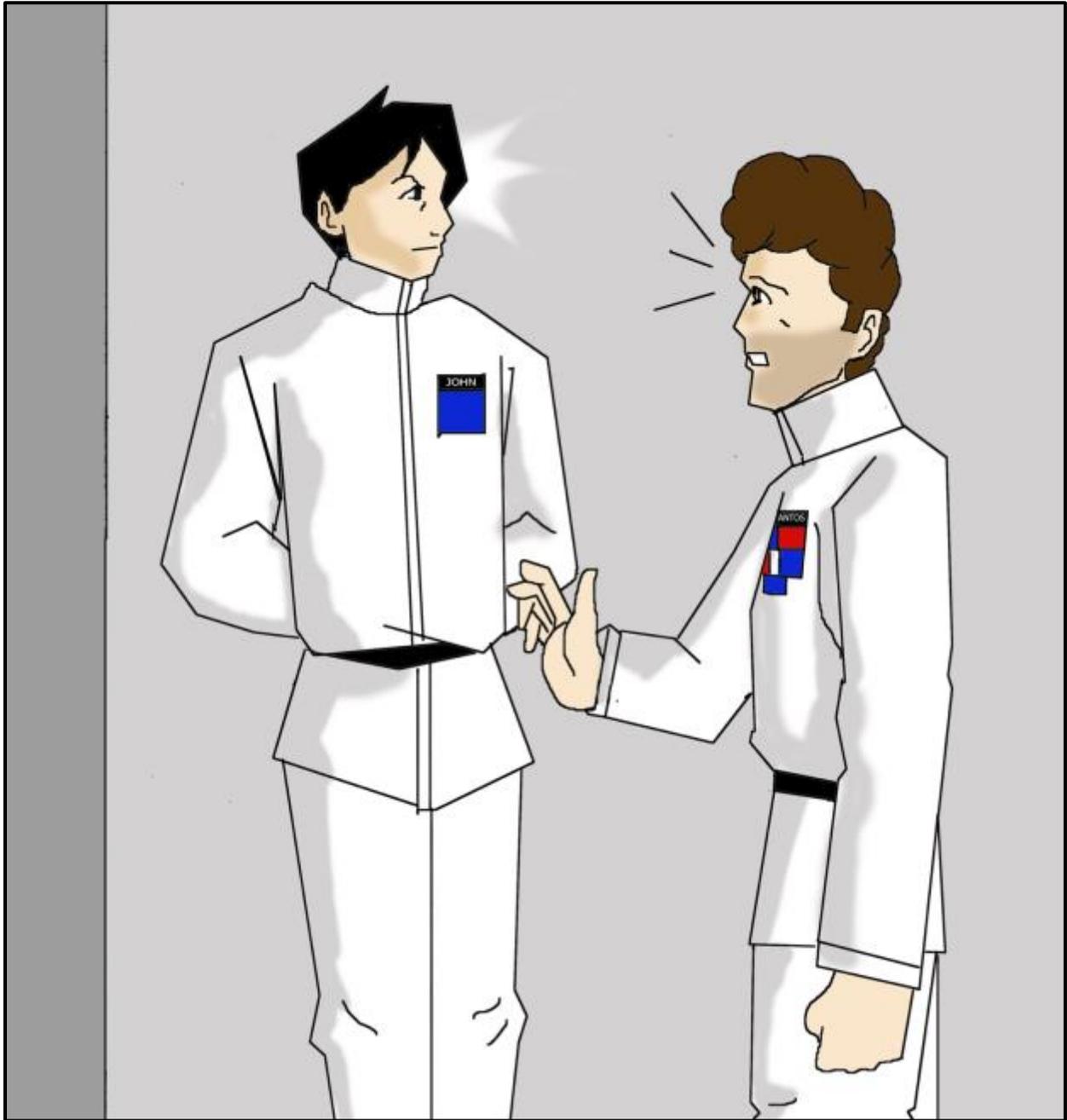
John said, “Follow me, Captain.”

They walked through the brains of the ship until they arrived at John’s private quarters. When they entered, he noticed it hadn’t changed much since their last journey. John liked things the same when it came to his personal life but technology was different. There, he thrived on change and improvement. The newest gadgets always turned him on. He slept here, because he refused to be too far away from the core of his faithful lady, in case she ever needed him to tend to her in an emergency. He was her devoted husband.

“What’s up John?”

“Oh, not much. Just wanted you to know, I sense a change in you. Romance. Love even? I know you don’t want to talk about it, but be careful you’re not seen.”

“Good grief. I can’t hide anything from you.”



“No, not much, but your distraction was fairly obvious to me, as well as others I’m sure, like Kitara. Be careful of her. I’m not sure if she’s jealous, but there’s something bothering her right now. Just a heads up.”

“Yeah, okay. I couldn’t get up this morning, so she’s hell bent on finding out why? She nagged me all through breakfast.”

“Maybe, she’s just worried about you, or maybe it’s something else? Can’t be sure, my friend.”

He patted him on the back and said, “Thanks, John. Women scorned, you know. Although, we’ve never really done anything, but I was attracted to her for a while, until well, you know.”

“Until you fell in love with a Satorian? A gorgeous one at that. Be careful, Captain.”

“You just pull everything out of my weak, vulnerable mind, don’t you?”

“Pretty much.” He laughed as they both headed out the door and back to the core of the ship.

Kitara was walking towards them. He smiled. She didn’t.

He ignored her attitude. “Let’s go Lieutenant. I want to go to see Major Cleary and check out sick bay.”

“You ill?”

“No.”

She was quiet and so was he as they headed down the corridor with the sound of their steps pounding in his head. He needed a drink.

His com lit up red. “Captain, Chief Petty here, we have a situation.”

He looked at Kitara as he lifted the wrist com to his mouth and said, “*Live*. What’s going on Petty?”

“I’ve sent security to the cargo bay, something activated the motion sensor.”

“We’re on our way. *Out*.” He watched the red light go green when he said out and headed to the elevator. Kitara was next to him with a look of concern on her face.

The door closed on them and for the first time in their history as friends he felt very uncomfortable standing alone next to her in quarters this tight. He wondered why he didn’t feel in the least bit attracted to those dangling dark curls and those blazing blue eyes, when just yesterday if she’d showed up in his room he wouldn’t have thought twice about making love to her, but now he couldn’t imagine it. Was it love? Damn, he must be totally enamored with Addie and yes, maybe he is even in love. He couldn’t get her out of his mind.

“Captain? What are you waiting for?”

He looked up and Kitara stood in the door waiting for him to exit the elevator. He couldn’t wait to hold her again. He couldn’t wait to see her smile again and touch her soft skin.

“Just thinking, Lieutenant.”

“Sir.”

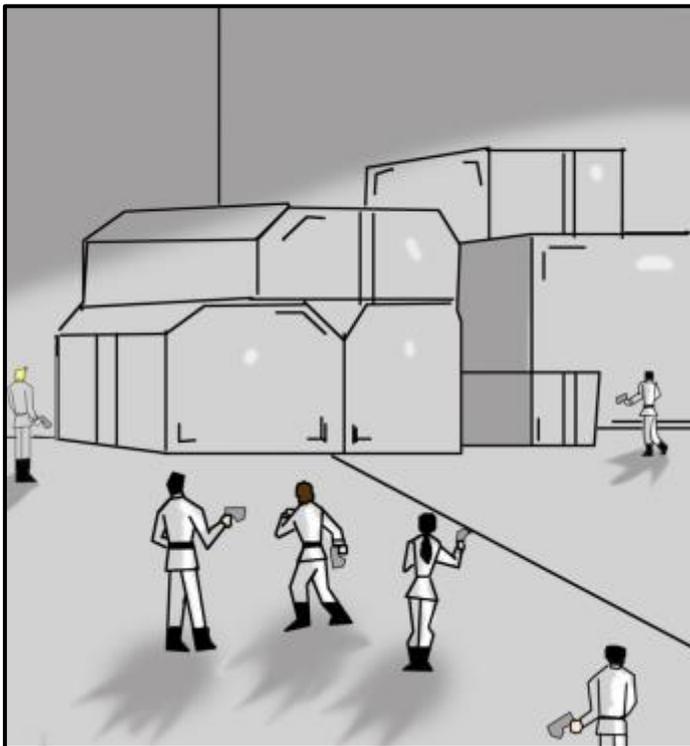
They hurried towards the cargo bay. When they arrived, the huge door opened and security stood around something laying on the floor. He couldn't tell what it was until they moved closer.

A small green jacket was folded up next to wrappers from food rations that were typically used during combat. Whoever it was, ate heartily.

He looked around and felt disappointment surge through him when Addie hadn't joined her security team. Of course, he knew she was certainly on deck in case she was needed.

“Well, security it'd appear that we have a stowaway.”

They pulled out their laser blasters and started searching the area.



“Put them on stun, we don't want to kill anyone if we can avoid it. I want to know why they're on board my ship.”

“Yes, Captain. You heard him, team, stun only.”

They all nodded and continued carefully searching the massive cargo area. There were large containers everywhere, carrying everything from medicines, ammunition, weapons, clothing,

towels, food, seeds for the Greenatarium (where they grew fresh vegetables and had chickens for fresh eggs)...there were also boxes loaded with a new type of laser gun.

Suddenly, he was worried whoever it was had plans to steal their weapons.

He and Kitara pulled their own lasers. They cautiously searched behind boxes. Kitara held up the jacket. It was quite small, a child's size, but it could be a decoy to give them the wrong idea or it could belong to several different races, some of which he'd never encountered before but just heard about in lecture halls during academy classes. One time he overheard a woman in a bar telling a story about her encounter with a small race of Shortens from the planet Pathton. He remembered her description of them and the fact that they were a kind people who were talented, creative and very energetic for their size. She said they could outrun most humans in any type of weather, and not just outrun them but outrun them barefooted. He remembered feeling quite impressed and always wanted to meet one but their planet was in another galaxy, one he'd never been to.

But, why would they be aboard his ship? What could their need be that would make them become a stowaway? It didn't make much sense.

Kitara was slowly moving around a large container that was marked ammo. He went around the other way so if someone was there, they could trap them in between the two of them.

Nothing.

“Stop, intruder, or I'll shoot.”

The scream came from the east part of the hold. Kitara looked at him and they both ran forward with their weapons out.

“Captain, over here.”

They ran to the side of a male security officer. He pointed to their left. “I thought I saw someone run along the back, at least I saw a shadow on the wall. They moved quickly and didn’t heed my warning.”

“Let’s go. You’re with me officer.”

“Yes, Captain.”

The three of them moved carefully towards the back of the hold, as the officer motioned for two of his security comrades to move in the opposite direction.



The officer tapped him on the shoulder and pointed to a dark corner. Something moved along the floor hugging it like a slithering snake. It was about 5’3” in length. It could be anyone.

Both sides moved in slowly compelling the creature to curl up into a ball in the dark shadow in submission or maybe it was getting ready to shoot something obtrusive at them. He thought of Addie and tried to push the thought out of his head, but the dark corner made him think of her and him having to hide with her in the dark shadows.

“Stand down, this is Captain Sarantos speaking. I’m only going to ask you one more time to stand down and if you don’t, my security team will shoot. You’re on my ship and I want to know why immediately.”

“Don’t shoot, Captain. I’m sorry, please don’t shoot, Captain Sarantos.”

A girl about twelve years old stood up and walked towards him, as security moved in to protect the captain in case she was something other than what she appeared.

“Hi, remember me? My name’s Candy O’Malley. My mom’s an assistant in sick bay. I’m sorry, I know we weren’t supposed to come but I hate staying at the home for assistant parents. My father died in combat two years ago and I didn’t want to be left behind.” She dropped her head down.

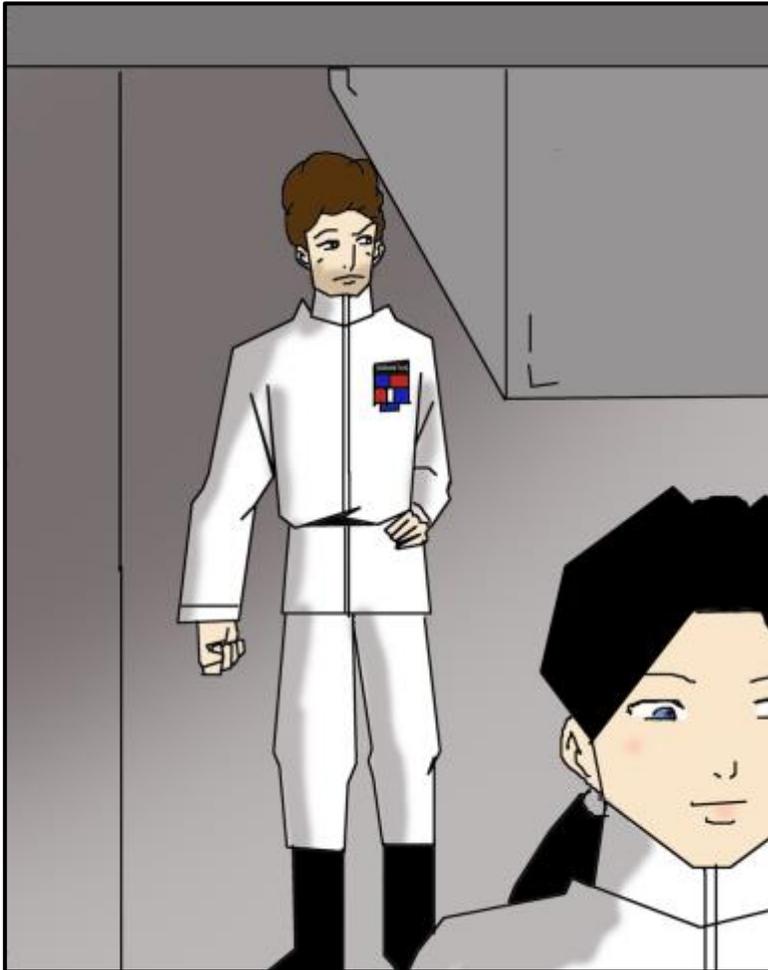
Great, just what they needed - a child on this war mission. He’d known her father and was friends with her mother, as well. Yes, he indeed recognized the freckle-faced girl with red braids. She looked just like her mother.

“Candy, I don’t approve of stowaways on my ship. There was an important reason why children weren’t allowed on board for this mission and now you’ve breached my ship. Your mother and I will have to discuss your behavior later tomorrow but right now let’s get you to her. I’m sure she’ll be very disappointed with your behavior. Don’t you agree?”

“Yes, Captain. I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to cause trouble. I didn’t mean for my mom to get in trouble either...”

“Security, I was on my way to sick bay and will take Candy with me, if you’ll just accompany us there it’ll be much appreciated.”

“Yes, Captain.”



He looked back at the shadows as they all headed out of cargo bay. He thought about the shadows and all the secrets their darkness holds. Addie, our love feels so right, yet we hide from the light. Why do we hide? Why are we so terrified? Hopefully, maybe someday, we'll tell the world the truth but for now the shadows belong to our hearts and each time I gaze into the depths of the shadow's darkness, I see your fiery violet eyes.

He whispered as he walked away, “The allure of the shadows will always exist and harbor our perfect secret, my sweet Addie Stuart”. You've

touched my heart and enslaved my soul Addie, my delicate, beautiful and mysterious little angel...