

When the order to go came, the security forces were ready. Their oxygen packs fit into the back of their clear helmets. Unlike environmental suit helmets, they fit tightly around the officer's head with a flexible neck piece to make movement easy. It actually protected them instead of hindering them in hand to hand combat.

They beamed simultaneously into the vital sections of the damaged war ship. The Breen crew were armed with personal disruptors. And they fought back with enthusiasm. But Mr. Dole had been correct. The Starfleet security officers had caught them off guard. The battle for control of the Dycam was short.

Lt. Orrint beamed into the Dycam from the Lexington. He was a short portly humanoid with light tan skin, receding dark brown hair, and a prominent forehead. He carried a small tool case. He reported to Mr. Dole on the bridge.

"Lt. Orrint." Dole said. "This is Primot Eloc. He has refused to answer any questions."

"Hello Primot." Lt. Orrint looked intensely into his eyes. Orrint's oxygen mask covered only the lower half of his face. Eloc did not answer, but did not look away either. "Is there a place where we can speak privately?"

"There is a conference room." Eloc nodded to a door that led off the port side of the Dycam's bridge.

"Good." Orrint smiled. "Lead the way."

In the conference room, Orrint set his tool case on the table and opened it. He took out a small luminescent crystal that would fit in the palm of his hand. He placed it on the table between them. Primot Eloc stood on the other side of the conference table and watched with a mixture of fascination and dread.

"What is it?" Eloc asked.

"A type of canar crystal." Orrint answered readily and put a computer data padd on the table next to it. "My people use these crystals for many different purposes. It helps focus thoughts."

"It is an interrogation device?"

"Please sit down, Primot Eloc." Orrint took his own seat never taking his eyes from Eloc's. The Breen primot sat down slowly. The piercing black eyes of the Starfleet officer were compelling. He could not look away. "I'm sure you know why we are here. My captain requires certain information. She has ordered me to retrieve it."

"She?"

"Yes." Orrint would not be side tracked with the discussion of cultural differences. He laid his palm over the crystal. Not touching it, just feeling the familiar warm energy that radiated from it. Orrint softly said. "Command protocols, Primot Eloc."

Eloc could not help but think about them. He tried to crowd his mind with unimportant details. Orrint picked up the crystal and laid it in his palm. He took Eloc's hand and placed it over the crystal. He did not force him. Eloc could have taken his hand away but the power coming from the crystal was warm and inviting. He was surprised that Orrint was giving him information about the Federation as well as taking information about the Breen.

With his free hand, Orrint entered data in the padd while they were connected. He recorded any and all technical information that came through the captain's thoughts. Orrint's skill

and experience with the crystal allowed him to selectively share his impression of all the worlds he had visited in his twelve years in Starfleet without giving away any technical or classified information. After twenty minutes, Lt. Commander Dole and two security guards came into the room. Orrint broke the connection reluctantly. It had been stronger than any connection he had experienced in years.

"This should be helpful, Commander." Orrint said as he handed the padd to Dole. When he stood up, he turned to the Breen Captain and said, "Thank you, Tholic."

"An interesting experience, Havick." Eloc responded to Orrint's use of his first name.

"Primot Eloc. If you will accompany the guards." Dole said. Eloc nodded and left the room under guard. Dole scanned the technical information. "Good. This should help."

"Good." Lt. Orrint nodded and put his crystal back in the case.

"Is it like the Vulcan mind meld?" Dole asked. "I mean, if you don't mind my asking."

"I don't mind." Orrint shrugged. He had been asked this question before. He found that beings without any telepathic abilities were fascinated by them, often afraid of them. "It's very different. I experienced a mind meld at the Academy. It was much more intense. The only way I can describe the difference to you is that this is an intimate conversation compared to making love."

"Well, that's descriptive enough." Dole laughed.