

The Bajoran Embassy Mystery
By Emma Thomas

Lieutenant Christine Aldous sat back in her chair, put her feet on her desk and looked at the data pad in her hand. As she reviewed the data it was obvious that there was something going on in the Bajoran Embassy. Something that revolved around the Bajoran Ambassador, Colonel Madia Amme, something that all the Embassy staff were involved in and something which none of the Starbases Starfleet officers knew anything about. With two possible exceptions, the first being Starbase 410's own Chief Engineer Lt. Andrew Cornell and the second being the commanding officer of USS Rage, Captain Leigh Brown.

Christine ran back over the data in her mind, she needed to be fully prepared when she presented it to Admiral Jat in two hours time. When had it started? As far as she could tell it had started several months ago when Madia Amme had made a sudden trip to Bajor, where she had undergone a medical procedure aboard Deep Space 9. That had seemed straightforward enough until put together with things that had happened on her return to SB410, but now Chris was jumping ahead. Her investigations had revealed that the USS Rage, under Captain Leigh Brown's command and the USS Saratoga out on a routine test run under Lt. Cornell had made unscheduled stops at DS9 during the time that Madia was there. For what purpose remained a mystery.

During Madia's recuperation surveillance devices in the corridor outside her quarters, Christine had so far been unable to bug the inside; she made a note to discreetly enquire with the Romulan, Klingon and Ferengi embassies to discover if any of them had managed it, after all she knew that all the embassies were bugging each other. Ambassador K'Hellenbeck (Romulan) had even been able to get one into her office although she still had no idea how. Anyway her cameras showed that Lt. Cornell was a frequent visitor to Madia's quarters.

All this aside it had been the Ambassador's erratic behaviour that had first aroused Admiral Jat's suspicions, I mean who would expect her to walk down the promenade and actually kiss K'Hellenbeck when he bumped into her instead of threatening violence to his person. She forgot to attend meetings and was heard tearing strips off her Chief of Staff, Lieutenant Barella El, and why? Because she had replicated black coffee instead of Ractagino. As her investigation deepened there had been more evidence of unusual behaviour, she made excuses to get out of her usual weekly "ladies" night with L'Sar, S'ena, K'iHQaS and various others; normally she was at the forefront of any mischief they got up to. Only yesterday Chris had received a report of Madia doing what the Ferengi call Ohmaks (erotic earlobe rubbing) to Quek, the Ferengi Ambassador, who she normally maintained was a randy little troll.

So suspicions fully aroused, Admiral Jat had asked her to investigate discreetly and find out if there was anything wrong and what was going on. Chris had reviewed Madia's movements for the past month and found that she had left the station in a shuttle on four occasions. The shuttle logs showed that she had docked with the USS Rage on all four occasions. Lt. Barella had accompanied her once and her security chief, Lt. Evad, was as always ever present like a shadow. Further examination of station logs showed that the USS Rage had docked at Starbase 410 six times in the past month and only four of these were weekly scheduled stops. On all six occasions Capt. Brown had met with Madia in her quarters for several hours, seemingly alone or with Lt. Evad and/or Lt. Cornell.

In an attempt to find out in what way Capt. Brown and Lt. Cornell were involved, Chris had interviewed all the Starfleet personnel who came into regular contact with Ambassador Madia Amme. Whilst most had co-operated they had all been confused as to the reasons behind her strange behaviour and mood swings. Lt.

Cornell had been evasive when Chris had spoken to him and was observed 10 minutes later letting himself into Madia's quarters. Capt. Brown had refused to even acknowledge her three communications to him aboard the USS Rage, and she knew he was receiving them because she had spoken to his first officer.

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A week later and Lt. Christine Aldous was no closer to solving the mystery. Admiral Jat was putting pressure (resources might help) on her to come up with something. Especially after the little "*faux pas*" she had made a couple of days ago. Chris had decided that since Madia's odd behaviour had begun after an absence from the station maybe she hadn't actually returned. In order to confirm her suspicions she would need a blood sample, but she couldn't exactly ask for one without alerting "Madia" to her suspicions. To this end she had recruited two Starfleet officers who were just as worried about Madia as she was, Cdr. John Borda and Cadet 1st Class Lucretia Nax, to assist her in proving (or disproving) them. Nax had distracted "Madia" whilst John came up behind her with a hypo-syringe with the intention of obtaining the blood sample they needed to see if "Madia" was Madia or if she had been replaced by a changeling.

Fortunately Madia was Madia. Unfortunately she didn't appreciate being jabbed in the arm without permission and reacted with all her military training by twisting John's arm up behind his back and pushing him to the floor, breaking his arm in the process.

The Admiral wasn't happy! That was an understatement. She now had an officer in a plaster cast and three officers up on various charges of assault and aiding and abetting an assault. The Bajorans weren't happy, Lt. Barella El had been very vocal on the matter actually, and were threatening to remove the embassy from SB410 all together. The Klingons, Romulans and Ferengi seemed to find the whole thing very amusing.

Oddly it hadn't been Admiral Jat who was able to calm Madia down as has been the case in the past, but Cdr. Steve Woods, Starbase's first officer and good friend to Lt. Cornell, adding to the mystery in Chris' eyes since he obviously knew something he hadn't told her or Admiral Jat. Chris hadn't heard exactly what he had said to her when he took her to one side in Admiral Jat's office, but she had heard the words "stress" and "not good" mentioned. The situation was further diffused the following day when the USS Rage made an unscheduled stopover.

Chris tapped a key on her computer and sat back. She wasn't really any further on than she was a week ago. All she had really achieved was to upset the Admiral and the Bajorans and get John's arm broken. To cap it all off the main parties were now aware she was investigating them and were; if possible, even more secretive than before, Andy had actually turned and walked the other way when he had seen her this morning. It was now obvious to her that she needed to keep a closer watch on both Andy and Capt. Brown.

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Almost a month had now passed since Christine's initial investigations into the strange happenings in the Bajoran embassy and now she finally had a theory worth considering. She couldn't believe she had really considered the Founder idea, after all the Federation had been at peace with the Dominion ever since the end of the War. But this theory was worth genuine contemplation. Colonel Madia Amme had made no secret of her hatred of all things Cardassian, particularly since there had been an incident involving her sister Madia Onna and several Cardassians on a Federation colony near the Cardassian border. The Federation and Cardassian

inhabitants were still contesting several of the planets. Chris had also discovered that the USS Rage had made several detours from its patrol route and into the Badlands over the past several months. Captain Leigh Brown's sympathy to the Maquis movement had been well documented in the past and Lt. Andrew Cornell had lost several academy classmates, who had left Starfleet and joined the Maquis, when the Dominion had wiped out the Maquis during its alliance with Cardassia. Given the current political climate surely it was not inconceivable that there was a move afoot to resurrect the Maquis. The question was, were Madia, Leigh and Andy involved and if so to what extent? From what little she had learned about all three of them during her time on Starbase 410 and her recent investigations, Chris was fairly sure that simply because of their personality traits they would be heavily involved in any plans. Maybe not to the extent of initiating them in the cases of Leigh and Andy, but she could not be sure about Madia, she had been screaming for blood when the Cardassians had attacked her sister. The only trouble she now had was confirmation. It was unlikely that the Admiral would act on this information without concrete evidence but Chris had no idea how to get any.

Chris had discreetly enquired with the Romulan, Ferengi and Klingon embassies about bugs in Madia's quarters, from K'Hellenbeck she had gotten a very firm rebuttal but that was only to be expected. The Romulans were very secretive. Quek had quoted the Rules of Acquisition at her and offered to sell her the information, she had declined. She wasn't about to pay him to tell her whether he was or wasn't bugging Madia's quarters and then pay again if he was. That left the Klingons. Chris had approached Ke'reths chief of staff b'Sel rather than the Ambassador himself. Here she had gleaned a little more information for not only did she discover that none of the embassies were bugging Madia, but b'Sel let slip that it was at Madia's request for personal privacy that they weren't. b'Sel claimed not to know the personal reasons but Chris suspected that if she didn't know then she certainly had a good idea.

Chris wouldn't be at all surprised to learn that the other embassies were also involved. The Romulans always had their own agenda, Chris wouldn't put it past Quek to use the opportunity to make a profit by dealing in arms and Ke'reth had shown where his sympathies lay by supplying the Major with ships for the Bajoran resistance during the Dominion occupation.

She had better make sure that when she put this theory to Admiral Jat it sounded less like a conspiracy and more like a possibility, hopefully then Admiral Jat would overlook her lack of evidence and make some enquiries with Admiral Thomas at Starfleet Intelligence.

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Well it was back to the drawing board again. Chris was beginning to think that there was actually nothing going on and the Admiral was just paranoid, but then the strange packages had started to arrive.

Admiral Jat had overlooked Chris' lack of evidence of a resurgence of the Maquis and contacted her superior at Starfleet Headquarters, Admiral Thomas, who also happened to be the head of Starfleet Intelligence. Admiral Thomas had revealed in the strictest confidence that, yes, they had monitored a Maquis revival and no, Madia and Lt. Cornell were not involved. While the USS Rages unscheduled side trips to the Badlands were in fact at his request to make contact with his undercover agent. He also conceded that since his undercover agent was Madia Onna it was not inconceivable that Madia Amme may be aware of the operation. This, in Chris' opinion, explained Captain Brown's visits to Madia's quarters and possibly her strange behaviour after all Onna was the only family she had. Chris was about to consider the case closed, but then the packages had started to arrive and they were

closely followed by the unexpected return of Vedek Sespirie from her retreat on Bajor.

The packages were all shapes and sizes. They were all delivered direct to Madia's quarters and from what Chris had managed to discover they came from various different planets in both the Alpha and Gamma quadrants. Chris had also, through means she was trying hard to keep secret, managed to intercept some coded transmissions from Madia. She had not yet broken the code but she did know to whom they had been sent, and that was the surprising thing, given Madia's dislike of Cardassians. They were sent to a tailor aboard Deep Space 9, a Cardassian tailor named Garak. The mystery deepened.

Chris was starting to have a suspicion of what was going on. One side effect of her interception technique was that it intercepted all outgoing and incoming transmissions. Hence her need to keep what she was doing a secret. Any way she had intercepted some communications between the Chief medical officer here on Starbase 410 and Doctor Julian Bashir on DS9. One of the incoming communications had included a formula for a medicine developed by Dr. Bashir, a sneezing remedy. Chris was only aware of one other person who had used Dr. Bashir's sneezing remedy and she had also purchased a new off duty wardrobe and uniform from Garak. Put this together with other clues, the mood swings, the forgetfulness, the words stress and not good, the frequent trips to sick bay and the sneezing it was obvious really, Chris didn't know why she hadn't realised it sooner. Madia was pregnant! The only question now was who is the Father?

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CASE CLOSED. Chris hit the enter key on her console and consigned the file to archive. She had sent a coded transmission to Ambassador Madia Amme telling her she knew her secret and would be reporting to Admiral Jat at 14:00hrs station time.

An hour before she was due to report to the Admiral she had received a reply, calling her and all the senior staff to report to the briefing room at 13:30hrs station time, where the Bajoran Ambassador Madia Amme would be making an announcement in order to allay the curiosity of the stations Starfleet security on what she considered to be a personal matter. Chris had duly attended the meeting.

They were all there when she arrived, Ambassador K'Hellenbeck, Quek, Ke'reth with his chief of Staff b'Sel and for Starfleet, Admiral Jat, Cdr. Woods, the admirals Aide de Camp, Dave Coombes. Madia was stood at the head of the table, flanked on either side by Lt. Cornell and Capt. Brown; behind her were her Embassy Staff, Capt. Evad and Barella EI. So all the candidates were present, and all attentive.

Silence had fallen as Madia stepped forward and had announced that due the recent investigations by Lt. Aldous she felt it was time to put and end to the rumours that were circulating the Station regarding herself. When she made her announcement everyone else was drowned out by the extraordinarily loud scream that issued from Admiral Jat. As everyone gathered around Madia with their wishes of congratulations on the up coming birth of her first child, Christine quietly slipped out and returned to her office where she sat at her console and called up the file that she had been about to close and typed a name followed by CASE CLOSED. She sat back in her chair and reviewed her actions. She decided she had not been remiss in forcing Madia to make her announcement; at least she had gained the final piece of the puzzle that allowed her to close her case, the name of the father. She hadn't been sure when she arrived, they were all so close to her, but he had slipped his arm around her waist as she started to speak. Who was he? Lt. Andrew Cornell of course.