

## **RamQul Rebellion**

**By Ann Thomas**

Ram Qul was a Cardassian/Klingon Alliance Stronghold. It spun slowly on its axis, its many turrets reflecting the fire from the beautiful Ram Qul nebula that gave it its name. In charge of the station was the Intendant Madia Amme. Blonde beautiful and pure evil, hers was a profitable station and she worked hard to keep it that way, or rather her overseers and slaves worked hard while she amused herself with her personal slaves. They were two Terrans David and Ellie who lived in luxury and in fear of their lives should some small action upset the Intendant.

She was aided in both the work and enjoyment by Barella El known as her Insisstant. Both women were Bajorans and ruled the station with a rod of iron. She had at her beck and call others to help maintain control. Kane her personal bodyguard and assassin, a soulless empty killing machine, he had killed his wife and daughter because Madia had told him to. She had had an implant put into his brain as a punishment, completely taking away his free will. It was felt that he was totally mad and only the implant controlled him. There were two other Klingons in positions of authority, b'Sel, a doctor who loved to experiment on slaves, especially if they were still conscious, and KiHQaS who maintained security. Both of these Klingon women were also highly trained warriors. Madia liked to surround herself with strong women as long as they knew their place. Also on the station was Anarita Jat, a joined Trill who fought the memories of her previous host and her symbiont in order to secretly help the resistance, which was led by her old friend Dalen Varr, another joined Trill who had a price on his head.

Deep within the station Anarita Jat tossed and turned in the small metal box that was her home. The Cardassians and Klingons were not known for the comfort of their furnishings. Anarita was dreaming or rather her thoughts were being controlled by the symbiont Jat and they were not good thoughts for Anarita. The Jat symbiont was loyal to the Alliance and its previous hosts had worked for the Alliance in many capacities. Anarita Tehamus, a member of the Resistance had been captured by the Intendants troops during a raid on her group. They had been betrayed by the very symbiont she now carried inside her. She would never forget that day when she realised that the man she had taken as a lover had betrayed her and her friends, leading the Alliance forces to the heart of their base. Still she had had her revenge and had taken him out with a blast from a captured Klingon phaser rifle. Unfortunately the blast did not kill the symbiont and she supposed it was poetic justice that as an unjoined Trill she had been forced to become the next host. Butcher b'Sel the doctor had not realised that all Trills had a pouch for the symbiont to enter their body until after she had slashed her open, on the orders of the Intendant, who had been quite fond of Anturan Jat. The good thing was, that at the moment the Intendant did not trust her enough to send her out to the rebel camps, so she did not find herself in the position of betraying her friends. Jat was still too strong for her yet; she had eight lifetimes of memories to contend with including those of a man who knew her intimately. Anarita Tehamus occasionally broke through and managed small acts of rebellion, for example defacing station posters, before Jat took control again. Then she found herself confessing to the Intendant and being punished for it, not enough to hurt the symbiont but enough to make Anarita suffer. Sometimes it was mental torture as she was forced to watch a slave cruelly beaten and killed for something she had done. Other times she had been turned over to Kane for punishment. He was an expert at inflicting the most pain with the least damage.

Anarita sat up with a start, woken by a heart-rending scream that still echoed in the corridors outside. She sat still for a while fighting the impulse to go out into the corridor and find out the cause of such anguish. She would bet that from experience that Kane had something to do with it. Eventually the Jat part of her won and she went out into the corridor. As she emerged Madia and Kane were coming toward her.

“Aah Anarita my dear “ purred Madia, “ no don’t run away I want to talk to you. You know I still haven’t forgiven you for killing my beloved Anturan.” She caressed Anarita’s face with a gloved hand. “He was a good lover you know, but then you do know don’t you? Perhaps I should have you take his place.” The Jat symbiont inside screamed yes but Anarita shuddered, the thought of intimate relations with this woman was more than she could bear.

“Perhaps not “ said Madia “ you’d probably try to stick a knife in me. I’ve a better idea, come along with me I have someone I want you to meet.” She turned and strode off down the corridor leaving Kane to grasp Anarita’s arm in his huge hand and pull her down the corridor. She winced as his fingers dug into her flesh and was glad when they stopped beside Madia outside an iron door.

The door swung open and Kane pushed her inside. Anarita stood still her mouth open with shock. There sat on a bench cradling a very swollen and bruised wrist and arm was ...herself. Sat beside her was ...the Intendant? No it couldn’t be. Anarita looked at the Intendant with confusion on her face.

“Allow me to present Admiral Anarita Jat and her Bajoran Ambassador Major Madia Amme, they are from an alternative universe and they are going to help me stay alive. Kane has just been giving our dear Major here a small demonstration of what will happen to her beloved Admiral if she lets me down. Ladies meet our Anarita Jat. She gets a bit reluctant sometimes to work for me but Kane shows her the error of her ways doesn’t he?”

Anarita nodded, her mind still in a whirl after meeting herself, “and an Admiral too” she thought to herself.

Just beyond the nebula was a small planet with three moons. The planet was not well known and simply referred to as AL3 and its moons were a, b, and c. It was known as AL3 because it housed the third largest training camp for the Alliance forces. Moon b was also the headquarters of the rebel freedom fighters, although the Alliance hadn’t quite figured that out yet. It was from here that Dalen Varr ran his Freedom Radio Station, although, because they piggy backed signals on Alliance sub space relays the Alliance didn’t realise they were that close. The man responsible for this feat of electronic engineering was John Borda a Terran known simply to his friends as JB. Both JB and Dalen Varr had been close friends of Anarita Tehamus and thought her dead after that disastrous raid by the Alliance forces led by Kane. They had seen her dragged off after killing the traitor Anturan Jat and thought that the Intendant would have her killed slowly in revenge. They never thought that instead she was forced to carry the traitor inside her and give it life. They plotted to free the slaves from the processing department deep in the bowels of the station and if they could blow up the station and kill the Intendant and her henchmen so much the better.

In the hellhole that was ore processing Leigh Brown stood up straight and stretched his aching back. Moisture glistened on his dusty body as sweat made rivulets through the dirt and dust. His tunic had long gone in ragged tatters and muscles showed through bare skin. Although once fit and rugged, hard work and poor food were beginning to take their toll. Beside him were two friends of his. Brian Starr and the half Orion girl S’ena. They too were beginning to show the

ravages of captivity and hard work. As Leigh stretched and turned to say something to Brian he felt a searing pain on his back. Above him on a ledge, holding a long whip stood a Cardassian overseer.

“Get back to work Earther pig” he growled and raised the whip once more. Leigh hastily bent back to his task. He’d felt the bite of the lash all too often and his back was criss-crossed with scars to prove it.

“One day “ he muttered to Brian, “One day and he’ll be sorry.”

“Yeah “ replied Brian “you and me both. That one has a lot to pay for.” They both looked at S’ena who was nervously watching the overseer. With her green skin and long hair she was beautiful despite the dirt and dust, and they wondered just how long they could keep her away from the giant Cardassian. They could smell the fear on her. Orions have very strong pheromones and the Cardassian had been tricked once when he had tried to take her away for the night and she had pretended to be ill. They knew he had his eye on her and they would protect her as long as they could, with their lives if need be.

Anarita lay on her bunk hands pressed to her throbbing head. Her mind was being assailed by eight lifetimes of memories, deliberately trying to weaken her independence. It was as if the Jat symbiont was co-ordinating a full assault on her senses and as yet she was not strong enough to rebuff it. Her spots stood out clearly against the pallor of her skin, glistening as the sweat poured down her face. She had tried to sleep but the voices in her head would not let her. She felt as if she were losing control, which of course was what Jat and the Intendant wanted. Deep within her mind a small voice said;

“I won’t give in I won’t give in.” She wondered if she went to sickbay would b’Sel give her something or would she be happier to see her suffer? Knowing b’Sel probably the latter. Anyway did she really want to show any sign of weakness? As she lay there she let her mind begin to drift.

“Go with it, it won’t hurt for now and I can regain control later. For now just sleep,” she thought to herself. Her eyes fluttered closed as the voices became still and she fell into a deep sleep.

On AL3b Dalen Varr was holding a planning meeting with John Borda and other members of the resistance. Not for nothing was John known as Mr. Fixit. He was an electronic genius and had rigged an old Federation “duck blind” camouflage to protect the base. It made their camp look as though it were part of the mountains. The advantage was they could see anyone coming, but they could not be seen. JB loved to use holographic technology and planned to use it in an attempt to free the slaves. They had good friends in the bowels of that station, friends who had been there far too long. There was Leigh, Brian and S’ena, John really missed Brian, they were good friends and complemented each other. They worked as a team and seemed to know what the other was thinking. It was down to Johns' genius and Brians' daring that they had rescued Jeanette Warren from Rura Penthe after she had been sent there by the Intendant. Slim and with red hair she had a temper to match her hair, but she never stayed cross for long and never bore grudges. She had been the leader of the resistance, and had held the Intendant at gunpoint before she had been forced to give in when Kane had threatened to shoot all her friends. As Varr and JB were talking Jeanette came in with Christine Aldous, who had recently joined them after the Alliance had killed her family in a raid.

“ We’ve had news, “ said Jeanette “Anarita is still alive but they gave her the Jat symbiont. She didn’t manage to kill the slimy slug after all.”

“That could mean she’s working for them now then” replied Dalen Varr as a shadow of pain crossed his face. He was very fond of Anarita and she was a good friend.

“From what we heard she’s been fighting it and suffered in the meantime.” Said Christine. “Apparently she’s had a few sessions with Kane and that wouldn’t happen if she was working for them, would it? By the way I’ve heard that the Intendant and Kane have left the station to go to some Alliance Conference.” “That’s good news,” said Dalen “we can put our plan into action. JB have you finished that hologram programme yet?”

“Just about” said JB. It’s all ready to install in the Rubber Duck and then we can go and kick some butt

Leigh Brian and S’ena huddled together in the metal cage that was their sleeping quarters. Both men had felt the bite of the overseers whip and S’ena had cleaned those welts that had broken the skin, to the best of her ability. They were talking quietly together, planning an escape from their prison.

“We have to be careful,” Leigh said. “I’m sure we have a spy in the camp.”

“Yes” replied Brian, “I’ve been keeping my eyes open and I’ve narrowed it down to one of two people. It’s either the Rigellian Dinadd or the Terran Mark.”

“Mmm that’s what I thought” said Leigh softly “we need to set a trap so we’ll let everyone in on the plan, and then keep an eye on them both and see what happens.” They quietly went in opposite directions and in low voices began to let the other prisoners in on their plan. After they had finished they crawled back to their sleeping place and lay down as if they were sleeping. All three were tired because they worked fourteen-hour days in a dusty, over-heated environment with very little water or food. They took it in turns to watch and as Brian struggled to keep his eyes open he saw a figure moving in the shadows of the room. He nudged Leigh awake and they stealthily followed the man ahead of them. He was making his way to the Cardassian Guards outside the cell.

“We have to stop him before he gets to the door,” whispered Leigh.

“Right, leave it to me,” replied Brian. He began to move more quickly but just as noiselessly as he had before. Leigh followed and as Brian rose up behind the man and put the chains of his manacles around his neck, Leigh put his hand over the mans’ mouth to stop him from crying out. The Rigellian tried to struggle but Brian gave a quick flick of his wrists and the man went limp. They lowered the lifeless body to the floor.

“Impressive” said Leigh, “I’m glad you’re on my side.

“Training” Brian replied with a grin “and practice. Right let’s get this body out of sight and we’re all set for tomorrow.”

At least we know that Kane and Madia have left the station. That will make it a bit easier, the guards get slacker when she’s not around.” Leigh said as he grabbed Dinadds legs.

“You two seem to have a history,” Brian answered, “or is that getting personal?”

“No it’s just that she seems to want to convert me to her way of thinking. She thinks she’s irresistible and can’t understand why I don’t fall at her feet. I think she looks on me as a challenge. I’d rather go to bed with a Denebrian Slime Devil.” Brian laughed.

“Well just watch yourself, she might get fed up of playing and change the rules.” Leigh gave a grim smile.

“If all goes well tomorrow we’ll be out of here before she gets back. Here lets put him in this corner and cover him with these rags. With a bit of luck they won’t notice he’s gone until it is too late.”

Anarita woke refreshed and clear-headed. She had just had the best nights sleep since she had been given the symbiont, Now was the time to find out whether she or Jat was in control. She felt different, as if she was in control, but she also knew how cunning the slug could be.

"Well" she thought to herself, "there's only one way to find out. Here we go and may the best woman win." She set off down the corridor to the Intendants' quarters. When she arrived she found her way barred by guards.

"I wish to see the Intendant," she demanded.

"The Intendant gave orders she was not to be disturbed," replied the guard.

"Oh I think she'll see me, tell her Jat wants to see her. I'll see you don't get in trouble." The guard entered the door and returned in a few seconds.

"She will see you now." He said. Anarita took a deep breath and entered the dragons lair. Madia was lounging on a daybed with her favourite slaves David and Ellie. David seemed to be enjoying the experience as he fed her chocolate, but Ellie was cowed and pale. The pallor of her face contrasted strongly with her striking long black hair, which was being stroked by the Intendant. Standing behind Madia and massaging her shoulders was her sadistic second in command Barella El.

"Anarita my dear, have you come to join us?" purred Madia with a mocking smile on her face.

"If you would like me too." Replied Anarita in what she hoped was a husky voice. Madias eyes opened wide in shock, as she had not expected this answer. She shrugged off Barella El and got to her feet. She took Anaritas face in her velvet-gloved hands.

"Anturan is that really you?" she asked as she looked into Anaritas eyes and planted a kiss on her lips. Anarita struggled to return the kiss, as Anturan would have although inside she felt only revulsion. She gave a small shudder and hoped Madia would think it was from passion.

"Yes Exalted One, I have control."

"Excellent then we have work to do." Madia ran her fingers down the side of Anaritas face, which felt only the softness of the velvet and not the steel fingernails inside. "You won't let me down now will you?" Anarita forced herself to return the caress, "no my love " she replied.

"Follow me then, I have something I want you to do. It seems that while they think the cat's away the mice want to play."

"Are you sure the plan will work?" Christine asked anxiously, "what happens if it all goes wrong and we get caught?"

"How many more times do I have to tell you, yes I think it will work, I wouldn't be doing it otherwise, Just go and sit back there, Dalen, will you get her off my back or I'll have problems with the controls."

"I'm sorry " sobbed Christine as Jeanette put a comforting arm around her. "It's just that I've seen what they can do. They massacred my village and killed all my family.

"It's all right JB does know what he's doing, it's worked before so it shouldn't be a problem. We just have to give him room to manoeuvre."

"I'm switching on holocloak now, " said JB. "We're getting close to the station so expect a challenge." Almost as he spoke the communications array crackled into life.

"Freighter identify yourself"

"This is the Alliance freighter Hercules, we request help, we have been attacked by rebel pirates and our cargo has been stolen. Our captain was killed along with some of the crew. We have two injured people on board and have sustained

heavy damage. Some of the crew were rebel sympathisers and have joined the murderous scum.” JB looked round at the others and grinned. “Nice touch huh?”

“Freighter Hercules please dock at bay 5. ” Came the reply after a short time.

“Emergency” replied JB our life support has just given out and we have a serious plasma leak. We are by bay 12 and request permission to land.” JB began to cough and gasp for air as he spoke.

“Permission granted we will send a medical team straight away.”

“Well troops are we ready to rumble?” he asked as he brought the Rubber Duck to a perfect touchdown. Weapons ready and you know the plan? Dalen I have to leave you and sort out that other matter, but if things go well we will be back to get you all off. Good luck,” he patted Dalen on his massive shoulder and hugged the girls. “Stay safe okay?” he whispered. They loaded up their weapons and cautiously crept down the ramp. As yet there was no one there and they quickly left the bay and found a turbolift.

“Going down ore processing and slaves” quipped Dalen as they began to descend.

“Control I am setting automatic pilot and sending freighter out. Warp core about to blow,” said JB as he settled back into the pilot’s seat.

“It’s up to you now S’ena” whispered Leigh. “Make him think it’s his birthday.” S’ena stood up straight and started to give off some very powerful pheromones. Although they knew what was coming, and had steeled themselves against the effect, the blast of lustful feelings still hit them hard. The Cardassian overseer had no chance. As S’ena glided towards him his whole attention was on the beautiful Orian girl who seemed, at last to be offering herself to him. The thoughts of them together were the last that he had, as both Leigh and Brian hit him on the back of the head with a piece of rock. He fell like a stone and they caught him as he went down. Leigh took the Cardassians phaser rifle and was just about to fire it as a signal to the other slaves, when he heard the whine of a phaser blast and the rocks at his feet disintegrated.

“Everyone stay very still. Guards bring those three to me!” a woman’s’ voice rang out. Leigh slowly turned, a look of disbelief on his face. Standing there as large as life and twice as evil was the Intendant and Barella El.

“She wasn’t supposed to be here. She left the station,” he thought to himself.

“Changing rules,” whispered Brian as Cardassian and Klingon guards grabbed them roughly, and dragged them to the Intendant. As they were forced to their knees Leigh looked for Kane. He wasn’t in sight, which was very odd because Madia didn’t go anywhere without him. Madia stood in front of S’ena, who was still emitting slight pheromones of lust along with strong ones of fear. She took hold of S’enas chin with one hand and ran her gloved hand down her face, as she smiled a cold evil smile.

“ Yes my dear you will do very nicely. Barella take her to my quarters. Guard, go with them. Oh and Barella, no touching until I get there. She’s mine first.” Barella El nodded her head in acknowledgement, and grabbed S’ena by the arm and led her off followed by a heavily armed Klingon. As Madia approached Leigh she slowly removed her velvet gloves.

“Leigh, Leigh, what am I going to do with you?” As she spoke she leant forward to kiss him on the lips. As she did so she ran her fingernails down his face leaving three red lines where the sharpened steel fingernails sliced into the skin. Leigh stared at her without flinching as she moved away from him. Suddenly without warning she spun around and slapped him around the face, her face contorted with fury. The blow knocked Leigh to the ground, and blood oozed from the cuts on both sides of his face. A Cardassian hauled him to his knees again, as Leigh shook his head to clear it.

"I could kill you this time, but then I'd probably regret it. You are a challenge, and I like a good challenge. You survived qu'bang and you have survived ore processing. You don't seem worried about yourself but I wonder how you'll feel having the death of your friends on your conscience?" She turned to Brian, "I hope you are ready to die for your foolishness in following our young friend here." She turned back to Leigh. "I have decided to kill your friend here and twenty of these slaves. Do you want to pick them out, or shall I?" Leigh gazed at her with contempt.

"Do what you like you evil bitch, but don't expect me to help you." As he spoke, he and Brian looked at each other and smiled.

"Been nice knowing you," Brian said.

"You too," replied Leigh. As she caught this exchange Madias face once again contorted in fury. They were defying her and she wasn't going to stand for that. Once again a stinging slap knocked Leigh to the ground, and she followed it with one for Brian. The guards hauled them back to their knees.

"She certainly packs a punch," said Brian as he shook his head.

"Only way she can get me to fall at her feet." Madia grabbed a rifle from one of the guards and aimed it at Leigh. She was just about to press the trigger when she lowered it and handed it back. She laughed as she said to Leigh:

"You nearly succeeded then didn't you? You aren't going to get off that easily so don't think you are." She turned to Brian, "and as for you I have someone special to send you on your way." She turned and beckoned to a figure in the shadows. "Come here my dear, I told you I had a job for you to do."

Anarita stepped forward into the light and heard Leigh and Brian gasp in shock. Madia gestured to a guard and he handed Anarita his rifle. She smiled as she aimed it at Brian.

"You know my friend Anarita Jat don't you?" She smiled as she saw the impact the full name had on them. "She has become host to my very good friend Jat. I must admit that she was a bit reluctant at first, and had to be taught a lesson by Kane on several occasions, but she eventually saw the error of her ways, didn't you my dear?" Anarita nodded keeping the smile on her face. As she stepped forward Anarita made sure she was close to an armed guard. Madia turned to speak to one of the other guards and as she did so Anarita winked at Brian and Leigh. As Madia turned back Leigh made a move as if to attack Anarita. As he lunged forward he shouted;

"You traitorous bitch, was he so important to you that you had to have him forever." As he had anticipated Madia stepped forward to stop him.

"Shall I do it now?" Anarita queried. Madia nodded, and bent forward to whisper in Leighs ear:

"Say goodbye to your friend and then you can pick out the next twenty."

Anarita raised the rifle once more and aimed it at Brian, as she squeezed the trigger she spun around and fired point blank at the chest of the Cardassian guard beside her. In one smooth movement she caught his phaser rifle as he fell and threw it to Brian, who caught it deftly and proceeded to put it to good use. At the same time Leigh rose up with his arms in the air and brought them swiftly down over Madias head thus imprisoning her within his arms. He made sure her arms were well down at her side so that she couldn't make use of her steel talons. The more she struggled the tighter he held, winding his leg around hers to stop her kicking.

"And I thought you always wanted to be in my arms?" he whispered in her ear.

While Leigh struggled with Madia, Brian and Anarita had got the guards under control with the help of the other prisoners. The guards had all been disarmed and their weapons were now in the hands of the prisoners.

As order was restored a laconic voice came from the direction of the turbo-lift, "You obviously don't need my help then." They looked around and saw Dalen Varr stood there, a sardonic smile on his face.

"Dalen!" exclaimed Brian and Leigh, "have you brought the troops in?"

"I've got Jeanette and Christine with me. JB's gone off on another rescue mission but he should be back soon." He stopped as he took in their puzzled faces. "Oh of course you don't know Christine, she joined us after her village was burnt to the ground by the Alliance. All her family were killed." He turned to Anarita. "Anarita my friend, how are you? I heard about the symbiont, is there any way you can get rid of it?"

Anarita smiled wearily. "No but I do seem to have it under control at last. It's been hard and at times very painful. Have you got a plan to get us out of here?"

Dalen turned and looked at the Intendant. She had stopped struggling and stood very straight and rigid in the iron hard circle of Leigh's arms. She stared back at him with a look of contempt on her face.

"You'll never get off of here alive, I've got other hostages who will all die if anything happens to me." Dalen looked at her with a strange expression on his face, it was almost sorrowful, disappointed like a child who had just been told there was no Father Christmas. He shook his head.

"I don't believe in hitting women, I have never found one that would bring me to that point, but you, you would drive me there I think. How can one small person have so much evil in them? Madia laughed,

"You won't hit me because you are weak, a coward." Dalen raised his mighty fist, then lowered it and turned away.

"Jeanette can you find something to tie her up with?"

"Certainly can" she replied. She went off and came back with some old rags tied together to make a rope. As she approached Madia she smiled.

"Bet you didn't expect to see me again?"

"No I should have killed you while I had the chance. Now you're running after cowards. How come you're not in charge. Was Rura Penthe too much for you?"

Jeanette blanched at the mention of Rura Penthe

"Yes it was" she replied. I really would like to see you end up there, and see how you cope. You won't have any slaves there to run around after you, and you can see if you like being assaulted by the guards." As she spoke she deftly tied Madias arms behind her, and Leigh was able to relinquish his hold.

"Thank goodness for that," he said, "my back was killing me. So Dalen what's the plan to get us out of here? Where's JB?"

"He had to go and attend to some other business. Apparently our friend here has a double from an alternative universe and she sent her off with Kane to some conference."

"Yes!" said Anarita; "I've met her, and a double of me. She's an Admiral, and she's injured. Madia had Kane hurt her as an incentive to her double to do as she was told."

"Don't worry JB has all that in hand. All we have to do is get off this station alive, so troops follow me and bring her with you." Dalen nodded his head in Madias direction.

"We have to go to her quarters and get S'ena," said Brian. "Madia had her taken there as a slave."

"Don't worry, we'll get her and the other slaves that are there. Now let's go."

Dalen Anarita and Jeanette led the way, with Leigh still holding tight to Madia following. After them came Brian and Christine followed by the rest of the slaves. The first seven entered the turbo-lift while the others spread out, seeking any straggling guards. Dalen had told them to rendezvous at docking bay 12 where there would be a transporter to take them off.

In Madias quarters a very frightened S'ena was huddled on the day bed. Barella El was watching her and almost licking her lips in anticipation. She was going to enjoy this one when the Intendant had finished with her. Always supposing of course there would be anything left to enjoy. She had seen people turn to mindless quivering jellies after Madia had played with them. She wondered where Ellie had got to. Down with that other Anarita Jat she supposed. After all she had been told to keep her alive. David was being his usual nondescript self. He only seemed to come alive around Madia and he was terrified of Kane. Mind you even Barella herself was frightened of Kane. Suddenly he was there before her as if the thought had brought him to life. He was demanding to know where Madia was. Ellie stuttered as she replied "She has g-g-gone to Ore Processing, there was some t-t-trouble down there. The Terran Leigh was t-t-trying to lead a rebellion." Kane growled "She should have let me kill him. Who's that?" He pointed to S'ena. "The Intendants new toy, An Orion slave for her to play with. She is a friend of Leighs"

Kane was just about to reply when the door burst open and Dalen Varr and Jeanette came through, phasers at the ready. Leigh followed still holding on tight to Madia Amme. Behind them came Brian, Anarita and Christine. Kane assessed the situation immediately, and surprisingly for a man of his bulk moved very quickly. He stepped back a few paces and grabbed S'ena off of the daybed she was sitting on. He swung her around in front of him and held her easily with one hand, the other hand held a phaser pointed to her head.

"What's known as a Mexican stand-off I believe!" Drawled Dalen.

"I don't know what you mean," growled Kane "but she dies unless you release my mistress."

"Your mistress dies if anything happens to my friends," replied Dalen. "That's a Mexican stand-off. Now what we need to do is resolve the situation. Madia I have a proposal for you. You let us go, and I let you and your handyman here live and I don't blow up the station. How about it?"

"I'd rather see you all dead," she snarled. "But I don't suppose I've got much choice. Kane let her go. There will always be another time."

Dalen turned to David, "you have the choice my friend, to stay here or come with us and have your freedom. What's it to be?"

"My freedom," replied David. "At least I stand the chance of living longer."

Kane released S'ena and she rushed over to Brian who held her tightly.

"What about the other Anarita Jat? Anarita asked

"She's okay and so is the other Madia and Ellie," said a voice from the doorway.

Brian whirled around still holding S'ena, "John my friend are we glad to see you."

"Prisoners released and transport waiting. Anyone want a lift on the old Rubber Duck?"

"We certainly do," laughed Dalen. "Lead on McDuff. We'll take the Intendant with us just to make sure we get off all right. Once we're out of firing range we'll beam her back to the station. Let's go home."

"I'm with you," said Leigh. "I'll be glad to let her go, she's a vicious bitch who deserves to die for what she has done. Still if we go back on our word that makes us no better than her,"

Jeanette came up to Madia and slapped her across the face. "I should kill you for what you put me through," she hissed. "But if I do we'll never get off of here. Be warned though, next time we meet you had better watch your back.

Madia looked at her steadily and then spat in her face. "I'm not afraid of any of you," she sneered. "You will all pay for this one way or another. As for you," she turned to David, "you had outlived your usefulness anyway. I was getting bored

with you. I was going to give you to K'iHQaS and b'Sel to play with. They will be sorry you have left."

"Enough of the pleasantries," said Dalen Varr, "let's get out of here before those two fine ladies turn up with some playmates. JB you and Jen take the lead, Christine you Anarita and S'ena next, then Leigh with our friend here and Brian you and I will bring up the rear. Right let's move out. You," he turned to Kane, "sit down over there and keep quiet and I might allow you to live."

Kane glared at him but realising the futility of his position did as he was told.

JB and Jen set off, followed by the others. As they rounded a corner a beam of disrupter fire shot past them. They quickly ducked back ramming into the others who were following them.

"Damn!" swore JB "looks like we've got company.

"Rebel Petaq" came a gruff voice, "put down your weapons. You cannot escape."

"That sounds like K'iHQaS and I bet the butcher is with her." Said Anarita. "We can't give up or we will all end up being tortured by b'Sel or Kane. Better to kill ourselves than that."

"No one is giving in or being tortured," replied Dalen Varr. "We will just have to keep them off while I think of a plan."

As they huddled together to avoid the disrupter rifles of the Klingon women and their crew Dalen came to the front of the group and shouted;

"We have your Intendant here and any firing may cause her injury. Do you want to risk her anger or that of Kane?"

"Don't mm" said Madia in a muffled voice as Leigh put his hand over her mouth.

"Naughty naughty" he whispered "we don't want to give them the wrong idea do we?"

Around the corner they could hear the whispered conversation of the Alliance troops.

"That's given them something to think about," said JB. Just then they heard the whine of phaser rifles coming from behind the Alliance. Then silence. Dalen poked his head cautiously around the corner. Lying on the ground were K'iHQaS, b'Sel and four more Klingons. Standing over them with a grin on his face was a dark-haired Terran and behind him was a giant of a man tying up the Klingons

"Dalen Varr I presume?" He said still grinning, "Steve Wood at your service and this is Chewie. You released some of our friends from ore processing and they said you might need some help to get all your party off safely, So Chewie and I decided to do a little recce and here we are."

"Well we're certainly glad you did, it was getting a bit too hot for comfort with that lot around the corner. I take it as you are tying them up they're not dead."

"No we decided to set the phasers on stun in case any of you got in the way. We have a transport ship waiting to take you off and my men have secured the corridors. You'd still better bring the Intendant along as security. Strange I thought she'd be taller for some reason."

They set off along the corridor intrigued by this laughing man and his giant friend. Leigh held tightly onto Madia as he half dragged her along with him.

"One day you'll be sorry," she spat at him.

"You've got to catch me first and I'm really not frightened of you."

As they made their way through the station a beam of sparkling light enveloped Leigh and Madia. Those in front whirled round but they were gone.

"Damn Kane must have got the transporter system back on line. Let's get to the shuttle bay and we'll decide what to do about Leigh then." As they entered the shuttle bay they found Kane, Madia and Barella El waiting for them. Leigh was

being held fast by two Cardassian guards. His face was bleeding and he sagged limply between them.

“Well, well it seems as though the tables have turned,” said Madia, “we can do this the hard way or the easy way.”

“And the choices are? Asked Dalen.

“You try to rescue him,” she nodded at Leigh “You all die. I keep him and the rest of you go free. I should keep Anarita but she’s becoming far too much trouble. So what’s it to be. All for one or one for all. Quite simple really. Don’t worry he won’t die, not for a very long time. I have plans for him and between Kane and b’Sel I’m sure he’ll wish he were dead.” She went over to Leigh and raised his head by the hair. He looked at her through pain filled eyes.

“I’m still not frightened of you,” he whispered hoarsely. He looked at the group of rebels, “Just go while you can. You’re no good dead. I can handle her she’s just a one finger pushover.”

Madia raised her hand and gave Leigh a hard slap across the face and then ran her fingers down his chest. Rivulets of blood mingled with the dust and sweat. He tried to grin. “Just go, please”

Dalen shook his head in sorrow, “Farewell my friend, we won’t forget you, We will see you again I’m sure.” He turned to Steve, I believe you have a ship waiting? Let’s get boarded. Would you like to show us the way? Jen you and Christine follow then Anarita and S’ena. Brian and JB next and I’ll come with Chewie. The rebels walked away, the girls with tears in their eyes as they looked back at Leigh. He painfully raised his head and gave them a weak grin.

“Bye see you around.”

The transporter set course for the rebel base. They had rescued nearly all the prisoners plus the two from the alternate universe but was the price they paid too high?

THE END