

# The Eye in Team

By Robert Lydford

## Prologue

The Planet Qo'noS, (Or Kronos, as it's more often called by non Klingon Speakers.) The Homeworld of the Klingon people, seat of power of the mighty Klingon Empire, and the location of the First City.

To the west of the High Council building, in the Kleq'a sector is an unassuming, but often crowded bar, a meeting place of warriors, looking to de-stress after a hard day in the nations capital. A place to drink, to gamble, to socialize, a place where stories are told and past glories relived. There's a door at the back of the bar, it needs a swipe card to enter. It's a private



bar, or at least that's what they say.

**It's not.**

It's the entrance to one of the Empire's best-kept secrets. It's one of the entrances to an underground world, the shady, and dangerous world of Imperial Intelligence. It's said to be almost the size of a small town; they say it's been there for years, quietly training the Empire's best spies and Assassins.

The Bar is just off Shield Street, about halfway down. It's called Jaq's.

Or at least, it was, or may have been. Some say there was a door there behind the bar somewhere, once upon a time. I wouldn't go looking for it. It's probably not there anymore. Perhaps it never was. But that's the world of espionage for you.

# KA-BOOOOM!!!!



A near deafening thunderous explosion shatters the stillness, of the late afternoon. The black and choking smoke bellows from the rubble of the bar, the acrid hot, fetid and pungent blackness that seems to engulf everything. The Screaming and the cries of the wounded, stumbling out, half blind, choking, as they pulled themselves out into the siren filled streets, tripping over the scarred, bloody and burned bodies of the dead and the dying, tripping over the groaning figures of the injured, and those who would never cry again. Drawn on a nearby wall, was a crudely spray-painted eye that seemed to reflect a hand, holding aloft a bat'leth. It's the symbol of the Klingon Empire's most dangerous terrorist organisation, the Eye of Kahless. A group opposed to the Empire's High Council, a group that wants nothing short of the Empire returning to the old ways, a group which hates the fact the Empire has made peace with the Federation, almost as much as it hates the fact that the Empire is now offering the proverbial olive branch to their one time most hated enemy the Romulans.

A young woman kneels in the street, coughing hard and holding her chest. Her breathing is ragged; blood is trickling down her softly ridged face, drawing a wet line through the streaks of soot and ash, which have almost marred the beauty of a faint Trill pattern along the edges of her brow and cheeks. Her name is K'tuluH. She's the adopted daughter of Ambassador Ke'reth, the actual daughter of his mirror universe

counterpart, the monstrous madman known as Kane.

She half stumbles, half crawls to an alcove and pushes a metal card into a slot in the wall. A series of Klingon symbols appear on a view screen, followed by line upon line of Klingon text in blood red upon a black screen. She tapped the touch screen. The symbol for the Bureau of Off-world communications appeared. There was wetness just beneath her right breast; from the pain, she somehow knew that at least one of her ribs was broken. The loss of blood was beginning to make her feel dizzy, and a little sick. From above her came the whine of engines, as the numerous emergency landing craft started to arrive, as their medical personnel were beamed down around her, as other hovering vehicles moved in, spraying the entire area with a dense white fire suppressant foam.

The symbol lit up again, as a female voice answered her. 'Give your required destination!' It asked. She spat out a little blood, not a good sign. She thought 'Klingon Embassy, Starbase 410, Ambassador Ke'reth zantai Makura!' She gasped, as a small tear ran down her cheek. 'Connecting you.' Came a voice through the Com-panel. She gulped as the sickening smell of burnt flesh assailed her nostrils, tightening her throat, making her gag.

Aboard the Starbase, Ambassador Ke'reth watched as a number blue robed reptilian Zhe'ri left the room. It had been a quite profitable morning. He nodded to the Ferengi accountant, in the Makura Clan's employment, who stood beside him wearing a red Klingon style robe with gold Trifoils holding a chain of office at his throat. 'A profitable morning, hey Nuk?' The Ferengi smiled as Ke'reth handed him two slips of Latinum. Stamped with Klingon Trifoils. 'Definitely Ambassador, If the Empire is as pleased as I, Then your people will

honour you.' Ke'reth smiled at the Ferengi, as the alien picked up his ledger padds and walked slowly backwards towards the doors, as Kana entered the room. 'I don't know how you can trust that, little-.' She said as the doors closed. 'I always think he's looking at me, and not in a good way.' Ke'reth gestured her towards a chair; she strolled in, and sat instead on the corner of his desk. 'Many of the best Klingon Families use Ferengi accountants these days.' He explained with a smile, as he held her hand for a moment. The moment was broken as De'laH the Green tinged Holographic face of both the Embassy and the IKV Proud Vengeance, appeared above the desk between them.

'Urgent message from Kronos, It's your daughter ambassador.' Ke'reth sat forward, maybe sensing danger. K'tuluH's voice came through audio only. 'Father I need your help, there's been an explosion here on Kronos, The place is going crazy.'  
'Are you hurt?' He asked.  
'Not really.' She lied, as she tried to fend off an overzealous medic. 'A few cuts and bruises. They've attacked Imperial Intelligence Headquarters, someone has dropped Jaq's bar right in on top of it. There are dead people everywhere.' Some survivors are already saying it's the eye of Kahless separatists, mad at having a Romulan peace envoy and his team on Kronos. The High Council has already declared a state of emergency. I had to use my Imperial Intelligence warrant card, just to get an off-world satellite com-link.'  
Ke'reth wrote on a padd, and pushed it towards Kana, who read the words scrawled there. '*Get the Vengeance ready.*' She nodded. It was as she turned to leave. That he spoke again. 'And find K'Taal, if he's not in one of the stations bars, or the Casino, check the Holo-suites, then the free-trade deck, in that order.' He then spoke into the desk microphone. 'Standby K'tuluH, I'm on my way. Don't tell

anyone I'm coming, I'll be there; within an hour or so. I'll find you!

The sound of the running of heavy boots filled the Starbases corridors as Klingons queued in the stations Transporter-rooms to be transported across to the Proud Vengeance. An alarm sounded within the Targ-pit, (the Station's Klingon bar.) As a voice recalled the crew of the Proud Vengeance to their duty stations, All over the station, warriors answered their communicators before dropping everything.

Captain Steven Woods sat in the Stations Command and Control Centre, as a Bolian Ensign called to him. 'Sir, we've got a lot of activity around the Vengeance.' Captain Woods stood up.

'Keep an eye on it Ensign Xima.' He said as he speed read the screen over her shoulder. He then tapped the silver and gold pin on his chest. Admiral, I've had several reports coming in, of the Klingons acting strangely, well; more strangely than usual.' He added.. 'It seems the Proud Vengeance has recalled its crew, from the station.' Admiral Anarita Jat tapped her screen. 'I think I may know why! I'm getting early reports from Starfleet Intelligence of a Terrorist attack on the First City, less than hour ago.'

'Surely not!' Steven exclaimed.

'It seems, that someone there has already contacted Ke'reth about it.' Anarita said calmly. 'Until we know what's happening Steven, have the other vessels in the area, warned to stay back from the Proud Vengeance. Then clear it for Kronos departure from this sector, as soon as its ready!'

'Aye Sir!' He sighed.

Kana ran down the stations corridor until she found herself outside the Free-trade centre, and eased her way in. After a few minutes searching she saw K'Taal briefly through the jostling crowd. He must have been dealing, as his hands were around the neck of a

Doptarian scrap metal Trader. 'Didn't you hear the recall?' She asked, above the voices of the surrounding dealers, as she came up beside him. 'I can hardly hear you!' He said, without taking either his hands or eyes from his struggling prisoner.' With difficulty she managed to prise K'Taal's right hand loose, as the Doptarian squeezed from his grasp, and ran from the room like a scolded cat. 'You really know how to spoil a guy's fun.' He snarled playfully. She fixed him with her number two stare. His manner changed. 'This is serious isn't it?' He asked, as he moved to leave the room with her. As they made it into the relative quiet of the corridor. She nodded. 'Someone has blown up a street in the First City.' A look of concern passed within his eyes. 'Many dead?' He asked, as they moved quickly towards a turbo-lift. She shook her head. 'I'm not sure!' She said, Ke'reth got the call from Imperial Intelligence.' She said, as the doors closed she tapped her Sleeve pin. 'Two to beam to the Vengeances bridge, Immediate!' They faded away as K'Taal yelled. 'I can't go back, and get involved-' His words faded as the Transporter beam took them. 'I'm still wanted on several outstanding warrants.' He continued as they arrived on the bridge. She shook her head. 'It's okay Ke'reth had your outstanding Warrants quashed when you first signed aboard the Vengeance.' K'Taal looked shocked. 'He never told me that he could do that.' She smiled. 'He had to call in several favours to do it, you owe him big.', She laughed, as Ke'reth ordered them to take their places, as he stepped down on to the lower level of the bridge, and rested his right hand on the console; He then tapped the ship-wide intercom switch. 'This is your General speaking, all hands be aware that we are going to Black alert, in one minute.' Black alert; was the signal that Ke'reth had assigned to warn the Proud Vengeance's crew of going into Trans-warp, due to the fact that every external scanner on the ship would

register only blackness and that the computers would show erroneous ship-wide readings that the ship was stationary.

There was a shudder as the Imperial Privateer Vessel Proud Vengeance Went to warp, Kana watched as the power levels climbed higher and higher; as she watched the power levels peak, she tapped a red lit panel; and everything on the screen before them went black.

Minutes later, Ke'reth ordered his ship to drop out of Transwarp just outside the Kronos defence perimeter, for a brief moment the Proud Vengeance shimmered green as it slipped silently under the invisibility of its cloaking device, after emerging from Transwarp.

'Ke'reth stood up, and pausing briefly to check the tactical screen, as he walked slowly across the bridge to his ready room. Once there, he contacted His onetime spymaster Arizhel.' She hid her surprise, at his communiqué with all the skill of a consummate poker player. 'Good afternoon Ambassador.' she said. 'What brings you home?

'A family matter.' He said.

'But first I need to contact Imperial Intelligence.'

'I'd like to help you, but I've retired' She said. He nodded.

'I heard that you were now the Special Security Advisor to the High Council.' Surely that's a sideways step, not a backwards one. She hid well, any irritation that she felt.

He risked showing his hand. 'I know about the Eye of Kahless.' He said. 'That's not really your concern Ambassador.' He felt his anger rise. 'With all due respect, when it involves my daughter, it is my business.' 'Your adopted daughter.' She corrected him. 'Her flesh and blood are mine, and her calling me father. Well, that makes me her father!'

'As you wish!' She conceded. 'It's actually quite fortuitous that you are here. I'd like you to help me investigate the explosion. Unofficially of course!' Ke'reth smiled. At her words.

'Your own men not up to the job?'

'She was still hiding her annoyance well. She softened her voice. 'I have over 250 agents dead, and more than 160 as yet, unaccounted for. We're not yet back up to full strength. **And between you and I!**' She overemphasized her words, for effect. Ke'reth nodded. 'I think that the Eye of Kahless terrorist group has at least one agent within Imperial Intelligence. They seem to be far too well informed, for my liking. I'm no longer sure exactly who I can trust.' She continued.

'I'll start by talking with my daughter, she may have seen something.'

In a darkened room, a tall thin grey-haired warrior addressed a room full of old men. 'So the die has been cast?' He announced raising his hands, as he turned his back upon the men, and appeared to venerate an Ancient bat'leth, mounted upon wooden blocks upon an altar, with a painted red back cloth depicting an all seeing eye. 'We are growing in number, the Empire shall be reborn from the fires of it's own destruction.' Some of the men cheered others looked a little worried. 'No Federation, No Stinking Romulans. We shall be warriors again!'

'G'bahk for Chancellor!' one man yelled out, other chorused this new idea. 'In time Brother Rah'kl, all in good time.'

'Oh, Ambassador.' Arizhel continued. 'We've located your Daughter for you; she's injured but alive; she's currently aboard a secure medical vessel the 'Iw Hov (Blood-Star) in cloaked geostationary orbit. I'll tell them your coming; then when I've finished up here, I'll meet you there.'

Half an hour later, aboard the medical vessel, Ke'reth walked into a small room where a grey-haired doctor was administering a medical drip to his daughter. She smiled, as she saw him, and tried to rise but the forcefield above her chest held her down.

K'tuluH smiled as Ke'reth held her hand and wiped her brow. Are you strong enough to tell me what happened?' She nodded.

'I suppose, that I should start from the beginning. As you know, It's been almost a year, now, since I decided to enrol in the Klingon Naval academy. It was a couple of weeks after my first assessment, that a man came to see me his name was G'bahk.' Ke'reth nodded. 'That would be Commandant G'bahk, the recruiting/enrolment officer of Imperial Intelligence.'

'I didn't now that, until about a week later.' She said, he gave me a test. He then told me to watch one of my instructors; a woman called T'Gral.' She paused. 'Dad, I saw T'Gral leave the bar hurriedly by a side door only a few minutes before the explosion. I think she saw me.' It was as she spoke that a nurse entered the room, carrying a Hypospray. Ke'reth moved slowly to let the nurse through, and then moving swiftly he grabbed the woman's arm raising it first, high above her head, he then twisted it back behind her shoulder, holding her tightly at the wrist, as he struck her hard in the small of the back, sending her to the ground, startling all those present. She yelled out in pain as he twisted the Hypospray from her grip. 'You forgot to sterilise your hands!' He snarled. She cursed at him loudly, as Ke'reth picked up a nearby Medical Tricorder, with his right hand, and smiled as he pulled his pistol on the fallen nurse with his left. 'Doctor.' He said, to the startled medic. 'Would you get Security in here for me? This is a Blayosine tri-oxide compound. A fast acting neural toxin.'

He waited as an alarm went off to summon help, K'tuluH looked startled. 'Was she going to try and kill me?' Ke'reth nodded. 'How did you know?' She asked. He gave her the slightest grin.

'In her eagerness to follow out her instructions, she gave herself away; she should have used the hand steriliser beside the bed before approaching the patient, and two; I noticed that her Hypospray already had a vial in it, when she entered the room.'

'I'm glad that you have good eyes' K'tuluH grinned.

At this point the Doctor came back into the room with a two-man security team in tow. 'Your father is right' He said. 'She should have taken her phial from the medical replicator beside your bed. That way the computer can log each dose of medication, given to the patient.'

'Not to mention, that I was expecting an attack.' Ke'reth said. She looked up, at him. 'Arizhel mentioned that she thought that they might have been a surviving witness or two that may have seen something. I'm afraid my arrival may have put you at risk.' She sat there stunned. As Ke'reth gave her a knowing look. 'I also had the Proud Vengeance; monitor all transmissions to this ship from the surface. A few minutes after I beamed aboard, I received news that a tight beam transmission had been sent to the nurses quarters from the surface.' He said pulling a tiny micro-communicator from his ear.

Arizhel entered the sickbay, just in time to see the nurse dragged from the room. 'I'm glad to see that you haven't lost your touch Ambassador.' He smiled. 'Not when it comes to my family.' He said, as he turned to the doctor. 'No disrespect Doctor. But, I want my daughter moved to the Vengeance, where I can have her watched by people that I trust.' The

Doctor nodded. 'I'll have her stabilised for transport.'

Two days passed as Ke'reth worked with the Forensic clean-up crew, while following the scant few leads that Arizhel had given him. He tightened his long black leather coat to protect himself against the winter chill that he felt, as he strolled down a dark alley. He then tapped his sleeve. 'Ke'reth to Vengeance, one to beam up.'

K'tuluH was sitting up; when he returned; she gave him a hug as Doctor Korl stepped back, as he spoke. 'Her lung has been repaired, and her broken rib has been set, though I'd go lightly on any strenuous exercise for the next few days.' He said, as helped her from the bed. 'I've prepared a mild painkiller.' He said as he handed her a Hypospray. 'The rest of the injuries, minor cuts and bruises, I'll let them heal by themselves.'

It was almost an hour later in Ke'reth's office, when K'Taal entered the room. 'What a mess, down there!' he said, Ke'reth nodded. 'You've seen it first hand?' K'Taal nodded. 'Seen it, collected evidence, and found out that it was a very professional job.'

'I expected nothing less.' Ke'reth said. K'Taal smiled. 'This is where it gets interesting.' K'Taal continued, dropping a padd on Ke'reth's desk. 'There were multiple explosions, not just one; and I've traced the explosives to a batch that went missing from a mining settlement in the Ketha province, two months ago. It was a series of foam Drokite charges. I've also got several bits of what Kana thinks are parts from the timing devices. Or at least what's left of them.' Ke'reth patted him on the back. 'Good work K'Taal!' K'Taal smiled. 'No need for thanks, I have my own reasons, for wanting the bombers caught!' K'Taal said, with a Grin. 'I'm told, That used to be a damn fine bar a few years back.'

Ke'reth tapped a screen. Then I have another little job for you.' K'Taal stopped and turned, leaning on his cane. 'What?'

'That's not the only explosive that's gone missing lately.' K'Taal's eyes widened slightly, as he stepped forward, towards the computer on Ke'reth's desk. 'An armoury was raided a couple weeks ago.' Ke'reth explained. 'Two large Tri-cobalt devices were stolen.' K'Taal shook his head. 'Bloody careless that! There's enough bang there to level a city block.'

Two men talk conspiratorially, within a side room off the main High Council building, one is G'bahk, the other younger man is Rah'kl. 'What of T'Gral?' The younger man asked. 'She's an idealist, easy to manipulate, we'll keep her alive while she serves the Eye.' The younger man scratched his beard. 'I've heard that there are strangers here, putting their noses in where they're not wanted, asking questions. One of them was here yesterday, no one recognised him, he walks with a stick.' The older man Nodded. 'Then use your Imperial Intelligence contacts, and remove him from the game, likewise any other others who arrive!' The man nodded. 'It shall be done!'

Aboard the Vengeance. 'I want you to find these explosive devices.' K'Taal shook his head. 'I don't have much in the way of contacts here.'

'Then make some!'

'I'm fishing without a rod down there.' K'Taal explained. Ke'reth put a case on the desk before him. K'Taal smiled at the Imperial Treasury tags on the case. 'Then you'll need some bait.' He said continuing the metaphor. This Latinum should help you make some new friends.' K'Taal nodded, as he reached out for the case, as Ke'reth caught his hand. 'Be careful!'

'Like you.' K'Taal said. 'I was born careful. I'll see what I can find out for

you; I'm in the mood for a Bloodwine or two.'

After drinking at several bars, and talking with both soldiers and civilian passers-by, K'Taal left the bar and turned a corner and walked along a row of shop fronts, just off a side street near Empire Square, and stopped, leaning on his cane as he watched the reflection of three men, in a shop window, three men, who seemed to be taking an undue interest in him. Years of living in the jungle had given him almost a sixth sense. He'd learned to know when he was hunting, and when he was being hunted. And this was definitely the latter. He started to walk on, leaning heavily on his stick. Some animals liked to feign weakness around predators. In fact K'Taal's walking stick was as much an extension of his fist, as an aid to mobility. As he walked, a man stepped out before him barring his way. 'You talk too much!' The First man snarled K'Taal turned slowly knowing the other three would now be behind him. A voice from behind snarled as he was pushed in the back. 'Asking questions is going to get you hurt!' Another warrior was wrapping a length of chain around his fist. 'Time to teach you a lesson.' K'Taal smiled as waited for their first move. The warrior swung for K'Taal's stomach, K'Taal moved at the last second side stepping the blow and slamming the man's chain wrapped arm upwards with his cane, so it connected with face of his first assailant. He'd brought himself some time as he elbowed a man in the throat, as he stepped backwards stunning him with a short jab. He then turned to a man who was pulling his knife. K'Taal brought his cane down on the man's wrist, probably breaking the thug's wrist, from his reaction. He heard the first man curse him as he wiped the blood from his face. 'You're going to pay for that!' He snarled. 'Sure!' K'Taal snapped remembering the case of Latinum, that he'd been buying friends with. He blocked a

knife-blow from one of the men, as he swung the case up impacting the first man's head with a satisfying crunch. 'I love hard currency!' K'Taal quipped through gritted teeth as he pushed a switch forward with his thumb, as a razor edged six inch blade extended from his walking cane. Within seconds two of the men were dead, a third nursed a broken wrist and the fourth was unconscious from being hit with a treasury case. K'Taal whirled around and placed the tip of his blade against the man's throat, as he nursed his broken wrist. 'You were going to teach me a lesson?' K'Taal asked sarcastically. 'I'd settle for a few names, like who hired you?' The man gasped as he twitched, his eyes widened. Poison K'Taal thought as he retracted his blade. 'K'Taal to Vengeance, I need a clean up crew down here, three bodies, to dispose of, and one injured and myself to beam direct to Med-lab one'

Meanwhile Kana And KIHQaS drove Ke'reth's black custom built hover-car through the lower levels of old city. Over the years the sprawling First City had been built and rebuilt, usually new on top of old. As those who could afford it moved ever upwards into the green and glass luxury of the armoured high-rise towers. Down here where the empire's forgotten; old men told stories to buy alcohol and drugs to alleviate their pains, and women sold what they could to get by, often selling themselves into the bargain. Years of smog and industrial waste had smeared the walls black. But people still lived and worked here.

KIHQaS drove, as Kana watched the screens set within the dashboard for traces of Trilithium that may give them a clue to the Bombs whereabouts.

'Slow down!' Kana snapped as she saw a blip on the screen. KIHQaS throttled back. 'What?' 'Faint traces of Trilithium; I doubt even K'Taal's sensors on the Vengeance

could pick up traces this small from orbit.' Kana said, as the car slowed to a stop, as faces watched them like rats in a lab expecting a meal. 'It's due to the background radiation down here.' She explained. KIHQaS touched the screen. 'That's not our bomb!' KIHQaS said. 'The signal is no-way large enough for a bomb, take it from a Tactical officer, there's not enough bang down here for a grenade.'

'Kana to Vengeance, no luck down here, has K'Taal reported back yet?' 'Ke'reth took the microphone from the communications officer.' He arrived about five minutes ago, he brought back a prisoner.'

'A prisoner?' Kana asked 'Apparently he upset someone.' Kana smiled. 'K'Taal upset someone; surely not.' She jested. 'Is he okay?' She asked.

'K'Taal is fine; I can't say the same for the prisoner. K'Taal was all for having him placed in an Agonizer booth.' Ke'reth replied. 'I'm going to see that he doesn't attempt to skin him, or get creative, and try something worse.' Kana looked a little put out by Ke'reth's remark.

'That sounds like K'Taal!' She sighed.

'Ke'reth, we're getting nothing but admiring glances for your car down here, permission to move to the next sector?' She heard Ke'reth sigh, as she spoke.

'You won't get anywhere near the lower levels of that part of town. Ke'reth said, They were forcibly cleared out years ago. Nothing but motion sensors and automated security drones down there.' The Security is even tighter with our Romulan guests in the top three floors of the Empire Plaza Hotel. Move up to street level, and I'll see if Arizhel can clear your Admission into the secure area. You'll be entering the city by the Cho'graD expressway.'

K'Taal had ordered the man stripped and scanned, before having him dress in the formfitting grey prison style pocket-less jumpsuit, with its red and amber chevron piped sleeves and trouser legs. The man was then strapped to a medical examination chair. The Prisoner was still sore from having a tooth forcibly extracted without anaesthetic by K'Taal, after checking for, and finding a small poison cap set within its crown. 'I'm not happy with you!' K'Taal said turning the chair to face him. 'You don't seem to remember who hired you.' The man looked nervous. 'I know that you're Imperial Intelligence, because of this.' He said picking up a bloody tooth from a surgical tray with a pair of dental pliers. 'I want the name of your handler, now spill it, or I spill you, all over this nice clean room!' The man looked un-phased, by the threat. Imperial Intelligence Agents were near impossible to crack with threats and torture, and K'Taal knew it. So he spun the chair to face the viewing window within the interrogation suite. The lights came on behind the glass revealing Ke'reth and Arizhel.

In the streets below. KIHQaS pulled back on the flight yoke as the car slowly rose into the air. She then tapped the throttle switch with her thumb and turned for the tunnel that would take them to the heart of the city.

The Cho'graD expressway was a ten kilometre long armoured tunnel that had been cleared by Imperial Intelligence. 'We'll be at the tunnel in 20 minutes at current speed.' Kana said.

They hadn't gone far when a blast of energy tore past them. 'I thought Ke'reth had squared things with Arizhel.' Kana said as the car rocked. KIHQaS lent over and ran her hand over a series of switches. 'Those are defence security drones, and if I know Ke'reth there's got to be weapons on this thing, somewhere.' Kana lent over

and slid back a panel between the seats; I've found the weapons control panel. She said, As the car banked hard to port. Kana pushed a button. There was a flash behind them as the first drone was blown to smithereens by a threat aware self-targeting air-to-air missile. KIHQaS grinned. 'Nice shot, You got anything else there?' She asked, as the car was rocked by another blast on its rear shield. Kana looked back as a pair of barrels mounted on a small domed turret rose up behind them, and raked the second attacker, causing it to clip the side of a nearby tower. KIHQaS glanced back as an armoured street interceptor pulled in behind them, all guns blazing. Kana jumped as an audio warning told her that her shields were losing power. 'Get us to that tunnel, or we're going to be aerial Sushi up here!' KIHQaS turned abruptly as a second armoured interceptor joined the fray. 'Ever get the feeling that they're not our escort to the capital?' KIHQaS joked.

'Well they're certainly not the welcome wagon.' Kana replied through gritted teeth.

'That's for sure!' KIHQaS said, as she barrel-rolled the hover-car and entered the tunnel inverted as Kana studied the panel beside her; luckily for them, she was a fast study. An explosion almost slammed them into the wall of the tunnel. Kana tapped a pale blue switch as the rear licence plate lowered to reveal three launch tubes. She pushed the first switch as dense black smoke bellowed from the rear of the car, filling the tunnel. Another switch fired an sticky oily liquid under great pressure into the air behind them smattering the windshield of the perusing vehicle, causing it to careen out of control before clipping a column supporting an internal sensor dome. There was a loud bang as a huge fireball ignited, as the flames seemed to chase them down the tunnel. KIHQaS opened up full throttle as the car shot upwards as it cleared the tunnel narrowly avoiding the flames. 'I don't think, we should tell Imperial Intelligence what we're up to

from now on.' KIHQaS said; Kana nodded. 'With you on that!' Kana replied.

Ke'reth paced the Bridge, before tapping a panel on the wall, a dark silver coloured pedestal rose up from the floor, before opening to release a rifle. Ke'reth slipped its strap over his black armour. It was time to take the battle to the enemy.

K'Taal threw his prisoner into the holding cell. 'A traitor's death awaits you; be thankful, that you weren't left to me!' He said curtly, as steel doors slid silently closed between them.

Ke'reth had returned to the bridge a few minutes after the prisoner had given him a name. KaziaH, a name that made even Ke'reth shudder. The KaziaH was a blood red creature similar to a Terran Scorpion; only the KaziaH had twin tails, each tipped with deadly sting. It was also the name Imperial Intelligence had given to a woman who years before had almost killed him, a woman known as Scarletta the scorpion. She was a professional mercenary, and a deadly assassin.

K'Taal entered the Transporter room a few minutes behind Ke'reth. His eyes were downcast as he was checking his dragon-headed disruptor, as he walked. It was as they prepared to leave, that K'tuluH entered the room dressed in form fitting black armour. 'Thanks for waiting for me!' She said. Ke'reth stepped towards her, raising his hands. 'No way!' He snapped.

'These people tried to kill me father, I want revenge!' She looked angry, but kept her tone respectful. Ke'reth rubbed his ridged brow. 'I don't want to lose you.' She touched his face. 'I don't want to lose you either Father!' But there's a job that has to be done. And Arizhel said that this will be a great learning experience for me.' Ke'reth shook his head at his daughter's words. 'Thanks Arizhel!' He said almost under his breath. 'Throw a child

in at the deep end! She looked into his eyes. 'I'm not a child anymore daddy. I need to do this, to face my enemies! It's the Klingon way.' K'Taal snorted. 'Girl's got a point!' K'Taal said, as he programmed the Transporter coordinates. Ke'reth turned to face him. K'Taal grinned as he handed her a pistol from a nearby armoury locker recessed within the wall. Ke'reth took his daughter by the shoulders. 'Down there you're a soldier; you stick close, and you follow orders, is that understood?' She nodded, as Ke'reth turned to K'Taal. 'That goes for you too!' K'Taal gave him his best mockingly innocent "who me" grin?

l'Sar and her troops moved into the labyrinthine network of tunnels that threaded their way under the First City. Behind her were thirty hooded warriors dressed alike in black armour, each had a dagger at his hip and black Bat'leth strung across his back. Black-Dagger troopers rarely spoke during missions, relying instead on hand gestures, and fingertip sign language. She removed a padd showing the system of tunnels and paired her men off, to carry the mobile shield generators into position' other teams would also be searching and sealing the tunnels.

After ditching the pursuing drones KIHQaS swung low between two towers, and slowed to a crawl, as Kana set the cars scanners to maximum range. 'I don't believe it.' She said after about an hour of scanning below the streets of the First City. 'What?' KIHQaS asked.

Kana tapped her screen, I have a Tri-cobalt signature, almost two clicks from here.' Kana tapped a switch.

'Eye in the sky to ground units, I'm sending you a Tri-cobalt signature for you to investigate.'

l'Sar knelt down to take her call. 'Where?' She asked.

'Ahead of you and to your right at about thirty degrees, you're about five clicks from it.'

'Understood! I'Sar out!'

Meanwhile elsewhere in the City, Ke'reth looked around for hard cover as they arrived. K'Taal and K'tuluH moved in behind him. 'Seen something?' K'Taal asked. Ke'reth nodded, lowering his voice. This area should have been cleared by now. But I'm sure I saw someone.' K'Taal pulled his pistol.

'You sure it wasn't a Security Officer?' Ke'reth shook his head.

'I ordered this area cleared!'

'You can do that?' K'Taal asked.

'Ke'reth nodded.'

It was as they approached the place where Ke'reth thought he had seen a figure; that a shot missed him by millimetres, any closer and it would have singed his hair. With a thought, Ke'reth set his electronic eyes scanner to a thermal imaging setting. K'tuluH knelt beside him. 'What!' she asked. Ke'reth pointed with the end of his disruptor to an alcove set within the wall ahead of them. 'K'Taal, use one of your flash bombs, see if you can pitch it into that alcove. K'Taal grinned as he removed a black ball shaped grenade from his belt, and twisted its setting dial to arm it. 'Come out, come out wherever you are!' He said under his breath as he pitched the grenade over arm into the alcove ahead of them. Seconds later, there was a flash and the alcove filled with black smoke sending a figure sprawling into the street

As Ke'reth rescanned the street, he gestured for K'Taal to advance, on the prostrate figure. 'Hello!' K'Taal said cruelly, as he kicked the man in the ribs, none too softly. 'That's Ke'reth, I'm K'Taal.' He said gesturing behind him with his thumb. 'and you're in the brown-stuff up to your ridges.'

K'taal jumped, as Ke'reth opened fire with his rifle on a second fleeing figure, bringing him down with a single shot.

On the other side of the City, Kana approached a guard post on foot. The Guard smiled. 'Ke'reth sent you?' He asked looking back at the hover-car. She Nodded. 'Thank Kahless!' The man exclaimed. 'Since the explosion, things have going to Gre'thor in a blood-wine barrel around here.' Kana smiled as KIHQaS arrived beside them. 'We need to get to the Romulan Delegates.' KIHQaS said. The man's eyes narrowed. I'm afraid that's not going to happen.' The man said pulling his gun on her, as he twitched. and fell to the floor. KIHQaS smiled, as she glanced at Kana who was holding the rubber housing of a severed power-feed cable. 'Oops!' Kana said, with smile. 'Shocking!' KIHQaS grinned, at Kana's words. 'That had to hurt!' Kana dropped the cable. 'I'm sure it did. Just goes to show, that you should never turn your back on an engineer.' Kana said, as she knelt down and checked the man's life signs. 'He'll live.'

'What gave him away?'

'Ke'reth gave us clearance, he didn't say that we'd be met, and this communications array was pretty savagely unplugged before we arrived. She said gesturing to the severed cable, my guess, is that the guard was taken care of, before we arrived.' KIHQaS smiled as Kana spoke. 'Well I reckon that explains the blood smear on the edge of that console.' Kana nodded.

As the last of the smoke cleared K'Taal had pulled the startled man to his feet and had him pinned to the wall. With the tip of the blade set within his walking cane at the man's throat. Ke'reth stepped forwards. 'What the gre'thor is going on?' He asked.

'I can't tell you anything!' The man said, appearing to shake visibly. K'Taal moved his blade closer to the man's throat so he could feel the point. 'Answer his question you Petaq, before

I cut you a new mouth, to speak out of.'

K'Taal jumped, as blast rang out, from somewhere over head and to their rear. The man's head was now, no more than a sticky smear of red coating the bricks. Ke'reth turned slowly around.

'SCARLETTA!!!!' Ke'reth yelled, turning slowly, hands hung limply at his sides, as he scanned the rooftops, as his voice echoed from building to building. A second blast hit the floor at his feet, kicking up the dust. As a Transporter shimmer caused them to turn, as a woman and three armed guards beamed in around them.

The Woman was beautiful tall, and athletically toned, her skin was pale by Klingon standards, and her hair was a shock of dyed scarlet. She watched them with her fathomless dark eyes. Ke'reth lowered his gun to his side and gestured for K'Taal to do the same. 'If she wanted to kill us, she'd have done it from the rooftop.' K'Taal nodded, Ke'reth's logic seemed almost Vulcan, as K'tuluH moved to stand beside him.

She approached Ke'reth. 'You've put on weight.' Ke'reth refused to rise to the bait. 'One too many diplomatic functions.' He replied. 'You still have your figure, a little older of course.' He retorted. She smiled. As she turned her back to him, K'Taal could now see the claws of a tattooed red scorpion on the pale skin between her shoulders under the low cut back of her sleeveless tunic. The symbol was also high on each of her forearms, and according to Ke'reth on the flat of her stomach too.

So KaziaH, What in the name of Empire, are you doing back on Kronos?' She smiled. At his question. 'And what are you doing with the Eye of Kahless? She looked around her. As she ran her hand down Ke'reth's cheek, he grabbed her hand. 'I've

become immune to your charms Scarletta. Answer my question?' She looked at him sadly. 'Would you believe me, if I told you that I was here to help you?' She batted her eyelids coquettishly 'I'm not sure I'd believe you, if you told me your hair was red.' Ke'reth said, as she smiled, with all the humour of a snake. Before turning on her heel, and shooting all three guards dead, with lethally precise ease. She blew theatrically across her pistols barrel, spun it forward and back in the manner of a gunslinger, then shrugged, as she holstered it. 'I'm a mercenary, not a religious fanatic.' K'Taal stepped forward. 'You don't trust her surely?' Ke'reth looked over to his daughter who was checking the bodies. Each had a single hole in his forehead. 'I'm not sure, after all, a few years back we were in bed together, when she planted a dagger in my shoulder. a little further down, and she'd have literally broken my heart.' Ke'reth joked. K'Taal moved towards Scarletta, 'Well, I know what I think.' K'Taal snarled. Scarletta smiled coquettishly at him. 'Well, who's this?' She tried her most seductive tone. 'Someone who's not buying what you're selling!' K'Taal snapped back. 'And before you ask, I don't intend to turn my back on you, for an instant.'

Beneath the City, a hail of Disruptor fire caused the Black dagger troops to drop to the ground, as they sought cover. L'Sar turned the barrel of her rifle, and kicking down a stack of wooden packing crates, probably discarded by those who'd built the bomb. The same crates, that she'd earlier taken cover behind, she now stood up, as she swept the room with a stream of fire. As smoke grenades spilled out into the room. Her troopers lowered their infra-red visors and moved in, on their enemies. A blast missed her by inches as she ducked before returning fire and blew the head clean off the nearest enemy soldier. l'Sar surveyed the room, more than 30 people were dead, including three of

her own men. There in the middle of the room was a Tri-cobalt bomb. 'Secure the room.' She said to a sergeant beside her.' He nodded and left. She tapped her sleeve. 'Ke'reth we have a bomb, singular here.'

Ke'reth stepped away from Scarletta as he took the call. 'Is it active?' He asked. L'Sar nodded, as she surveyed the weapon. 'Oh yes, Active and equipped with anti Transporter, and mercury switches. This things going to be hard to move. I need Kana here, perhaps even KIHQaS's knowledge of weapons. There's a couple of anti-tamper boxes bolted to the hull here, and lots of extra cabling inside and out.' As Ke'reth listened, his eyes never left Scarletta's. " He tapped his communicator. 'Kana!' He waited before his Chief Engineer answered. 'Here!'

'How far are you from l'Sar's position?' Kana checked her Tricorder. 'About twenty minutes, why.' She asked.

'l'Sar's unit has found one of the bombs, near the hotel, but it's bolted down, and needs your T.L.C, to disarm it's anti Transporter device, before we can shut it down.'

'Okay, Show us on-route, we've had a little problem of our own here.'

'You Okay?' He asked, She smiled.

'Nothing we couldn't handle, Kana Out.'

Scarletta stepped forwards. 'So your unit's on top of things?' Ke'reth fixed her with a distrusting look. 'You shouldn't listen to other peoples' conversations.' He said coldly. She put on a look of mock rebuke. 'Oh come on, if I took that advise, think of all the neat stuff that I'd miss.'

'I think, I should kill her here.' K'Taal said, stepping forward removing his Disruptor pistol. Scarletta moved her fingers as a tiny poisoned throwing blade fell into the palm of her hand, from a concealed sheath upon her wrist. Ke'reth looked hard at her. 'Put your toys away you two. If we're going

to work together, we're going to have to try and trust each other.'

'Are you crazy?' K'Taal snapped.

'Trust me on this.'

'Oh, I trust you, it's lady death here, I don't trust.' He retorted.

'Lady Death? Well that's a codename I never considered.'

'Lets get one thing straight here!' K'Taal snarled. She interrupted him. 'Whatever you plan on straightening, you better not point it at me, or I'll snap it off!.'

'Yeah! Which Imperial Charm school did you drop out off?'

'Bite me?' She snapped back.

'I would, but from what Ke'reth says you're probably poisonous.' Ke'reth sighed, audibly to show his irritation.

'Can we get going?' He inquired.

'Where?' Scarletta asked.

'I was hoping you were going to tell us that?' Ke'reth asked. She turned slowly to face them. 'Okay, cards on the table time, The Romulan Ambassador is my Son.' K'Taal blinked. 'Either that's Targ Sh-.' Ke'reth shot him a look, that interrupted him, causing K'Taal to change tact. 'Or she's older than she looks.' Ke'reth took a deep breath before he explained. 'She's a Klingon/Romulan Fusion.' K'Taal barely hid his disgust, he'd never yet found the need to like Romulans. Ke'reth turned to her. 'Romulus, so that's where you've been for the last 12 years?' She nodded. 'Yes, but I had my son Kadius more than 60 years ago, when I was still young. His father was a Romulan Senator. She pulled back her hair from her soft almost Romulan 'v' ridging, to reveal a slight point at the top of her ear. 'Romulan DNA Is great for keeping a girl looking young.'

'Imperial Intelligence had me kill Kadius's father. But I'm still a mother. Not a good one, granted but I'm still a mother. When Kadius came here for this peace conference, I realised most Klingons would be angry about his presence.' She paused. 'Just like

you're dagger happy friend over there. So I followed him to Kronos, to keep him safe.

'And the Eye of Kahless? Ke'reth asked. She rubbed her brow. I heard that they were out to start another Romulan war. They believe that the Romulan Senate is still relatively inexperienced, from the recent Reman incursion, and that their military is still weak from the Dominion War.' K'Taal glanced at K'tuluH as he sat down next to one of the bodies and absent-mindedly rummaged through the dead man's pockets. Her eyes widened. 'Force of Habit.' K'Taal explained with a shrug. 'Years of surviving, in a jungle, existing on what I could find, or steal.' She smiled.

'They're wrong of course!' Ke'reth turned back to Scarletta, from watching K'Taal. 'Wrong?' He asked. 'The Romulans committed less than a third of their fleet, to the Dominion war.' Ke'reth smiled. 'That makes sense, I suppose.' Scarletta put her hand out, palm up. Ke'reth took it.

'These are interesting times.' He said. She nodded, almost sadly. 'Let's go and save my son!' She said. He smiled, at her words. At last believing her. 'Let's go save an Empire or two!' Her grip tightened on his hand. She leant forward and kissed him on the cheek.

In an underground bunker nearby. G'bahk looked to Rah'kl. 'They've found the first bomb' Rah'kl said. 'Well need to move quickly.' G'bahk shook his head. 'It was to be expected.' Rah'kl looked somewhat shocked. 'We've informed the Romulans of an attempted attack, and moved them to a place of Safety.' The older man continued. 'Safety!'

'Well, relative safety, they'll be moved to the High Council building.' The younger man's eyes widened. 'You're going to destroy the High Council?'

'Ask a doctor, and he'll tell you this is true. There comes a time, when a limb is so riddled with disease, that a surgeon has no other option then to

remove it.' The younger man looked panicked.

'You can't do that! You'll kill thousands if you detonate a bomb there.' G'bahk smiled.

'And I shall return and demand vengeance on those who committed such an atrocity! Before using my command of Imperial Intelligence to take power.'

'The Romulans will declare war, for your murdering of their delegation.'

'Oh, I expect that, and under my new emergency powers, I'll declare myself Chancellor, and return the Empire to a time of Glory.'

'You're crazy!' The young man said. G'bahk turned slowly towards Rah'kl, his hand already on his Disruptor. 'They probably called Kahless crazy, when he opposed Molor.'

'You're not Kahless!'

'Oh come on, show a little faith.' He said, as he shot Rah'kl dead.

L'Sar looked up as Kana and KIHQaS entered the room. Kana moved straight to the bomb. Her hand already reaching for the contents of her tool-belt. KIHQaS knelt beside her. 'How bad is it?' Kana looked at her Tricorder, a bead of sweat collecting on her brow as she unscrewed a panel atop the bomb. She wiped it off with her sleeve. Placing her hands within the bomb, she pressed a concealed button raising the bombs diagnostic and arming computer.

Twenty almost unbearably tense minutes passed slowly, as Kana and KIHQaS, worked to disarm the bomb. As they worked, Kana withdrew the small purple bound, silver bladed dagger from a scabbard on her right boot and severed the cables, before throwing l'Sar the small console. 'Here Catch!' She called out. l'Sar caught it one handed with a look of irritation. 'Are you trying to get us all Killed?' Kana shook her head. 'This bombs a decoy!' Once you get past the wires and decoy fuses, there's not much here. l'Sar's brow furrowed as she

approached the bomb. 'What about the Tri-cobalt charge we detected?'

'Gone!' Kana replied. 'There's a residual trace of Tri-cobalt here, but it's not a bomb, in fact I think it's this Tricorder here inside the case which is transmitting false Tri-cobalt readings.' 'So where's the Bomb?' I'Sar asked. Kana shrugged her shoulders. 'Search me!' Kana said, taking a deep breath.

I'Sar gestured for her men to stand down. 'I'll contact Ke'reth.'

'Ke'reth from I'Sar, The first bombs a dud, Kana yanked the wires, and there's no Tri-cobalt. There's still a bomb out there somewhere.'

Ke'reth turned to Scarletta. 'Your next move?' He asked. She shrugged.

Ke'reth shook his head. 'It's time to ask for help.' He tapped his communicator. 'Arizhel I need your help.' She smiled. 'I no longer have the kind of powers you need.' Ke'reth smiled. 'But you must know where the Romulans are?' She lowered her voice conspiratorially. 'They've been moved to the Diplomatic levels beneath the High Council building, to await transportation off-world.' Ke'reth's eyes narrowed. 'I'm not sure that's wise.' She nodded. 'I spoke out against it too, but I was overruled by Security Adviser Ha'jah!' 'Ha'jah!' Ke'reth asked. 'Could he be involved.'

'Well of course he's involved. He's the brother of my successor at Imperial Intelligence, Colonel Khemor.' She said.

'I've backed you in the past. Ambassador, but I'm not sure you're right here.'

'Okay!' Ke'reth changed tact. 'Do you ever get the feeling that the Empire has just put all it's eggs in one basket?' She shook her head.

'They're not having the meeting in the High Council building here, they're moving the Entire meeting to the Security of Ty'Gokor.'

T'Gral Entered the hall of the House of G'bahk, about ten minutes brisk walk from the High Council building. 'You fool, coming here!' He snarled. 'Do you want to destroy all our plans.'

'The Plans have changed.' She said angrily. 'They've moved the whole event to Ty'Gokor!'

'Excellent!' He said, with a smile.

'So Predictable!' He snarled. 'I thought that they'd try that, that's why I always intended to attack them in space. I wouldn't risk blowing up my intended future seat of power, would I?'

'How can you know that you'll be within a position, to take power?' She asked. 'I intend to have my Promotion by tomorrow morning, I'll be the new head of Imperial Intelligence, after the death of my late predecessor.'

'Colonel Khemor is dead?' She asked. 'Oh yes, he will be very soon.' She hid her look of shock.

'You've had him killed?'

'Promotion by Assassination, isn't unheard of within the Empire.'

In an office, just across the road from the High Council building. Ke'reth picked up Colonel Khemor's, command cloak from the figure on the floor, as the dead man's eyes opened and he looked up. 'I owe you my life!' He gasped, as Ke'reth helped him to his feet.

'You owe your life to Kana, my Chief Engineer.'

'Then I'd like to thank your Kana for this, he said, playing with a tiny Borg built shield generator in the palm of his hand. 'You don't mind if I keep this?' He asked. Ke'reth closed the man's hand over it. 'With my Pleasure Colonel.'

'How did you know?' The Colonel asked. 'Deduction Colonel, You're an honourable man Khemor, therefore if you can't be bribed, then you're in the way.' The Colonel's eyes narrowed in rage.

'When I get my hands on that stinking G'bahk, I'll ring his cursed neck, and

kick his rotten backside straight through the gates of Gre'thor.'

Ke'reth smiled. 'You'll have to wait, this is the first time, since coming here, that I've been within in reach of G'bahk.'

'Well, if I can't have him. promise me this; that you'll kill him for me!' Ke'reth nodded.

'Scarletta I want you to take care of T'Gral, drug her; But I want her alive.' She nodded.

'It will be a pleasure.' She said stepping forward, and embraced him. 'You finally forgive me?' She asked. He nodded, with a smile. 'Yes!' He said. 'But, it will be a while before I take a scorpion to my bed again, let's just leave it at that.'

Aboard the Vengeance, Ke'reth ordered his ship cloaked and readied her for silent running.

'Kana looked up.' The Vor'Cha Class IKV SeDveq. (A *type of barbed spearhead*) is ready to depart.' Ke'reth turned to K'Taal. 'Are the Romulans aboard?' K'Taal glanced up from his screen. 'I'm showing twenty-three Romulan Life-signs aboard.'

'Then prepare to follow her.' He ordered. As they moved off K'Taal's eyes flicked over the screen of his science stations sensor display. 'We have company.' Ke'reth turned to face him. 'A cloaked Bird of Prey, is running on a close parallel course.'

'That would be for G'bahk.' Ke'reth said. 'Can you Identify it?'

'It's the Wamwl' (*Hunter*) He replied, and scans show that G'bahk is still aboard the Vor'Cha.'

'And the bomb?' Kana asked.

'I can't tell from here. But I'd put my Latinum on it being aboard the Bird of Prey.' K'Taal said.

'I concur.' Kana replied, Looking to Ke'reth. 'That Vor'Cha would have been searched from the screws in her deck plates up.' Ke'reth nodded. 'Then He intends to beam the bomb aboard and detonate it remotely.' Ke'reth said, as he stepped up to the front of the

bridge. 'KIHQaS, do we still have the empty bomb case?' He asked. The woman behind the Tactical console nodded. 'In cargo-bay 3, Why?.' He grinned.

'Then go have it moved to Transporter room one.' She nodded as she left the bridge.

K'Taal smiled at Kana. 'A Transporter switch?' She shook her head. 'That's almost impossible to do at high warp, without someone noticing the time lapse. You'd need some kind of distraction.'

'Ke'reth looked at K'Taal. 'You feel in the mood to spoil someone's day? K'Taal Grinned, as he moved briskly towards the doors. I'll be in the Jungle Warrior, awaiting orders.'

'You're going to have him buzz the Hunter?' Kana asked. Ke'reth smiled. 'Not exactly, but There is something that he can do for me?' Ke'reth switched his chair communicator to the frequency of K'Taal's sleeve pin. 'K'Taal, When you get out there can you locate, then load up with some Tubercine gas.' K'Taal nodded as he sat down in the Proud Vengeance's rapid transit system, that would take him at speed to the hanger at the rear of the ship. 'Not a problem.' He replied. 'I can scoop that up through my Nacelles, once I'm out there. There's dozens of pockets of Tubercine out there.' He grinned. 'Oh you're sneaky' He said as he figured out Ke'reth's plan. 'How did you come up with that?' Ke'reth shrugged. 'I once hit a pocket of Tubercine gas, on a mission, while flying a Death-wing Interceptor, The ship stalled, I almost stood the interceptor on it's nose, I stopped so sharply. As you know, the damn stuff's almost undetectable even to modern sensors.'

'Until you're right on top of it.' K'Taal added. Kana smiled. 'He's going to stall the Hunter by venting Tubercine gas into its Nacelles.' Kana voiced the plan. 'He's right, you're sneaky, you know that?' I'Sar jested. Ke'reth

nodded. 'With a ship that size a momentary loss of power to one of her nacelles, should give us a few seconds for you to make the Transporter switch.' KIHQaS's voice came through the speaker in the headrest of Ke'reth's chair. 'The bomb is loaded.' Ke'reth winked at Kana. 'KIHQaS, beam Kana directly to Transporter room one, Kana; Brief KIHQaS on the mission, and tell me when you're both ready. Ke'reth tapped the switch on his chair. 'K'Taal, go and get your gas, let me know when you're ready.'

'Aye Sir!' K'Taal grinned, as he entered the shuttlebay, pulling a hands-free pilot microphone over his head, as he ran up the Jungle Warriors rear loading ramp.

'They must have modified their cloaking device, I don't think the Vor'Cha can see them.' l'Sar said as she stepped up to the Tactical rail. Ke'reth nodded. 'That would make sense.' He said. 'G'bahk has to keep his hands clean.'

The Jungle Warrior slipped unseen from it's moorings, and out into space.

T'Gral. Stood in the plaza of the Imperial Hotel, as she waited for a hover-taxi to take her to the Starport, that would allow her to escape off-world. She'd already figured that G'bahk wouldn't allow a witness to his crimes to survive, especially one who'd assassinated Colonel Khemor. It was as she stood there, that she felt something sting her neck. She fell, as a fast acting neural toxin paralysed her. A few people had gathered by the time a red haired Doctor made her way through the crowd, as she concealed a compressed air dart launcher within her Sleeve. Two Imperial Security men entered the room dressed as medics pushing a hover-gurney. 'Scarletta to Ke'reth, I've got my target sedated. Save my son.'

Ke'reth smiled at the incoming message. 'Consider it done.'

Aboard the Hunter, G'bahk turned to his Assistant Tactical Officer. 'Stand ready Kren, we're about to make history!' Kren nodded, preparing attack run Sir, we'll be in Transporter range in two minutes, our shields are calibrated to allow us to slip inside the Vor'Cha's shield envelope. Then, your moment of glory is assured.'

'K'Taal to Vengeance, I'm fully loaded, but the Hunter has started her attack run.' Ke'reth nodded.

'Move in K'Taal, just await my order to attack.'

'Aye Sir, moving in. This is going to be fun, I just wish I could see G'bahk's face, when I put his breaks on for him.'

'Stay focused people!' Ke'reth ordered as he watched the Tactical display. 'Kana, are you and KIHQaS ready?'

'Ready!'

'K'Taal are you ready?'

'All set here!' K'Taal said, as the Jungle Warrior dropped unseen across the Bird of Prey's path, as it breached the Vor'Cha's shield envelope.

G'bahk nodded to the woman at the Transporter console. 'Beam the bomb across.'

'Aye Sir!'

As the woman aboard the Hunter pressed the switch, there was a slight jolt followed by the lights dimming as the ship pitched to starboard, sending it's crew sprawling. 'What in the name of Kahless was that?' An apologetic helmsman looked up. 'Just a Tubercine gas pocket Sir, we're already correcting for it.'

'And the Bomb?' G'bahk asked. The woman looked back at her screen. 'It's aboard the battle-cruiser.'

KIHQaS watched as the Vengeance's Transporters glowed as the bombs were switched in mid Transit.

Aboard the Hunter. 'Countdown to Detonation in T-Minus 3 minutes' The Woman announced.

'Why so long?' G'bahk demanded.  
'It will take that long, to get clear of the bomb, we have a double Tri-cobalt charge in that thing, we need to be far enough away, when the explosives detonate.' The Woman replied curtly.  
Ke'reth took a deep breath as the Hunter moved slowly away.

Aboard the Vengeance, a young woman looked up. 'General!' Ke'reth turned to face her. The Jungle warrior is moving into position for Warp docking.'  
'Give K'Taal the Go ahead, and activated the Auto-docking tractor beams to pull him in.'

Ke'reth straightened his collar, as he stepped toward the Communications station. 'Put me through to the Hunter.'

'Greetings G'bahk!' The man looked startled, but hid it well. 'Ambassador Ke'reth, you're too late. History doesn't wait for fools, you know!' Ke'reth smiled. 'Okay, but before your date with destiny, ask yourself one question?' The man's brow narrowed. 'Okay, as you're too late to stop me, I'll bite. What's your question. Ke'reth smiled a dangerous smile. 'What can't be moved, and is ready to go bang?'

'Riddles General? You're bluffing!!!' G'bahk snarled. 'You cant stop it, the bomb can't be stopped or moved once it's installed.' Ke'reth smiled as Kana and KIHQaS, re-entered the bridge. 'Oh I'm counting on that!' Ke'reth replied coldly.

G'bahk looked suddenly unsure as he glanced around his bridge.  
'Then this is goodbye.' Ke'reth said. The man now looked worried as Ke'reth sat down smugly. 'Where's my bomb?'  
'You're sitting on it!' Ke'reth said with a shrug, before saluting him, from his command chair.

G'bahk's eyes widened almost impossibly.

**NOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!**

G'bahk screamed, as a burst of orange flames spilled from the Hunter, tearing it to pieces. As a rapidly expanding fireball engulfed it.

Ke'reth looked up. 'Move us between the explosion and the Vor'Cha, raise Primary and secondary shields to full power!'

The energy wave from the Explosion struck the Proud Vengeance across her port shields, throwing the massive ship sideways. As the lights dimmed and Klaxons sounded as the Vengeance decloaked. K'Taal stepped towards Ke'reth, his eyes wide, as he stood there breathless, from hurrying to the bridge. 'I'm So glad I didn't miss that.'

'It couldn't have happened to a nicer guy.' Kana observed, dryly.

KIHQaS looked up from the Communications console. 'Ke'reth, It's Chancellor Martok, he wants to speak to you. He's demanding an explanation.'

'Tell him I'll beam across, as soon as I've had a shower, and found my Command cloak.' Ke'reth said with a grin. 'I hope he's not too busy, as I've got a real tale to tell.'

## **Epilogue**

That evening aboard the Proud Vengeance, Martok stepped smartly into the main meeting hall. More than two thousand troops stood on either side of the room, as he walked briskly towards the raised dais decked out with trefoil banners. A war horn sounded as Drums were beaten. As from speakers above them the Imperial anthem played.

Beside Martok on the platform, stood Romulan Ambassador Kedius, surrounded by his aides. He smiled as

a Romulan Banner was unfurled behind him.

Martok spoke. 'This is an unusual day.' He paused. 'This is a historic day. Warriors of the Empire, a new chapter has been written, in the blood of history. Not since the days of the Dominion war, when Klingon and Romulan, fought side by side; together as brothers, has such cooperation been evident. Though, It still seems odd that a Klingon would risk his life to save a Romulan. But history it seems is rife with moments of so called rarity. This ship shall, be honoured many times, in it's future but it's on this day, that our Romulan Allies wish to Honour it's crew.'

Romulan Ambassador Kediuss stepped forward. 'I am-.' He paused, for a second as if lost for words. 'Glad, that I am able to make this address. I was not aware that my life was so close to being ended.' He looked over the crowd. 'As a child, I was always told that a Klingon Warrior faced death, unflinching, head on and eyes open.' The cheering of thousands of Klingons drowned out his words. Martok called for silence, from the crowd with a hand gesture. As the Romulan continued. 'I now feel that I know what that means.' Another roar went up.

Kana laughed as she helped K'Taal straighten his collar and honour sash. 'Come on, smile, you're one of the first Klingons to receive the Romulan Order of Empire.' He looked hard at her. 'I can't believe this is happening.' He said dourly. 'I'll never be able to show my face again, I'll be the laughing stock of the Empire! He moaned. KIHQaS nudged him. 'An Honours an Honour. Plus, you'll be in good company.'

'I still can't believe, that I saved a Stinking Romulan.' K'Taal spat. Kana shook her finger in front of him. 'Naughty, Naughty, you have to learn, to play nice.' He scowled. 'You'll have to at least pretend to be civilised.' I'Sar added.

Martok raised his hands for silence as the cheering subsided.

Step Forward Ke'reth, K'tuluH, I'Sar, Kana KIHQaS and K'Taal. Ke'reth nodded as each of the warriors passed him on their way to the platform.

Romulan Ambassador Kediuss smiled as one of his aides opened a large flat dark wooden box revealing five silver eight pointed stars, each backed by a green ribbon, and a sixth that had been set with a pale blue stone at its centre. Ke'reth stepped back as the warriors names were called. K'tuluH, I'Sar, Kana KIHQaS and K'Taal. Each snapped to attention as Kediuss pinned on their medals to their sashes before shaking their hands, and thanking them each in turn, as he came to K'Taal, he placed his fist to his chest in a Klingon Salute. 'You're an excellent Pilot my friend, and for that; I thank the stars. I owe you my life.' Inside K'Taal's head, he heard the words 'Don't rub it in.'

He then turned to Ke'reth, for services to the Romulan Stellar Empire, I hereby award you the Romulan Order of Empire, Centurion class.' He said as he pinned a medal on Ke'reth's chest before breaking protocol and hugging him.

'If there is ever anything that I can ever do for you; you only have to name it, and if it's within my power, I'll grant it.'

Ke'reth smiled. 'Try to forgive your mother, for what its worth, she was only following orders.' He said. The Romulan smiled. 'No promises, but I'll try.'