

Admiral Rale sat down in his command chair. He could feel the fingers wrapping around his neck even now. When Lord Koloth discovered that he had been outwitted so badly, by a pathetic ship. The com officer walked up behind him. "Admiral, the Imperial Wrath commands that we make contact, immediately" Rale suppressed a shudder. This was it, the end. A hologram shimmered into place on bridge. Koloth stood there, life-size.

"Admiral, I see you have brought back a gift. A shame you seem to have managed to cripple your ship in the process." He arched his eyebrow expectantly, "care to tell me how?"

"They detonated a torpedo of some description inside the docking bay." He replied his voice breaking.

"I see." Replied Koloth "I seem to recall it is procedure to neutralise weapons before boarding. Clearly you have failed in this task, admiral. Report to the command ship for," he paused "re-assignment."

The white armoured troopers detonated the door, it came flying into the room in multiple pieces. Picard ducked and hid behind his chair, he closed his eyes.

"Come now Picard, what are you hiding from?" asked Q. Picard opened his eyes and stood up. "Welcome to shuttlecraft six."

"What do you want Q?"

"I save your life and this is all the thanks I receive?" He looked sternly at Picard "I can always send you back."

"That won't be necessary"

"Good, things have changed since we last spoke."

"What things?"

"We, that is to say the Q continuum need you"

"What for?"

"The Q are loosing their powers."

Picard looked at the entity. "What do you mean Q?"

"What I said, I strained myself even moving you this far,"

"Where are we?"

"That doesn't matter at the moment. The fact of the matter is you must discover why. It seems to be linked to the invasion by the Empire."

"What can I do about it?" asked Picard

"There are imperial agents on Risa. That should be your first stop," said Q. Picard disappeared in a flash.

The soft green-blue orb of Risa grew in the window. Cortswaien watched the pilot as he began to take the ship into the atmosphere. "Pitch down four degrees, engaging repulsorlifts." Said the pilot.

"Signals still non hostile," said the communications operator. "Numerous greetings being received."

"Landing area still clear, four kilometres from main settlement. No shielding has been detected, at this time." Reported the sensor operator. Cortswaien stood up, leaving the four men on the bridge, nodding to Sub-lieutenant Friedman to take over.

He walked down the short corridor that formed the neck of the corvette, and turned left, to the passenger quarters. Opening a sliding door to the passenger quarters, he stepped in. Leaning on a chair, was the agent from intelligence. He looked over his shoulder, placing the datapad on the desk. "I take it we've arrived?"

"Yes sir, we are about to land." The agent stood up, and pulled a jacket from the captured ship over his battered flight-suit. "Wait for my return, if I am not back in forty eight hours or have not transmitted the code-word, you should open fire on the locals and escape." Cortswaien nodded.

"What's the code-word?" he asked.

"Almighty."

The agent left the room. Cortswaien could hear the landing gear extending at the rear of the ship. There was a shudder from the back of the ship, of the vessel touching down. The intelligence agent pushed a button and the airlock began to cycle open. The agent stepped into the 'lock. "Forty eight, from now," he stated. Cortswaien nodded, taking note of the time.

Picard walked to the counter, "Tea, earl grey, hot" he said to the table.

"Certainly, citizen, please input your citizen code into the table computer. Picard sat down, pressing the sequence of numbers on the panel. The replicator in the middle of the table produced a cup of tea. He looked around, what did Q mean about 'Imperial agents' did he mean the Romulans. There had been rumours recently about a coup on Romulus. He took a sip from the tea. "He must have meant the ships that attacked the enterprise, he may not have intended to, but he had given away quite a large amount." Picard lost himself in reflection regarding this new adversary. "The Borg seemed invincible on our first encounter, these Imperials will have their weaknesses too." He thought. "I must contact starfleet command" he resolved.

Picard stood up, leaving his drink behind, and left the café. In one direction were the governmental areas, another the infamous pleasure district. Picard looked upwards seized by a sudden impulse, descending from the sky was a familiar ship. Picard ran in the direction it was moving he had to find out what was going on.

Six ships dropped out of hyperspace, their target was something known as a transwarp hub. Moving to take up a three dimensional diamond shape, at an offset from the target they began to accelerate. At the front was the imperator II class star destroyer obliterator, arrayed behind her were four dreadnoughts, and at the rear, a victory class star destroyer.

In front of them, the orange mist of the nebula waited. On the display screens of the task group's tactical controllers, over one hundred distinct vessels were visible. Looking at the command hologram of the area, in the obliterator's battle control room her captain smiled. "All ships, general quarters, send to the Imperial Wrath, 'Enemy engaged.'"