

Chapter two, an insignificance.

"Captain" said Harry Kim, for the fourth time. Captain Janeway opened her eyes.

"Yes?" she said sitting up.

"I think you might want to see this." said Kim.

"On my way" she said.

The captain stepped out of the turbolift and onto the slightly cramped bridge. "What is it then?" she asked impatiently, having not yet had any coffee.

"Captain, remember that Borg world we're going around?" said the first officer, Chakotay

"Yes" she replied, "what's happened?"

"It has been destroyed." replied Tuvok.

"eight four seven two?" she asked suppressing a shudder.

"No, we would have detected the subspace fissure that is created by species eight four seven two's weapons, there was no such effect from this explosion. As far as we can tell a single ship entered the system and destroyed the planet and the attendant cubes."

The captain paused for a moment. "Are they still there?" Harry Kim checked the console again and nodded. "Hail them." She ordered.

"Hypo-space radio transmission detected." The black dalek swivelled it's dome to look at it's inferior, deliberating as to whether there was any opportunity for the benefit of the dalek species in replying. "Initiate contact." It grated, "audio only."

The shuttle stopped dead, and landed with a prodigious amount of steam or smoke of some kind. Several voyager crewmembers ran out of the way coughing and spluttering. Harry Kim looked through the door at the shuttle. It was a light grey colour, made of geometric plating. It had four rocket-type thrusters that it used for landing and taking off. He turned and spoke to Tom Paris.

"We might manage it this time Tom." Paris looked back at him.

"You seem to think that every day, besides, those voices creep me out. No warmth, that's the trouble.

It's a pity we don't have an empath aboard, then we'd know why they offered to help us." He replied

"Maybe they're just benevolent, why is it that there can't be any nice super-powers? The Borg, eight four seven two, and from some of the transmissions from starfleet, the dominion too."

"Nice guys don't bristle with weapons, nor do they blow up planets Harry. I've got a bad feeling about this."

The two officers strode forwards as the flaps guarding the entrance to the shuttle opened. There was an interior door just inside. It slid backwards to reveal a grey pepperpot like armoured shell, between it's 'waist' and it's base were rows of sensor globes, around the thorax section were metal slats above a grille, beyond that was a section culminating in a dome. From its midsection came an

apparatus that resembled an ancient 'sink plunger' and an elongated whisk.

The creature slid out and was followed by six more, moving with an eerie and protracted silence. Another came from the impossibly large interior of the shuttle; this dalek was red and black. It stopped in front of Tom. It looked at him with its eyestalk.

"We have monitored your communications." It stated in its agonising voice the lights on its dome flashed as it spoke. "You have an individual known as 'the doctor' aboard your vessel." It paused. "Yes" said Tom, glancing at his companion.

"You will turn him over to us."

"If you need anything, I'm his assistant, I can probably help you."

"The doctor is the enemy of the daleks. Therefore you are also an enemy of the daleks." It screeched.

"EXTERMINATE HIM" it shouted, and a grey dalek turned to face Tom.

The dalek pointed the whisk attachment at him and fired. A pulse of blue light leapt from the gun and hit the astonished starfleet officer, square in the chest. He was sent flying, literally. His corpse hit a stack of boxes containing prefabricated shuttle components. The other daleks opened fire on the crewmen who were in the shuttlebay. Harry Kim ran for the doorway.

One of the security officers ducked behind a barrel and shot at a dalek with his phaser. The dalek turned, unharmed by the stun blast and fired at the barrel. It exploded. The man was killed by the blast, and the explosion showered half of the room in boiling fuel.

Harry dashed past the door and quickly punched the code to raise the force fields. The blast from one of the daleks weapons splashed across the field protecting him, sounding like an enraged beehive.

The red dalek turned to its troops, "Seek, Locate, Exterminate! Capture the captain, the doctor and any potentially useful specimens, exterminate all others."

"We obey" they chanted in unison.

Tuvok looked up from the security station. "Captain, there has been weapons fire in the shuttlebay." Captain Janeway stood up and rushed over to the security station. "Red alert!" she said, "dispatch a security team, and put the shuttlebay onscreen."

An image of chaos appeared on the screen. There was smoke everywhere, some of the room appeared to be on fire. The daleks were gathering around the doorway. They were blasting at the edges of the force field, hoping to destroy the emitters.

"Vent the bay" ordered the captain. The smoke was blown from the screen and the fires died. The daleks however remained where they were. They pause for a moment, rolling to form a pathway. Another dalek rolled out of the shuttle. This one mounted a single huge cannon on its torso. It fired a

titanic blast, and the field was gone. The bridge crew could clearly discern several yellow shirted security officers and ensign Kim being blown out of the bay.

"Special weapons dalek has breached defences. Carry out your instructions." The red dalek said through it's internal communications system.

The four daleks slid down the corridor silently, their eyestalks swinging from side to side, scanning for potential threats. Occasionally an overzealous security officer would try to attack them, and they were shot down in short order.

They stopped outside a turbolift. The lead dalek looked at the console for a moment. "This deck is sealed" it said. They turned and headed to the area that was designated as "engineering."

"Intruders now in two groups, captain, they are both still confined." said Tuvok "unfortunately they are on the same deck as main engineering." Janeway looked up. "How about B'lanna's fortifications?" "They aren't coming fast enough, one group is headed for engineering now."

B'lanna placed another hastily replicated explosive charge behind a panel in the wall. Behind her the engineering staff were constructing a barricade. It was fairly shoddy, made out of old plasma conduits and plating. They had constructed it behind the door, so that they could close the doors if neccesery. At the moment they had them wedged almost sealed, with about a foot in between them.

"They're coming, four of them" someone shouted from inside engineering. B'lanna dashed through the doors and clambered over the barricade, followed by another engineering crewmember.

Someone passed her a phaser rifle and she squatted down behind the makeshift battlements, looking though a small gap at the empty corridor. The daleks rounded the corner.

"Exterminate" the first one cried and fired, blasting an old deck plate into the air. It moved forwards and fired again, this time hitting a crewmember. She slid across the floor and lay in a heap at the foot of a terminal. The starfleet officers opened fire, scoring the surface of the dalek somewhat. Another followed it as it rolled toward the barricade.

Torres turned around, and shot a look at a man holding a tricorder and covering behind a bulkhead. He nodded and pressed a button. The walls of the corridor blew out blasting the daleks in the centre.

"Under attack" said one.

"Unanticipated resistance, Withdraw: Regroup:" said another, backing away. The forward dalek had been severely disabled. It rolled back slowly, it's non-weapon arm hanging limply.

"Captain, the others are now converging on engineering." Tuvok reported.

The red dalek approached. "REPORT" it demanded glaring daggers, or rather narrowing the aperture of its eyestalk, which was as close as a dalek could manage, at its inferior.

"Enemy position is fortified, we require fire support" it replied.

"Agreed," grated the red dalek, and the special weapons dalek trundled forward.

The chief engineer looked around the door. Several security officers crouched down behind the barricade, squinting into the sights of phaser rifles. Her marquis experience was at coming in useful once again. She tossed a freshly replicated grenade, another useful trick banned by the federation, to one of them.

He looked at it for a moment. "Where's the firing button?" he asked innocently. Torres pinned the man down with a stare of cold contempt.

"It's a grenade." He shrugged back at her. "On second thoughts, I'll use it." She hissed at him, snatching the explosive back.

Another heavily equipped invader rolled around the corner, this one dominated by a massive turreted gun. The crew fired at it again, burning layers from its armour. The dalek turned and pointed its canon at the barricade, giving the impression of aligning it perfectly with some invisible target marker.

B'lanna made a snap decision to run. The barricade was incinerated, throwing her through the air. She stood up looking behind her. An enormous part of the bulkhead was melted, and still bubbling. The deck itself was caving into the level below. Several smears of ash were all that remained of the barricade, and its defenders.

From the distance there was a metallic cry of "Advance!"
Torres began to haul herself forward, towards a ladder.

The red dalek deactivated its antigravity generator, having crossed the slowly cooling crater in the deck. The other daleks had secured various positions around the engineering centre. He looked up at the glowing reactor in the middle of the room, recording the design for future reference.

It was clearly a reactor of some kind. Looking at the construction it was clear that these humans were a disgrace even to their species. They clearly had no concept of safety or redundancy. He turned to one of the grey daleks.

"What is the status of that reactor device?" he asked.

"The device is operational and functioning at twenty percent capacity."

"Locate the central computer." He ordered

"I obey" said a dalek.

After a short search they located the most likely candidate. From the open entrance of a jefferies tube, B'lanna watched as they zeroed in on the isoliner array. The red one moved in front of it and fired its weapon at it several times.

On the bridge the lights suddenly dimmed. All of the consoles winked off. Janeway looked up. "What happened?" she asked urgently.

"All control systems non-operational" said a crewmember "Shields Weapons Propulsion, Internal security." He paused as the meaning of what he had said sank into everyone's minds.

The red dalek rolled onto the deck, gliding through the melted remnants of the turbolift shaft doors, and switching off its antigravity fields. The special weapons dalek was stopped at the end of the corridor, waiting patiently for some unfortunates to cross its sights. Several more daleks passed through the doorway.

"The doctor is somewhere on this level. Capture him." It ordered, rolling towards the next turbolift shaft, it was time to pay a visit to the shoddy vessel's bridge.

B'lanna Torres dropped down from the maintenance duct, grenade in hand, scanning for any invaders that might be nearby. There were none, she jogged cautiously along the corridor. She could see the remnants of the battle, but the daleks were nowhere to be seen, they had apparently left. Crouching she looked around the still warm doorway,

There was now a hole to the deck below, through it she could see the cooling steel, no longer the red-hot it had been before. Suddenly the hairs on the back of her neck stood on end. It was a strange feeling of faint static electricity. She crept back from the doorway, rising to her feet.

"DO NOT MOVE" came the grating agonising voice from behind her. They had left a guard. She instinctively reached for the pin on the grenade.

She wasn't nearly fast enough. B'lanna was distantly aware of an incredible pain in her back, a sensation of being pushed through the air, and slamming against a wall. Then she was aware of nothing more.

"Survivor neutralised." reported the dalek. Then it rolled away in the direction of the now re-pressurised shuttle-bay.

Several decks above four grey daleks rolled along one of the seemingly endless corridors. They formed a semicircle around a door labelled "sickbay." The daleks began firing on the door. They blasted the

metal outward in a shower of shrapnel.

The daleks pushed their way through the wreckage, scanning around, there appeared to be only one occupant of the room, whose appearance did not match that of the doctor. They aimed their weapons at him.

Outside the ship there was a vast flash, hundreds if not thousands of craft had arrived, borg cubes. Aboard the dalek ship the black dalek watched the display as the inferior cybernetic creatures attempted to intimidate the daleks with a show of force. Fire rippled out of the dalek ship, batteries of weapons on full fire mode, exterminating enemy ships a dozen each second, per battery. The red dalek looked at Janeway "This vessel is now under dalek control. Resist and you will be exterminated." It grated in its unnerving monotone. The dalek extended its manipulator arm. "You will come with us." It gestured for her to enter the turbolift shaft. Captain Janeway walked hesitantly to the edge of the shaft. The melted remains of the door were still glowing a dull red, and she could feel the heat as it was convected away from them. The red dalek looked at her, feeling frustrated. "You will proceed" it said. Janeway continued protesting.

"It's not possible," She said.

The dalek charged the manipulator field on its arm to its tolerances. Its eyestalk gleamed like a beacon in the darkness of the emergency lighting, it spoke "You will obey the daleks, unconditionally." It released the growing field a few inches from Janeway.

She was shot through the air with a startled yelp. She hit the far side of the turbolift shaft with a dull thump. The red dalek activated its anti-gravity globes and floated over the molten metal, and began to descend the shaft with the captain firmly held by an invisible force.

The remaining daleks needed no further instructions. A chorus of screams echoed down the shaft to Janeway's ears as the aliens went about their work.

The other group of daleks manoeuvred the doctor down the corridor. They kept their gunsticks unerringly trained on him. They had no intention of allowing his escape this time. They marched him down the corridor.

Ahead of them Seven of Nine had finally opened the door to her cargo bay. The daleks were escorting the captain through the corridor outside. Seven ducked quickly behind the doorway. The daleks marched the captain down the curved corridor. Seven clutched a hand phaser, setting it to its highest setting.

She burst out as the daleks passed the room, after only a precautionary look inside. Seven fired the phaser at one of the illumination strips above them, and then pointed it at the red coloured leader

"Release the captain," she ordered matter-of-factly. The dalek glared at her for a moment. It pointed its weapon at her and prepared to fire. It hesitated for a moment, unsure of what the onboard computer was trying to remind it of. Such warnings usually allowed daleks to make informed tactical decisions.

Then it saw the implants on the human's face. There was a standing order to capture such specimens alive if possible. It began changing the settings of its weapon.

"As you wish" it lied. Then it fired. Seven fell to the floor in the same way a dropped marionette would have done. The paralysis function was far more effective than federation stun effects. It interfered with the brain of the target species, temporarily deactivating the voluntary muscle control of the victim. It could be administered for any chosen period of time, even indefinitely.

The red dalek turned to the captain. "Carry her." it ordered.

In space the dalek ship rounded a gas giant. At the speed it was travelling, the planet's orbit would be permanently changed by the slingshot manoeuvre. The ship ploughed through a line of borg cubes, several vaporising against its shields. The ship finished off the last cubes with several shots from its main batteries.

On the bridge the black dalek watched the side display. One of the daleks controlling the sensor systems reported, "Enemy vessels destroyed."

"Recall the assault shuttle force, and prepare for interstellar drive." It ordered.

This enemy was tenacious, and unwilling to recognise that it had encountered a superior life form. They resolutely refused to concede that they were not perfect. It was clear that they must be exterminated. Utterly.

It watched the assault shuttle leave the other, stricken vessel. The signals from the shuttle indicated that prisoners had been taken, including the doctor, and no daleks had been disabled in the battle. Had the black dalek been in a human military, he would have been expecting a medal. As it was he focused on the task at hand, congratulations could wait for another time.

"Destroy that ship" it ordered one of its subordinates.

"I obey" it replied, a moment later a beam of energy shot from the dalek ship, blasting voyager to a thin cloud of atoms drifting through space.