

(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 - Whiterun Hold - PO1 Steven Hammons- 1428)

(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 - Whiterun Hold - SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 14.29)
(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 - Whiterun Hold - COUNS Alaya Hammons- 1430)
(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 - Whiterun Hold - SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 14.35)
(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 – Whiterun Hold – EO, Ensign Bohb- 1436)
(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 – Whiterun Hold - PO1 Steven Hammons- 1437)
(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 - Whiterun Hold - COUNS Alaya Hammons- 1439)
(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 – Whiterun Hold - PO1 Steven Hammons- 1441)
(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 – Whiterun Hold – EO, Ensign Bohb- 1447)
(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 – Whiterun Hold - PO1 Steven Hammons- 1448)
(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 – Whiterun Hold - SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 14.50)
(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 – Whiterun Hold – EO, Ensign Bohb - 1451)
(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 – Bleak Falls Barrow – PO1 Steven Hammons- 1452)
(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 – Bleak Falls Barrow – PO1 Steven Hammons- 1456)
(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 – Bleak Falls Barrow - SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 14.57)
(USS Illuminar - Deck 4 - Holodeck 2 - Bleak Falls Barrow - EO - Ensign Bohb - 1458)
(USS Illuminar - Deck 4 - Holodeck 2 - Bleak Falls Barrow - PO1 Steven Hammons - 1459)
(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 – Bleak Falls Barrow - SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 15.00)
(USS Illuminar -- Sickbay -- Deck 5 -- CMO 3XO Lt. Quinna Solice -- 1501)
(USS Illuminar - Deck 4 - Holodeck 2 - Bleak Falls Barrow – EO – Ensign Bohb - 1501)
(USS Illuminar - Deck 5 - Holodeck 2 - Bleak Falls Barrow – PO1 Steven Hammons - 1505)
(USS Illuminar - Deck 5 - Holodeck 2 - Bleak Falls Barrow - SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 15.10)
(USS Illuminar - Deck 5 - Holodeck 2 - Bleak Falls Barrow – PO1 Steven Hammons - 1511)
(USS Illuminar - Deck 5 - Holodeck 2 - Bleak Falls Barrow – EO – Ensign Bohb - 1512)
(USS Illuminar - Deck 5 - Holodeck 2 - Bleak Falls Barrow – PO1 Steven Hammons- 1516)
(USS Illuminar - Deck 5 - Holodeck 2 - Bleak Falls Barrow- SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 15.20)

(USS Illuminar - COPs Office - 3/O LCDR Dieter Gregory, Ensign Victor "Raid" Montero - 1630)

[illegible]

Scott and the engineering team started their refit and testing process on the unit during the wee hours, but success was near. With some physical manipulation, a few bloody knuckles they'd managed to get all the power feeds and mount points married to a standard Federation umbilical foundation. The power feeds were behaving within normal parameters and now they were just adjusting the data feeds. As predicted, the data feed was going to be the most difficult.

"Computer, shut down the power to unit and place it in standby." Requested Matrix.

"Aye sir." She replied.

(Reply Gregory)

(Posted by Steve)

[illegible]

Temas was a little nervous. This was going to be the, as the cliché put it, the first day of the rest of his life. He will be forever joined with another, and everything will change for him. For the first time in his life he had a sense of belonging and purpose. He watched as the transporter effect completed its cycle and Riven and Michaela were fully materialized. With a smile he jumped onto the pad and threw his arms around the both of them.

He had trouble stopping the flow of thoughts, but finally managed to get himself under control, stepped back and took a deep breath.

"Of course," Temas said.

point of idyllic, he opened his mind and relayed the memory to Tamas. ::You will find many programs that give you such tranquility. The opportunities for exploration in the holodecks are nearly limitless.::

Tamas nodded, having managed to calm himself down. ::It will take me a little time to get used to this place. I will... play with the holodeck.::

Riven lifted up his voice. "Hello Luma, how are we doing today? I've been anxious to see you again since our little talk."

=^= Luma is pleased the Riven has returned with the Michaella. Luma is very pleased with the offering of her Tamas. Luma is ready to make the bonding formal. Then the Riven can fix our Sienna and her T'Mur will like Luma again. ^=^= Luma sounded very distressed. She grabbed Riven, Michaella and Tamas and moved them via the site to site transporters to the VIP Guest Quarters that Riven and Michaella had used the last time they were aboard.

(USS Illuminar - Deck 2 - VIP Quarters - Ambassador Riven Mias, Tamas Laredo, Michaella Kirien-Mias and Luma'lenai- 2005)

Luma utilized the holo-emitters and appeared in her purple cat-girl form before them, her long sparkly purple hair settling as she did, looking around the quarters in distaste. ^=^= The Riven should decorate his quarters. ^=^=

Tamas felt the pull of the transporter affect and was surprised by their sudden movement to the Ambassador's quarters. That in and of itself was a shock to his system. Things were rarely a surprise to young Betazoid, as intentions were often the first thing that he could read on people. However there had been no sign of Luma's intentions before she moved them. It was interesting, scary, and a little exciting all at the same time.

Then he saw Luma in her alternate form and smiled. The look of disdain on her face over the sparseness of his quarters was amusing, since they far surpassed his junior officer quarters in extravagance. But Luma's words came back to him, "the offering of Tamas," and he was reminded why they were all there.

Riven looked about and noted their baggage had already been delivered as expected. He took Michaela's hand as he moved closer. "We knew we would be staying a while this time so brought some decor. Not a lot but it's a start." The quarters were very large by ship standards and even more opulent comparatively speaking than the Captain's quarters. "Let's all have a seat, there's no reason to be standing around." After all were seated he positioned himself in a comfy overstuffed chair which was his favorite.

Temas sat on the edge of the small sofa, watching Luma. Then he looked at Riven. He was still feeling a little nervous. He had been briefed about what was going to happen, but there was no way of knowing what, exactly to expect. All he knew was that he now had a purpose and place where he can feel like he belongs, at least in time, and perhaps a chance to not go slowly insane.

"So how does this begin?" he asked.

"Let's get to the crux of the matter." Riven stated as those present waited expectantly. "The process is not complicated as I understand it. Captain Sekal who has acted as temporary mind bondmate twice told me it is as simple as melding minds with Luma. Temas if you are ready?"

Temas was a little surprised that it would be that simple. He'd been under the impression that it was a complex process that would take a great deal of time. Riven made it sound... well, easy. He was pretty sure it wasn't that easy. However, whatever was ahead for him, he was ready.

"Yes, I am ready, Riven."

The Betazoid smiled. "And you Luma, do you accept Temas as your mind bondmate?"

Luma spun happily and nodded, giggling, her giggles showing via the holoemitters as sparkles of coloured lights. =^= Yes! The Temas is not my Vex, but perhaps will be more stable than my Vex was. Luma will always miss the past bondmates, and it is difficult to let them go even when entropy does not embrace them.=^= Luma turned towards Temas, =^= The Temas is not allowed to embrace entropy.=^= She sounded stern, which was not her normal way of being.

Temas smiled at Luma, "Nor am I planning to, Luma."

"Just so. Temas open your mind to the Lenai. There will be a merging of consciousness for a time. Afterward you will be able to slip in and out of each other's consciousness at will. Relax and reach out for her."

Temas sat back on the sofa and closed his eyes. He took a deep breath then let it go slowly. As he breathed out he lowered his telepathic filters he'd spent his lifetime building and let his mind reach out. Another slow breath and he reached out further until he began to feel the edges of Luma's consciousness touch his own.

::Brace yourself?: Luma suggested and held herself still for several moments, then forcibly merged their consciousnesses, Luma viewed Temas as a stable rock in a sea of colours and music, the way she viewed time and space. ::See? The Temas is now Luma's anchor in the present, the temporal bondmate.:: The way she viewed the universe was unique and she imparted a lot of information to him, very quickly. Things he needed to know about the Illuminar, how to extract her, what the emergency plans were. The things that she could do and why she needed him. It seemed to stretch on forever but was over in a few moments.

Temas stiffened slightly as his gentle touch was suddenly gripped by the strength of Luma as she wove their consciousnesses together. Then he relaxed and simply allowed her to overwhelm him. He imagined that it was how it was with others when he was young and invaded their minds without being able to stop.

He could feel the colors, and understand their significance to her. He understood why her form was sparkly purple. Then he heard the music. It was the same music he could hear on the nights he couldn't sleep and stretched his mind out as far as he could. The impossible harmonics that almost made him weep. It was also beautiful.

Then he experienced something new. He saw time as not just a linear flow. Time seemed to occur all once. And in the middle of spacial and temporal storm he stood. He was now the anchor that held Luma to this time. But that reality could change, as long as it was within his own lifetime. He was tempted to look at the future, but decided that he would rather experience life as it happens. The future was actually in flux, as if it were ever changing.

Next came a flood of information. Luma was forcing his neurons to accept the knowledge that she was imparting. This was what caused the pain. There were a lifetime of experiences, and people, flooding his memories. It became difficult to distinguish his own memories from hers. He could see the faces of all of her previous bond mates wash through his mental vision. Some he could identify names; Sekal, Verin, Vex... some were just faces.

He felt the loneliness of the Mystique. The betrayal of the Federation. Thirty years was a drop in the bucket in the life of the Lenai, but it seemed to be an interminable drop. And then the rescue of Saleke. He was so strong and brave and true. There was more than just respect for him, there was love.

And then there was her life mate, and his death. Tamas could not prevent the tears. The universe had filled with her sadness and anger. Then the realization that she was the last. When Luma embraces entropy all that was the Lenai would be gone.

As suddenly as the onslaught of information began it ended. Although the presence of Luma was still with him, there was also something missing. His brain was now pulsing with knowledge that he was not yet able to access.

=^= The Tamas might need to rest and let the information settle properly. ^= She spoke helpfully.

Tamas opened his eyes and smiled, "No, I'm fine."

Then he tried to stand up. His legs felt like they were made from live eels. He seemed to have no control over them, and he sat back down.

"On second thought," he added, "perhaps I should take a moment."

Riven had been monitoring the exchange as a failsafe to pull Tamas out if necessary, not that he expected any issues but his mind healer training during special or unknown operations made it an ingrained reflex. He didn't intrude on the personal exchange but rather monitored Tamas for undue stress or reactions. Once it was over he sat back with a sigh. "I spoke with the Captain about this as I'd earlier mentioned. He found at first that the memories were slow to be accessed, even for a Vulcan due to the sheer enormity of their volume and Luma's advanced age which to her is probably small but to us

nearly unimaginable. I would suggest you talk with him since he seems to be modifying the role due to past experience with Vex'ahlia Jordaan. As well he communicates a great deal with Luma even when her mind bondmate is available. A Vulcan would call it simple efficiency but I think it goes beyond that." There was a twinkle in the Betazoid's eye as he said the last.

"Sit there while I get you something to drink." He walked over and opened a vintage bottle of Fleur la Grande, one of Betazed's finest wines which he had brought for the occasion, poured a glass for himself, Tamas and Michaela and passed them around.

"Sip it slowly and take your time getting up, you have just had an overwhelming experience."

Tamas accepted the glass and looked into the liquid, but did not drink. He suddenly realized something. Looking up he stared at Riven.

"Something is different," he said, slightly alarmed. Then he focused his mind and he smiled. "I don't hear the continuous stream of thoughts. If I focus, I can hear everyone, well almost everyone, but I don't need to shield them out." He was torn between concern and relief. "What's going on? Did you expect this?" He looked at Riven with a suspicious eye.

Riven noted both the look and his empathic senses picked up on the emotional content. "Expect it? No. Hope for it? Yes. But that is not the reason you were approached about becoming a mind bondmate. I believed it would give you the focus and direction you needed and you fit Luma's requirements."

Tamas smiled and took a sip of the wine. His eyes widened at the flavor in approval. "Wow."

He took another sip and made contact with Luma, ::Can you taste this through me?::

Luma had been peering into Tamas' face and then giggled, ^= Yes! Luma likes it! Drink more! Slowly! ^= She ordered, happily, sparkling eyes. ^= The Tamas is pleased? The Tamas will be happy and not go away? ^=

Following orders he took another sip and allowed the sensation to wash through his mind. "Yes Temas is very happy," he replied, realizing the distinctions of Luma's ownership. He was still "The Temas." It would take time for him to become "My Temas." He would wait. ::And I have no intention of going away. I will stay here for as long as you want me to.::

::The Temas is not allowed to ever leave then!:: Luma declared, feeling less lonely and more herself. Her emotional energy was calming quickly, which would make the atmosphere on the ship more comfortable for the psi aboard. ::The Temas is not to grow jealous of Luma's 'friends' though. The Bohb is helping run the skin's legs and Luma now has her very own kitty caitian called P'Rah.:: Luma helpfully supplied images of the people mentioned.

Temas nodded, ::I understand you had friends before I came to you. I've seen this Bohb in your mind before. He is special to you?:: He saw an image of them being together alone playing music.

Luma nodded, ::Yes. The Bohb is a psi-null however. He doesn't see himself as lacking but he is. Luma wishes he could be repaired so that he can hear her. But that is not to be.:: She moved out of the range of the holo-emitters and her head disappeared before she moved back into range. =^= Oops? =^=

::Luma's Temas will brush the kitty caitian P'Rah?:: Luma had been hoping for Vex to return to do it, since Sienna had said 'nope' and she couldn't ask Sekal to do it. It wasn't dignified.

Temas had to fight a smile, ::I don't know P'Rah, but I'm pretty sure he wouldn't appreciate me trying to brush him. Caitians can be funny that way. But perhaps I can meet with him and we can be friends too. Maybe I can play with him?::

::Luma will ask him first. It's important to ask permission before you touch a small one.::

Temas laughed to himself, realizing that this was not something she was going to just let go of.

::It is very important.::

Gregory paused, he needed a drink and some time to decompress more. "Computer end log. Where is Replra Dosar?"

=^= Reolra Dosar is in the Explorers Lounge ^=^=

Standing up, he checked his uniform and headed off to Explorers lounge.

(Reply none)

(Posted by Tim)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar - Deck 4 - Explorers Lounge - LCDR Dieter Gregory - 2245)

The Explorers Lounge was barely a 1/3 full. Of course, with people on the planet, or recovering from their time on the planet, it was not hard to explain. Moving to the bar, he sat down as Reolra came over with a glass in her hand. Bolian Gin and Tonic for you Commander," she said with smile.

"Quiet night I see," he replied as he took the drink, squeezing the lime into the liquid.

"Well, we're around a plant, hard not to want to get off the ship. I even sent Sam down planetside to lay in some fresh produce and see about some Betazoid alcohol for some specials. So it's just little ol' me here tonight."

"Well, what time do you plan to be off tonight?" Gregory asked.

"Depends on what my options are."

Gregory nodded, "I am sure I can make you an offer you won't want to refuse. A double sunrise on Risa."

Reolra chuckled, "Got to do better than that Commander, been there, seen it."

She put her fingers to his lips before he could respond, "Hold that thought," she said as she moved to check on a lone table in the corner.

Gregory turned around, sipped his drink and pondered the options.

(reply, any wishing)

(Posted by Tim)

[illegible][illegible]

(USS Illuminar - Deck 4 – Personal Quarters – ACEO Ensign Scott Matrix - 0231)

It had been a long day to say the least. Scott and the engineering crew had completed their work on the cloaking device and handed it off to the command staff for deployment. The USS Hilary depended on their work. Scott and the engineering crew did their best and he was confident all would work out. He's poured over the configuration, the new programming and hardware interfaces too much. He was second guessing things and that was a cardinal rule you didn't break. Never second guess yourself.

“Computer, martini...three olives...dirty.”

The replicator generated the nearly perfect Earth drink. Scott took a small sip and sat in his dimly lit quarters and looked out at the stars moving past his viewpoint.

“Computer, reply to father. Got your message, I will speak to my commanding officer and see if I can get leave to visit. Glad you are doing well and am looking forward to seeing you soon.”

(Reply none)

(Posted by Steve)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar – Main Engineering – ACEO Scott Matrix - 0511)

Scott yawned aloud, so much so he was embarrassed, but no one seemed to notice. The cloaking device had apparently been successfully deployed or perhaps delayed. He didn't know for sure. Nonetheless, his normal duties tasked him with ship's business. Nothing urgent or new seemed to be on the horizon so he took the time to complete several routine upgrades and maintenance typical of a Star Fleet vessel. He also planned some down time in either the holodeck or catching up with crewmates.

“Computer post this station the latest log files for the level 2 diagnostic on the EPS conduits, deck 3 through 7.”

A few moments pasted and the computer displayed the results. “Nothing out of the ordinary.” Scott said aloud.

The computer displayed a personal message from subspace. Scott tapped the access message. Admiral Steve Matrix displayed on the screen. He marked it for later but knew what it was probably about. He'd have to talk with his Captain to make sure all was well."

Scott tapped the schedule and started to assign the duty roster.

(Reply none, any)

(Posted by Steve)0

[illegible]

(Betazed - Jarren Falls- Resort Suites - ME Mason Quincy - 0925)

Happy birthday Michael. This gift is how we will communicate with you. It is a text-only device that only receives messages from a specific subspace bandwidth that is only open long enough to send this message. Keep this close. We will be in contact with you soon to give you your test of commitment. I'm so glad we're together again. See you soon. Hugs and kisses, Fe.

Michael frowned and sat on the bed rereading the message and memorizing the words. A few seconds later the message disappeared and all that was left was the shiny black box. There was nothing on it that would allow him to bring the message back up. That was when his door chime rang.

Quinna stood there at the door waiting to enter. It was time that they talked and Quinna already knew the results. She has spent time in her quarters formulating what was going to happen. Putting her clothes in for cleaning, she thought about it. Taking a shower she thought about it. And now she stood there waiting to do more than think about it. The door opened. "Hi, Michael. I think we need to talk about what happened on Betazed."

Michael was now in 'operative' mode. He wasn't giving any information away to anybody with simple body language cues. Keep things light, and never know anything. He smiled, an honest happy to see her smile, and reached his hand out to Quinna's drawing her into a hug, and kissed her on the cheek.

"Well hi yourself," he said lightly. "Well I thought it all seemed fairly obvious what happened, but what would you like to know?"

Quinna was getting lost with his kisses. She desired to throw him on the bed and to ravish him. Instead, she stepped back. "You know this morning was not the wake-up call I was hoping for. How are you doing?" Quinna had many things to say but was not sure how to say them.

Michael pulled Quinna into his quarters and to the sofa. "Yeah, that was not how I wanted to wake up either. I had other ideas planned out." An evil smile came across his face and kissed her again. "But I guess I'm fine. To be honest I've spent worse time in a holding cell. And I shouldn't really have been surprised by Fiona."

"I am still curious as to why Fiona changed her mind. She has so much anger towards you. It makes me wonder why she 'let you go,'" Quinna was interested in what Michael would say on the subject.

Michael shrugged, "Fiona is... a complex woman. She really isn't mad at me. I did hurt her when we... ended our partnership. She really just wanted to send me a message. And maybe find a way back into my life."

Taking a deep breath, Quinna knew what needed to be done. "I know for sure now that I am a liability. Correct me if I am wrong, but you would not have been caught with your pants down both literally and figuratively with you were not with me. People warned me that you were going to hurt me but in the end, it is you that will be hurt because of me. I noticed that you were off your guard more than once. The only place we can be together is here. And I know Fiona will find her way here." Quinna took a deep breath.

Michael took hold of Quinna's hands and looked into her eyes. "I took that all into consideration before I pursued a relationship with you. You keep trying to tell me that you are aware of the dangers of being with me. I'm telling you that you have no idea what people are capable of when push comes to shove."

He took a deep breath and stood up, stepping away from the sofa. "Quinna the danger is real. Perhaps Verin is right, I'm no good for you. But if you think that's true we should probably end our relationship here and now, before I get any more emotionally invested. However, know this, you are already a vulnerability for me. No matter where things go from here. That is something I'm not used to."

Quinna looked up at Michael. "I want to spend as much time as I can with you. I want to be here with you. I just do not want me being here with you to hurt or kill you. You have so much that still needs to be done. And I want to be here and help you through it all. I just don't want to be your liability. Remember back in the cargo bay, I had to kill you to prove my loyalty. To keep me safe." Quinna looked for Michael's thought in his eyes. "I want you to be able to do the same for me. Am I making any sense?"

Weston nodded, "Believe it or not, you are. And believe me, if I could kill you to keep you safe I would." He chuckled at his own joke. "I'm glad you are recognizing the danger I have put you into is real. It might get worse. But the danger I put you into is the same danger our being together puts me in. As long as you understand that and accept that risk, both sides of the risk."

"You have me all the way. I know I am an adult and sensible enough to handle you and me. And all that goes with it." Quinna needed to make sure that Michael thought the same.

He shook his head, as if in disbelief. Quinna was just a little left of crazy. He stepped back forward and knelt on the floor in front of her. He pulled her into a big hug. "This might get bad... soon. And you may find cause to doubt me. But know that everything I do will be so we can be together."

"As long as you remember that everything you do, you do not have to do it all alone." Quinna kissed him. "You and I have to have an understanding. I know there are things you probably do not want to tell me. I can respect that, but I really want you to be open with me about things that happen." Quinna gave Michael another kiss along his ear. "Even when you have to go out on your own." She added.

"I can only promise to be as open as I can," Michael said, already knowing he was holding back.

Though this was not really the most appropriate time, Quinna needed the information that Michael started to give her when they met. "I need to know something before we continue my "Undercover" training. Now I trust you, I have been thinking about when we met. You know about my parents. You are too young to have known them, but I need to know what you know." Quinna reached down at the locket she had. In order to continue on with her exploration with Dieter then she needed to know.

Michael knew that this conversation was coming. To be honest he'd been surprised that it hadn't come up before. He sat back on the sofa and took a deep breath.

"To be honest, the investigation into the disappearance of the Auberjonois has been ongoing since the ship disappeared through that wormhole. SFI had gotten involved shortly after they got a data dump from the ship, authored by your father."

"Um Say What? What?" Well, this was a shocker for Quinna. "No, no, My father was a doctor. Are you saying my father was Starfleet Intelligence?"

Michael chuckled, "Absolutely not. We've not been sure why he's been the one to send out the data. However, what they found was that the command staff were all dead, with the exception of your dad."

Quinna bit her lower lip, "I wonder why they were going through the wormhole. Do you remember much more?" Quinna wondered but was sure it would not tie into the investigation over the Bajoran artifacts that Dieter and Gregory were studying. But there was evidence that her parents could be alive.

(USS Illuminar - Deck 1 - Ready Room - CO - Captain Sekal - 1205)

There is shore leave and then there are Vulcans. Famed for passing up shore leave as unnecessary and a waste of time that could be spent on more productive pursuits. And the Captain was no exception to the rule.

There was much to go over pursuant to reports from the fleet concerning discoveries made in the "new" Alpha Quadrant. Illuminar herself had made a number of discoveries concerning conditions on former member worlds and prospective species, many of whom were on "the fence" due to current conditions. The fleet had been greatly expanded due to the influx of newer Vulcan vessels as well as those that had reappeared due to the reset of the timeline after the release of the alter universe orb into the Bajoran wormhole.

This had caused other consequences as well since Q had been freed up to increase his interference in StarFleet affairs and seemed to have made the Illuminar the focus of his "experiments". What had caused his interest? Had it been because he knew upon their launch to Bajor that Sekal's ship would be the one that would dispose of it?

Their understanding of an energy based lifeform and their perception of time had been greatly increased by the presence of Luma on the ship and it appeared that this was logically the case. An emotional being in charge of this ship might have looked at it as a curse but Sekal considered it an opportunity to study one of the most enigmatic beings in existence. Not that he invited the or wanted the god-like being aboard, far from it but when he did appear he made the most of the opportunity to scrutinize him.

Sekal had been studying the reports from the fleet the entire morning and was nearly finished when the comm activated.

=^= Weston to Sekal, Captain, can I get a minute? ^=^=

"Affirmative." Was his response and he retracted the screen after saving his progress.

(USS Illuminar - Deck 1- Bridge- SFI - Michael Weston - 1210)

The turnbolift doors opened and Weston stepped off. All heads turned and looked at him with curiosity, some with disdain. He ignored them all and headed straight to the ready room. In all of his years of intelligence work Michael knew that there was a time to have to report in to someone, and superior officer, a handler, someone. He didn't always trust some of the people he had to report to. But he knew that Sekal was one of the few he could.

Reaching out he tapped the door chime.

(reply Sekal)

(posted by Al Muir)

(USS Illuminar - Deck 1 - Ready Room - CO - Captain Sekal - 1211)

"Come." He spoke at the chime and deactivated the door lock.

He sat back as the sometimes SFI operative entered the office. Currently Michael Weston was disassociated from his superiors in the Intelligence agency and was being used at the orders of the Chief in Charge of StarFleet security due to his knowledge of and investigations concerning the organization within their midst, Roanoke.

"Please have a seat Mr. Weston, what is this meeting concerning?"

He steepled his fingers and leaned back in the chair as this unusual member of his crew began to explain.

(Reply: Weston)

(Posted by Charles G)

(USS Illuminar - Deck 1 - Ready Room – SFI, Michael Weston - 1212)

Weston sat in the seat across from Sekal. Rather than his usual relaxed pose he took he sat forward, leaning in.

“Captain, I need you to seal the room, before I say anything more,” he said.

(reply Sekal)

Once the room was sealed he relaxed slightly. “I’m not sure if you heard what happened on Betazed this morning, but the Betazed authorities had me arrested for the murder of Ambassador Miri Achoxur. It was all a ploy by a former associate, who I believe is working with those responsible for my... predicament. In fact, they went through all of that in order to offer me a job.”

(reply Sekal)

“I have no idea what the job that they want me for,” Weston admitted, “but I have a feeling it has to do with your friends from Roanoke. But that is not why I’m here. In order for me to gain their “confidence” they are going to require an example of my commitment to getting back into the intelligence game. And to be honest, the test they are planning concerns me. I’m confident it will have something to do with the Illuminar. It will not be a small thing, and it will most assuredly be an attempt to distance me from the crew of the ship, making it impossible to go back to my old life.”

He sat back and looked at Sekal, waiting for his questions.

(reply Sekal)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

"Captain, I need you to seal the room, before I say anything more."

The operatives posture projected urgency. "Luma seal the room on my order."

Once she answered that it was done with a pout in her voice he nodded. "Continue."

“I’m not sure if you heard what happened on Betazed this morning, but the Betazed authorities had me arrested for the murder of Ambassador Miri Achoxur. It was all a ploy by a former associate, who I believe is working with those responsible for my... predicament. In fact, they went through all of that in order to offer me a job.”

"Indeed." The Vulcan's slanted eyebrows took on a steeper drop as his eyes narrowed. "I was informed of your arrest and release. What was the project they had in mind for you?"

“I have no idea what the job that they want me for,” the operative admitted, “but I have a feeling it has to do with your friends from Roanoke. But that is not why I’m here. In order for me to gain their “confidence” they are going to require an example of my commitment to getting back into the intelligence game. And to be honest, the test they are planning concerns me. I’m confident it will have something to do with the Illuminar. It will not be a small thing, and it will most assuredly be an attempt to distance me from the crew of the ship, making it impossible to go back to my old life.”

The CO'S eyes narrowed further. "What do you anticipate gaining from such an exchange?"

(Reply: Weston)

"It is a logical assumption that they would give you many such 'tests' before gaining their full confidence and any information gleaned in the interim would be negligible. To anticipate otherwise would be to overlook the logical and obvious, one such as you would be used as a pawn on the board rather than a bishop or queen."

(Reply: Weston)

"Sabotage or subterfuge could be simulated without actually compromising the ship and I will not allow actual intelligence to leave it however something could be 'doctored' that would look legitimate but lead your handlers in the wrong direction. I stand however on my earlier point, in order to gain any valuable inside intelligence you will have to do so surreptitiously. Also my command team would not go blind into such an arrangement but will be brought 'into the loop'. There will be no more instances of your one contact aboard being unavailable."

(Reply: Weston)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

"What do you anticipate gaining from such an exchange?" Sekal asked.

“The only possible advantage is to find out who is really at the bottom of this,” Michael admitted. “Perhaps I can stop looking over my shoulder and worry about what’s next. And maybe, if there is a connection, help you with your problem with Roanoke.”

"It is a logical assumption that they would give you many such 'tests' before gaining their full confidence and any information gleaned in the interim would be negligible. To anticipate otherwise would be to overlook the logical and obvious, one such as you would be used as a pawn on the board rather than a bishop or queen."

Weston nodded, "I have played that role before. But most people don't see pawns as the powerful weapons they are. And played to their fullest potential, a pawn can raise its position to become as powerful as a queen. But my play is not for power but position. I want to be clear of harms way." He watched as Sekal thought about what he had heard.

"Sabotage or subterfuge could be simulated without actually compromising the ship and I will not allow actual intelligence to leave it, however something could be 'doctored' that would look legitimate but lead your handlers in the wrong direction. I stand however on my earlier point, in order to gain any valuable inside intelligence you will have to do so surreptitiously. Also my command team would not go blind into such an arrangement but will be brought 'into the loop'. There will be no more instances of your one contact aboard being unavailable."

Michael nodded, “I agree. Besides, in order for me to make it worthwhile I might otherwise have had to kill someone. That is not in my plan. On the other side of that, though, I can’t have your command staff suddenly liking me. That would arouse too much suspicion.”

(reply Sekal)
(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

"I agree..." the operative added, "... besides, in order for me to make it worthwhile I might otherwise have had to kill someone. That is not in my plan. On the other side of that, though, I can't have your command staff suddenly liking me. That would arouse too much suspicion."

An image of Sienna's reaction to the agent at the party came to Sekal's mind. "I do not believe there will be any issue in that regard Mister Weston. I do consider your concerns as to your safety however to be illogical in the short term. While on the Illuminar you are one of my crew and under the protection of this

ship. Perhaps while fulfilling your assignment we will get to the root of your difficulty within the intelligence community though that is by no means certain. At any rate once you have received their demands relay it to me and we will see what we can do to facilitate your intelligence gathering within their organization. Additionally if you run afoul of one of my command crew bring the issue to me and I will do what I can to defuse the matter. Is there anything else?"

(Reply: Weston)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

Quinna awoke. She turned once again to an empty bed. Not the way she was hoping to wake up. At least she did not have Betazoid police storming her room. Even Though this was not her room. She wrapped the sheet around her and went into the main space looking for Michael. She made her way back to her room and started to look for her clothing. As she found items, she would place them on the bed.

Quinna found everything but her pants and her left shoe. She wondered if Michael hid them on purpose in order to keep her around. Quinna just found one of the shirts he had for himself and put it on. If he wanted it, he would have to come and get it. She left for her quarters which were halfway down the deck.

Quinna made it to her quarters without being seen. She giggled to herself how she made the “Walk of Shame”. She started stripping herself down as she made her way to her shower. Computer, display federation news. The wall changed to a viewer and the news played in the background. She heard nothing interesting in the news. She emerged back into the bedroom. She sat on the bed starting to get dressed.

Quinna's uniform started to feel tight. With all the indulgence she knew she needed to work out in the gym later. Once dressed, she pulled the light blue outfit out of her bag. There she reached in the pocket for the purchase she made at the street fair. There she pulled out the small trinket and a cube. The cube had Bajoran writing on it. She put them on the table next to the couch.

Quinna then left her quarters and went to sickbay. She might as well get back to work.

(Reply None)

(Posted by Kris B)

[illegible]

She was organizing the games when she received a telepathic message from Aunt Melodia. She responded in kind.

:: I am organizing the games Auntie. I am also taking on any challengers for some gymnastics.::

(Reply Melodia)

(Posted by Edward)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 - SecO, PO1 Steven Hammons - 1355)

Skyrim it appeared was a mountainous country. The line of mountains he had seen when entering the program were to his right and they were well into the foothills on the north side. When originally seen he had been in the south but the cart had taken them through a gorge beyond the western spur. Helgen had been just beyond them. The rocky road they were following was paralleling the Whiterun River going east with the mountain range just to the south and they were getting ever closer to the one with its peak in the clouds. Steven was beginning to consider that what he saw as a range were merely ever diminishing foothills of that tremendous lone mountain.

The trees here were coniferous and unlike those in the south which were beech-like with broad leaves and there was a more defined chill in the air here with the smell of snow though there was none on the ground. Hammons was certain that the farther north he went from here the colder and more rugged the land would become.

Riverwood was a substantial village with a log palisade on the west side but the broad gate was open as they walked through. It had a sawmill on the river and numerous thatch houses. Soldiers patrolling the height of the log wall were neither Imperials nor Stormcloaks, their livery was of a golden color as were their shields and their helms were conical and crafted from steel and leather. The village was nestled in the foothills and close upon the forest.

Hadvar's sister was called to the sawmill to meet with him and she greeted her brother warmly. Upon finding out about the dragon attack and being told that Steven had escaped Helgen with her brother she invited him to come to her house to eat and to rest. After she had walked off Steven approached the Nord.

"What is it about this war you are involved in Hadvar? How did it start?"

The blonde norseman gave him a long look. "Is it possible you are unaware? Very well. The Empire once encompassed the whole of Tamriel but since the great war most of the provinces have been lost to it. The islands of the Altmer, the Sunset Isles first fell to the Thalmor in their midst and they corrupted the Bosmer then the Kahjiit in Elsewheyr. The Dunmer and Argonians had been at war since the Oblivion Crisis so when the Thalmor launched the Great War the Empire was severely weakened. The high elves took the land of the Redguard and most of Cyrodil, nearly destroying the white/gold tower in the Imperial city. The Imperial city was retaken by legions from Skyrim.

And what was our reward? To end the war the emperor signed the white gold concordant with the Thalmor which banned the worship of Talos. Now the Thalmor walk the lands seeking out Talos worshippers then send them off to prisons or murder those that do not come quietly. Jarl Ulfric had enough and challenged King Toryg to combat, his intent was to sieze the throne and evict the Thalmor from Skyrim. And kill Toryg he hid but the Empire does not hold to our ancient codes and branded him a traitor and a pretender, chasing him from Solitude. So we who follow him have fought the Empire to drive both them and the Thalmor from our homeland.

And this we will do or die. You are safe here for now, Whiterun hold is neither for Ulfric nor the Empire but Jarl Balgruuf is more like us than the Empire, one day he must stand with us and his forces may give us the numbers we need to drive the Empire out at last."

"Quite a complicated situation." Hammons followed Hadvar to his sisters house where he was not only fed but given an iron sword and a dagger. Still iron weapons but at least better than the sword he had at the start.

(Reply: Any)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 1 -Chief of Security Lt (jn) Keung Lee 1400

The concept of travelling in time was intriguing and certainly an adventure as far Keung Lee was concerned. As a result of his conversations with Dr Roger Battenburg and Dr Mary Belington, Lee had spent the last couple of days in the ship's library researching anything about the concepts of time travel. He tried to access information about the mysterious portal called the Guardian of Forever but any data about that portal was inaccessible and well above his clearance level. He read books, magazine articles as well as watching vids of discussions and documentaries from other Federation cultures that had interests in time travel. He came to the conclusion that overall..time travel was a possibility but the technology wasn't available. It was interesting to see that much of Starfleet records referring to time travel was indeed classified. Finally Lee had put together his own thoughts about time travel based on the available resources and test out his theories, he programmed into the holodeck a 'What if' scenario

Lee stood outside holodeck 1 which fortunately was not occupied. Holodeck 2 was used by PO1 Steven Hammons and from what he discovered, was likely to be in there for some time. He pressed the computer panel. He then spoke "Activate Lee time scenario 1". ~It was hardly a original title~ thought Lee.

“Enter when ready” said the computer. It sounded like Luma!

Lee was inside the Rayland Research Station Mission on the planet Hamuea in the Kuiper-Edgeworth Belt. Lee in his research had discovered that the Rayland Research Station was a Federation science facility where among other space projects were rumoured to be working on the concepts of temporal mechanics. So what better place to start speculating. He programmed the scenario that he was a guest of the Director of the Rayland Research Station, Dr David Winchester. A well known cosmologists, physicists and best selling author.

Dr Winchester had welcome Lee who kept his position as Chief Security Officer and his story was that he was here to evaluate the safety protocols of the station. The actual complex was underground.

“How big this is place, Dr Winchester?” asked Lee as they walked along a central corridor before stepping onto mechanized walkway which carried them along the length of the tunnel. Lee could not see any end to the tunnel, although they soon passed several intersections and diverging corridors.

“There are 500 inhabitants living and working here which include families. The station took eight years to build four years to build. We arrived in a fleet of six freighters . A team of Starfleet engineers excavated the ground and digging was done by huge boring machines which cut through the surface, collected the debris and transported the debris behind it using conveyor belts. The debris were hauled up to the surface by automatic wagons. The engineers use controlled blasting for smooth wall blasting techniques/ The architectural design was created by one of Henderson Industries’ construction firms..

There are 15 buildings on giant springs, with a total of 1.5 acres 2,000 feet down from the top of the mountain. The buildings are free-standing buildings connected by hallways and ramps inside. The buildings are on 1,300+ giant springs, and built 18 inches from the rock walls in the mountain, so they can move independently if there is an earthquake or a blast. The building would bounce, but never touch the granite,” We would not lose operations . We have workout facility, living quarters, recreational areas and an arboretum. Medical centre, laboratories , chapel, All the buildings are connected to the central operations centre by tunnels and lifts. They allow us to move easily from one building other. These conduits run into the planet core. We use geothermal energy to melt the ice that covers most of the outer surface. It provide us with oxygen and water along with electrical power from our fission reactor core.” Explained Dr Winchester.

Dr Winchester led Lee was taken to another level of the building “ that’s is the reactor core” pointed out Dr Winchester. Lee started through thick Plexiglas screen at a huge concrete cylinder, roughly a hundred feet in diameter. Enormous pipes filled with either coolant or heated gas connected the heavily shielded nuclear reactor with the massive turbine and generator. ”That provide virtually all of the

station's electrical power.” Lee was shown a large number of laboratories which looked impressive with state of the art, then to the living quarters, testing areas, recreational areas and an arboretum

“We come to the location of the particle accelerator” said Dr Winchester. He pressed on an entry panel and he moved closer to a camera. The doors slide open into a huge chamber where Dr Porch led them to a large observation lounge. The huge window provided them with a view of a large complex machine which stretched into a corridor. “This is the particle accelerator. It consists of a 27-kilometre ring of superconducting magnets with a number of accelerating structures to boost the energy of the particles along the way. . If we were to go inside the inside the accelerator tunnel you would see a tube which runs continuously in either direction. We call this tube the "beam pipe" - This is because inside the tube, two beams of particles fly round the tunnel. The beams are accelerated to very high energies by magnets surrounding the beam pipe. These make sure that the two particle beams circulate in opposite directions without crashing into each other. When the beams of particles reach their final top energy, the magnets alter their path and bring them into collision at pre-determined points around the accelerator ring.”

It was an incredible sight although for Lee, not being a scientist, much of it went over his head but nodded appreciately.

“It was in our research looking into trans wrap engineering” continued Dr Winchester “We accidentally discovered that the technology developed had produced a rather fascinating by-product effect. Our experiments opened up a temporal distortion or a rift in the space time continuum. Our research concludes that not only we have the ability to travel through space beyond the speed of light but it just might be possible to travel in time using the technology of our particle accelerator. It could be possible to adapt the particle accelerator to enable a human being to move close to the speed of light. Say for example, Mr Lee you are sent through to the particle accelerator. For someone like me who is looking in several years would be possible but to you it would seem to last only a few days. By the time you stepped off the accelerator, you would be younger than the rest of us.”

Lee tried to take this in and said ““That would do for me..the ultimate eternal youth treatment”

Dr Winchester ignored Lee's attempted funny comment but Lee continued with “So this particle accelerator can be the means to time travel?”

“In a way, time travel is possible. There are particles called pi mesons. They don't live very long because they disintegrate after mere millionths of a second. When they are sent through the particle

accelerator at nearly the speed of light, the affect is astonishing. Their lifetimes expand dramatically. It appears these particles are traveling in time, or in relation to other particles, they are moving more slowly.”

"I want to ask you that in your research have you discovered a way to actually travel through time?"

Dr Winchester actually smiled to Lee's surprise "For the last six years my team and I has developed what I believe is a completely safe method of time-travel, to be used for the purposes of historical research and observation. This device is essentially a giant superconductor which is also able to convert different forms of subspace energy "-an energized matter stream can be created and directed along a super dimensional conduit inside a subspace field. The result is a completely stable artificial vortex into another time-space continuum. Infact let me show you."

The doctor directed Lee out of the Particle accelerator along a corridor and then up a flight of stairs onto another corridor towards a set of double doors marked with the words ‘Temporal Operations Centre: Authorised Personnel Only.’ Dr Winchester pressed a series of buttons on the entry panel. The doors opened. “Welcome to the Temporal Operations Centre.”

(reply none)

(posted by John)

[illegible]

Raven joined them at the table and listened to the story. Raven was a Female High Elf fire Evocation wizard. She was sympathetic to their cause and wished to join their quest. She ate and drank with them then told of her intentions.

"I am Raven. A high Elf Fire Evocation Wizard. I am sympathetic to your cause. I was sent by the Harpers faction to join your quest. It is a most worthy cause and my skills are at your use. I come a long way from Neverwinter so a long rest is most needed."

She had high level spells known and slot spells that are mastered that should be very useful in the quest.

(Reply Hammons)

(Posted by Edward)

[illegible]

"I am Raven. A high Elf Fire Evocation Wizard. I am sympathetic to your cause. I was sent by the Harpers faction to join your quest. It is a most worthy cause and my skills are at your use. I come a long way from Neverwinter so a long rest is most needed."

Raven sounded quite a lot like Lieutenant Trei in disguise and it was a good one. Steven gave a grin. "The more the merrier."

Hadvar gave her a searching look. "It is said that the Thalmor faction of Altmer on the Summerset Isles purged many of their brethren upon gaining power which would make you not Thalmor. That is good, we need all the aid we can gather these days."

Hadvar's sister came over. "There has been no sign of dragons here but Jarl Balgruuf in Whiterun must be warned. A dragon attack there could kill hundreds if they are surprised."

"I cannot be seen there." Hadvar explained. "The Jarl keeps Whiterun an open city where all may mingle and my presence there would be noted and reported. Perhaps our new friends could make the journey and warn the city." He looked "Conan" and Raven over.

"Sure, why not." Hammons set the empty mug back on the table. "It sounds like a place I would like to see on my walkabout. How about you Raven?"

(Reply: Trei)

"A done deal then." Hammons held out his hand for a shake which Hadvar turned into a clasp of forearms in true Nordic fashion.

"There is a trader here in the village on the main road, you saw the boy and dog sitting on the porch yes? You can buy any equipment you need there."

"Sounds like a plan, let's go Raven. The sooner we get started the better."

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 1 -Chief of Security Lt (jn) Keung Lee 1410

"Welcome to the Temporal Operations Centre," said Dr Winchester

Lee followed Dr Winchester into a large busy chamber and glanced around the room horseshoe-shaped configurations, with multiple stations.. Lee absorbed all of it in a heartbeat - the sensation of it, the sights and the sounds - and etched it into his memory, taking an extra moment to savour it.

He could hear the sound of music joined by the slight hum of machinery and ventilators, augmented by small pockets of quiet conversations. The operations centre itself was humming quietly. Desks and tables and consoles were cluttered with things, the walls covered with graphs and display panels. . Some were looking at computer screens; others reviewing holographic projections in mid-air.

Lee was staring at an array of wall monitors that were showing different live images of scenes from Earth..landscape buildings and, people, various conflicts of...historical battles! He wondered why the scientists were showing history films!

"Mr Lee" said Dr Winchester. Waving to the monitors "What you are seeing real time images of events from Earth past. Over the last two years, we been sending a number of time probes through the space time continuum to Earth past...and this is what we got?"

"That's incredible." Exclaimed Lee as he moved closer to the monitors. One monitor showed a overhead view of New York somewhere around the 1930s judging by close up of the dress appearances of how people dressed. Also, he could see the construction of the Empire state building.

The images that grew solid showed a tight formation of red uniformed soldiers armed with what appear to be muskets were steadily moving up a hilly area towards a ridge of trees. Ahead of them were drummer boys. Lee recognised the soldiers as British redcoats Appearing from the trees, were a large group of men dressed in purple tunics wearing turbans waving sabres running towards the Redcoats. The Redcoats had raised their rifles and fired into the group of soldiers. A number of the opponents fell while the rest continued on straight into the soldiers where there was a melee of rifle bults, bayonets and sabres. The scene was horrific!!

The images started shaking and paled into blackness.

"Trying to get the images back!" shouted a technician. "Wait we getting another transmission .."

The second image resolved into an birds eye view of a landscape of skyscraper buildings including the instantly recognised buildings of the twin towers of New York. Lee recognised the vehicles on the ground and people. This was New York but when. The image remained longer than the first.

"How is this possible?" Asked Lee

"This way." Said Dr Winchester as he led Lee to a large window at the end of the Chamber. Through the window was another chamber and they all had panoramic view of the gigantic frame of what looks like a huge portal that sprawled out before it, like the rim of a bottomless well. The ring wasn't a perfect circle at all, but rather a series of repeatedly jointed segments, upon which a central trunking corridor, along with a series of emitters and conduits and tubes and reinforcing struts were constructed, which were in a perfect circular curvature.

There were handrails to facilitate movement back and forth along this smooth tube . The sheer size of the portal was huge, almost a kilometre in diameter, with the ringed segments comprising the torus itself each almost twenty metres across. Working on the portal were a number of engineers.

"This is ..if I be so modest. The Winchester time vortex. This device is essentially a giant superconductor which is also able to convert different forms of subspace energy an energized matter stream can be created and directed along a super dimensional conduit inside a subspace field. . Once the destination is selected, the time vortex generates a stable traversable wormhole which allows travel to its destination. The tunnel is physically only a few dozen meters long, although once it is activated for time travel its length actually becomes infinite ." Explained Dr Winchester

"What are these probes that you refer to?" asked Lee as he turned round from looking at the time vortex

"They're satellite drone-based navigation and communication with cameras, sensors antennas and transponders that receive and retransmit signals. They have Solar panels that provide power and a propulsion system designed to take the emitters into orbit"

"How do you receive the signals" enquired Lee

"The transponders send data from its location through time to our surface network antennas via our time vortex. Then we receive the signals in the form of pictures and sounds." and sounds as you can see on the monitors" Explained Dr Winchester

Lee was feeling quite excited about what he heard. Maybe there is a chance to physically travel time using this time vortex. "Tell me, doctor, have you sent anyone through the time vortex" , perhaps an opportunity of a lifetime to actually experience time travel. Lee realized it was an odd thing to think

about. After all he 'came' to the future from the past himself, too! But that had been an accident, whereas this... this was going backwards deliberately. It wasn't the same

“We going through two phases. Phase 1 was sending probes through the space time continuum to record different events of Earth’s history which is what you are seeing now. Seeing the success of this, we will begin to start with Phase 2. This is actually sending someone through the time vortex.”

"Freeze program," said Lee

(reply none)

(posted by John)

[illegible]

The trader was indeed directly on the road at the center of the village. Steven walked in first right into an argument.

"You aren't going to find anyone to take the job. I'm the only one who will do it and I can take care of myself." The speaker was a woman who was seated at the table by the hearth.

"For the last time no!" The proprietor was standing behind the counter red faced. "It's not so important that I would risk my own sister to fetch it. You are not going after the claw."

"Claw? What claw? Steven asked as the door shut.

The trader turned to them. "Oh sorry for bringing you into our argument. Last week thieves broke into my shop and stole a golden claw from my counter. While I say claw it was actually more like a dragons forehead complete with clawed fingers and about twice the size of my hand. I bought it years ago and it has sat on the counter ever since... until thieves broke in and stole it."

Hammons looked at Raven then back at the trader. "How much would it be worth to you if we recover it?"

"One hundred and fifty septims." The proprietor was quick to offer. "My sister says the bandits took it to the ruins across the river and can show you the way to get there. You two look to be new to these lands. She wants to go but I won't have it."

"I followed their trail for a way so I know it is there." The woman sitting before the fire didn't look like an adventurer but sounded competent. "I will take you across the bridge and show you the trail if you are willing."

"And that is as far as you will go." Her brother growled.

Hammons turned to Trei. "What do you think Raven? Whiterun or claw hunting first?"

(Reply: Trei)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 - Riverwood Trader- EO, Ensign Bohb - 1412)

When Bobb had received his invitation to participate in a “game” set by Steve Hammons intrigued the Magillan. He had never really gotten to interested in holodeck role playing, life was interesting enough on its own. However, a mediaeval world seemed interesting , and to be honest, he needed a little mental break. So he did a little research, which did not do him very much good. A world full of different species, none of which he was familiar with. However finding an outfit was ridiculous. He wound up wearing leather trousers and a long and loose, sleeveless tunic. He also replicated a long handled mace with for long blades attached at the head.

When he picked up the mace a smile of satisfaction rolled over his face, "Sometimes the old ways are the best."

He had entered the holodeck and found himself walking into a village filled with straw thatch roofed buildings. People were milling around, and he realized that not one person took note that a 7 foot ape had just entered the village, carry a very dangerous looking club. Suddenly a young man ran up to him.

“Sir, you look like you might be in need of supplies,” the boy said. “You should go to the Riverwood Trader in the middle of town.” He pointed the direction to go. “You’ll find everything you could possibly need there.”

Bohb looked at the boy inquisitively, "have seen other strangers in the village?"

"You'll find everything you could possibly need there," he repeated in exactly the same manner as before.

Bohb looked at him, about to ask another question, when he realized the response would most likely be the same, so he decided to go to the trading store in the center of town. He walked through the doorway and heard voices talking. Following the voices he found Hammons dressed in what could only be described as a barbarian outfit, carrying a rather impressive looking sword. Standing beside him was a slight fellow dressed in a hooded cloak. Bohb strode over to the pair.

"What do you think Raven? Whiterun or claw hunting first?" Hammons was saying.

"Mr. Hammons," Bohb said smiling, "I'm happy to have caught up with you before all of the fun began."

(reply Hammons)

He turned to look at the hooded figure, who seemed familiar as well. Suddenly it dawned on him. "Lt. Trei? It will be a joy to have this adventure with you."

(reply Trie)

"So what are we going to do?" Bohb asked.

(reply Hammons, Trei)

(posted by Al Muir)

(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 - Illara's house - SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 14.15)

"I am game for a recon mission to retrieve this claw. We could use a couple more to fill the party out in case of an ambush. Lets go."

(Reply Hammons)
(Posted by Edward)

(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 - The Riverwood Trader - PO1 Steven Hammons- 14.16)

"Engineer Bohb welcome to the party." Hammons said while eyeing the morningstar that the huge Magillan had brought with him. "Ooh, nice weapon. I hope you're ready to bash some heads in, you've got just the weapon for it. As for fun you missed the ambush, almost getting our heads lopped off and a big scary dragon so you are coming in at the right time."

"I am game for a recon mission to retrieve this claw. We could use a couple more to fill the party out in case of an ambush. Lets go."

Hammons grinned at Trei then turned to the trader. "Claw hunting it is, have those septims counted and set aside for our return my good man. Hopefully this won't take too long. We've got the beginnings of a stout party here."

Whilst Hammons was speaking with the proprietor Bohb and Trei were talking.

"First though I'm going to need something a little warmer."

Steven's coin purse had been light and became negligible after purchasing a warm hooded cloak at an outrageous price but so fortified he was looking forward to the quest. They followed Helga from the trading post to the outskirts of town.

(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 - The Riverwood Trader – EO, Ensign Bohb- 1417)

While Hammons made purchases at the trading store Bohb found himself in front of a reflective surface. His clothing looked acceptable, but according to his research the character he should be playing would be Orsimer, commonly called an Orc. And he was not looking that part. He had hidden a PADD in his outfit and pulled it out, tapping commands into the programming of the simulation. Suddenly his appearance made a few changes. Firstly his hue altered to be a greenish color. Then his teeth altered so that he had much larger incisors protruding from his bottom row of teeth. Now that was a bit better.

Now looking the part he noted that the others were leaving the shop, following a woman. He quickly moved to fall out behind them, curious as to their destination. He was curious what this "claw" was, but as they appeared to be on a recon mission, it would most likely be revealed at the right time.

(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 - Whiterun Hold - PO1 Steven Hammons- 1427)

As they walked the road Hammons, whom he discovered was a character named Hadvar, was talking to the woman, Helga, as they discussed the route they were taking. He mentioned something about a "creepy ruin" which intrigued the Magellan. The term creepy was a word he hadn't encountered until he had come to the fleet. He had acquired an interest in the subject, as it involved an element of fear of the unknown.

"Just great! Well in for a penny in for a pound." Hammons turned back to his companions. "Mages are best for support and I'm the shortest so Bohb follow me but not too close. I might see danger before it sees us if we are lucky."

Bohb followed "Hadvar" at a quick but easy pace, and said softly "Mr. Ham... Hadvar, I would appreciate some help choosing an Orsimer name for my character. I noted that you are Hadvar and Lt. Trei is called Raven, but I do not have a ... cool character name. I would appreciate advice."

(reply Hammons, Trei)

As they walked he noticed the slight change in the terrain, and stepped carefully onto the snow. It was cold between his toes. He hadn't considered replicating foot wear as he typically didn't wear any as it was. When the trail opened up the cold wind blew through his facial fur, leaving it speckled with frost. Hammon... Hadvar pointed out the stone watch tower. Then Bohb watched as he lowered himself to the ground and crawled slowly through the bushes and flora of the terrain. Bohb attempted to be stealthy as well, but built as he was, stealth did not come easy. Still, he managed to follow Hadvar to the edge of the rocks and look down at the group of creatures at the bottom of the hill.

"This isn't our destination," Hammons whispered, "but I've got a feeling these guys aren't going to just let us waltz by." He pointed to the right of the tower bridge. "The trail goes close to the bridge then splits off to the east. There's no way to follow it without being seen."

Bohb nodded, agreeing with his assessment of the situation, "Indeed. Apparently the only way is to go through that band of ne'er-do-wells. I would suggest a full frontal assault. I believe our fighting skills will outmatch their numbers."

He smiled as he looked down at his Morningstar, smiling at the prospect of... cracking some skulls with it. He looked over to see Trei... Raven pull out a strange looking book. After a moment she whispered for them get down. Putting her hands on the ground flames shot along the ground and snared most of the marauding party.

"Ok men do your thing," she said, almost with a sound of disdain in her voice.

Bohb frowned as he did not relish the idea of simply slaughtering helpless individuals who were being restrained. He looked over at Hadvar and shrugged. They stood up and headed down the hill. There were still a few individuals that were capable of putting up a fight. A man with a rather large and wicked looking sword jumped at him swinging. Bohb stepped back so the sword missed him. He swung his own weapon striking the man across his body. The sharp edge dug into his ribs and sent the man flying several meters. He lay on the ground unmoving.

He looked over to see how Hammons was faring.

(reply Hammons, Trei)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

She led them to the east side where the road curved north and a bridge spanned the river. "The road as you see turns east on the other back and continues to follow the river but there is a trail straight ahead across the road and it winds up this side of the mound to the west then back east and ends at a ruin at the summit."

"Hey wait a second, that wouldn't happen to be that creepy ruin I saw from the road west of Riverwood would it? I was at the top of the hill just above the standing stones."

"That is the one."

"Just great! Well in for a penny in for a pound." Hammons turned back to his companions. "Mages are best for support and I'm the shortest so Bohb follow me but not too close. I might see danger before it sees us if we are lucky."

He led the way across the bridge at a fast clip.

(Reply: Bohb, Trei)

They crossed the road and sure enough the trail was easy to spot. Hammons followed it for a short distance North till it turned along the side of the hill and began rising steeply. His feet were soon crunching through snow and he was glad for the cloak, he kept his eyes moving ahead and sometimes upward in case someone decided to roll a boulder down on them.

They were over halfway up when they came to the west side, the trail opened up into a snow covered escarpment with a chill wind that was blowing drifts then curved northward following the edge. It was here he caught sight of the stone watch tower. Hammons got low and began creeping through the brush that was in abundance until he could look over a mound at the side of the trail. Looking down he saw a half dozen unsavory types wearing hide, leather and fur. Some of them had warhammers as long as Bohb's Morningstar. Half were on this side of a short bridge that led to the watch tower and half on the other side. It appeared the tower had been built on a spur of rock that jutted out from the mound below. Additionally he saw an archer lounging at the opened door of the tower but could see no one atop it.

He motioned for the others to come forward but stay low. Keeping his voice at a whisper as the slid up he said, "This isn't our destination but I've got a feeling these guys aren't going to just let us waltz by."

Steven passed up the other two on this side of the bridge, leaving them for Bohb. He didn't know how long the spell would hold but the tower needed to be checked for more combatants. The first thing he saw in the narrow tower to his right was a coin purse set on a small wooded table, he passed it up and

grabbed a wooden shield leaning against the legs of it. The far wall had a narrow window which showed glorious sky, the left wall was unadorned. There was a wooded staircase beside the table on the right and he sped up it two or maybe even three steps at a time.

The second landing was a small, round room with a chest but no enemies. The side above the narrow window below had a doorway with a ramp curving around the tower on this side leading to the top. Hammons immediately ran up it.

To be met at the top by an outthrust blade. He barely got the shield up in time to take the blow which knocked him back toward the edge. Hammons growled and lunged forward but his thrust was blocked by the shield of the other. The two traded blow on shield for several flurries before his opponent was a little slow on the attack and Hammons burst forward with a shield blow that knocked the other's aside and his sword point was driven into the bandits chest.

His opponent dropped to the floor of the watchpoint and Hammons sucked in a deep breath. "Wow, that was exhilarating!"

The parapet was waist high so he walked around and exulted in the view. To the north were a line of hills, to the west a tremendous freshwater lake which fed the Whiterun River and beyond the lake a forested region with more trees like those he had seen in the south. To the south the mountain chain with the tall one to the east and Riverwood and its woodland at their feet. He could also see the road he had followed and the standing stones. To the East he could see the trail they had been following which led farther up through a narrow cut and climbed to the eerie ruin.

The ruin was exotic certainly. Curved pillars of black on two sides met a walkway in the center and reminded him of a ribcage which led to a round building the color of sandstone. "Definitely not quarried here, is it a temple or some ancient seat of power?"

At the other end of the ribs was a lookout point which extended over the cliff several feet and looked west.

"Wow!" Ancient and evil perhaps but breathtaking.

Having gained the lay of the land he started back down the ramp toward the others.

(Reply: Trei, Bohb)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 - Whiterun Hold - SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 14.30)

She saw the same unsavory types as Hammons saw. She checked her book of known and mastered spells. She found one that would not cause much suspicion and restrain those in the party's way. It may be necessary to eliminate those in the way of their path to retrieve this claw but at least this will retrain them. She whispered to Hammons to get down. She placed her hands on the ground and produced vines of fire snaking to the party in front of them tangling all but one in a web of fire. This ought to allow Hammons and Bobb to take out the trash. She nodded for them to take out the trash.

(Reply Hammons, Bobb)
(Posted by Edward)

(Reply Hammons, Bobb)
(Posted by Edward)

[illegible]

"You really should let me go." Alaya spoke quietly, her hands tied behind her back with course rope and her ankles tied together in front of her. Her pack was being pawed through by one of the bandit lieutenants and the leader was staring down at her with evil eyes.

"Shuddup, Thalmor scum." The leader casually backhanded Alaya and while she was stunned shoved a gag made up of her spare outfit in her mouth when the lieutenant had found her herbal recipe book, "Talos take you, Thalmor!" He cried drawing a dagger. Alaya's dark eyes widened in fear and she shouted behind her gag, not realizing that the program was trying to take her words and turn them into something the program could use. Outside the structure, she heard the sounds of fire and fighting, then felt herself being lifted up, blindfolded and stuffed in a wooden barrel. Alaya continued shrieking as the lid of the barrel was put in place, her fear not at all imagined at this point in time. She had been warned by Luma that Steven was off playing 'dangerous' holodeck games in the 'cold wet ick' and had been told to dress in the outfit given to her for another of his games. She was dressed in thigh length furred boots, a long furred, belted cloak and soft, warm leather and wool. Her blue hair was braided back and she wore her daggers in the tops of her boots.

::Steven Hammons if you don't get me out of this barrel, I will... I will... do something evil to you!:: Alaya ordered, shouting loud enough that Trei could hear her as well. ::Now!:: She hissed the last word along their bond. She wanted OUT NOW.

(reply holodeck)

(posted by Mel)

[illegible]

Raven saw Hammons and Bobb take care of business with some difficulty. She motioned for her familiar to scout beyond the tower for any reinforcements. If they did come, she will pepper them with fire balls. The familiar would bake them with fire balls out of its beak. The enemy will not have time to

react to this. She checked her book of known spells and found major illusion. She layed out the options when Conan returned .

"We can press on or take a short rest to recover health. If we press on, I have a few spells prepared that will be most useful. If we take a short rest, I can recover spells used and we can heal. I also have a few spells to use in that time too. One of the spells is fireball which I can have my familiar pepper anyone in our path. The choice is yours."

The spell major illusion would be used to conjure an ice dragon guarding the tower. It would depend on what reaction is given to determine how she uses her spells.

(Reply Hammons, Bobb)
(Posted by Edward)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 – Whiterun Hold – EO, Ensign Bohb- 1436)

Bohb looked in time to see Hammons, now Conan, get impaled by an arrow. But it didn't seem to slow him down. He continued to advance on the archer, and wound up in a bladed combat. His movements were quite impressive. It was a fast and furious battle that Hammons soon prevailed in. Bohb approached the remaining restrained men. He looked at his Morningstar mace and frowned. Slinging it over his back he moved over two of the men. With a shrug he thrust out both of his fists simultaneously. Both men grunted and slumped in their restraints. Now that they were no longer necessary the fiery straps disappeared.

He then followed Hammons over the bridge. He watched as Hammons grabbed a shield and ran towards the tower. Bohb noticed a small leather bag laying near where the shield had been. He picked it up to hear the jingle of metallic coins that were inside.

"Ah yes," he said to himself, "legal tender." He had seen Hammons purchase clothing at the store with some. Bohb had neglected that detail, but now it seemed to have rectified itself. He tied the pouch to his belt and continued to follow Hammons. He looked back to make certain that "Raven" was following. Apparently her character was primarily a magical one that assisted the fighting from afar.

As he ascended the stairs to the tower he arrived in time to see Hammons drive the point of his sword through the chest of a bandit. The sight of so much violence caught him by surprise.

“Wow, that was exhilarating!” Hammons exclaimed.

Then he moved up to the parapets. Bohb stopped at the body to take time to come to terms with the rules of the game. Kill or be killed seemed to be the parameters that he would have to be willing to accept. Life's primeval struggle. Even if the lives are fictitious all life was precious. But all worlds, even Magilla Prime, had their barbaric beginnings. This was an opportunity to embrace that barbarism. So be it.

A moment later he saw Conan coming back down the stairs. He seemed relatively unharmed and there was no sign of the arrow injury. But it did seem that he was a little low on energy.

"Are you okay?" he asked.

(reply Hammons)

He went down the stairs ahead of Hammons and went back to where Raven was.

"We can press on or take a short rest to recover health," she said. "If we press on, I have a few spells prepared that will be most useful. If we take a short rest, I can recover spells used and we can heal. I also have a few spells to use in that time too. One of the spells is fireball which I can have my familiar pepper anyone in our path. The choice is yours."

"I'm fine to keep going," Bohb said, "but Conan here took an arrow and may need some health recovery. What do you think Conan?"

(reply Hammons)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

“Are you okay?”

Hammons gave Bohb a grin. "Couldn't be better." The two walked down the ramp with a swirling, cold wind blowing around them. Once they reached the 2nd landing Steven stopped to take stock, the chest was still here along with a couple of stout wooden barrels and a small table and chair. "We really shouldn't leave without searching everything, there's no telling what we might find. Games like this leave random loot drops, we might find anything from coins to upgraded equipment..."

::Steven Hammons if you don't get me out of this barrel, I will... I will... do something evil to you! Now!::

Hammons stopped thunderstruck as the mental communication ended. "Alaya!" He laughed and sprinted to the barrels, the first contained cabbages, not something he needed and the next was opened to reveal his lovely bride. He tossed the lid aside with a clatter and reached in to lift her out. She was remarkably light considering her diet. He stood her up then proceeded to take off her blindfold and gag. "Well look how dressed up you are! Something tells me Luma was involved again."

He pulled the dagger from his belt and cut her hands free and then her ankles. "When will she learn we are perfectly safe. It's no more dangerous than that Christmas drama on the mountain just with real enemies."

(Reply: Alaya)

"Mr. Bohb and Lieutenant Trei are with me, looks like you are joining the party courtesy of everyone's favorite Lenai."

(Reply: Alaya)

The chest held an assortment of clothing, Hammons picked out a thicker, warmer shirt of a rust red color and put it on then replaced his cape with hood then took her arm as all 3 went down the narrow stairs.

Once downstairs they met Raven on the bridge.

"We can press on or take a short rest to recover health," she said. "If we press on, I have a few spells prepared that will be most useful. If we take a short rest, I can recover spells used and we can heal. I also have a few spells to use in that time too. One of the spells is fireball which I can have my familiar pepper anyone in our path. The choice is yours."

"I'm fine to keep going," Bohb said, "but Conan here took an arrow and may need some health recovery. What do you think Conan?"

"Conan" nodded. "I took a 30% hit to my character health which should regenerate pretty quickly now that the battle is over so let's take ten and snatch a breather inside out of the wind. We still have a ways to go. The trail goes through a narrow cut as it ascends to the ruin and we will be walking through snow up to our knees probably. Those clouds above us look to be heavy with it as well. It won't take us long to get there but we want to be rested when we do, there's no telling what may be waiting for us."

"Oh I get it. When you take a health hit the computer uses the comm input in your ear canal to inform you of your status. Well I am good to go, if everyone else is ready let's get moving."

“Well my friends, with the dark skies getting darker,” Bohb piped up, “I think we should be moving on. After all, our goal isn’t going to come to us.”

"What -exactly- is our goal? And what is a Thalmor, and why does that make me scum? And who or what is a Talos?" She asked, quiet confused.

<reply any>

Alaya stayed in Steven's wake as they climbed up the side. This was a harder hike than she was used to but she kept up, her furred boots were very anti-slip.

"Raven there's at least one guard perched up high on the ribs with a bow watching the trail. If you could send your bird to pick off him and any other snipers that may be up there it will free the rest of us to get our hands dirty."

(Reply: Trei)

He looked to Bohb. "I saw 2 guards at the top of the stairs. While Ravens familiar is crispy frying the archers we will charge up the staircase. Watch yourself though and don't let yourself get flanked because I don't know how many are up there. If worst comes to worst we can always stand back-to-back to protect each other."

(Reply: Bohb)

To Alaya he turned a smile. "Stand by with healing my love in case we need it. Once Raven is finished with the snipers she can help us out if necessary. We will push inward from the top of the staircase to give you two room to work."

Alaya leaned in and gave her mate a kiss as she opened up her book and took a stance, intending to cast her magic. She spoke some words and lesser wards surrounded both Bohb and Steven.

"Let's get this party started." Alaya nodded, then jumped as she was told that she had gotten a skill point in restoration. She shrugged, not knowing what that meant, but she'd deal with it later.

Alaya shrieked as someone threw a dagger at her. She dodged it and then cast one of those wards on herself, and lastly on Trei.

(reply holodeck)

(posted by Mel)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 – Whiterun Hold - PO1 Steven Hammons- 1448)

[Health at 100%]

"Did anyone else hear that?" Hammons looked around at the others who gave him a blank look. "Oh I get it. When you take a health hit the computer uses the comm input in your ear canal to inform you of your status. Well I am good to go, if everyone else is ready let's get moving."

"Well my friends, with the dark skies getting darker," Bohb piped up, "I think we should be moving on. After all, our goal isn't going to come to us."

(Reply: Alaya, Trei)

The wind outside the tower was picking up and the clouds seemed to be gathering overhead, they were dark and threatening. He stepped outside and a gust tore at his cape. "We need to move quickly or we will get caught in a storm. We should have just enough time to make the ruin."

He set a brisk pace across the bridge, looking back he saw a white dragon curled around the 3rd landing which was the lookout point. The illusion seemed to give him a wink before vanishing as Ariel ended the spell. He gathered the hood about his head to ward off the blowing snow which was being stirred up from the ground and hit the trail to the barrow.

The wind continued to pick up as they began to climb the trail, a benefit of the rising wind was that it was scouring the rocky ascent of snow though the footing was a bit dicey in places and he slipped more than once. Fortunately they weren't on some cliffside but rising toward the cut he had seen with bluffs on each side which were getting shorter as they climbed. There was one small drift as they passed the cut and turned north but it was easily circumvented. It was only a few minutes later that he caught sight of the first pillars and crouched then slid up behind a boulder.

There was a small field of tall plinths rising up from the ground and he surmised they had once supported the walls of a building that had long ago disintegrated. Beyond them was a wide staircase cut into the rock of the bluff which was a good 15 to 16 feet wide and ascended twice as far. Beyond the staircase were the "ribs" he had seen which rose along the sides of the portico with the walkway at their peak. Visibility was being affected by the rising wind but he was able to see 2 brigands walking a patrol at the top of the stairs and perched above the round, sandstone building was an archer who was watching the approach.

He slid back around the bend in the cliff to warn the others. After motioning for them to huddle up he started issuing instructions.

"Raven there's at least one guard perched up high on the ribs with a bow watching the trail. If you could send your bird to pick off him and any other snipers that may be up there it will free the rest of us to get our hands dirty."

(Reply: Trei)

He looked to Bohb. "I saw 2 guards at the top of the stairs. While Ravens familiar is crispy frying the archers we will charge up the staircase. Watch yourself though and don't let yourself get flanked

because I don't know how many are up there. If worst comes to worst we can always stand back-to-back to protect each other."

(Reply: Bohb)

To Alaya he turned a smile. "Stand by with healing my love in case we need it. Once Raven is finished with the snipers she can help us out if necessary. We will push inward from the top of the staircase to give you two room to work."

(Reply: Alaya)

"Let's get this party started."

After Trei had released her hunter/seeker familiar and it had flown around the crest Hammons gathered himself and when the explosions started he rushed around with sword and shield readied.

The bandits at the top of the staircase were shouting as their mates on high were getting pummeled by magic and it took a moment for them to notice the two who were charging the stairs. One of them eventually did and began cursing as he charged down to meet them. His partner began calling over his shoulder for support then joined him. Both were carrying two-handed weapons which were going to hurt if they hit.

The two pairs met halfway up the staircase.

(Reply: Bohb, Alaya, Trei, any)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 – Whiterun Hold – EO, Ensign Bohb- 1447)

Bohb had sat down on a large rock and waited as he examined the remaining contents of the chest. He found a fur cape that he put round his shoulders. None of the other clothing items would fit him. On closer inspection he found a side panel which opened to his touch. Inside he found a rather large an ominous looking dagger. It seemed to be made from an amalgam of iron and a strange element he was not familiar with. The handle was wrapped with a leather strip. There was an extra "claw near the handle of the blade that looked fairly dangerous. He smiled and hitched the blades scabbard to his belt.

After about ten minutes Bohb stood up and stretched. He toyed with his new dagger, which he had learned was orcish. He was not a master of hand to hand combat, however, he could see this as an opportunity to practice.

“Well my friends, with the dark skies getting darker,” he said, “I think we should be moving on. After all, our goal isn’t going to come to us.”

(reply Hammons, Trei, and Alaya)

He started to walk down a path past the tower towards the delapidated building that was their goal.

(reply Hammons, Trei and Alaya)

(posted by AI)

[illegible]

[Health at 100%]

"Did anyone else hear that?" Hammons looked around at the others who gave him a blank look. "Oh I get it. When you take a health hit the computer uses the comm input in your ear canal to inform you of your status. Well I am good to go, if everyone else is ready let's get moving."

“Well my friends, with the dark skies getting darker,” Bohb piped up, “I think we should be moving on. After all, our goal isn’t going to come to us.”

(Reply: Alaya, Trei)

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on each side which were getting shorter as they climbed. There was one small drift as they passed the cut and turned north but it was easily circumvented. It was only a few minutes later that he caught sight of the first pillars and crouched then slid up behind a boulder.

There was a small field of tall plinths rising up from the ground and he surmised they had once supported the walls of a building that had long ago disintegrated. Beyond them was a wide staircase cut into the rock of the bluff which was a good 15 to 16 feet wide and ascended twice as far. Beyond the staircase were the "ribs" he had seen which rose along the sides of the portico with the walkway at their peak. Visibility was being affected by the rising wind but he was able to see 2 brigands walking a patrol at the top of the stairs and perched above the round, sandstone building was an archer who was watching the approach.

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(Reply: Trei)

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(Reply: Bohb)

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(Reply: Alaya)

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The two pairs met halfway up the staircase.

(Reply: Bohb, Alaya, Trei, any)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

Conan alerted her of two snipers on the towers. She sent her familiar with fire bolt prepared to take out the archers one by one. The first didn't see it coming and was pelted with a fire bolt along with one leaving her hand. The second archer sent an arrow at her familiar but the raven did an air dodge and sent another bolt at the archer. The second archer proved to be tougher than the first so Raven sent a bolt from her hand pelting the archer down. Conan and Bobb clearly disregarded a stealth attack and began charging up the stairs. She cursed something in Klingon at their boldness. She made her way to their position and started firing fire bolts into the line of enemies hoping to take out more than she missed..

"Lets be tactical about this. Clear and move step by step. I will follow behind and take out what I see. Give me a shout when the area is clear."

(Reply Hammons, Bobb, Alaya)

(Posted by Edward)

[illegible]

Bohb listened as Hammonds gave directions to the group. Clearly he was the experienced player in the group. It would be wise to follow his lead. He watched as Hammons stealthily moved around a boulder, staying where he was. Stealth was not his forte. Meanwhile he contemplated what he'd been learned and considered his character's name. When Conan returned he began to organize the group.

He told Raven to send her bird to take care any snipers with bows that might be waiting for them on high. Raven simply nodded and stepped back.

"I saw 2 guards at the top of the stair," he told Bohb. "While Raven's familiar is crispy frying the archers we will charge up the staircase. Watch yourself though and don't let yourself get flanked because I don't know how many are up there. If worst comes to worst we can always stand back-to-back to protect each other."

Bohb nodded, "Sounds like a good plan. And call me Grog."

Then he told Alaya to be ready with healing spells, which initially concerned him until he remembered that the damage they would receive would only count in points.

"Let's get this party started," Hammons announced.

Trei released her raven familiar as the two of fighters made their way up the stairs towards the men who had their attention on the screaming of their friends above. One of them finally saw them and came running down to meet them. Suddenly a second came around the corner, both brandishing heavy looking two handed swords.

Bohb looked at Hammons who was smiling, almost fertile like. The first man swung his sword. Hammons ducked under it leaving the man to meet with Grog's Morningstar. He managed to lift his sword enough to prevent contact with the sharp edges, but the impact of the blow knocked him against the wall. Grog picked the man up by the throat and flung him down the stairs. He could hear the thuds and crutches as he hit each step.

By the time he caught up with Conan the man was in battle with three sword wielding figures. He was managing fairly well, but Grog thought it only right to make the odds better. He grabbed the closest one by the collar and pulled him away.

The man threw his sword round wildly and managed to catch Grog's arm.

[10% damage]

Bohb looked irritated. He took a big swing over his head and drove his mace head into the swordsman's abdomen. He moaned and dropped to ground. Lining up the man's head he swung Grog swung his Morningstar like a golf club and the man's head disappeared, followed quickly by the body.

He turned to see how avian was holding with only two opponents.

(reply Hammons)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 – Bleak Falls Barrow – PO1 Steven Hammons- 1452)

The goons on the stair taken care of Hammons had gained the landing and a wide pavement stretched ahead of him with the curving pillars running from the round building at one end with a roughly domed roof to his right which was higher than they were standing. A stairway the width of the portico they were standing on led up to it. To his left it stretched to the face of the cliff with the crows nest lookout above. All told this portico was probably 100 feet wide and 300 long from cliff to building.

The 3 who met him there were armed more sedately with one-handed swords, the one in the center caught his eye. But not for long because there were 5 more behind them. Steven took a blow on his shield from the man on his left and ducked the swing from the one in front of him. The one on the right was winding up for a thrust when he was grabbed by the collar and tossed unceremoniously down the stairs by Grog.

Hammons saw fire streak by him which erupted around the one who had missed him while Raven's familiar dove on the one before him spitting flames. Both bandits were consumed by fire and became screaming torches. Their cries were soon snuffed out as they fell lifeless to the pavement. Hammons stopped before the staircase that climbed to the barrow and turned to wait for the others. "Good teamwork there. Well done by all."

(Reply: Trei, Bohb, Alaya)

He stepped over and picked up a fallen bow, it appeared to have been dropped from above and one of the lifeless bodies that had fallen had an intact quiver full of arrows with iron points. "Might as well start practicing, I'm going to have to learn at some point." He placed the quiver and bow on his back along with his pack.

The wind was gusting savagely and the flurries of snow had gotten thick. Hammon's cape was fluttering and snapping around him.

"Storm's here, let's get inside."

(Reply: All)

They climbed the stairs and stood before double wooden doors banded by iron. If this ruin was as old as it looked why did the iron look new? Was it protected by some spell? Hammons pushed on one and it opened without a sound then slipped inside.

There was light from the north side which lit the building dimly due to a small part of the roof having collapsed and snow was being driven through the crack the collapse had made. The sound of the wind was as loud in here as it was outside. He stepped aside from the others and look about, what he saw caused him to drop into a crouch.

In the center was a raised dais accessed around it by eight steps. There was an ornate chair which was made of wood atop it which looked almost throne-like. Braziers burned around the periphery of the dais but it was what he saw beyond it that gave him caution. A campfire was burning steadily and shadows of men were being thrown on the walls by it.

Hammons motioned for the others to get down and crept forward to get a look. He reached the dais and found a recently deceased bandit lying partially upon it. He stopped to examine it and was able to discern many small bite marks made by razor sharp teeth. It appeared that at least one who had come in had been attacked and killed. Looking around he saw the bodies of many small animals the size and color of opossums stretched out with deep gashes or arrows protruding from their bodies. Whatever these rodents were called they were obviously deadly in numbers.

He slipped up behind the seat and looking around it caught sight of as many as a half dozen brigands either sitting or walking around the campfire. There looked to be as many women as men. One male was particularly intriguing, he was human and wearing a metal breastplate. Hammons wondered if he might be a leader or just someone lucky enough to have scavenged a choice piece of armor.

And who were these guys anyway? He considered that thought. They were a band of warriors in a war zone during a war which pointed to them probably being deserters, from which side really didn't matter. They had formed their own unit and were taking advantage of circumstances presumably to enrich themselves but why here? And where was the thief?

All that Hammons had seen so far were warriors, burly for the most part with little call for stealth and if they had broken into the Riverwood Trader would no doubt have stripped the place. The trading post had been stocked with food, clothing, armor (junk most of it), weapons (the same), spell books and potions. A group of bandits would have descended like a swarm of locusts. But only one item had been reported taken then brought here. What was its importance? Was it a guide or a key to something? And what was it they were searching for?

He retreated back to the others then huddled with them while keeping his voice very low. "Six bandits and no sign of the claw. There is a tunnel beyond the campfire, it looks like from the rubble left that they broke through a wall into it. Wherever the claw is it is surely somewhere in there."

(Reply: Bohb, Trei, Alaya)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

Conan informed her of the 6 bandits gathered around a campfire. He said there was a tunnel beyond that and the claw was most likely in the tunnel.. She instructed her familiar to produce dancing lights complimented by her casting Prestidigitation to lure the bandits away from the tunnel. If there was something in the tunnel to deal with, they will deal with it. The dancing lights played in the air like a family of fairies promising gold and gems if they were followed. That was enough for the party of bandits as they followed the lights. They had a short time to get the claw and get out. She turned to Conan and implored him that we needed to move fast.

"We need to move fast. The dancing lights spell won't distract them long. If we encounter anything in the tunnel we will deal with it. Lets move."

She prepared fire bolt just in case and her familiar did as well.

(Reply Hammons, Bobb, Alaya)

(Posted by Edward)

[illegible]

“Good Teamwork there,” Conan said. “Well done by all.”

Bohb was starting to see the entertainment value of playing such a game. There is an outlet for one's more violent tendencies. And knowing that no one is actually being harmed was helpful. Although he did wonder what happened if you lost all of your health points.

"Thanks," Bohb said, "that was... cathartic."

(reply Trei, Alaya)

He watched Hammons pick up a bow and a quiver of arrows, reminding him to keep looking for items of worth. However at this point, the item of worth would be some food and shelter.

"Storm's here, let's get inside," Conan said.

Even Bohb was beginning to feel the cold, and his fur cloak barely held out the wind. Clearly he was going to need to find something that gave him more protection, at least from the elements. He climbed the stairs up to a set of heavy, and ominous looking double doors.

Hammons pushed a door and it easily swung. Bohb had expected at least a creak from the iron hinges, but it moved silently, which put him on edge. It seemed so easy. A little too easy. The only sound was the eerie howling of the cold wind through the building, as the hole in the roof gave them little respite from the cold. At from the beast, if they stayed out of the draft, they'd get a break from the beating of the wind. Suddenly Conan dropped to a crouch.

Crouching was never much of a strategy for the seven foot Magillan, but he pressed himself against a wall. Then Bohb saw the shadows being cast by men from a fire. Hammonds went into his stealth mode to reconnoiter the scene. When he came back the news was less grim than he had expected but not as good as he'd hoped.

"Six bandits and no sign of the claw," he said. "There is a tunnel beyond the campfire, it looks like from the rubble left from when they broke through a wall into it. Wherever the claw is it is surely somewhere in there."

Raven looked at her raven as if a conversation were happening between them. The bird took to flight and suddenly the air was filled with bright, twinkling lights. They were fascinating, and Bohb couldn't help but stare at them. Trei's voice brought him to his focus.

"We need to move fast. The dancing lights spell won't distract them long. If we encounter anything in the tunnel we will deal with it. Let's move."

With that Grog leapt forward and ran into the firelight. He drew his Morningstar and began a wide arc around his head. By the time anyone had noticed him he was already swinging through one warrior, sending the broken body flying into the man next to him. Grog stepped on the second man's skull, hearing a slight crunch as his head flattened slightly.

He rolled towards a third, thrusting the head of mace into his midsection. Then he freed the orc blade from its scabbard and thrust it under the warriors jaw, deep into his cranium. Turning he threw the blade at a fourth and it had the good fortune of the blade sinking into his chest.

His shoulder cried out as he felt something cut into his left arm. Looking over there was another warrior taking a second swing at the orc, this time aiming for his head.

(reply Conan, Raven, Alaya)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

A dagger split the air and embedded itself in the neck of the breast-plated man who was winding up for a finishing blow on Grog. The man jerked and gurgled then flopped to the floor. Hammon's sword was in his left hand as he leaped into the fray and cut down one bandit with a slash across the neck before transferring the blade back to his right hand for a dazzling bout of swordplay with the last.

The bandit had a shield but Hammons had dropped his before jumping into the fray as he couldn't throw a dagger and hold the longsword with it. Their swords clashed as Steven pushed the guy back and away from the others. The bandit was at a disadvantage since he was using a shortsword but the shield made him hard to hit. The brigand was surprised however when "Conan" launched a vicious side kick that slammed the shield into him and caused the guy to stagger back. Hammons took advantage of the opportunity to knock his sword aside then skewer his right side. The bandit went down with a gasp then shuddered as he hit the ground before going still.

Hammons cleaned the blade off quickly then eased it back into the scabbard he had taken from its owner outside before retrieving and wiping off his dagger. "Look, a chest."

He tried to open it but it was locked so he used the pommel of a dead bandits weapon to bash it till it broke. Lifting the lid he looked inside. "What's this?" He breathed in a shocked breath then pulled out a glowing orb that was shedding a warm, white light. He vaguely felt rather than saw facets around its surface. The silence of the others was broken by an imperious female voice.

"You have found my beacon mortal. Bring it and cleanse my temple of the foul darkness that inhabits it and you will be well rewarded. I, Meridia await you."

Everyone else had heard it too and were looking around for the source of the voice.

(Reply: Alaya, Bohb, Trei)

"Well that was a shock." Hammons wrapped it in a cloth from the chest then pulled off his backpack and placed it at the bottom. It didn't weigh more than a couple of pounds.

After placing it on his back and rearranging his stuff he stood to his feet. "I've been thinking about the questions Alaya had and Hadvar told me a bit but I'm sketchy on a lot of it. The Thalmor seem to be a faction of high elves that overthrew their monarchy and did a purge of those that didn't disagree with them. They started a war with the severely weakened Empire 20 years ago and nearly toppled it. One of the terms for peace was a ban on the worship of Talos which the Thalmor enforce by dragging off and imprisoning or outright killing worshippers. What their beef is with Talos and what he represents I have no clue."

(Reply: Any)

"Let's go then." He had tried the metal breastplate and found it to be too heavy for his liking. There was a pair of high, soft leather boots in the chest however that fit him and would add some protection to his feet and legs above what his rough shoes afforded.

[Steven Hammons has leveled up. Perk points in stealth, one-handed weapon and blocking available. 10 points available for health, stamina or magicka for all party members.]

"Health for sure." He stated.

[Health increased by 10 points.]

(Reply: Any)

Steven waited and when the others had made their choice he started into the tunnel which was lit by oil lamps and torches spaced irregularly.

The tunnel wound around and down, at one curve to the left was an ancient but ornate table that had small ceramic urns atop it. One had been broken and some coins were visible, breaking the others yielded a handful of gold coins and a cut amethyst.

The tunnel turned again and faintly in the distance he could hear a man's cry for help.

(Reply: Alaya, Bohb, Trei)

Hammons increased the pace and entered a room with a large table in the center. 3 colored flasks sat atop it along with a bound tome. There were cabinets placed along the walls that appeared to hold embalming tools and rolled strips of old linen. There were cracks in the wall on the left side beyond the upright cabinet. Spider webs hung thickly around the opening. Steven stepped over to it and looked into a room that had its walls nearly covered in webbing. At the far end was a cocooned figure hung in what appeared to be a doorway. Looking around he saw no visible spiders though mounds on the floor appeared to be egg sacs. The cries for help were coming from the cocooned figure and he saw it move a bit.

Steven stepped into the room with his sword out wondering what had made this its lair since he saw nothing. He was almost in the center when the hairs at the back of his neck prickled at a noise above him. He looked up and nearly shrieked at the sight of the horse sized spider descending on him. He threw himself to the side to get away from it then swung around with sword raised and shield at the ready. It was settling to the floor and its multifaceted eyes were set on him.

(Reply: Trei, Bohb, Alaya)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar- Deck 4- Holodeck 2 – Bleak Falls Barrow - SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 15.00)

Raven heard Conan call for help. She rushed down the tunnel to see a giant spider bearing down on Conan. She had her familiar ram a fire bolt from behind the spider while she shoved a fire bolt down the spider's throat. The screech from the spider was deafening as it was fried from the inside out. She picked up Conan off the ground.

"Shall we find out who is in in the web cocoon ."

She had her familiar ready rapid fire fire bolts as they freed whoever was in the cocoon. She readied flaming sphere to compliment the fire bolts as they searched for the claw.

(Reply Hammons, Bobb, Alaya)

(Posted by Edward)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar -- Sickbay -- Deck 5 -- CMO 3XO Lt. Quinna Solice -- 1501)

Quinna managed to quickly take an assessment of the reports and was reminded of a major trigger item. Physicals. The crew needed physicals. And Quinna needed to handle them. She did not want to interrupt her Assistant CMO on her honeymoon. She still could not believe that married. But she was happy for them.

Now it was time to send out the message.

“MANDATORY PHYSICALS. REPORT TO DR. SOLICE!”

And then it was done. Short, sweet, and to the point. She needed those physicals in order to complete her medical report.

Since her time in sickbay was over, Quinna decided to hit the gym.

(Replies ALL)

(Posted by Kris B.)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar - Deck 4 - Holodeck 2 - Bleak Falls Barrow – EO – Ensign Bohb - 1501)

"Look, a chest," Hammons noted then quickly bashed the locking mechanism to open it.

What's this?" he asked pulling out a glowing sphere.

He was soon answered by a strange voice that seemed to come from nowhere, and everywhere at the same time.

"You have found my beacon mortal. Bring it and cleanse my temple of the foul darkness that inhabits it and you will be well rewarded. I, Meridia await you."

"Well that was a shock." Hammons wrapped it in a cloth from the chest then pulled off his backpack and placed it at the bottom. It didn't weigh more than a couple of pounds.

Bohb looked at the others thoughtfully. "Well that sounds like an intriguing invitation. How can we turn the lady down. Especially sine we'll be "well rewarded"?"

(Reply: Alaya, Trei)

"I've been thinking about the questions Alaya had," Hammons said, "and Hadvar told me a bit but I'm sketchy on a lot of it. The Thalmor seem to be a faction of high elves that overthrew their monarchy and did a purge of those that didn't disagree with them. They started a war with the severely weakened Empire 20 years ago and nearly toppled it. One of the terms for peace was a ban on the worship of Talos which the Thalmor enforce by dragging off and imprisoning or outright killing worshippers. What their beef is with Talos and what he represents I have no clue."

Bohb shrugged, "I'm amazed at how much knowledge you have of this realm, Conan. I have no idea who the Thalmor are or who Talos is, but there must be a reason from banning the worship of Talos. We better be on the lookout for anything to do with either of these groups."

"Let's go then." Conan said.

But first he tried on a metallic breastplate but tossed it aside, in lieu of a nice pair of boots. Bohb picked up the armor. It was heavy, but he could easily bare the load, so he put it on, feeling a little more protected. He heard a voice say something about health, stamina and magic, so he chose health. There was no such voice for Bohb, but he did feel more protected and wondered if his protection or defense ability rose because of the armor.

Then they followed Conan down a stone tunnel, sparsely lit by torches. As they wove through the passage they could slowly hear a voice crying out for help. They came into a room that was covered in an amazing array of spider webs. At the other side of the room was something that was completely encased in spider webbing. A meal fit for a giant spider. The muffled cries came from the cocoon. At first there didn't seem to be anything else in the room. As Hammons stepped to free whoever was in the webbing a giant spider dropped down from the high ceiling. He dove to the side, preparing to defend himself.

Steven stepped into the room with his sword out wondering what had made this its lair since he saw nothing. He was almost in the center when the hairs at the back of his neck prickled at a noise above him. He looked up and nearly shrieked at the sight of the horse sized spider descending on him. He threw himself to the side to get away from it then swung around with sword raised and shield at the ready. It was settling to the floor and its multifaceted eyes were set on him.

Raven rushed out of nowhere and cast a spell that sent fire down the spider's throat, baking it from the inside. The creature shrieked and died.

"Shall we find out who is in in the web cocoon," she asked.

Bohb was a little concerned that the shriek of the spider would call reinforcements, and he didn't relish the thought of battling a hoard of giant spiders. Little ones gave him the heebiejeebees.

"Let's make it quick," Bohb suggested.

(reply Trei, Hammons, Alaya)

[illegible]

"Now that's what I call heartburn! Must have been a killer." He noted, satisfied at last that it wasn't getting up as he poked it with the sword. "Geez that thing gives me the creeps. The worst part is I'm sure this won't be the last one we see in game. Just perfect!"

"Thank Nocturnal you got rid of that thing. Cut me down now please."

"The Golden claw?"

"The someone was me. Arvil the Swift they call me."

"Yes I do."

"You idiot." The cocoon replied. "How am I supposed to hand it over until you get me out of this web? It's impossible. Cut me down and I'll hand it over to you."

"I suppose you could at that."

"Of course."

"Thanks for the help." His laughter trailed behind him as he dashed farther into the tunnel.

"Dang it."

Hammons hacked down the last of the web. "He's getting away."

(Reply: Any)

Arvil was indeed swift and had put some distance between them. The tunnel was serpentine and Steven passed an altar with a cut stone, more offering jars and a couple of potion bottles in his haste as he chased after the dishonorable thief. ~Can't say i didn't expect it.~

The next thing he knew they were entering an internment area. Alcoves in the walls held remains, some completely wrapped in old linen and some crumbled to nothing but bones. There were shuffling noises ahead and as Steven looked around several of the bodies lying in alcoves began to move! "Undead area, watch your backs!"

Draugher shuffled into view, some still with shreds of armor attached and most carrying swords or axes. The temperature of the room seemed to drop. Steven stepped to the side and used the sword to hack one of them to pieces that was trying to get up.

All told it looked like a dozen bearing down upon them. Apparently the thief had disturbed their rest when he ran through laughing. "No sense of humor." Steven muttered as he went after another.

(Reply: Bohb, Trei, Alaya)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar - Deck 5 - Holodeck 2 - Bleak Falls Barrow - SPA LT JG Ariel Trei - 15.10)

They freed a thief that said he stole the golden claw. When asked for the claw to be handed over, the thief took off down the tunnel. Conan and Bobb perused the thief. When Raven caught up with the party they were fighting zombies. The alcove chamber was bigger than the spider chamber but she had to be careful with fireball. She decided to try rapid fire fire bolt with her familiar complimenting her, she could take out a good percentage of them and have Conan and Bobb clean up her misses. She prepared rapid fire fire bolt with her familiar next to her. Bolts of fire began to fly like a world war 2 machine gun spaying zombies left and right. She saw Conan do his thing and Bobb got some action too.

"Here zombies. Have some spicy meat balls."

(Reply Hammons, Bobb, Alaya)

(Posted by Edward)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar - Deck 5 - Holodeck 2 - Bleak Falls Barrow – PO1 Steven Hammons - 1511)

Hammons took several blows on his shield while striking out at the draugher that were pressing them back. His sword flicked out to separate the head from one undead body which caused the whole to collapse to the ground writhing.

Suddenly several caught fire and quickly became blazing torches as their parchment dry skin and wrappings caught fire. One bumped into another setting it ablaze. The air was soon filled with smoke. Steven at that point was using his shield to clear a path through the bodies which were already beginning to scatter. The first draughter to catch fire were quickly consumed by it and burned away until

only bits of charred bone remained and the remainder that were untouched by flame were hacked to pieces.

Hammons wiped his forehead. "Wow, talk about flammable!"

This chamber appeared clear is a bit charred so he picked up several torches from a stack along the wall and lit one from a draugher that was shambling by blindly. "Thanks for the assist." He watched as it dropped to the ground and was jerked as it was consumed. "Happy unlife day to you."

With the torches in hand he moved to the next chamber. It was down a short ramp and twice as large as the first, as a matter of fact there was a wall of sorts which divided it which also had alcoves in which bodies had been laid to rest. Some of the bodies were restless however and moving about with swords in their dead hands. And when one turned and Hammons was in its line of sight it gave an explosive growl and moved toward him.

"How could their eyes possibly work anyway?" Hammons noted an oily sheen on the floor and his eyes traveled up to see a large, shallow clay reservoir overhead. "Hey! Raven use a firebolt on that ropes that the pan is hanging by and let's see what happens."

(Reply: Trei)

Hammons stepped back as the reservoir tipped, a flaming liquid raining down from it before it crashed to the floor and the entire chamber exploded into smoky flame.

He pushed everyone back to escape the heat and smoke which hesitated then bellowed up through an unseen crack or vent.

They retreated back to the first chamber to wait until the fire died away.

"That was handy. I wonder if that was placed there on purpose. Duh! Obviously it was but it seems kind of strange to have that much foresight when designing a mausoleum. That should clear out the next chamber nicely at any rate."

(Reply: Bohb, Trei, Alaya)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

(USS Illuminar - Deck 5 - Holodeck 2 - Bleak Falls Barrow – EO – Ensign Bohb - 1512)

After being released from the webbed cocoon this Arvil the Swift made good on his name and bid a swift exit from the chamber. Clearly, he was not a man of his word either. However, if he had been then this adventure might have come to a much swifter conclusion. The band gave chase down the tunnel, until they ended up in what looked like some kind of a holding facility. Of course now it was in ruin, with dead bodies in various states of decay lying in the cells.

Suddenly some of the bodies began to move. One stood up and began to shuffle towards them, his hands stretched out to grab them.

“Undead area,” Conan called out, “watch your backs.”

Suddenly the air in the room grew cold and about a dozen soldiers in various states of armor came into the chamber. It took a moment for Bohb to realize that they were also in various stages of... dead. Conan leapt on one and cut it into smaller pieces as it was trying to get up. Bohb looked at his Morningstar with a bit of disappointment. He was going to need something with more of an edge to it. He noticed a bright sword sticking into a table and went over to it. It seemed to be crafted from a silver alloy. With a fast motion he drew the sword out of the table and swung it at one of the undead that was crawling towards him. The sword easily went through the creature which squealed and went limp.

“Very interesting,” Grog said. “This should help.”

He began to scythe through the undead, like a farmer through wheat. Suddenly there was a series of fireballs shoot at the them, exploding on the undead. Some were harmed, some simply kept walking forward, whilst on fire. Bohb discovered that removing a soldier's head from its body was the best way to stop the soldier. With the head removed the bodies collapsed and burned down to ashes. Between Grog, and Conan's killing spree, and Raven's fire bolts, they were able to finish off the hoard of undead, leaving the air filled with smoke and brimstone. Picking up torches they moved forward into the next chamber.

This room was larger than the last and the undead bodies were already starting to stir and move towards them. Hammons noted a container of some kind of oily substance. He asked Raven to shoot the container with a firebolt, which she did. The fiery liquid fell from the ceiling and coated the room in flames. The group retreated to the last room until the fire died down, hopefully burning up what was left still moving in the larger chamber.

“That should clear our next chamber nicely at any rate,” Hammons said cheerily.

Bohb shrugged, “Unless there's something in there that's fire retardant.” Anything seemed possible in this game. He checked on the door to find it cooling to touch and pushed the door open. Smoke

billowed into the small chamber, but it looked like the flames had mostly died down. A wave of heat went by the Orc burning at his eyes. But there didn't seem to be anything else moving. Slowly he moved back into the larger chamber, waving the others to follow.

(reply Conan, Raven, Alaya)

(posted by Al Muir)

[illegible]

“Unless there’s something in there that’s fire retardant.”

Hammons chuckled at "Grog's" comment. "Who knows, let's go find out."

He slipped through the door and walked over ashes and bits of bone to find at the other end a passageway blocked by three swinging guillotine traps which were set in a row about three feet apart. Hammons watched their transit closely. They weren't moving freely but the speed appeared controlled and they actually went up into the wall on each side. It looked as though one could slip by into the space between the next, wait for it to go by then slip through to the last then repeat the maneuver. "Hmm. Hopefully there's a mechanism on the other side to deactivate this."

He continued to search the chamber and on the other side found a crumbled section of wall that led to a wide crack, crawling up it he found a chest and the vent through which the smoke had dispersed. "Chest up here." He bashed it open as he had the last and found two money bags inside which he passed back to Raven and Alaya. Hammons and Bohb had already fattened their "accounts" so it was time to spread the wealth.

(Reply: Bohb, Trei, Alaya)

Also in the chest were an assortment of oddments including a set of lock picks. "Oh sure, put the lockpicks inside a locked chest. Makes perfect sense." Come to think of it the Trader had been selling lockpicks. "Looks like it's time for me to start practicing a new skill."

He hopped down and went back to the trapped entry way. "Hang loose here and I'll see if I can disable it on the other side."

The first was easy to slide by and he made himself as thin as possible until the next was at the bottom and going away. He slipped at the last one but still made it through by a hair then started looking around. Sure enough there was a switch, he reached for it but heard a guttural "Huff" behind him.

Spinning around while drawing his sword he saw another draughr trying to split his skull with an axe. He jumped to the side and took it on the shoulder instead. [Damage to Health 18%]

He brought the shield up and blocked the return blow then rained several vicious blows on the undead until it fell then turned and pulled the lever. He didn't see the guillotines stop and withdraw though he did hear the sounds of clacks and swishing noises stop. His attention was on 2 more draughr that had stepped out of vertical alcoves and were turning toward him.

(Reply: Bohb, Trei, Alaya)

(Posted by Charles G)

[illegible]

Conan passed two bags of loot to her. She set them aside to deal with more zombies. She readied rapid fire fire bolt and began wailing them in the void and any zombie she could see. For some reason, she hummed an obscure song by a band called the zombies but she modified the name of the song to fit the situation. Her familiar did the same.

"Its the time of the seaaaaason for killlllllling."

(Reply Hammons, Bobb, Alaya)

(Posted by Edward)

[illegible]

Gregory was steps away from the bridge if things needed his attention. Being in orbit around a friendly planet, it was good to let one of the younger officers get experience. He'd surprise them shortly with a drill. Surprise always brought out the practical reactions, as the announced drills were less reflective of the true skills of the crew being tested.

He was reviewing the progress that both Mr. Bohb and Mr. Matrix were making on their projects. Now it was time to brief the flight crew. He tapped his Comm badge, "Lieutenant Grey Wolf, Ensign Montero, please come to the COPs office at 1630."

=^= Montero here. Acknowledged. ^=^=

(Reply Grey Wolf, IYW)

That would give them enough time to finish their activities before reporting to discuss the project.

