

Subject: Returning To Duty

Author: Lt. Jake Arrington

Stardate: 80430:0630

Place: Jake's Quarters

Time: After "Black Ops"

Jake was laying on his bed reading a pad and sipping a cup of his favorite coffee. Jamaican blend, double strong, double sweet. He appeared to be very interested in what he was reading, because he was so engrossed in it, he didn't notice the door chiming, indicating that somebody wanted in. Finally he looked up from the pad.

Jake: Enter!

The doors swish open and his friend Ensign Masterson walks in. He looks at him and walks over to the bed and sits down.

Jay: What the hell are you doing? I've been standing out there chiming the door for 10 minutes!

Jake: Sorry, just reading.

Jay: (Taking the pad from his hands) What are you reading? (Looking at it for a second and dropping it on the bed) Damn man, you really need to stop beating yourself up about this! It wasn't your fault!

Jake: Wasn't it? I truly believe I could have saved that ship and it's crew! But I lost my judgement and ran into a closet and sat there cowering while the rest of the ship fell to pieces around me. I can still hear the screams of the officers as their lives were slowly and painfully taken from them by the BORG on that day. I truly believe if I wasn't so scared I could have saved them!

Jay: There was nothing you could do man! Nothing. You had no idea the BORG would attack that ship! Nobody did! You're sitting here sipping coffee dwelling on the past, and that's not healthy. It wasn't your fault. Yes, you had a chance to try and save the ship, but instead you did what anybody else would have done given the chance. You ran and hid. In my eyes, you wouldn't be here right now if you hadn't.

Jake: Somehow I don't believe that. The more I think about it, I am able to piece together more and more about what happened that day. And I know that I was scared, and a lot of things were running through my mind at that moment, but I keep seeing this vision of my father crying out for help. I keep seeing him reaching out calling my name, and then suddenly everything goes black and silent.

Jay: Okay, so what good is continuing to read this thing? All it is a record of schetchy reports of what happened on that ship. Written by somebody who wasn't even there. I've

seen it many times. In the eyes of the families of the crew members that died on that ship, you are a hero.

Jake: A Hero! I didn't save anybody! I'm not a hero!

Jay: Surely you know by now that it doesn't take saving somebody's ass to be a hero. Being the only survivor on that ship makes you a hero.

Jake: Whatever you say man, but I am not a hero. I'm a coward.

Jay: I think you've been listening to Commander be`vaj too much man.

Jake: So what if I have? She's right.

Jay: In her own way, yes. I'm sure if you were a Klingon, you'd surely be stripped of all your honor for what you did. But you're not. You gotta understand, Klingon's see things differently. Their lives are all about battle and honor. That's good for them. But not for you. Sitting here dwelling on the past all the time, and continuing to let her comments about your past get to you isn't getting you anywhere man. It's tearing you apart.

Jake's comm badge suddenly chirps. The Captain's voice comes over it.

[Morris to Arrington]

[Arrington here]

[Lieutenant, I want you to meet with Commander Fallan and escort him to the conference room]

[Escort him?] Arrington asked.

[Yes Lieutenant, he doesn't yet know his way around the ship. I'm certain that you'll find him in one of the hollow suites on deck seven] Morris said

[Aye sir, I'm on my way Arrington out]

Jake deactivated his comm badge and set his cup of coffee on the table next to the bed and picked up the computer pad and stood up and went over to the dresser with it and set it on top of it and checked his uniform and his hair in the mirror and turned to his friend who was already starting for the door of his quarters.

Jay: I'll see you later man, I've got some things to take care of.

Jake: Okay.

Jake follows Ensign Masterson out the door of his quarters, and they both enter the turbo

lift. "Deck Seven!", Jake said, and the doors closed and the turbo lift began to move. The lift stopped on deck 5 and Ensign Masterson got off. As the doors closed him out of Jake's site, he stood there and thought for a moment about what Jay was saying to him back in his quarters. Was it really his fault that those officers died while he ran and hid in a closet? He still didn't know.

The doors opened on deck 7 and he stepped off the lift and stopped at one of the holosuite's and checked the computer panel right outside. He was about to enter when the doors suddenly swished open and saw Commander Fallen walking out, almost running him over. The Commander looked at him for a brief moment and then left him standing there and walked toward the lift.

Jake: Commander Fallen!

Fallan: Yes?

Jake: I'm Lt. Arrington, chief of security sir. Captain Morris asked me to escort you to the conference room for a briefing sir.

Fallan: (Stopping by the lift) Well, what are we waiting for?

Jake joined him and the turbo lift doors opened and they went into it. As the doors swished closed, Lt. Arrington stood at attention and stayed silent. Commander Fallen looked at him and smiled.

Fallan: At ease before you sprain something Lieutenant.

Jake's hands rested at his side and he snapped out of his daze and shouted, "Bridge" and the lift began to move. Fallen studied him closely for a few moments. Everything about him appeared to be human except the eyes. He was very puzzled by the Mercury colored eyes, how the walls of the turbo lift seemed to reflect right off of them. He cleared his throat and spoke.

Fallan: Lieutenant, what race are you?

Jake turned and looked at him with a strange look on his face.

Fallan: If you don't mind my asking.

Jake: Sorry sir, I get that a lot. I was under the impression that everybody knew of my race. I am Tandorian sir.

Fallan: No problem Lieutenant, just asking, that's all.

The doors opened on the bridge, and Lt. Arrington lead him to he conference room. The doors opened, and jake took his place next to the Doctor. Commander Fallan just stood

there looking around the room at all the officers. He found an empty chair on the other side of Captain Morris and he went to it and sat down.

NRPG: Okay, I might be way out of my league here, but I tried. It's taken me some time to get back in the habit of coming up with storylines quickly so that I'm not left behind. LOL! Anyway, here's what I got.

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