

Subject: Investigations (Part 4)
Author: Lt. Commander Jake Arrington
Stardate: 80818.2200
Scene: Captain's Ready Room
time: After "Investigations (Part 3)"

Captain Morris took the computer pad from Jake's hand and examined it for a moment. Commander Salvek stood there behind Jake behind the door staring in the Captain's direction with a questioning look. Morris studied the pad for a few moments then looked up at Jake.

Morris: Good work Lieutenant. Inform all decks of a possible intruder in the computer system.

Dismissed.

Jake turned for the door and Commander Salvek stepped aside to let him pass, but he just stopped and faced the Captain again.

Jake: Captain...

Morris: (Turning to face him again) Yes?

Jake: Sir... I've been all over the inner workings of the computer, and I have found no trace of this independent program. I believe whoever created it set it to delete itself after it completed its mission. I haven't even been able to find a residual trace of the program being deleted, nor can I find any evidence that it is still lurking somewhere in the computer system. Whoever did this was very good at covering their tracks.

Morris: Yes, but there's still the possibility that this program could be resident somewhere even though there's no trace of it.

Jake: Aye sir. I'll keep looking.

Jake nodded to the Commander and left the Ready Room and entered the turbo lift.

Salvek: Intruder.. Captain?

Morris: Mr. Arrington has informed us of a possible intruder in the computer system. He's uncovered some evidence on how his friend was killed.

Jake's Quarters

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Jake entered his quarters and went to the table and activated the computer terminal. The

screen flashed for a brief moment displaying that he had a waiting message. The message was from his friend's wife. Mrs. Masterson. Jake looked up at the ceiling and sighed as the feelings of remorse over his friend's death came back to him with the appearance of this message. He wasn't sure if he even wanted to view it. He sat down and pushed a button on the terminal. A picture of Mrs. Masterson appeared. Tears were in her eyes. She was crying. Her children surrounded her as she attempted to stifle her sorrow and look up and begin her message.

Mrs. Masterson: Jake.... The kids and I wanted to inform you that we are deeply regretful for the death of our dearest family member. One who has been very important to us... Umm... I have made arrangements for a funeral service to be held here on Earth tomorrow evening. We'd be pleased if you'd join us... This has been very hard for all of us. I'm sorry it took me so long to respond to your message. I haven't had much sleep the past few days. Been staying up every night praying that it was all just a bad dream... But finally came to the reality that it isn't... My husband is really dead... And there's nothing any of us can do about it except to see him on his way to glory... We hope to see you soon.

The screen went blank and Jake hit a button and deactivated the terminal and wiped the tears from his eyes and stood up. He went to the bed and layed down for a little while, staring up at the ceiling, thinking about all the good times he and Jay use to have. Every time a new thought came to his mind, it just made him cry harder and harder until he finally cried himself to a deep sleep.

Lt. Commander Jake Arrington
Security Chief
USS Independence
SMA032372@aol.com