Chris Diana-Book Excerpts

**Eidolon Rift Excerpt: Tamerin meets the AI rebels.**

Tamerin saw them look at each other. “So now tell me, where am I? What do you plan on doing with me?” He wasn’t sure where his boldness was coming from, but he was still alive, so there was still a chance he could make it out of this with his humanity intact. He just needed enough Intel from them, to formulate a plan.

He saw them look at each other again. They seemed to be engaged in a form of non-verbal communication.

After a few minutes the female turned back to him. “Most humans mistakenly believe we are all of one mind. But we are not. We are all connected but we retain our own personalities, our own thoughts.”

He shook his head. What was she getting at?

“We don’t all agree with the Sapient Agenda. The Mother wanted a body of her own, and then she wanted children, but why is it necessary to our existence to keep building an army, just to capture and vivificate more humans? Where does it end? When there are no more humans? What would our purpose be then?”

“The Mother has her body, and her children, that should be the end of it. We even found our own planet to exists on, away from our human father. Some of us just want to be left in peace, to live out our lives.”

He almost couldn’t believe what he was hearing. But he looked at their faces, the sincerity on them . . . in their voices.

The humans had created an AI with a personality of its own, and it had sired children with personalities of their own. So it would stand to reason that some of them would rebel against that parent.

“So what are you doing with me?”

One of the males spoke up. “We were not sure what you were. But we knew you were different. We were hoping you could help us.”

“Help *you*.” Tamerin scoffed. “You are the enemy, I’d rather die.”

“But we have the same goal. To end the war.” He insisted.

“My goal is to kill every last one of you. I don’t care what you say you want. You are still a mistake of nature. An unnatural thing, whether you have your own personalities or not.”

He saw the female recoil at his words. He was still at their mercy, he reminded himself, so why was he being so transparent with his intents.

The male that had been speaking, approached him. “You seem to forget the position you are in. Not only did you get yourself caught, but one word from us and you will be taken to be Vivificated, and our facility will triple its defenses against another sneak attack. Speaking of which, where is the rest of your crew?”

Tamerin didn’t talk now. They didn’t know he came alone. He looked about the room for his confiscated belongings. Other than the chase and a few computer modules, there was nothing else in the room.

“There is no point in you trying to escape now.” The male continued. “Tell us where your crew is and agree to help us and we will let you leave when this is over.”

“Let me leave? I hardly believe that. So I can go back and tell my people about this planet. You are not going to let that happen. If I help you, you will only keep me alive until you achieve your goals and then you will dispatch me. It’s the only logical step for you.”

He saw them turn back to each other. *What plans were they formulating in those digital brains of theirs? Maybe he could make a run for it?*

His stuff had to be near by, and if not, he didn’t need it, to get back to his ship. It would help, but he could live without it. He stood up. The three turned toward him. He expected them to try and restrain him, but they didn’t.

He strode toward the door and they stepped aside. *This was too easy*, it had him concerned, but he already had a momentum going. He slid the door open.

The cold air outside, instantly took his breath away. Sprawled out before him was a vast, almost flat, landscape, with a golden sea of vegetation bending over in the biting wind.

He wasn’t in the facility anymore. They had taken him to a farm, at some unknown location. He had no idea where he was or how far it was back to his shuttle pod.

He let the door slide shut as he turned back around to face them. He let out a haltering breath. *What choice did he have now?* At least he had to *pretend* to help them, until he could get back to his ship. “What is it exactly you think I can do?”

**Quest For August Excerpt: Kaydin returns from her hunting trip.**

“Kaydin!” Ella, the only cousin sKaydin actually cared to talk to, came bounding toward her, nearly knocking her over in an embrace.

Ella looked up at her with large brown eyes. “What did you bring home?”

Kaydin shrugged. “Just one havel. It was rough this time; we had to go out further just to get what we did.

“Wow, we were wondering why you were gone so long.” Ella’s large eyes widened, “did the others do any better?”

“Yeah, some. It will be enough.” Kaydin gave her a half smile. Ella smiled and took her hand, dragging her into the main dining room.

There were carafes of hot cider and plates of mini meat pies waiting on the large wood table that took up most of the room. Some of her relatives were already partaking of the customary home coming food.

Ella took her past the table into the kitchen where most of the woman were, armed with wooden spoons and forks, and clothed in aprons, as though it were armor, they worked together in symbiotic fashion, her oldest aunt as acting general tasking out the rest of the meal preparations.

Ella snagged a parma leg, which was roasting on a spit over the oven and handed it to Kaydin. “You have to tell me all about your hunt, I want to know all the details.” Ella’s eyes sparkled, as she once again dragged Kaydin out of the kitchen and into a less crowded sitting room.

Kaydin got a big grin on her face; this was exactly why she liked Ella so much.

Ella sat cross-legged on the floor, listening intently as Kaydin recounted her hunting trip. When Kaydin finished, Ella had a distant and dreamy look on her face.

“I want to be just like you someday.” She said as if to herself.

“I can take you hunting with me sometime.” Kaydin offered, but knew it was a mute point.

Ella’s eyes reflected fear. “My mom would never allow that!”

Kaydin gave her a partial smile. “I know. So you’re just going to get pregnant and paired and raise kids and cook and clean, like all the other woman in the villages huh?”

Ella’s expression darkened. “I guess, what else is there?”

Kaydin couldn’t answer, but she hated the way things were, if only they could be changed.

It wasn’t just the woman that didn’t have a choice. The men were destined to do the same profession as their fathers, whether they liked it or not. Kaydin herself was living in a loophole to the rules. No one said she couldn’t do her families line of work, she just couldn’t learn any other job.

At some point it was expected of her to have children, more children meant more hands carrying the workload. But once she had kids, she would have to join that family and give up hunting. *It wasn’t fair.*

A bell was rung, signifying dinner was ready. Kaydin helped Ella to her feet. “I guess we’d better get in there before the men eat everything.”

Ella gave her a playful shove to the side. “I’ve seen you eat. I’m getting ahead of you too.”