

Crimson Delta

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by Kyle Eggleston

Captain Jack O'Brien sat on the bridge of his ship, the U.S.S. Fresno. The Red Alert was sounding on all decks. Several Dubor Scout Ships were flanking the Fresno left and right attacking from all angles. With every hit, sparks flew across the bridge in a bright flash of light.

O'Brien held onto his command chair. He looked over to his first officer Kate Monson. "Kate, get that containment field in place or we'll lose half the ship!" He ordered.

"On it!" Kate yelled over the screams of terrified ensigns.

The Dubor had upped their attack in this sector of space since the war began. They had focused their main forces on Crimson Delta in an attempt to destroy the station. It was their way of saying don't mess with us, we will fight you to the death. Well, it was working.

Jack had enough of this nonsense. "Launch fighters, let's see if they can take some of the heat off of us!" His order was heard and carried out. Outside, two squadrons of heavy fighters flew out of the docking bays and began attacking the scout ships. The fighters were more maneuverable than the mile long Fresno. They were faster too, being able to zip and zag around the Fresno as needed. As each scout ship was destroyed it was a minor victory for the Fresno, Crimson Delta, and their crews.

As the last of the scout ships were destroyed and the fighters were recovered and into their bays, O'Brien called to cancel the Red Alert. The bridge lights came back up, it was no longer dark. He never understood why the bridge went dark during a Red Alert, it simply made no sense to him.

"Department heads, I want a tactical evaluation done in an hour. We'll meet in the main conference room." O'Brien ordered. "I want to see how we did compared to last week's engagement, how we might improve. That sort of thing. Commander Monson will give out the assignments."

Monson stood at attention. "Aye sir." She said.

As the bridge cleared of non essential personnel who had only been there for the fight, O'Brien looked over the latest casualty reports. They seemed to weather this latest storm quite well considering they had little to no help from the station below. Crimson Delta's main

battery had jammed and refused to fire leaving the Fresno to do all of the heavy lifting. O'Brien noted to have a meeting with the station's commander regarding their latest attack once he had all of his reports in a row. Fortunately the Fresno had taken most of the heat from the assault as the station was a sitting duck.

Thank goodness for small favors. O'Brien thought. Crossing the bridge, O'Brien entered a small office. As he left the bridge, he gave orders. "Kate you have the bridge, see that those damage repair teams are assigned and working to get repairs underway. I don't want our next engagement to happen until after we're repaired." It was wishful thinking, but Jack was good at that. He hoped they would be prepared for the next assault.

Kate nodded. "Yes sir." She said as she got to work.

In his office, Jack removed his uniform jacket. It was a bit stuffy in there for it. He took a moment to look at the disarray that was his desk. Picking up a photo, he placed it back upright. It was a photo of his ex-wife. Only Jack could tell you what he was doing with her picture on his desk and then it might only be a half truth. Jack didn't really know why he had her picture, it just gave him comfort to some degree.

"Captain's log, September 12th, 2246." O'Brien began his log entry for the day. "We have weathered this latest attack from the Dubor with limited casualties. My crew seems up to the task at hand of taking on the enemy."

O'Brien's comm unit beeped indicating someone wished to speak with him.

"Computer pause recording." O'Brien commanded. He activated his comm unit. "Go for O'Brien."

"Sorry to bother you sir," The voice of the assistant chief medical officer came over the wire. "Doctor Green is dead. He was performing an emergency operation when the Med Chamber lost atmosphere suffocating him instantly. He and the patient died without warning." The woman continued. "Waiting for your orders on how to proceed."

Jack sighed. Doctor Green was a qualified doctor. Not as good as his old CMO, but good enough. "Understood Doctor." Burke replied. "You have just become chief medical officer, I'd say congratulations are in order, but we both know that won't bring back the dead. Take over from here, O'Brien out."

He was almost certain he heard the woman say *son of a bitch* before the line closed, but couldn't be sure. He couldn't blame her for being upset. If he had just inherited someone's job, he would be pretty upset about it too. The doctor was human, she would get used to running things down in Med Bay. If she didn't, there would be hell to pay. Jack preferred to run a tight ship. There were times to let your hair down and times to be on the go. Now was a time to be

on the go. He couldn't afford to lose anyone to the thought that they would lose this conflict. All hands had to be on deck at all times. That's just how the ball was run.

As he sat there, damage reports started flooding in from all of the department heads. Engineering had taken most of the brunt of the attack. The chief engineer had to shut down the main reactor core. The Fresno was adrift in space for the moment. Jack didn't like that, but with the main reactor down for repairs he had no other choice but to wait it out.

Picking up a news pad, Jack decided to catch up on the news at home. He didn't like being kept in the dark with what the new administration was doing on his watch of all things. President Cain had enacted a curfew of twenty-one hundred hours. All civilians were to be indoors by that time and citywide blackouts had been established preventing any light to shine out giving off targets for the enemies.

Leaning back in his chair, Jack lit a cigar and took a long drag from it. Exhaling the smoke into rings, he smiled. Being out near The Rim had its advantages. Earth had outlawed smoking years ago, but out here no one could tell you what you could and could not do. He liked that about space.

Kate Monson entered jack's office unannounced. She gagged at the smell of the cigar. "You know those things are a death trap right?" She said waving her hand to get the smoke out of her face.

Jack shrugged. Cancer was a thing of the past. What did he care if he got a few drags in during his off hours? He didn't. As far as he could tell, he could do what he wanted and how he wanted. No one could tell him otherwise, especially not his first officer. What was one more nail in the old coffin?

"What do you have to report commander?" Jack asked as he put the cigar out. He did that out of respect not because he wanted to.

Kate shook her head. "Nothing yet sir. The department heads are scrambling to come up with their reports. I just wanted to remind you of your meeting with the station commander at oh six hundred this morning. You've yet to check in since orbiting this rock, they'd like a word with you."

Jack nodded. He had meant to check in with the station commander, but was otherwise engaged protection the station itself. O'Brien figured he had his priorities straight but maybe the station commander felt otherwise.

"What's the station commander's name?" Jack asked.

"Major Burke." She said. "John Burke."

Jack whistled. He hadn't heard that name in a hot minute. O'Brien thought for a moment, there was something he remembered reading about a John Burke right after the fighting broke out. "Not *the* John Burke." He said.

Kate nodded. "The one in the same." She responded. "He took over the station roughly a year ago about the same time you signed on Crimson Gamma." She placed her hands on her hips and leaned forward. "Personally I thought he had died in the attack on Earth. Must have been a different John Burke I was thinking about."

Jack confirmed her suspicions. "Yeah, I heard the same rumor. Guess some men are larger than life and ghost stories. Is that all commander?"

Kate nodded. "Yes sir. Just that reminder. I'll be going now."

"Dismissed." Jack said as he watched his first officer leave his office and enter the bridge. Jack couldn't ask for a better first officer than her. Sure they had their differences from time to time, what good working relationship didn't have its ups and downs? He was happy to have her aboard.

Looking at a nearby clock, Jack read the time. Oh four hundred hours. Man it was early, but the Dubor didn't care what time they attacked. If they felt like attacking during supper they would. It was all about being unpredictable. So far there had been no rhyme to their attack, the reason was obvious. Destroy station Crimson Delta at all costs. Jack just wondered when they would be bringing in the big guns to finish the job. These scout ships were nothing but a test of the station's defenses. They would attack and report back to a larger control ship who would then report back to the Dubor home world for their generals to compile the data and make a strategy plan from there. Jack appreciated their efficiency, but hated it at the same time.

Picking up a cup he drank from it. The coffee was cold. Jack placed the cup in the matter reclamation unit and left it at that. What he needed was an hour of uninterrupted sleep. Walking over to a makeshift cot on the floor, Jack planned on doing just that. As soon as his head hit the pillow he was out like a light.

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Oh six hundred came earlier than expected. Jack found himself standing in the station commander's office standing at attention. He noticed there were no chairs in the room, not even for the station commander. There was a standing desk in the middle of the room and that was it. No decorations of any kind. Jack wondered if this Burke fellow was a hard ass just bucking for a promotion to get the hell out of there. If that were the case it was a shame.

"Captain, we seem to be getting off on the wrong foot." Major Burke said. "I've sent, I don't know how many communiques to you requesting you to come aboard and meet with me. They've all gone unanswered until now. Why?"

Jack frowned. He didn't have a good explanation for why he hadn't bothered to meet with the major, but no explanation wasn't a good reason at all. "Sorry sir." He said. "I was busy preparing my vessel for battle using drills. It must hae just slipped my mind." Jack lied through his teeth, he had been conducting drills but they didn't prevent him from meeting with the major.

Major Burke tapped a swagger stick against the desk. Jack wondered what was with these people and their sticks? Was there a memo he had missed? He never needed a swagger stick when he was in command of Crimson Gamma. He simply shook his head.

"Find something amusing captain?" Burke asked.

Jack shook his head no. "No sir, just admiring your swagger stick sir."

Major Burke looked at the stick and then back to Jack. "It's a fine piece of work, I should know I generated it myself. But enough about that. You and your ship are here at the request of General Tague. She doesn't think I am capable of defending this station by myself." He said. "She could be right, but we've gotten along just fine so far without your help."

O'Brien tried not to quip that the major's main gun battery would like to have a word. He simply kept his mouth shut. It was a known tradition in his family to speak only when spoken to, he had not been spoken to. Simply an observation had been made.

"Let me put this out there captain." Burke said. "You're an alien. I don't have to like you to work with you. Don't believe for one moment we will ever be friends. Is that clear?" He stared O'Brien in the eyes driving his point that much deeper.

O'Brien nodded. "Yes sir. No friendship sir. Understood."

"Good." John smiled. "Your men are free to use the station's facilities as time permits. You'll find it comprizable to Crimson Gamma, should feel like home. I know how it can be being cooped up in one of those space ships. I ran a ship during the Civil War myself before I was given command of Crimson Delta. General O'Neil was a great man, it was a shame to lose such a fine valued officer."

O'Brien stopped himself from rolling his eyes. Was everyone who fought in the Civil War on the losing side but him? He was beginning to wonder how many more people he would come across who actually thought Cain's plan of action was the right one. Again he kept his mouth shut, rule number 2. Don't ever discuss politics if you don't have to.

"Well I think that's all captain." Burke said. He slammed his swagger stick on the desk.
"My aide will escort you back to your fine vessel. Good hunting captain."

O'Brien nodded, did an about face, and exited the office. A woman was waiting for him as he exited the room. She smiled at O'Brien and gestured to a transport tube. "This way sir." The lieutenant said.

They passed through the many corridors to get to the docking ports, O'Brien noticed there weren't many aliens on the station, mostly humans. Surely the planet below had a population who wanted to visit the station to trade their goods for money and other things like clothing. They were simple farmers after all.

As if reading his mind, the lieutenant spoke up. "The alien population mostly keep to themselves in Section B." She said. "We rarely see them in the more common areas of the station. They prefer to do their business down there. The major likes it that way too."

Jack made an observation. "Major Burke rules with an iron fist, doesn't he lieutenant."

The lieutenant didn't know how to take the question. It required a simple yes or no response, that was all. Yet she felt it as a personal attack against her commanding officer. Refusing to be offended, she simply smiled. "Aye captain." She responded finally.

O'Brien nodded as they walked. There wasn't much more to be said, he had all of the information about the major he needed. The major had one thing right, they didn't have to like each other to be able to work together. O'Brien could look past the major's imperfections if it meant getting the job done by the end of the day.

Exiting a transport tube's lift, the captain and lieutenant found themselves in the docking ports. He walked up to where his shuttle was docked and smiled at the lieutenant.

"Stay safe out there." The lieutenant said as a goodbye.

O'Brien nodded in response. "You stay safe in here, don't let the major do anything too wild on the alien population down below. Who knows, we might need them."

The lieutenant looked back with a face of disgust. How dare the captain even suggest such a thing to her. She had it in her mind to report it to the major as an insubordinate comment, but decided against it. Maybe the captain was just having an off day, eventually he would come around. She thought. Things like that take time for a man to understand their way of thinking.

Captain O'Brien boarded his shuttle and headed back to his ship directly above the station. He had placed her there in orbit on purpose so the major would have to look up with respect. Sure it was a cheap move, but it was a move worth making. O'Brien didn't want to be kept from what he felt was rightfully his, respect. He was in this fight as much as anyone else

on the station. Jack felt there was nothing wrong with what he had done. The major would get the hint eventually, but for now it was just another ship docked with the station in orbit of a farmer's planet.

Burke watched from his office as the shuttle carrying O'Brien docked with the Fresno. What was Tague thinking giving him command of a star ship? He knew the order came from the higher ups, that she wasn't the actual one to give O'Brien command of the ship. But still Jack wouldn't have been Burke's first choice to command a star ship and keep her in orbit with his station, not by a long shot.

Opening a channel, he called over to Crimson Gamma's C&C. As the channel opened, John winced at the man on the other end of the line. Tague's first officer. The two officers had served together on the Umpumbra, one of the older ships of the fleet. "Tom." John Burke said.

Tom looked back through the comm unit and smiled. "John Burke as I live and breathe, why haven't you died yet?"

Burke cracked a smile. "Just haven't had the chance yet. But the way this war is going, you might get your wish. Hey, is your CO around? I need to talk to her." He paused "She's the one that bosses you around and signs your checks in case you've forgotten."

Tom gritted his teeth. Part of him wished they could get along, but there was another part that just didn't want that to happen. "I'll get her for you." He said. "You should come over sometime, we can grab drinks and remind ourselves how much we hate each other."

Burke shook his head. "Perhaps not."

Tom nodded. "Perhaps not. It was good to see you again major, stay safe out there."

Eve Tague stepped out of the shower to answer her comm unit. Wrapping up in a towel, she sighed. Her hair was a mess, but that didn't matter. What did matter was someone was bothering her day off. Walking over to a computer terminal, she shouted at it. "Yes, what is it?!"

Tom appeared on the screen. "Sorry to bother you ma'am. I have Major Burke on the line for you." He really was sorry for bothering the general, but when duty called one had to deal with it.

Eve nodded. "It's alright Tom. This better be good. Put him through."

An uptight John Burke appeared on the monitor. He was trying to keep his composure as best he could, but found it difficult to do. "Eve, what the hell are you thinking giving that half breed command of a space ship? The Fresno of all ships!"

Eve smiled. She knew this would get under his skin. The Fresno had been a ship close to the major one that had a special history to it. "Blame President Cain." Eve said. "It's all his

doing. He wanted to keep the half breed as you call him under a watchful eye. You're playing babysitter major, nothing more. If you can't handle that, I'm sure I can find someone to replace you. I hear Tom has been bucking for a promotion."

Burke frowned. "Understood sir." He said. "Enjoy your day off. Burke out."

Eve unwrapped the towel and began drying her hair. She hoped John would be up to the task at hand. The last thing she wanted was an officer who couldn't follow orders or handle the orders given to him by the president of all people. Eve shook her head in disappointment. John would eventually learn, they all learned when it came to Eve's command style.

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Grilka mourned the fact that Jack was gone from her. She wanted this all to be a dream and for her to wake up, have everything be normal again. She wanted Jack to be in command of Crimson Gamma again, where he belonged. Grilka wailed inside her quarters. Security had already been called twice due to a noise complaint. Grilka couldn't help the way she mourned, it was the Dubor way. Deep down she knew Jack mourned her as well, just in a different way; a human way. But he still mourned.

Not wanting to be disturbed, Grilka disabled any door chime from calling into her quarters. There was a knock at her door, a rapid knock, a knock that wasn't going to stop. Wiping tears from her eyes long enough to answer the door, she walked over to the entrance to her quarters and pressed a button on a side panel next to the door. The door slid open.

Norev stood on the other side of the door, she was carrying a fruit basket.

Grilka stared at the basket in confusion. "What is this?" She was surprised to see Norev of all people standing at her doorstep.

Norev handed the fruit basket to a confused Grilka and explained. "Humans tend to give a gift when someone is having a bad day, like you are. It was either fruit or flowers. I do not see the need in flowers, they taste good but are rather more meant for a romantic interlude. Since we are not in a romantic state, flowers would have been inappropriate." She paused and smiled. "The fruit on the other hand, you can enjoy."

Grilka accepted the fruit basket gracefully. "Well I accept your offering. But why are you here exactly? I don't understand."

Norev entered Grilka's quarters and sat down on a bar stool in the kitchen. "You once came to me asking me for help, to help you become a better delegate to be exact. You lacked

the necessary qualities to be a representative for your people.” Norev said. “Well, I’m here to help you in that regard. Staying in your quarters, hiding, isn’t going to do you any good my dear. You need to get out there and show the station that you are okay with how things are going. You need to show them you do not support this war effort but support Earth’s troops. That is the foot you need to put forward.”

Grilka sighed a deep sigh. The ambassador was right as usual. Grilka hated that about Norev, why couldn’t she be wrong from time to time? It didn’t make any sense to her, not at all.

Joining Norev on a bar stool, Grilka rested her hands in her lap. “I miss him.” She said.

Norev nodded. “I know you do.”

Grilka shook her head. “No, you don’t understand. It is not my people’s way to feel this way about off-worlders. But he isn’t fully from Earth now is he? Not a stranger either. He is part of me, he is part Dubor.”

Norev nodded again. “I know.” She said. “But you will manage, we all will manage. I am having my own issues with Obshi. Why do these men have to be so difficult?” Norev stomped her foot down on the deck squishing a bug. “You should get that looked at, don’t want an infestation happening in your quarters.”

Grilka slid a small box across the counter over to Norev and indicated for her to open it. The box had a hinge on it like a small ring box. Opening the box, there was in fact a ring inside, it was hooked to a necklace.

Norev looked to Grilka waiting for an explanation.

“It’s Jack’s.” Grilka said. “His twenty year service ring. He said he wanted me to hold onto it. I do not understand the Earth custom for holding onto such an item. But I agreed to do it for him. Maybe he thinks he would lose it on his new assignment?”

Norev chuckled to herself. “Oh you naive child.” She said. “He is having you hold onto this item, this precious item that is close to him, as a sign that he will be back for you. It is a gesture of his love, a token of affection. Some men give actual wedding rings, others give something that is important to them. The sentiment is the same. He cares about you.”

Grilka smiled at the gift. *A gesture.* She thought. Jack did love her, this was proof of it. It had been staring at her all this time and Grilka never noticed it. Taking hold of the chain, she lifted it and the ring out of the box and put it around her neck. “I think he would like me to wear it.”

Norev nodded her approval. “Most definitely he wants you to wear it, and wear it with pride.” She added. “He is the heart of your heart, the soul of your soul. You are meant to be.”

Grilka nodded her approval of Norev's words.

Norev stood from the bar stool. "No more tears my dear." She said placing a hand on Grilka's shoulder. "Things will get better, you will see. I promise." Without further word she exited Grilka's quarters.

Grilka looked at the ring around her neck. She would take Norev's words to heart. The love of her life would return one day. The war would take priority over that reunion for now. She understood that now. The bloody war had to take place first. Grilka picked up a glass and threw it on the floor, it shattered as it made contact. Duborian legend stated that when glass was shattered, it had a way of telling you the future. Grilka stared into the shards looking for hers.

She stared at the glass for what seemed like hours with no visions into what her future might hold. Grilka sighed. Maybe it was all just a fable told to children in hopes that they would find a way to follow their dreams. There was a lot of things she had been told as a child that she believed in, this was one of them.

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Crimson Delta rocked underneath the feet of its occupants. As the gravity plating shifted to keep people from falling over, John Burke ran his way to C&C from his office. He would have taken the express route, but that transport tube hadn't worked since the last attack on the station. Maintenance said it was on their list, but that was to remain to be seen.

Walking into C&C Burke looked out the main viewing window. A Dubor warship was bearing down on the station. *Shit!* He thought. *They've upped their game.* He wondered if Crimson Gamma was getting hit as well. That couldn't be his chief concern right now. He had over a half a million lives to worry about. Even the alien ones whether he liked it or not.

"Report!" Burke ordered.

"Incoming fire from a Dubor warship." A lieutenant said stating the obvious. "The Fresno has launched their Atlantic Fighters and are protecting our Main Fusion Reactor Core with their shields."

Thank goodness for some good news. "What about our fighters?" Burke asked.

The lieutenant frowned. "There's a problem with the launch tubes sir. Maintenance is working on it." She worked her console as fast as she could getting more information for the major.

"Fire the main battery." Burke ordered. "Get those missiles airborne."

“Aye. Main battery firing.” The lieutenant reported. “Missiles away.”

Outside, bullets fired from the main battery and found their target. The Dubor’s shields held. Missiles also fired from their gun ports striking the Dubor ship. Burke hoped they would make a dent in the enemy shields, but that was doubtful. After the pasting they gave the Franklin, it was impossible to say whether Crimson Delta’s defenses would be any match for the warship.

Atlantic Fighters fired repeatedly at the Dubor warship from every angle possible. Their attack vectors were random at best, something to keep the Dubor second guessing where they would strike next.

The Fresno’s bridge was exploding all around them. Kate Monson was coordinating their attack with her counterpart in C&C on the station. “Aft shields are failing.” She reported. “Kicking in secondary shield generator now.” She watched as the shields grew stronger. “Aft shielding restored.”

“Good, keep an eye on those shield generators; and keep firing!” O’Brien yelled over the explosions going on around him. Sparks were flying across the bridge like usual during an engagement. As a fire erupted in the aft quarter of the bridge, an ensign took a fire extinguisher and put it out. O’Brien nodded, his people were taking care of the situations that arose.

“Target their weapons array and engines.” O’Brien ordered. “I want that ship disabled.”

“Aye sir.” Crew members echoed around the bridge. They got to work targeting the required sections of the enemy ship. Without weapons she couldn’t fight back. Without engines, she couldn’t escape and Earth could take prisoners.

The battle lasted for another half hour before it was over. The Dubor warship was adrift, her escape pods all launched down to the planet below leaving no one on the ship. It was a needed victory for Earth.

O’Brien looked at the warship on the main viewing screen before him. She had taken quite a beating at the hand of his forces. Both the Fresno and Crimson Delta had taken losses of their own. Each suffered multiple hull breaches and casualties. Med Bays were overrun with wounded and otherwise injured crew members.

Standing from his command chair, O’Brien headed towards the transport tube that would take him down to Med Bay. “Kate, take the conn.” He said. “I’ll be in Med Bay checking on things down there.”

Med Bay was in shambles. The lights were flickering, oxygen tents were barely working keeping oxygen in, and there was a lot of injured people waiting to be treated. As O’Brien walked in, he was greeted by a nurse who filled him in on the situation at hand. He simply

nodded and frowned. His crew members were fallen and he felt like it was his fault. Sure it was war and these things were expected but that didn't make it easier. As he walked by the bed where an injured ensign was laying, the ensign held out her hand grabbing hold of Jack's uniform.

"Sir." She said between gasps of breath. "Did we do it? Did we stop them?"

Jack nodded his head. "Yes ensign, we stopped them." *For now* he thought. There would be more battles to be fought later on he was afraid. More battles and more death. "You did good." He said offering his best words given the condition she was in.

As her blood pressure dropped, and her heart rate stopped, the ensign went into cardiac arrest. A nearby nurse began CPR on the ensign. "Come on dammit." The nurse yelled. "Don't you fracking die on me!"

Minutes later the ensign was declared dead. The nurse looked to Jack with a grave face. "I'm sorry sir,, her wounds were too extensive. There was nothing we could do even if we weren't swamped and had a fully working surgical bay. I'm sorry sir." She repeated. The nurse closed the ensign's eyes and placed a sheet over her head.

Jack bowed his head and offered a silent prayer for the dead. He knew the risks associated with war, the death, the destruction and all of that. It never got easier. He hadn't had time to learn each and every member of his crew yet, the change in command had happened so suddenly. Jack wanted to learn their names, wanted to learn what made them tick. He would not forget this ensign, her death would stay with him a while. Most commanders wouldn't get close to their crew like he wanted to. Jack wasn't like any normal commanding officer.

O'Brien waited for the doctor to become available to retrieve a status report. As the doctor exited surgery, she approached Jack with a not so good look on her face. "Captain." She said.

"Doctor, how's my crew?" Jack asked. "How many deaths are we talking here?"

The doctor sighed, she was trying to keep up with the casualties as best she could. There just wasn't enough manpower to save them all. "I'm sorry to say we lost over one hundred officers and enlisted men, sir." She said. "I managed to help save over fifty souls, I still have two surgeries scheduled."

Jack nodded, a third of his crew was dead. He could only imagine the death toll that had happened on the station below them. "Thank you for your work doctor." Jack finally said. "You better get back in there."

He watched as she walked away back into the surgical chamber.

Jack frowned at the death, the loss, the destruction. It would take them over a week to fix repairs to the Fresno. Over a week in a dry dock they didn't have access to. He hoped the station had the necessary manpower to help repair his ship. If Crimson Delta couldn't provide help, maybe Crimson Gamma could.

Leaving Med Bay, Jack headed for his office. He had paperwork to fill out, just like the doctor had to fill out death certificates. Passing through the bridge, Jack made eye contact with Kate. They were thinking the exact same thing. War was hell.

As Jack entered his office, he removed his duty jacket and placed it across his desk. "Computer, resume captain's log. Now, where was I." Jack wondered. Oh yes, he had been talking about how they had limited casualties during their last encounter with the Dubor. Oh how things have changed for the worst. "We had another encounter with the Dubor. They were evenly matched with us this time, they brought on a warship. I've lost over one hundred good people because of this menace." Jack paused. What a menace it was indeed. "We best come up with a way to defeat them before any more lives are lost. End Log."

Jack looked out his office window at the world below. Hundreds of Dubor were now conquering that home. It was up to him to put a stop to it, and put a stop to it he would.

The End