

# ***TRAITOR***

## **Chapter XI**

*“Computer, is there a tracking device on this ship that could be sending a signal to the ships following us?” Denise questioned the CPU.*

When Joseph got up, the little whittier who had been sleeping in his lap scampered over to Denise and jumped into her lap, momentarily arousing her. When the whittier curled up in her lap she fell back asleep.

Joseph stretched his arms as he wandered over to the main control panel and sat down in the co-pilot’s seat. Yendor was so involved in his checklist he didn’t notice Joseph’s presence. Joseph began to look over the instruments to get a bearing on where they were.

“This doesn’t make sense,” Joseph blurted out startling Yendor.

“What do you mean?” responded Yendor.

“We’re not headed for Sigmata; we’re headed for the Blithonian system...WE’RE HEADED BACK TO REIDFORCIA!” Joseph exclaimed getting everyone’s attention and awakening those who were asleep. “What do you think you’re doing?” he directed the next question directly at Yendor. “Are you nuts?”

“You must be seeing things, we’re right on course for Sigmata,” Yendor insisted, trying to hide the anxiety in his voice.

“OK, let’s see. Computer, please give me the destination of the coordinates as they are currently set on the console?” Joseph asked the CPU.

“Current settings will take us to the Blithonian system in approximately fifteen minutes four point six seconds,” the CPU replied.

“Computer, how long have we been on these headings?” Joseph continued.

“We were going in a circular pattern for eight hours eighteen minutes seven point two seconds. Twenty-one minutes forty-five point seven seconds ago the coordinates for the Blithonian system were locked in,” The CPU responded.

“Computer, who input those coordinates?” Joseph asked.

“The pilot,” the CPU answered matter-of-factly.

Fragon grabbed a trazer and pointed it at Yendor.

“You traitor!” Fragon blurted out. “I should blow your head off right now.”

“DONT, if you do you’ll blow a hole right through the side of the craft and then we’ll all be dead for sure!” Dr. Xelco turned and yelled at Fragon.

“We’ll take care of him later. Mark please go below and check on the equipment. If my guess is right, the failure of the concealment device was not an accident. I would bet my last corona that he has set a homing device down there as well.” Dr. Xelco began ordering people into action.

Mark climbed down the hatch while Fragon directed Yendor to the back of the craft where they tied him to one of the console chairs.

Conrad took over the controls and questioned the CPU on how to evade the Reidforcian force that had been tracking them.

“Computer, has the enemy closed in on us since I last inquired?” Conrad inquired...

“No, their relative distance from the craft has remained the same,” the CPU answered.

“Computer, is there any way to repair the jamming device or the concealment device?” Conrad continued.

“Yes, the diaphragm is not ruptured. If the diagonal buss is attached to the main consport of the concealment device, it will give approximately twenty minutes six point seven seconds of use. To make the jamming device operational it will only require the flipping of the input switch,” the CPU described how to repair the equipment.

“Computer, is the jamming device in its current configuration the same as prior to lift off?” Conrad asked further.

“No,” was the simple response from the CPU.

Conrad stuck his head down the hatch and relayed the information to Mark.

Dr. Xelco began to question Yendor. “Why have you done this?”

He did not answer.

“I thought that you were with us and that you were helping us. Now it turns out that this was a plan you had set up all along. Well, have I got a surprise for you. I have found enough parts to construct the main igniter so we can use the McMarian Hyper-Warp drive system. If we can get this thing working, we’ll leave those friends of yours in the dust,” Dr. Xelco chided Yendor.

Yendor did not respond. He just gazed forward; probably surprised that he had been caught so close to returning to Reidforcia.

“Conrad, hold our present course until we can get this equipment installed,” Dr. Xelco ordered as the doctor took the co-pilot’s seat and began attaching the device he brought with him to the console.

“Computer, is there a tracking device on this ship that could be sending a signal to the ships following us?” Denise questioned the CPU.

“Yes,” the CPU responded.

“Computer, where is the tracking device?” Dr. Xelco asked.

“It’s located in the head of the one you call Yendor Remlap,” the CPU replied.

Denise immediately went back to the medical supplies, took out the Quad Radial Emanator scanner (QRE) and set the dials to determine where the transmitter might be. Yendor fought her, but two of the Bignols grabbed him and held him still while Denise scanned his head.

“Here it is. It’s located behind his left ear. It’s the same as the one we removed from Conrad earlier. I think I can deactivate it with my QRE,” Denise said anxiously.

She took the QRE and set the frequency to match the one the transmitter was giving off. She increased the level until Yendor began to wince and then screamed from the

intense pain the high frequency caused. Two seconds of pain and then Yendor slumped forward, unconscious. Denise then took the laser knife and made a small incision behind his ear and removed the small transmitter remembering to deactivate the implosion module.

“Computer, is the transmitting device deactivated?” Denise asked the computer.

“Yes,” was the simple response.

“We’ll question him later. Denise, keep the QRE on the same signal and reduce the intensity. Maybe we can fool them into thinking that the device is still functioning. That way they won’t know what is going on,” Dr. Xelco yelled back to Denise as he kept working on connecting the makeshift panel.

Fragon took a cool cloth and began to wipe Yendor’s brow with it.

Denise checked on Somat and the injured Bignol, and she found them a little upset over the current turn of events, but resting quietly.

Mark poked his head up out of the hole and gave the high sign that he had completed the repairs to the equipment.

“Computer, are the jamming and concealment devices operational?” Dr. Xelco questioned the CPU once more.

“Yes,” That was all they needed to hear from the CPU.

“Give me a few seconds to finish the installation of this panel and then we’ll be able to put our escape plan into effect,” Dr. Xelco said while concentrating on the job in front of him. “Fragon, bring me the metal integrating tool from the workstation, please.” Dr. Xelco requested.

Fragon went to the workstation, retrieved the tool for the doctor, and handed it to him. Dr. Xelco, using the tool, worked feverishly to get the panel connected to the harness of the McMarian Hyper-Warp controller so they could begin to put an end to the plan Yendor had been setting in motion.

“Mark, is everything in order down there?” Dr. Xelco asked.

“Yes sir,” Mark answered.

“Computer, lay in a new course for the Sigmata colony and engage upon my

command,” Dr. Xelco ordered the CPU. “Everyone, take a secure seat because when this thing locks in it will give us quite a jolt.” He continued.

Mark crawled out of the lower compartment, secured the door, and took a seat behind Conrad.

“Computer, turn on the jamming device and the concealer, then set our course to Sigmata, NOW!” Dr. Xelco relayed to the CPU and as he did so he threw the switch on his makeshift panel. The ship bolted forward so fast that just about anything that wasn’t attached moved towards the back wall. The skies around the ship became a blur as it swept in a graceful arc and then blasted out of the range of the Reidforcian force that had been tracking them.

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“DON’T, STOP, I CAN’T TAKE IT ANY LONGER. I’LL DO ANYTHING YOU WANT. JUST LEAVE ME ALONE!” Yendor screamed out as he fought the ties that held him down.

Yendor had just come to after being unconscious from the removal of the tracking device in his head. Immediately Dr. Xelco moved over to him and tried to get his attention.

“Yendor, it’s me, Matthew Xelco. Come out of it man, you’re safe,” Dr. Xelco consoled him.

Yendor just looked at him with a panicked face and his eyes wide open.

“IT’S A TRICK I DON’T BELIEVE YOU. JUST LEAVE ME ALONE. DON’T HURT ME ANY MORE!” Yendor continued to rant.

“Yendor! It’s Matthew Xelco, and over there is Regis Fisbon, and there is Conrad Darnoc, and Mark Cooter, don’t you recognize us?” Dr. Xelco said in a calm and reassuring manner.

“I...I...don’t know whether to believe you or not. I was in the Processing Room, the last I remember. Where am I now?” Yendor insisted.

“We are on the the Confederation ship ZX/2. My son and his friend Denise Wantis

rescued us from the planet Reidforcia. It would appear that the implant in your skull took control of your actions and you didn't know what you were doing or even where you were," Dr. Xelco explained to Yendor.

Joseph motioned towards Denise to come over to him, and whispered softly to Denise as she bent down to listen, "Denise do you think that my father might have one of those implants as well? When we found him he had just been released from the Processing Room himself."

"It's a possibility, perhaps I should check him with the QRE," Denise responded.

"Go ahead, but don't let on what you are doing," Joseph warned.

While Dr. Xelco continued to brief Yendor on where he was and what had transpired, Denise walked slowly behind Dr. Xelco, turned on the QRE, and passed the device over the head of the doctor. She turned towards Joseph and shook her head no. Joseph gave off a sigh of relief knowing that all possible stones had to be turned. She then wandered around the cabin checking to see if anyone else might be a threat. None was found.

"Do you know the plan? Do you know why we were allowed to escape from Reidforcia? Do you know what was in store for us when we got back?" Dr. Xelco questioned Yendor.

"The last thing I remember for sure is that I was in the Processing Room on one of the stretch tables. Lord Froth was trying to get me to betray you, but I wouldn't. I was stretched until I thought that every bone in my body was about to snap. Then they put a hood over my head and sent shocks of electricity through my body. The pain was so intense I think I must have blacked out," Yendor told his story.

"Here is what I remember after that," Yendor explained. "I seem to recall that Lord Froth was disappointed when he found the McMarian Hyper-Warp drive system wasn't functional after they discovered the ship outside of the prison gates."

"He allowed you to escape from the planet. He has been aware of your movements from the time the ZX/2 came into range of the prison. The beacon signal alerted him."

"He thought that he could get the information he needed from you Dr. Xelco, but

you proved to be a worthy opponent. He allowed you to go free. He assumed that you would make the McMarian Hyper-Warp system operational on this ship. I think his plan was for me to take control of the ZX/2 until you had the McMarian Hyper-Warp drive operational. He assumed you would get it working, and then I was to bring the ship back to Reidforcia. It's all a little fuzzy.”

Then when I brought the ship back to him he would have everything he needed to equip his ships with the new technology,” Yendor struggled to remember. “He is impressed with the ingenuity of the ones who saved you.

“That all makes sense to me. I will let the others know. Just relax for now,” Dr. Xelco reassured Yendor.

Continuing to update Yendor, Dr. Xelco explained, “We are free from the Reidforcian threat for now. We are on our way towards the Sigmata outpost where we can get reinforcements. We have many secrets about the Reidforcians we can use against them, particularly the way they react to light,” Dr. Xelco continued to explain to Yendor.

While Yendor was recuperating from the effects of his torture in the Processing Room, Conrad and Joseph began to plan their arrival on Sigmata.

“Computer, are we being tracked by the tower at Sigmata?” Conrad asked the CPU.

“Yes, they are aware of our speed and course.” The CPU replied.

“Computer, Is there any other traffic in the vicinity that we should be cautious of?” Conrad inquired.

“No, there is no activity in or around the Sigmata station,” the CPU gave its answer

“That's a little strange, usually Sigmata is one of the busiest outposts in this sector,” Conrad said to Mark.

“Computer, do you know of a reason why there is no traffic at Sigmata,” Conrad asked the CPU.

“No, I do not have an answer to that question,” the CPU replied

“I think we need to proceed with caution,” Mark suggested.

The journey to Sigmata allowed the passengers to eat and get some much needed rest. Denise not only worked to make Regis and the Bignol comfortable, but she also

prepared meals in the dispensary for all of the crew. She was the perfect flight attendant.

After his rest, Joseph moved into the pilot's and giving Conrad a break. Conrad moved over to the co-pilot's seat.

"Computer, how long before we are in radio range of Sigmata," Joseph asked the CPU.

"At this speed in approximately twenty-two point two seconds," the CPU responded.

"Computer, how long before we arrive at Sigmata colony," Joseph continued to probe the CPU.

"We should arrive at Sigmata colony in approximately thirty-five minutes two point five seconds," The CPU replied.

"We must really be moving," Conrad said very surprised.

"One hour fifty-five minutes fifty-five point seven seconds," the CPU jumped in.

"What a comic," Conrad responded.

"Mark, open a frequency in the ultra-space range and hail the base," Joseph said asked Mark who was not at the communications desk. He reexamined the control panel before him to make sure that all systems were operational.

"Computer, what is the frequency for the Sigmata base?" asked Mark.

"One hundred forty-five point seven macro hertz," The CPU answered.

Mark set the frequency into the communicator on the console in front of him, and then Mark hailed the colony.

"Calling Sigmata colony, this is the Confederation ship ZX/2 returning from Reidforcia, please respond," Mark called out over the head set he had placed over his head earlier so could monitor the radio for any friendly transmissions.

No response.

"Try again maybe we aren't in range yet," Joseph pleaded.

"We've been in radio range for the last eight point nine seconds," responded the CPU.

"Is there any way we can keep that CPU from being so obnoxious?" Conrad asked.

"Forget the CPU. I'm not getting a response here," Mark said confused at the lack of

response. “Calling Sigmata colony, this is the ZX/2 returning from Reidforcia, please respond,” Mark continued.

Again there was no response.

“Why aren’t they responding?” questioned Conrad.

“I don’t have any idea. Maybe I should try the CIG universal frequency,” Mark thought out loud. He changed the frequency to the universal channel. “Calling Sigmata colony, this is the Confederation ship ZX/2 returning from Reidforcia, please respond!” Mark almost begged the microphone.